



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 28th Legislature  
First Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Alberta's Economic Future

Monday, November 25, 2013  
6:19 p.m.

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The 28th Legislature  
First Session**

**Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future**

Amery, Moe, Calgary-East (PC), Chair  
Fox, Rodney M., Lacombe-Ponoka (W), Deputy Chair  
  
Bhardwaj, Naresh, Edmonton-Ellerslie (PC)  
Cao, Wayne, Calgary-Fort, (PC)  
Donovan, Ian, Little Bow (W)  
Dorward, David C., Edmonton-Gold Bar (PC)  
Eggen, David, Edmonton-Calder (ND)  
Hehr, Kent, Calgary-Buffalo (AL)  
Johnson, Linda, Calgary-Glenmore (PC)\*  
Luan, Jason, Calgary-Hawkwood (PC)  
McDonald, Everett, Grande Prairie-Smoky (PC)  
Olesen, Cathy, Sherwood Park (PC)  
Pastoor, Bridget Brennan, Lethbridge-East (PC)  
Quadri, Sohail, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC)  
Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont (PC)  
Rowe, Bruce, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (W)  
Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC)  
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)  
Xiao, David H., Edmonton-McClung (PC)

\* substitution for David Dorward

**Also in Attendance**

DeLong, Alana, Calgary-Bow (PC)

**Support Staff**

W.J. David McNeil	Clerk
Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Law Clerk/Director of Interparliamentary Relations
Shannon Dean	Senior Parliamentary Counsel/ Director of House Services
Philip Massolin	Manager of Research Services
Stephanie LeBlanc	Legal Research Officer
Sarah Leonard	Legal Research Officer
Nancy Zhang	Legislative Research Officer
Nancy Robert	Research Officer
Corinne Dacyshyn	Committee Clerk
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Christopher Tyrell	Committee Clerk
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Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Janet Schwegel	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

6:19 p.m.

Monday, November 25, 2013

[Mr. Amery in the chair]

**The Chair:** Well, good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome back. First of all, I'd like to welcome all the members and the staff in attendance at today's meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future.

I would like to call this meeting to order at this time, and I would like to ask those members and those joining the committee at the table to introduce themselves for the record. Members who are sitting in as substitutes for committee members, please indicate this in your introduction.

I will start with myself. Moe Amery, MLA, Calgary-East, and chair of this committee.

**Mr. Fox:** Rod Fox, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka, vice-chair of this committee.

**Mr. Hehr:** Kent Hehr, MLA, Calgary-Buffalo.

**Mr. Rogers:** George Rogers, MLA, Leduc-Beaumont.

**Mr. Donovan:** Ian Donovan, MLA, Little Bow riding.

**Mr. Strankman:** Rick Strankman, MLA, Drumheller-Stettler.

**Mr. Quadri:** Sohail Quadri, Edmonton-Mill Woods.

**Ms L. Johnson:** Linda Johnson, MLA for Calgary-Glenmore, and I'm the substitute for Mr. Dorward, MLA, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Mr. Eggen:** Dave Eggen, MLA for Edmonton-Calder.

**Mr. Luan:** Good evening. Jason Luan, MLA, Calgary-Hawkwood.

**Ms Olesen:** Good evening. Cathy Olesen, MLA, Sherwood Park.

**Mr. Xiao:** David Xiao, Edmonton-McClung.

**Ms Pastoor:** Bridget Pastoor, Lethbridge-East.

**Mr. McDonald:** Everett McDonald, Grande Prairie-Smoky.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Naresh Bhardwaj, Edmonton-Ellerslie.

**Mr. Cao:** Wayne Cao, Calgary-Fort.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Good evening. Janice Sarich, MLA, Edmonton-Decore.

**Ms DeLong:** Alana DeLong, Calgary-Bow.

**Ms Robert:** Good evening. Nancy Robert, research services.

**Dr. Massolin:** Good evening. Philip Massolin, manager of research services.

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** Well, thank you, all.

Ladies and gentlemen, the meeting agenda and minutes were posted to the internal committee website on Friday.

A few housekeeping items to address before we turn to the business at hand. Please be advised that the microphone consoles are operated by the *Hansard* staff. Please keep all cellphones, iPhones, BlackBerrys off the table as they may interfere with the audiofeed. Audio of committee proceedings is streamed live on

the Internet and recorded by *Hansard*. Audio access and meeting transcripts are obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

Now, I trust that you all have seen the agenda. I would like a motion to approve the agenda. Moved by Mr. Xiao. All in favour? Any opposed? Carried.

Now we need a second motion, to approve the minutes of April 24, 2013. Are there any errors or omissions to note?

**Mrs. Sarich:** So moved. You're asking for a mover?

**The Chair:** For a motion to approve, yeah. Mrs. Sarich. All in favour? Opposed? Carried. Great.

Now we move to item 4 on the agenda, and that's committee priorities. The working group met to consider issues that could be reviewed by the committee within the parameters of its mandate. Once an issue was identified, Dr. Massolin and committee research services were directed to draft a motion, which was distributed to the working group for its review. The working group is recommending that the issue of high-speed rail transit between Edmonton and Calgary be brought to the committee for its consideration. The draft motion was posted to the internal website.

I would ask if a member of this committee would move the motion.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** I will. Thank you very much. I move that given the rapid and continual growth in the population of Alberta, in the interest of maximizing the economic impact of that population growth, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study of the feasibility of establishing a high-speed rail transit system between the cities of Edmonton and Calgary.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Bhardwaj.

I will open the floor for discussion. Ms Pastoor.

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point in time I'd like to amend this motion if I might. I'll read my thoughts. I move that the committee change the suggested draft motion to remove the following wording, "between the cities of Edmonton and Calgary," and replace those words with "to be built for Alberta in phases."

The motion would now read that

given the rapid and continual growth in the population of Alberta, in the interest of maximizing the economic impact of that population growth, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study of the feasibility of establishing a high-speed rail transit system to be built for Alberta in phases.

**The Chair:** Great. Having heard the amendment to the motion presented by Ms Pastoor, any discussion on the amendment? Mr. Xiao.

6:25

**Mr. Xiao:** Yeah. Mr. Chair, I'd like to support this motion.

**The Chair:** The motion or the amendment?

**Mr. Xiao:** This amendment. I strongly feel that it's necessary for us to have a long-term plan, you know, for the high-speed rail transportation system. Personally, I really believe that someday, sooner or later, we're going to have a high-speed rail which can connect not only Calgary and Edmonton but, I hope, all the way from Lethbridge to Fort McMurray. I think that would change the way we do business completely. It does make absolute sense to plan from stage to stage instead of just saying that we'll only build the high-speed rail between Calgary and Edmonton.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Xiao.  
Mrs. Sarich.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I support the amendment. I think it's quite interesting that if we keep the amendment as suggested by the committee member, then, for example, if another committee member or the committee itself feels that phase 1 should be Edmonton to Calgary or a different location of phases throughout the province, it gives you the ability to narrow that scope at another point in time as the committee wishes to explore this broader issue. There could be other components that the committee would be interested in, so this is the value of keeping the amendment by the hon. colleague very broad. It would be helpful in further dialogue and debate as to what should be actually studied for the purposes of the feasibility of this particular issue.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Sarich.  
Mr. Rogers.

**Mr. Rogers:** Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to speak in favour of the amendment. Following on Mrs. Sarich's points, I think that quite often people in the rest of the province tend to think that some of the decisions that we make are in a frame of mind that suggests that the world of Alberta exists between Edmonton and Calgary. I think that changing the motion as suggested would offer some buy-in for the rest of the province to realize that this is something we're looking at as the years go by. This could take 30, 40 years to build, but if anybody has travelled to places like Germany and other parts of Europe, you know that rail travel is really very efficient and very effective for moving people and goods. A lot of goods also move by rail.

I'm very supportive of this.

**The Chair:** Great. Thank you.  
Any others? Mr. Cao.

**Mr. Cao:** Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go along with the amendment. The only thing is that I'd like to just express my view that sometimes we have: why do we need to do things? I agree that we should have a high-speed rail catering to the transportation of goods and services and people, with the population increasing. That's why. Also, what to do? That is to build a high-speed rail. The how to do it: I think that if we go too much into detail on how to do it, then we proscribe the different options. I'd just give a little idea to maybe stay away from the how. That's for the technology and the people who do it. I just wanted to voice my view on that.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Cao.

Any other discussion on the amendment to the motion? I'll call the question, then. All in favour? Any opposed? Carried.

Any discussion on the motion as amended?

If not, I will call the question on the motion as amended. All in favour? Opposed? Okay. Thank you.

I think we're moving right along here. Ladies and gentlemen, with the passage of this motion the committee has commenced its review and must table its finding no later than May 25, 2014, in accordance with Standing Order 52.07(4), which states that an inquiry must be concluded and the committee's report on the matter tabled in the Assembly no later than six months after commencing the inquiry.

Okay. Now we would like to review the schedule. In order for the committee to commence a review of this nature, I would

suggest that we consider how this review should proceed. Does the committee wish to receive presentations from select groups at the outset based on their expertise in this matter, i.e. the Ministry of Transportation? Does the committee want to hold public hearings in this respect? If so, I would suggest maybe the locations could be Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary.

Let's have a discussion. Mrs. Sarich.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the schedule that you're trying to propose, wouldn't that depend on what we identify as what exactly we would like to take a specific examination of relative to the motion that we just passed? For example, if there was interest by the committee to take a look at the identification of stakeholders, which is under (c), and there was a determination that the stakeholders – let's say that there happen to be some in Calgary, as an example. Then we would explore the economics of convening here or the implication of going to Calgary. You know what I'm getting at?

It's a little bit hard to say where specifically we might meet, but maybe we're trying to respond by keeping it broad and open and saying that if the need arises, this committee would have the flexibility to convene meetings outside of Edmonton, wherever that may be, within the province of Alberta. Maybe with the identification of a stakeholder there could be broad or narrow interest by stakeholders to provide us with information, depending on where they come from. I don't know if you want me to go into any other detail, but I'm just trying to help ensure that we have enough flexibility.

**The Chair:** Let me hear from Mr. Rogers first, and then we'll come back to you.

**Mr. Rogers:** Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would take a little different path than Mrs. Sarich. I think that with the idea of going to locations, be they wherever – Edmonton, Calgary, Fort Mac, Lethbridge as a potential – having a meeting out there somewhere, we will hear from stakeholders. We will hear from academics, businesspeople, proponents, potential proponents. But I think that for the opportunity to hear from Joe Public, the average Joe Citizen who might be interested in this topic, we would need to go somewhere to meet them. The idea to expect, for example, that people from Lethbridge would come all the way to this room to have a meeting: I think that establishing some locations, at least – I don't know – a few anyway, would give the average citizen the opportunity, if they're interested, to come to a room at the Sheraton in Red Deer or Calgary or somewhere to give us their thoughts. That's the piece where I would see the benefit of going out somewhere.

**The Chair:** Yes, Mrs. Sarich.

6:35

**Mrs. Sarich:** Thank you. I appreciate that further insight by the hon. colleague, and I would agree on establishing but with the flexibility to expand as necessary. You're quite right. There could be some interest by the public in another location that may fall outside of that, and I would like to assure Albertans that we have that flexibility to travel where necessary, so we'd take the committee's business to the community.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** What I've stated here between Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary were just suggestions. I mean, we can say Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge, you know.

But we'll carry on with the discussion here. Ms Pastoor.

**Ms Pastoor:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I might be pushing this a little bit too fast, but there are some pretty good – and I'm not sure how in-depth they are in terms of science – surveys out there that say that actually three-quarters of Albertans are behind having high-speed rail. Now, whether that was just people that were asked between Calgary and Edmonton, I don't know. But I suspect that anybody who has ever been to Europe would value high-speed rail, especially knowing what our population is going to be like within 10 years, never mind within 20.

Again, sort of jumping right to the top, I'd like to invite three companies that actually have expertise in this. Now, SNC Lavalin has a great deal of expertise, but they basically are LRT. They're not high-speed rail, which is a little bit different.

**The Chair:** I think you're jumping the gun a little bit. This is the next item for discussion, okay?

**Ms Pastoor:** Okay.

**The Chair:** The stakeholders.

**Ms Pastoor:** Oh. Well, I didn't consider them stakeholders. I consider them, "Let's get the thing moving," and they can make it move.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. McDonald.

**Mr. McDonald:** Thank you, Chair. I guess my thoughts were along the line of the member from the south. I think we need to put some cost to some of this before we go too far. I mean, it's interesting to meet with the people, but the people also need to know what the liability is as part of the package. I think we're going to find a lot of support with their stakeholders, but when we follow up later with the cost, it needs to be relevant at the same time, I think. Just a comment.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Hehr:** To be fair, I always appreciate the opportunity to get out and talk to the public. With that being said and with what Ms Pastoor referenced, I think there are countless surveys, going back a long time, where there's been very consistent support by Albertans for a bullet train. So for us going there, having a meeting and saying, "Oh, yeah; we want a bullet train; it'll add so much to our GDP; it'll be great; you know, it'll be puppy dogs and lollipops all over this province," it may be a good exercise in PR. But whether it's actually concrete and fulsome and we're actually getting understanding of a quality report to take to the Alberta people, then should the government of the day wish to go down this path, they can use it as an opportunity to hear feedback on it.

I don't necessarily see the need for having public consultations on this. I think our committee has to come to an assessment more on its viability, the costs, and what kind of government muscle it's going to take to do this, what type of private industry support is going to handle it, and in a three-month period we're going to have enough of a challenge doing that, considering we're broadening this out to the whole province instead of just the Calgary-to-Edmonton line. In my view, it would be jumping the gun to go on a PR tour of the province with this committee although it would be of some marginal value.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. Cao.

**Mr. Cao:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I go along with the Member for Calgary-Buffalo in terms of why we need it and so on. I think there's enough demand and surveys and data out there, but the

consultation probably is not about that. It's about how it would be funded and what kind of things we may touch on on those subjects as well. It's not just about the why but the what and the how to do it. I think citizens probably need to be convinced of it if the government proposes something about financing, how it will be built, and so on. I see the benefit of consultation in that aspect.

**The Chair:** Yeah, Ms Johnson.

**Ms L. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to disagree with some people in the room and say that it's important to consult about how serious the demand is. It's a great project to talk about, but the reality of the land that's going to be needed, the impact on other projects in the province is pretty serious, so an opportunity for Albertans to advise us on their view of the potential project is important to have on the record.

Now, whether we have to go to every potential town – we've just done a whole bunch of consultation on another committee with people calling in and visiting us here, so it's a combination. But the venue has to be given to Albertans to discuss the project.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms DeLong.

**Ms DeLong:** Well, thank you very much. This is something I've been interested in for a while. The last time it was looked at, we actually had to look at what was available at either end of this train. Where high-speed rail tends to work is where you've got a really good public transport system at either end, and whether or not we're to that state yet with our cities is something that we've got to look at. In a way, yes, we do have to look at the various cities there.

I guess the other point that I wanted to bring up was that with the New West Partnership essentially we should be opening it up. In other words, it isn't just Alberta companies though we have some fantastic companies. SNC Lavalin is very strong here in Alberta. Even though we do have some fantastic companies here, it is something that we'd have to essentially open our eyes to the world on in terms of solutions.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your comments.

I think, as Mr. Hehr has already said, we have had reviews, and we have had studies, and what I would like to suggest, before we get this review under way, is to invite the Ministry of Transportation to attend our next meeting. Following a presentation from the ministry the committee could be in a better position to direct the committee research staff on further research requirements. Are we in agreement? Excellent.

**Mr. Rogers:** If I may, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Rogers:** Do we have to formally ask the ministry to come here? Is that just something that you can undertake, or is it required that the committee would pass a motion to ask the ministry to come?

**The Chair:** Yeah, we can make the request. We will undertake to make the request. We don't have to make a motion to ask them to come here and make a presentation to us.

Ms Pastoor.

**Ms Pastoor:** Yes. Thank you. Perhaps the Member for Calgary-Buffalo can help me. I know that I've sat through two presen-

tations of companies that have more than put their toe in the water. They've got some really good statistics.

Back to the Member for Calgary-Bow: part of the process was that, in fact, the train would hook up to the airports and then into the city. There's a lot of work that's been done on the ground by people who have put money into the research. It's not just – what am I looking for? – studies that have been put on a shelf. These guys have put big money into, partly, producing these presentations, so I know that we would probably like to hear from them. I can't remember the names.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm sure Dr. Phil will give us some names.

Jason and then Naresh.

6:45

**Mr. Luan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I want to thank the committee members and the working group who picked up this subject. It gets my wholehearted support and my enthusiasm.

I just want to recommend that the chair consider, when you request that the Minister of Transportation comes, perhaps we can be specifically asking . . .

**The Chair:** I didn't say the minister. I said somebody from the ministry.

**Mr. Luan:** Okay. All right. Why not the minister?

The point I was trying to make is that it's delightful to hear that we all not only want to support the developmental phase for Calgary and Edmonton, because of the obvious reason that the population of 2 million definitely supports that demand there, but doing it in light of province-wide developments. The questions to the Ministry of Transportation must attach somehow to that to say: in light of this idea what can you provide the committee with for (a) background information and (b) what the overall strategic transportation plan is for the province and how this high-speed railway between the two corridors will enhance that.

At the end of the day, it is about timely development of infrastructure to support economic development. I must emphasize that: timely. When I hear some folks already mention that this is a 30-year project, by my count that's too late. The economic lag and the infrastructure go hand in hand. If you miss that ball, you won't get it.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Luan.

Mr. Bhardwaj, and then we'll go to Dr. Phil.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I'll be very brief. I think there was a feasibility study done on this a few years ago, to my recollection. When you're inviting the ministry, perhaps you can ask them about any previous research study and to please bring the results along as opposed to starting from scratch.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Good. Now I'd like to invite Dr. Phil to talk about the identification of the stakeholders.

**Dr. Massolin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under item (c) there on your agenda. For past committee reviews for this committee and the other two legislative policy committees research services has aided the committee in preparing a stakeholders list. We were available to do likewise this time around. I guess we could certainly put the base list together, of course. It's a draft stakeholder list. Past practice has sort of indicated that because this list is the committee's list, the committee has input, perhaps

through the working group, as has been past practice. So we can certainly aid the committee in that regard.

Then the other question, I suppose, that the committee needs to deal with or grapple with is what kind of presentations it would like under this. Would it like to receive written submissions, oral presentations, or both? What is the nature of that as well?

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you. It's before the next meeting, right?

**Dr. Massolin:** Mr. Chair, I can help you. We can certainly put together a draft list prior to the next meeting for the committee's approval at that meeting.

**The Chair:** Exactly. That's what I meant. Okay.

Also, members of different caucuses can utilize their caucus research capabilities and submit any suggestions for additions to the list to the chair for review by the working group prior to consideration by the committee.

Mr. Rogers.

**Mr. Rogers:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This may be early, but at some point I would suggest that on our first contact with the stakeholders or some of the stakeholders or however we do that, I think it would be prudent to advise them that we would invite them to provide written submissions, and then the committee may at a later date ask some of those individuals to come and make actual presentations.

My thinking is that we don't give every stakeholder the idea that they will have an opportunity to come before this committee. I doubt very much that we'd be able to handle them all, but I think that once we've received a certain number of submissions and we've done a little bit with our staff, some fleshing out of what has been suggested, at some point there may be some of those groups that we may want to have at the end of the table here to explore the idea some more.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mrs. Sarich.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe it would be very valuable to have research prepare a list and certainly if there's more feedback as to what would be added through the chair.

Another consideration to help move this forward. Simply asking, for example, Bombardier or the Van Horne Institute or any of the stakeholders to come before the committee: we need to identify – and maybe we'll have time at the next meeting – what exactly we would like them to put down on a piece of paper or, in the future, make a presentation about here. So it's not just information. Some of the standing committee members already had touched upon, for example, costs, population to support that. There are some natural things that would be identified through a letter from the chair and the deputy chair, but I think we need to go back and take a bit of time to think through all of the parts that we're interested as a standing committee in asking the stakeholders to prepare information on. What would we value? I think Dr. Massolin started a little bit, you know. There's some groundwork, thinking thoughts about that, but I'll leave it at that.

**Dr. Massolin:** Well, Mr. Chair, a possibility might be for the committee, perhaps the working group, to structure panels around certain themes – obviously, the economic market analysis would be a theme; the land issue might be another theme – and then invite presenters according to those themes. That might be a way in which to dissect, digest this information in order for the

committee to receive it in the best way possible. We could certainly assist in that.

Another thing is that we can do research to identify issues generally and group those and help the committee that way.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Based on the suggestions, I think we need a motion. This motion that I was going to read into the record hasn't been posted, right?

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** It was not posted.

**The Chair:** It was not posted. That the committee research services complete a draft stakeholders list identifying organizations with expertise in or potentially affected by possible high-speed rail transit within Alberta . . .

Actually, it was between Edmonton and Calgary.

. . . and submit the draft list to the chair and that committee members also submit their recommendations for stakeholders to the chair to be included on the list . . .

By November 29? I'm not too comfortable with this date here. I mean, we're at the 25th today, right? How about December 6? Wouldn't that be better?

. . . by December 6, 2013, for review by the working group of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future and submission to the committee for its approval.

Can I have somebody move this? Mrs. Sarich.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Yes. Can I speak to that or just ask a question?

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Well, so moved. Your working group is going to work with research to identify some of those themes or panels of information, and that will come back at the next meeting, so we'll be able to have a look at that. I think it's going to take a little bit. Everybody needs some time to kind of figure out what would be very important so that if you're going to ask a stakeholder to come or write in, it is very clear what we're looking for. There could be different stakeholders. Like on the land assembly, it may not necessarily be a stakeholder of the actual hard goods, which would be the actual train itself.

6:55

**The Chair:** Okay. Any further discussion?

I'll call the question. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

I think we have discussed a little bit here the options that we have available to us, whether we want written presentations or oral presentations or both. Any discussion on that?

**Mrs. Sarich:** Just based on some experience on other standing committees, it's nice to narrow in, but if you have it a bit more broad or optional – another member of this committee suggested that, you know, if the committee wanted somebody to come here and present in addition to their written submission, the committee would have the flexibility to make that determination. Certainly, in writing back to our committee, if there should be an interest by a stakeholder or a group on this very topic, we should be able to have some dialogue around that because there might be some appropriateness for that, but if we are inundated in a large capacity, you know, that falls beyond the means of this standing committee, then we should have the flexibility to discern that as well.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Hehr:** I actually enjoyed the process that we undertook on the hydroelectric dams, where we had both written and then some really expert organizations and individuals associated with getting those dams up and running and the economics behind them. I see no reason why we couldn't have the capacity to do that here and hear from some of the industry groups that have already proposed high-speed rail in some form or fashion. If there is a compelling written submission by a newer entity or organization, we could also have the flexibility to do that.

So I'd try to model it almost like the same process we had on the hydroelectric dams. I thought that worked very well. It's a model that worked for me, possibly scheduling a day where we have a bunch of presenters in here like we did on that front. I thought that was excellent.

**Dr. Massolin:** Just to clarify, I believe that that committee, the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship, only had oral presentations, and they kind of did them by panels. I don't think there were any written ones except for the ones that they handed in at the time of the presentation. I believe that was the process.

**The Chair:** Okay. So we need a motion. Would someone make the following motion, that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future authorize the chair in consultation with working group members to prepare a schedule of presenters and time frames to submit to the committee for review.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** So moved.

**The Chair:** Mr. Bhardwaj.

Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Now I will ask Dr. Massolin to address the research that can be completed to assist the committee in its review.

**Dr. Massolin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, just as I mentioned, I think we'll certainly aid in the preparation of that stakeholders list, but I also think that we can assist the committee in identifying the broad range of issues that are associated with high-speed rail. We can put together an overview research document on that if the committee wishes and present that at a future meeting so that the committee can get a sense of what's out there. Of course, we're available for other research tasks as the committee desires.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any questions for Dr. Phil?

**Mr. Cao:** I think it's great that we have research help. I just wanted to add that I came here from California, and a few years ago there was big talk about connecting San Francisco with L.A. through a bullet train. So they had a study. They had a problem, an issue, and they haven't got it done yet. Anyway, there's a lot of information that we can learn from their experience.

That's all I had to say. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Ms Pastoor:** I guess I'd just like to maybe leave a small comment. If there's a will, there's a way. There's more than one way to skin a cat. We need high-speed rail in this province to move it forward. The question is: how are we going to do it?

**The Chair:** Great.

Any other discussion, ladies and gentlemen? I think Dr. Phil has a comment to make.

**Dr. Massolin:** Well, I just wanted to confirm that the committee wanted that issues document. I saw heads nodding, so I assume that that's a yes.

**The Chair:** I think from what I have gathered that it is a yes.

**Dr. Massolin:** Okay. That's all I want to know. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now the date of the next meeting. We are suggesting next Tuesday, December 3 – could you check your calendars, please? – to receive some briefing from the Ministry of Transportation.

**Mr. Rogers:** Would it be a supper meeting again like this time?

**The Chair:** Around this time, from 6:15 to 7:15. That's strictly to receive a briefing from the Ministry of Transportation. Are we okay with that date?

So that is the date. It's December 3, 6:15 to 7:15.  
Anything else for discussion?

**Mr. Xiao:** No more shepherd's pie.

**The Chair:** That's right. I will talk to her about that.

Okay. If there's no other discussion, I need a motion to adjourn.  
Mr. Rogers.

Thank you very much. The meeting is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 7:03 p.m.]





