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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016

ESTABLISHED 1902

POSTMEDIA



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LAYCOCK SLIDE

Team Saskatchewan skip Steve Laycock glides through the house as he throws a rock during round-robin competition against P.E.I. at the Brier curling championship on Tuesday in Ottawa. Laycock won that game 8-5 but lost an evening match against New Brunswick 7-6. Team Saskatchewan's record now sits at 3-4. **B1**

Leaders take different paths to woo voters

Premier runs on record while NDP's Broten has a long list of promises

EMMA GRANEY

Saskatchewan Party Leader Brad Wall said Tuesday he isn't interested in a "bidding war" with the NDP over campaign promises.

NDP Leader Cam Broten has been front and centre over the past few weeks making platform announcements about reducing ambulance fees, tax breaks for middle-income families, and

scrapping Executive Air.

His latest commitment came Tuesday, the first official day of the provincial election campaign, when he said the NDP would do away with SaskBuilds, the Crown corporation charged with evaluating procurement options like public-private partnerships (P3s).

Broten said Tuesday that cancelling SaskBuilds would save \$15 million annually, as well as "hun-

dreds of millions of dollars by avoiding ... reckless and costly P3 deals."

But while the NDP has so far promised new initiatives and changes to government processes, Wall says his party will promote its record, comparing it with the NDP's, pointing mainly to the province's financial picture while making only a few spending commitments.

But can you campaign without promising many new initiatives for Saskatchewan voters?

SEE PROMISES ON **A4**

Homeless men given tickets to West Coast

ANDREA HILL

Two young First Nations men who say they were denied provincial funding to stay at the North Battleford Lighthouse homeless shelter are on their way to the West Coast.

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services paid about \$500 for two one-way bus tickets from North Battleford to Vancouver and Victoria.

Jeremy Roy, 21, who has mental health problems and has never held a job, said it will be his first time out of the province. He said he asked Social Services for a bus ticket to British Columbia after he heard another man at the shelter request and be given a ticket to Victoria, where the man had friends and family.

"I don't know. I just made a decision to go," Roy said Tuesday, hours before boarding a bus to Vancouver. He said his sister used to take care of him, but not anymore. He said he doesn't know anyone in Vancouver.

Both Roy and Charles Neil Curly, 23 — the Victoria-bound man Roy overheard, who's been homeless since losing his job delivering furniture in North Battleford last fall — said they plan to live in shelters in B.C.

SEE HOMELESS ON **A7**

Sask. Metis \$725,000 in debt

BETTY ANN ADAM

The Metis Nation - Saskatchewan (MN-S) is more than \$725,000 in debt, 15 months after losing its federal funding.

The estimate, calculated by accounting firm Ernst and Young, includes more than \$245,000 in unpaid legal fees and more than \$286,000 on an overdraft account.



Robert Doucette

The estimate does not include up to \$200,000 in federal funding holdbacks from last year, which could yet be paid out, said MN-S president Robert Doucette.

SEE DEBT ON **A7**

SPORTS

HUSKIES

Volleyball team ready to serve up wins at nationals **B2**

NEWS

TRANSIT

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Two homeless men sent to B.C. with 'no supports'

HOMELESS FROM **A1**

Curly, who hails from the Mosquito First Nation, said he was so frustrated by Social Services not funding him that he wanted to leave. If he has to be homeless, it might as well be by a beach, he said.

"Nothing to be scared about, right? Got to get out into the world and see new sights," he said.

Caitlin Glencross, manager of the shelter, said the news of her clients' departures "threw (her) for a loop."

She has seen Social Services pay for bus tickets to send residents of other provinces back home, or to send people from small Saskatchewan communities to larger centres with more services, but she's never seen Saskatchewan residents issued one-way tickets out of the province, she said.

Both Roy and Curly have received their welfare cheques from the North Battleford office for months. Glencross said she can't

comprehend why the two men — who have no plans for survival on the west coast — are being sent out of province.

Roy, who has "significant" mental health concerns, doesn't seem to understand what's going on and doesn't know where he'll get his medication once he leaves North Battleford, she said.

"I'm obviously concerned about these individuals. They're going to go somewhere now that they have no supports because they couldn't get supports in our province."

Because the provincial election was called Tuesday, spokespeople for the ministry can't talk publicly about the matter.

Saskatchewan Party candidate Donna Harpauer, who served as minister of social services before Tuesday's writ drop, said it's always been left to the discretion of social workers to decide whether to send people elsewhere.

"That policy's been in place for many, many years. They know the circumstances, they know if there



Jeremy Roy waits in the North Battleford bus depot for a bus bound to B.C. He says he was denied provincial funding to stay at the North Battleford Lighthouse homeless shelter. *MCPHEDRAN PHOCUS*

are family members who are at the end of wherever they are going. They know their rationale, their reasoning," she said.

Janice MacKinnon, a public health professor at the Univer-

sity of Saskatchewan and former social services minister under NDP premier Roy Romanow, said it's impossible to say whether the government acted appropriately because social workers are bound

by confidentiality restrictions and can't comment on cases, even to clarify facts.

"There is no government policy to provide people with bus tickets out of the province, but in specific situations helping people travel to where they have family or better opportunities might be a reasonable approach if the social worker thinks such action is in the best interests of the client," she said in an email.

Glencross, who has worked with the men for months, said she believes the moves are not in their best interests.

NDP leader Cam Broten said the one-way tickets to B.C. appear to be an example of recent "short-sighted" cuts to emergency shelters in Saskatchewan.

"You don't just send someone who is desperate, with no supports, on a Greyhound to Vancouver where they have no supports or are on the streets and can't get the help that they need there," he said. "Instead of having a housing first approach, the Sask Party has a Greyhound first approach."

In November, Social Services cracked down on who was receiving emergency shelter per diems to stay at places like the Lighthouse. The North Battleford shelter received provincial funding for about 70 per cent of clients who spent the night there when it opened last January. This January, just 11 per cent were covered by provincial dollars.

Choice of Yorkton location remains controversial

DEBT FROM **A1**

Federal dollars to the organization that represents about 50,000 Metis citizens in Saskatchewan were halted in November 2014, after feuding factions of the MN-S failed for five years to hold twice-yearly legislative assemblies required by its constitution.

July 30 and 31 have now been set for the long-awaited assembly, which will give MN-S five weeks to prepare for a Sept. 3 election date which the Provincial Metis Council (PMC) will recommend to the assembly, Doucette said Monday.

The majority of the PMC have voted to hold the assembly in Yorkton, against the wishes of Doucette and his three supporters on the council.

He said he still hopes to persuade the council to have the gathering in Saskatoon or Prince Albert, which are more centrally located and so more likely to attract Metis citizens to observe and participate in the annual general meeting which follows.

"I think it's important that more Metis people are involved in this than less," Doucette said.

"There has to be inclusion and

participation of our people at the MNLAs and the AGM.

They should be afforded the opportunity to participate and listen to their government in action."

Vice-president Gerald Morin said the meetings should be moved around to show the MNS represents people from all over the province.

He isn't concerned about the extra three and a half hours from Saskatoon to Yorkton that will be added onto northerners' travel, he said.

"The cost issue is not a big factor."

Travel costs to the assembly are covered for about 140 local presidents, the provincial council and representatives of women and youth, but non-elected Metis must pay their own way if they want to watch elected leaders or participate in amendments to the constitution, Doucette said.

The federal department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has provided \$200,000 for Ernst and Young as expert advisers to back up and protect the Metis citizenship registry, and to pay for three meetings of the council.

"Departmental officials are working closely with leadership of the Métis Nation — Saskatchewan to support the organization as it works to resolve its internal gov-

ernance issues, as well as to foster conditions for a strong nation-to-nation relationship between Canada and the Métis Nation," INAC spokesperson Michelle Perron said in an email.

Doucette also concerned that the council's appointment in February of Mavis Taylor as CEO and clerk of the assembly puts her in a conflict of interest because she is the president of the Glaslyn local and is on the board of the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Doucette, who won strong majorities in two elections, has said he will not run again.

Morin said he doesn't know if he will run again.

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