

MANITOBA) Order No. 24/00
)
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD ACT) February 23, 2000

BEFORE: G. D. Forrest, Chairman
D. L. Barrett-Hrominchuk, Member
J. A. MacDonald, Member

**APPLICATION BY THE CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION OF
CANADA (MANITOBA) INC. AND MANITOBA SOCIETY OF
SENIORS FOR AN AWARD OF COSTS FOR
PARTICIPATING IN A HEARING CALLED TO CONSIDER
AN APPLICATION BY CENTRA GAS MANITOBA INC. FOR
APPROVAL OF A WESTERN TRANSPORTATION SERVICE
AND AGENCY BILLING AND COLLECTION SERVICES**

A public hearing was held in the City of Winnipeg, commencing October 6, 1999 to consider issues arising out of an application by Centra Gas Manitoba Inc. ("Centra") for approval of a Western Transportation Service and Agency Billing and Collection Service.

By letter dated November 29, 1999 Counsel for the Consumers' Association of Canada (Manitoba) Inc. and the Manitoba Society of Seniors (the "Applicant") filed the appropriate hearing

and summary sheets. The total claim for costs is \$84,059.14 comprised of professional fees of \$63,915.50, disbursements of \$15,211.31 and GST of \$4,932.33.

The Applicant submitted that they had made a substantial contribution to this hearing both in terms of participating in the substantive stakeholder meetings held and in viva voce evidence produced as well as in making recommendations to the Board concerning the application. The Applicant also noted the evidence as given by Mr. John Todd, and the perspective it presented on competitive concerns.

The Applicant noted the savings in hearing time as a result of reaching consensus on a number of issues. The Applicant also noted its lack of financial resources and substantial interest in the process and the outcome of the proceedings.

The Applicant requested that an Order as to costs be rendered as soon as possible.

By letter dated January 17, 2000, the Board inquired as to comments from Centra. By way of letter dated January 27, 2000 Centra indicated that it had no comments.

BOARD COMMENTS

The Applicant is well known to the Board as an intervenor on matters relating to Centra. The Board is satisfied that the Applicant has insufficient financial resources to present its case adequately without an award of costs. The Applicant represents a group which has a substantial interest in the outcome of the proceedings.

The Board recognizes the contribution made by this Intervenor to the process and would allow the request in whole amounting to \$84,059.14.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. The Consumers' Association of Canada (Manitoba) Inc. and Manitoba Society of Seniors' application for an award of costs be allowed in the amount of \$84,059.14.
2. The costs shall be payable by Centra Gas Manitoba Inc. within 30 days of the date of this Order.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD

"G. D. FORREST"
Chairman

"H. M. SINGH"
Acting Secretary

Certified a true copy of Order
No. 24/00 issued by The Public
Utilities Board

Acting Secretary