

NEWS RELEASE

CONFLICT COMPLAINT AGAINST GROENEWEGEN DISMISSED

Yellowknife (July 11) - Chief Conflict of Interest Commissioner Joel Fournier has dismissed a conflict of interest complaint against Hay River MLA Jane Groenewegen.

In the complaint received May 2, 1996 by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly Greg Rowe from Hay River Mobile Park Ltd., the successful bidder on the contract, alleged that Mrs. Groenewegen had interfered in the process. He also accused her of crossing the lines of what proper, noting Greenway Holdings Ltd., a company in which Mrs. Groenewegen has a controlling interest, had also submitted a proposal for a small portion of the space being tendered. The report states that it was suggested to Mr. Fournier in many of his interviews that this case may have been motivated by political bias.

But Mr. Fournier said he was satisfied that while Mrs. Groenewegen erred in her judgment, it was in good faith. He suggested that Mrs. Groenewegen, who recognized early in the process the potential for conflict, should have stayed out of the process completely or insisted that Greenway's proposal be withdrawn.

Mrs. Groenewegen said she agrees that she should not become involved in this issue and felt at the time compelled to respond to the requests of a number of her constituents to allow their concerns to be heard by the minister.

"There are many areas of concern that MLAs, still involved in business, have to be aware of to comply with the conflict legislation," said Mrs. Groenewegen. "This situation has brought this to my attention early on in my role as MLA for Hay River. Now I can continue with the work of representing the best interests of my constituents."

The Chief Conflict of Interest Commissioner investigates complaints made against Members of the Legislative Assembly. The above noted complaint was dismissed July 10, 1996.

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