

Official Minutes of Regina Convention

The ninth annual convention of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association opened on Tuesday, February 7, 1911, at the auditorium, city hall, Regina, at ten o'clock, with the president, Mr. F. M. Gates, in the chair.

The president in calling the meeting to order referred to the work which has been done during the past year, and then appointed the following committees:

CREDENTIAL COMMITTEE

Messrs. F. Sheppard and Greenhill.

RESOLUTION COMMITTEE

Messrs. Mugford, Durrell, Hutchinson.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

The president then asked for reports from local associations and Mr. Kirkham, on behalf of Saltcoats local association, reported on the work done in the district.

FRATERNAL GREETINGS

The president then called upon the delegates from Alberta.

Mr. Jas. Bower, president United Farmers of Alberta, stated this was the third time he had had the pleasure of conveying the fraternal greetings of the United Farmers of Alberta, and said that every year as we became more closely identified with the work, it was shown more than ever that our interests are identical, no matter what portion of Canada we are from.

Mr. E. J. Fream, secretary-treasurer U. F. A., thanked the convention for the welcome given to the visitors at the convention, and assured the members that the United Farmers of Alberta were working in harmony with the kindred associations—Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

Mr. W. J. Tregillus, vice-president, U. F. A., said this was his first visit to Saskatchewan. He came here hoping to gather information and had therefore been looking forward to this visit with a great deal of pleasure. He wanted to present a few thoughts to the convention; the first was the great value of time and, therefore, at this time delegates should be careful not to air their grievances but to keep right down to business; the other was that we had got into a great habit of passing resolutions, then thinking the matter was finished. Another thought was the responsibility of every individual member in carrying on the work of the association, while the last was the need of direct legislation. This is a matter of evolution and if we could only get the power where it should be, the people owning the government, instead of the government owning the people.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President F. W. Gates said that before giving his annual report he wished to thank the many members of the association for their kind sympathy and enquiries at the time of his accident last fall.

The president then read his annual report which was unanimously adopted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The report of the board of directors and executive committee was then presented by the vice-president, Mr. J. A. Murray.

Mr. Murray moved and Mr. Maharg seconded: "That the report of the board of directors and executive committee be adopted as read." Carried unanimously.

The president asked if the committee appointed to consider the matter of securing literature relating to the association in different languages was ready to report.

Mr. Durrell, on behalf of the committee, answered that this committee was not yet prepared to report.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

The president then introduced Mr. P. McAra, mayor of Regina, to the convention.

Mayor McAra extended a hearty welcome to the delegates on behalf of the citizens of Regina. Mr. McAra spoke of the previous meetings of the association in Regina, and stated that it was found that the spirit which prevails at these conventions is that they are working for the welfare and general good of Canada.

President Gates on behalf of the convention, thanked the mayor for his kind invitation extended to the delegates.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The annual report of the secretary was presented by Mr. F. W. Green, also the treasurer's and auditor's report.

Mr. Green moved and Mr. Hyde seconded: "That the secretary's report be adopted as read." Carried.

Mr. T. Lawrence spoke of the formation of the emergency fund and stated he came forward to help the fund along with a subscription of fifty dollars.

Mr. Langley announced that arrangements had been made for the printing of a large number of copies of the elevator bill, so that every delegate in attendance could secure a copy of same when the convention re-assembled in the afternoon.

REPORT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. A. G. Hawkes presented a verbal report on the resolutions adopted at the annual convention held at Prince Albert, and the answer to these resolutions received from the Hon. W. Scott on behalf of the government. Mr. Hawkes said a good many resolutions were passed last year which had to be submitted to the Dominion government, and this report dealt only with the resolutions which were presented to the provincial government.

The first resolution submitted had reference to the introduction of a system of farm bookkeeping into the schools, and the answer received that the government was in sympathy with this suggestion.

In regard to the resolution requesting that greater restrictions be placed on companies or individuals seeking railway charters or subsidies for the building of new lines. The government stated that they were in sympathy with the resolution.

In regard to the request that the lands held by speculators should be subject to a further tax, the premier answered that he was not free to give any definite promise, although the government looked upon the matter with considerable approval and would give it consideration.

On the hail insurance question the premier answered that he was able to state that the government will agree to carry out the recommendations contained in the resolution, and suggested that if this present law was not satisfactory it would be as well for the association to take the matter up.

In regard to the resolution on mortgages the premier answered it is probable the attorney-general may be able to introduce legislation at the next session, but he could not give any particulars regarding same.

In regard to the resolution dealing with men employed on threshing outfits the premier answered that the attorney-general thought this would not be practicable.

Dealing with the matter of gristing charges the premier answered that he would look into same.

In regard to the resolution dealing with the coal business, the premier answered that he thought it was not the mine owners or workers of coal who were at fault, but the freight rates was the matter which should be considered.

Mr. Hawkes moved and Mr. Hutchinson seconded: "That the report as presented be adopted." Carried.

Before taking up the resolutions the president announced that it was the intention to read the resolutions from the platform and the mover of the resolution could then come forward and speak to same.

Mr. Green made several announcements to the delegates, requesting them to register, and in regard to accommodation for delegates.

ADJOURNMENT

The president then declared the meeting adjourned till two o'clock.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

Tuesday afternoon's session was called to order by President Gates at 2.05 o'clock, who announced that owing to the fact that so many of the delegates had not arrived the discussion of the elevator question would be taken up on Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. Tuesday evening's session would be devoted to addresses by Messrs. Chapman, Partridge and McCaig. The meeting of the organization districts would be held on Wednesday morning, while the election of district directors would take place on Thursday morning, both of these meetings being held at nine o'clock.

Mr. Railton asked if the balance as shown in the financial statement was unimpaired. Mr. Green answered that the only charge to be made on the balance was the secretary's salary for 1910.

The resolutions were then taken.

DIRECT LEGISLATION

Mr. Lawrence moved and Mr. Tanner seconded:

"Whereas direct legislation appears to us to be the only way to effect legislation equal to all,

"Be it resolved, that this association declares in favor of the Initiative, Referendum and Right of Recall, and instruct the executive to use all legitimate means to bring about such legislation."

Considerable discussion ensued on the question, Messrs. Lawrence, Stowe, Murray and Kirkham speaking and declaring in favor of the resolution, and the question was then put and declared carried.

RAILWAY FREIGHT TARIFF

Mr. Murray moved and Mr. Stowe seconded: "Whereas, the railway tariff for freight, passenger travel, express rates and telegraph is an oppressive burden to the Western population, and,

"Whereas, the C. P. R. has already declared a dividend of ten per cent., which by existing legislation and their charter makes this the limit beyond which dividends must be applied to the reduction of freight rates, and,

"Whereas, the Dominion railway commission in dealing with express rates have exposed the grossly exorbitant profits of Canadian Express Companies, and practically ordered a square deal,

"Be it resolved, that the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association demand the lower railway rates we are entitled to, and urge upon merchants, citizens and others their immediate co-operation."

On the question being put this resolution was declared carried unanimously.

CAPACITY OF CARS

Mr. Noble moved and Mr. Simpson seconded:

"Whereas, we understand that the railway companies have ceased constructing cars of 40,000 lb. capacity, which makes it difficult for farmers with small acreage to ship their grain direct over the loading platform,

"Be it resolved, that our executive take this matter up with the railway companies, or the railway commission, either to provide cars with two doors to load through, with sufficient bulkhead so that the farmers may fill a car of large capacity, or else to allow a farmer to use a thousand bushel car for a smaller amount of grain without increasing the freight rate per cwt."

On the question being put it was declared carried.

SURTAX ON LAND

Mr. Cross moved and Mr. Robinson seconded: "Whereas, the progress of our province is made difficult by so much of the land being held for speculation and left unoccupied, and,

"Whereas, the increase in the value of such land is due to the labor of the actual settlers,

"Therefore, be it resolved, that our local government be asked to give municipalities and local improvement districts power to tax vacant lands as high as double the tax on occupied lands."

Mr. Clayton moved as an amendment and Mr. Enquist seconded:

"Whereas, the progress of our province is made difficult by so much land being held for speculation and left unoccupied, and being a constant source of danger by prairie fires, and,

"Whereas, the increase in the value of such land is due to the labor of the actual settlers,

"Therefore, be it resolved, that our local government be asked to give municipalities and local improvement districts power to tax vacant lands as high as double on unoccupied lands and to fire guard these same lands and charge cost of the work to the owners."

Mr. Hawkins moved as an amendment to the amendment and Mr. Conlon seconded: "Whereas, the progress of our province is made difficult by so much of the land being held for speculation and left unoccupied, and,

"Whereas, the increase in value of such land is due to the labor of the actual settlers, and local improvement districts to double the tax on all lands in such municipalities or districts, with a rebate of fifty per cent. on all lands resided on and in the occupation of a bona fide farmer."

The question was then called for, the result being as follows:

The amendment to the amendment was put and declared defeated.

The amendment was put and declared defeated.

The original motion was then put and declared carried.

HAIL INSURANCE

Mr. Dunning, on behalf of Beaverdale local association moved, and Mr. Clayton seconded:

"Whereas, the companies operating in hail insurance are not doing a satisfactory business, and,

"Whereas, the provincial government agreed to see satisfactory business was conducted,

"Resolved, that we call the attention of the provincial government to the existing conditions with a view of establishing conditions with a view of establishing a system of hail insurance by assessment as adopted at our last convention."

"Whereas, the hail insurance companies now operating in Saskatchewan are not doing a business acceptable to the farmers of the province,

"Therefore, be it resolved, that a provincial hail insurance system be established, the revenue for the said system to be raised by a tax not exceeding two cents per acre, all land to be subject to said assessment, providing that any resident ratepayer be allowed to register out one section or less from the assessment and participation in the benefits."

Mr. Gabriel moved as an amendment and Mr. Houser seconded:

"That this resolution be amended by striking out the following words where they appear in the last clause of said resolution, 'providing that any resident ratepayer be allowed to register out one section or less from the assessment and participation in the benefits.'"

On the question being put to the meeting the amendment was declared defeated, and the resolution was adopted.