



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Alberta's Economic Future

Wednesday, June 26, 2019
6:15 p.m.

Transcript No. 30-1-1

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 30th Legislature
First Session**

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

van Dijken, Glenn, Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock (UCP), Chair
Gochring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP), Deputy Chair

Allard, Tracy L., Grande Prairie (UCP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Bilous, Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South (NDP)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Horner, Nate S., Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)
Issik, Whitney, Calgary-Glenmore (UCP)
Jones, Matt, Calgary-South East (UCP)
Reid, Roger W., Livingstone-Macleod (UCP)
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)*
Rowswell, Garth, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UCP)
Stephan, Jason, Red Deer-South (UCP)
Toor, Devinder, Calgary-Falconridge (UCP)

* substitution for Lorne Dach

Support Staff

Shannon Dean	Clerk
Stephanie LeBlanc	Acting Law Clerk
Trafton Koenig	Parliamentary Counsel
Philip Massolin	Manager of Research and Committee Services
Sarah Amato	Research Officer
Nancy Robert	Research Officer
Michael Kulicki	Committee Clerk
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Aaron Roth	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications
Jeanette Dotimas	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Janet Schwegel	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

6:15 p.m.

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

[Mr. van Dijken in the chair]

The Chair: Okay. I think we will call this meeting to order. I want to thank you all for attending. Welcome to members and staff in attendance for the orientation meeting of the 30th Legislature Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future.

My name is Glenn van Dijken. I'm the MLA for Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock and chair of this committee. I'd ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, starting to my right with the deputy chair.

Ms Goehring: Good evening. I'm Nicole Goehring, the MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs.

Mrs. Allard: Good evening. Tracy Allard, MLA for Grande Prairie.

Mr. Reid: Good evening. Roger Reid, MLA for Livingstone-Macleod.

Mr. Barnes: Drew Barnes, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Mr. Horner: Nate Horner, MLA, Drumheller-Stettler.

Ms Issik: Whitney Issik, MLA, Calgary-Glenmore.

Mr. Jones: Matt Jones, MLA, Calgary-South East.

Mr. Stephan: Jason Stephan, MLA, Red Deer-South.

Mr. Rowswell: Garth Rowswell, MLA, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

Ms Renaud: Marie Renaud, St. Albert. I'm substituting for Lorne Dach.

Mr. Dang: Good evening. Thomas Dang, Edmonton-South.

Ms Gray: Hello. Christina Gray, Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Ms Sorensen: Good evening. Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications at the LAO.

Mr. Koenig: Good evening. I'm Trafton Koenig with the Parliamentary Counsel office.

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

Mr. Roth: Good evening. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.

The Chair: I would like to note for the record the following substitution: Ms Renaud for Mr. Dach.

A few housekeeping items to address before we turn to the business at hand. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard*. Committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. I would ask that all members please set their cellphones or other devices to silent for the duration of this meeting.

We have a proposed agenda in front of you. Any additions to that agenda? If not, a motion to approve the agenda would be in order.

Mrs. Allard: So moved.

The Chair: Moved by MLA Allard that the agenda for the June 26, 2019, meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future be adopted as distributed. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you.

Item 3, committee orientation. As indicated by the agenda, the purpose of our meeting today is to provide committee members with a brief orientation regarding the mandate and the role of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future and to appoint a subcommittee on committee business as required under the standing orders.

First, we have to address the possibility of members participating in committee meetings by teleconference when they are not able to attend in person. Section 6 of the Legislative Assembly Act permits participation in a committee by means of telephone or other communication facilities that permit all members participating in a meeting to hear each other if all members of the committee consent. The committee rooms are equipped to facilitate meeting participation by telephone. This committee may wish to pass a motion, which needs to be passed unanimously, to approve meeting attendance by telephone for the duration of a Legislature or for the duration of a session.

With this in mind, I would note that a motion to approve teleconference attendance for the duration of a Legislature does not preclude the committee from determining that in-person attendance at specific meetings may be required. In those cases, a motion would be considered at the end of a particular meeting requesting the attendance in person of all members at a subsequent meeting.

At this time I would suggest that we entertain a motion to permit participation via teleconference for the duration of the 30th Legislature.

Ms Issik: So moved.

The Chair: Moved by Member Issik that

for the duration of the 30th Legislature the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future permit committee members to participate by teleconference, subject to the proviso that the committee may require members' attendance at a particular meeting upon passage at a previous meeting of a motion to that effect.

Any questions or comments?

Seeing none, I'll call the question on the motion. All those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Thank you.

That motion is carried unanimously.

We move on to item 3(b), temporary substitutions. Standing Order 56(2.1) and (2.4) outline the process for substitution of chairs, deputy chairs, and committee members. For convenience, templates are available on OurHouse for members to use when providing notice of a temporary substitution both for an e-mail communication or for a written notice. Please note that it is the responsibility of the original committee member to ensure that a substituting member is prepared for the meeting and has been provided with all necessary briefing materials. If you have any questions about the substitution process, please feel free to follow up with the committee clerk.

In addition to official substitutes, Members of the Legislative Assembly who are not committee members or official substitutes may also attend and participate in committee meetings. However, they may not vote or move motions. Any questions on that agenda item?

Then we will move on to item 3(c), committee support and administrative matters. Joining us today are staff from the Legislative Assembly Office, who are on hand to provide nonpartisan support to us at all of our committee meetings. Joining us at the table today to my left is the committee clerk assigned to this committee, Aaron Roth. He is here to provide procedural, administrative, and general assistance as required. He is also the first point of contact for this committee for any inquiries from members, staff, and the public.

Next to him is Dr. Philip Massolin, manager of research and committee services. He oversees committee operations and attends meetings to receive research assignments from the committee and co-ordinate the work of the research team to ensure completion of research requests. Next to Dr. Massolin is Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel. Trafton is available to provide legal and procedural assistance to the committee as required. Finally, next to him is Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications. Rhonda and her staff are available when needed to provide communications expertise to the committee. Any questions?

Seeing none, we'll move on to item 3(d), committee mandate. As this is our first meeting, I would like to provide you with an overview of the committee's mandate and processes. The Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future is one of three legislative policy committees, often referred to as LPCs. Its mandate relates to the areas of advanced education; culture, multiculturalism, and status of women; economic development, trade, and tourism; labour and immigration; and infrastructure.

The committee may meet to review a bill or to consider an issue referred to it by the Assembly and can also meet on its own initiative to consider issues within its mandate. The annual reports of government departments, provincial agencies, boards, and commissions are referred to the LPCs, and these committees may also review regulations and hold public meetings. In addition, every year, when the time comes, we will be actively involved in the consideration of the main estimates. Any questions with regard to the mandate?

Seeing none, we'll move on to item 3(e), relevant standing orders. As this is a committee of the Legislative Assembly, we are governed by the procedures and practices of the Assembly, including the standing orders where applicable. However, within these limits we are able to determine our own practices and adjust them as needed to take on various tasks. As outlined in the standing orders, primarily in chapter 5, legislative policy committees may take on a number of initiatives or be assigned tasks by the Assembly. In the past legislative policy committees have often been directed to review a bill after first or second reading or deemed by the Assembly to be a special committee for the purposes of a comprehensive statute review. Under Standing Order 52.03 the committee is able to conduct a review at its own initiative provided the committee is able to complete its work and report to the Assembly within six months. Any questions on this topic?

6:25

Seeing none, item 3(f), subcommittee on committee business. As committee members may recall, all legislative policy committees are required to establish a subcommittee on committee business. In this regard Standing Order 52.011(3) states:

At its first meeting of a new Legislature, every Legislative Policy Committee and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts shall appoint a Subcommittee on Committee Business to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair and to report to the committee on the business of the committee.

As indicated, the purpose of the subcommittee is to meet and report to the committee on matters of the committee's business, which would include making recommendations about timelines and review processes. Ultimately, however, the final decision on any of these matters rests with the committee itself. In most cases, unless otherwise directed by the committee, working groups and subcommittees meet in private with the support of the committee clerk, research and committee services, and Parliamentary Counsel. It is anticipated that this process will apply to the work of the subcommittee on committee business.

Do members have any questions about the establishment of this subcommittee? Member Dang.

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify, I guess. The subcommittee is an all-party committee: that is my understanding. Having chaired a subcommittee in the past, in the 29th Legislature, I know that as these things drag on – well, drag on is the wrong term; sorry. As these things meet over many years and much time, sometimes substitutions may be required. For clarification, I guess, then: is it acceptable that a member from this committee or another member could substitute on the subcommittee?

The Chair: I believe so. The standing order requires the chair and the deputy chair to be members of the subcommittee, and then also a third member is a committee member from the government caucus, so it can be substituted from time to time.

Go ahead, Aaron.

Mr. Roth: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The committee creates the subcommittee and can define the term of reference for the subcommittee, including substitutions. In other cases, like the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, already they have created such a subcommittee on committee business, and in that case they permit substitutions from the membership of the main committee.

Mr. Dang: I don't know if you have a motion prepared to that effect. I would move a motion that

we strike a subcommittee on committee business consisting of the chair, the deputy chair, and a member of the government, allowing substitutions for any of those members as well.

The Chair: Okay. That can work.

There is a draft motion available, Member Dang, and we can show it as drafted, and then we can add in how you would like to present an official motion.

Mr. Dang: I would move that motion.

The Chair: You move the motion? Okay. Yeah. That's clear enough for you?

Mr. Dang: Yes.

The Chair: Any other comments or concerns with the motion? Any discussion? Member Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Just around the scheduling of subcommittee meetings, I don't think we need to change the motion, but my request to you as chair would be to work with all subcommittee members to pick an amenable date.

The Chair: Yeah. Absolutely.

If no other questions or comments, then all those in favour of the motion? Any opposed?

That motion is carried.

Thank you.

That moves us to item 4, other business. Are there any other items or issues for discussion at this time?

Seeing none, the date of the next meeting. The next meeting will be at the call of the chair, working together with the subcommittee, of course.

At this point I believe our agenda – Member Gray?

Ms Gray: Similar to my comment regarding the subcommittee, my experience on committees involved the chair polling all committee

members so that you as the chair have the information about availability. Is that your intention going forward?

The Chair: Absolutely.

Ms Gray: Thank you.

The Chair: Yeah. We would identify a time frame that would be needed and then find dates that would work for as many as possible.

Ms Gray: I appreciate that. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Any other comments?

Mr. Dang: I would move that we adjourn.

The Chair: Perfect. A motion by Member Dang for the meeting to be adjourned. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 6:32 p.m.]

