



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on the
Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Monday, May 27, 2013
5 p.m.

Transcript No. 28-1-6

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First Session**

**Standing Committee on the
Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund**

Khan, Stephen, St. Albert (PC), Chair
Jablonski, Mary Anne, Red Deer-North (PC), Deputy Chair

Anderson, Rob, Airdrie (W)
Casey, Ron, Banff-Cochrane (PC)
Dorward, David C., Edmonton-Gold Bar (PC)
Eggen, David, Edmonton-Calder (ND)
Kubinec, Maureen, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (PC)
Sandhu, Peter, Edmonton-Manning (Ind)
Saskiw, Shayne, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W)*
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**Standing Committee on the
Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund**

Participants

Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance

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Lowell Epp, Executive Director, Capital Markets

Darcy Scott, Public Affairs Officer

Alberta Investment Management Corporation

Donald Olsen, Vice-president, Client Relations

5 p.m.

Monday, May 27, 2013

[Mr. Khan in the chair]

The Chair: We're going to call the meeting to order. Thank you, all, very much for joining us this evening for the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

I'm going to begin the meeting with introductions. My name is Stephen Khan, MLA for St. Albert, and I have the honour of chairing this committee. I'll begin on my right, and we can work our way around the table.

Mrs. Jablonski: Good evening, everyone. Mary Anne Jablonski, Red Deer-North.

Mr. Eggen: Hi. I'm David Eggen, MLA for Edmonton-Calder.

Mr. Dorward: David Dorward, MLA for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Scott: Darcy Scott, communications branch, Treasury Board and Finance.

Mr. Olsen: Don Olsen, with AIMCo.

Mr. Epp: Lowell Epp, Treasury Board and Finance.

Mr. Babineau: Rod Babineau, Treasury Board and Finance.

Mr. Saher: Merwan Saher, Auditor General.

Ms Dean: Shannon Dean, Senior Parliamentary Counsel and director of House services.

Ms Sorensen: Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications and broadcast services.

Ms Dotimas: Jeanette Dotimas, communications consultant, LAO.

Ms Sales: Tracey Sales, communications consultant, LAO, as well.

Ms Kubinec: Maureen Kubinec, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock MLA.

Mr. Casey: Ron Casey, Banff-Cochrane.

Mr. Saskiw: Welcome. Shayne Saskiw, MLA for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Corinne Dacyshyn, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you, all, very much for attending.

Just some housekeeping as we begin the meeting. I hope you have the materials which were posted to our internal committee website.

As everyone is a veteran of these meetings, you know that the microphone consoles are operated by the *Hansard* staff. Also, please keep your cellphones, iPhones, BlackBerrys off the table as these can interfere with our audiofeed. Audio of the committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and recorded by *Hansard*. Audio access and meeting transcripts can be obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

Just a few brief notes. I do want to thank everybody for joining us this evening. I believe I am the new guy on the committee. I know that almost everybody else has served on this committee in the past. It's very much an honour and a privilege to be here as the committee chair.

I do also want to take a moment to say that this is an exciting time, I think, particularly for this committee.

Oh, we have some attendees. Why don't we revert to introductions.

Dr. Sherman: Raj Sherman, Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Mr. Sandhu: Good evening. Peter Sandhu, Edmonton-Manning.

The Chair: We should also note at this time as well that Mr. Saskiw is a substitute for Mr. Anderson. Thank you for sharing your evening with us, Mr. Saskiw.

As I was saying, if I may, with some of the new legislation introduced with Budget 2013, particularly as to how the province is moving forward with savings as it relates to the Alberta heritage savings trust fund as well as some of our other savings vehicles, this is an exciting time to be a part of this committee. On a personal note, I look at this work as the work of moving forward. It's purposeful work in terms of our children and our grandchildren and some of the opportunities that they will have that we've been blessed with in our role in government and as citizens of Alberta. Thank you very much for your work in the past, and I'm excited to work with you as we're moving forward.

As we move forward, I would like to seek approval of the agenda, the draft agenda. I'm looking for somebody. Maureen Kubinec.

Ms Kubinec: I will make that motion.

The Chair: Thank you. That motion would be that the agenda for the May 27, 2013, meeting of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund be adopted as circulated. All in favour? That's passed. Thank you.

As well, we're looking for a motion for the adoption of the minutes. Do we have anybody who can review the minutes? Mr. Sandhu. Thank you very much. Moved by Mr. Sandhu that the minutes for the February 21, 2013, meeting of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund be adopted as circulated. All in favour? Opposed? Thank you.

As we're moving right along, we come to our draft communications plan, that has been circulated. I hope everybody has had an opportunity to review the draft communications plan. We did have a number of meetings to take a look at what we might tweak in terms of previous communications plans. The 2013 public meeting has been set for Wednesday, October 2, 2013, at 7 p.m. at the Oasis Centre in Edmonton, and in order to plan for the public meeting, a draft communications plan has been prepared by LAO communications with my input, as I mentioned, over a number of meetings with staff.

I would now like to call upon Tracey Sales and Jeanette Dotimas, communications consultants with the LAO, to review the draft communications plan and answer any questions that come from that review.

Ms Sales: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm pleased to introduce my colleague Jeanette Dotimas. She will be involved in all the communications for the public meeting this year, so the two of us will be providing all of your communications services.

As you know, over the past few years initiatives in support of the annual public meeting have focused primarily on expanding the reach of the public meeting. We did this first with the broadcast and then, of course, with the online initiatives. Having reached a broadcast audience of over 16,000 last year and significant online participation for two years running, we believe this goal was successfully achieved.

For 2013 we'd like to sort of switch focus a bit. We'd like to expand on these successes but also create new opportunities to educate the public and increase understanding of the fund. So the goal for our plan this year is to further Albertans' knowledge of the heritage fund by expanding upon initiatives in support of the public meeting to create educational opportunities. The strategies that we're recommending within the plan, that we'll sort of walk you through, include expanding social media initiatives to create educational opportunities, making the public meeting more engaging, targeting advertising to specific demographic groups, exploring free promotional opportunities, and expanding the reach province-wide with the broadcast and webcast chat, as in previous years.

I'll now turn things over to Jeanette to discuss the first two strategies.

Ms Dotimas: The LAO now has more of a social media presence compared to where we were at this time last year. We recommend that we build on the engagement we've built so far with Albertans and incorporate the social media mix into this year's public meeting as follows.

We're looking at expanding social media initiatives to create educational opportunities, as Tracey mentioned. We recommend that Twitter chat be included in this year's public meeting, which will have no direct cost to the committee. In addition to the live stream and online chat we recommend that in 2013 we initiate the online chat through Twitter. This will provide the public with yet another way to communicate with the committee and will make the chat more accessible to those who are using mobile devices.

We'd like to expand the online activities through Facebook as well, with no direct cost to the committee. Leading up to the public meeting, it is recommended that communications services post interesting tidbits and trivia about the fund and post straw polls to further educate and engage our online audiences. As an added value much of the content, especially the results of the polls, can be used for the public meeting itself during lulls or between questions to encourage those participating to further the discussion. All messaging will direct traffic to the committee website for more information, as always.

Other social media messaging which will also have no direct cost to the committee. As in the past committee members are welcome to like the LAO on Facebook or follow us on Twitter. In order to ensure a consistent message and to make it easier for those who'd like to share the message, we encourage members to share and retweet Assembly messaging about the heritage fund leading up to, during, and following the meeting.

5:10

The second strategy is to make the public meeting more engaging by producing an introductory video about the fund at a cost of \$2,500 to approximately \$4,000. We'd like to recommend that we produce a three- to five-minute video to present historical information about the fund in an entertaining and educational way that will also be more suited to the television and online viewing audience. This would be delivered in place of the historical information that was previously delivered through the committee as part of the PowerPoint presentations.

Lastly, we'd like to incorporate social media initiatives into the meeting. At no direct cost to the committee we'd like to incorporate into the meeting the results of our social media trivia and some of the straw polls, which will create a more dynamic

atmosphere and provide meaningful and fun and educational content to fill during the Q and A portion of the meeting.

Ms Sales: Moving on to strategy 3, we're going to recommend that this year we try targeting our advertising to specific demographic groups. While we know that the fund belongs to all Albertans – and we'll recommend general advertising as well – we do feel that it would be worth while to target some of our advertising to specific groups that we have noticed tend to show interest in the heritage fund. These groups tend to be the senior demographic, which, historically speaking, has perhaps the greatest connection to the fund. They tend to be socially conscious, and they tend to actually show up for our public meetings. We plan to reach this audience through advertising in the *Edmonton Senior* and the *Calgary Senior* as well as through some promotional posting of flyers and posters, things like that, to different seniors' groups and associations, seniors' centres, that sort of thing. The second initiative has no cost, and the seniors' newsletters are estimated at about a thousand dollars.

Moving on, the second demographic group would be postsecondary students. We feel that this particular group is very socially active, and because the fund is meant for future generations, this group, I think, has a vested interest in the future of the fund. We've also noticed, actually, in the past two years for sure, that student association bodies from various postsecondary institutions have actually participated in the public meetings, so we're thinking that maybe we should reach out to them specifically. We're talking about reaching out to the student associations through exploring advertising with online campus papers, looking into radio spots and PSAs with campus radio stations. Then, of course, we can target our online social media initiatives to postsecondary groups through our tweets and that sort of thing. The cost estimate for this initiative is about \$2,500.

Moving on, the other demographic that we're talking about is, for lack of a better word, the newshound demographic. One of the things that we noticed in reviewing the results from last year was that a substantial part of our audience that answered the online survey actually noted that they had heard about the public meeting through the media on a lot of the radio news shows. That was quite interesting to us, so we're actually suggesting that maybe we put some dollars into advertising with 630 CHED, CHQR, and iNews 880 as they were very helpful last year in letting people know about our public meeting and the fund. The estimated cost is about \$5,800.

Moving on to number 4, as with every year, of course, we'll try to explore all free promotional opportunities at our disposal. Together with the social media initiatives, which are free, we're recommending again, as I said, event posters. In the past we have provided event posters as well as stat cards to the constituency offices of all MLAs. We will again do this, but we will also expand on this by providing posters to seniors' centres as well as public libraries. Of course, we will seek out any media relations opportunities that could exist. We'll use the committee website.

Last year we added the new initiative of producing an e-card, which we sent to all members. That did seem to prove successful. There were some people who answered the online survey who did say that they found out about the meeting through their MLA. I don't have a specific reference to the e-card, but I think that having a personal invitation from an MLA has proven effective for many constituents, so we're recommending repeating that initiative.

Then, of course, we'll post the information to all the online calendars that are for free.

Moving on to 5, we are recommending that we again use the Shaw broadcast as well as the online webcast and chat initiative. It was successful, and it has expanded the reach of the committee quite a lot. Again it's going to be approximately \$6,000.

Moving on to 6, general advertising. We're looking at local newspaper advertising primarily to get people to the public meeting. It costs about \$12,000. Then we're looking at province-wide advertising as well simply to support the province-wide broadcast of the meeting as well as the online webcast. We're looking at \$24,000 for province-wide advertising.

Moving on to 7, as in previous years, of course, we have used the statistics card. It's been very effective in providing a tidbit of information on the fund to the public and a little bit of historical reference, updated stats, that sort of thing, so we're recommending doing that again at a cost of about \$2,000.

Then, of course, we will continue to measure results as in the past, so we will produce a print survey for any attendees of the public meeting and then an online survey as well that we can direct the public to.

Altogether we're looking at an estimated \$57,300 for the communications budget.

Are there any questions?

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms Sales and Ms Dotimas.

We will now open this up to the floor for discussion.

Mr. Dorward: I have a number of questions. The first one is on the introductory video on the fund. When would that be shown? Just at the Shaw meeting?

Ms Sales: Yes. It would be at the public meeting. It would sort of be a nice introductory message to the meeting, and then it would provide the historical information that previously was included in the PowerPoint by Finance.

Mr. Dorward: I like that idea. I wonder if we couldn't add to that or have a subset of it of about maybe one minute or something that we could tweet out – I don't know if that's practical – or a little subset of it that could be a little tickler to ask people to come. Then, of course, YouTube; video always does better. I wonder if we shouldn't release it early, release it before that night. These are just ideas I'm having to increase the exposure of it.

The second area is to maybe get it into the papers versus radio. You've got \$36,000 in the budget for papers, and radio is \$6,000 plus \$2,500 to the student campus radio stations and newsletters, give or take. You've got about 80 per cent of the money spent on newspapers. Now, if you have to spend that much money on the newspapers to touch all the newspapers, then I understand because we probably should touch all those newspapers, but if there are repeated insertions in those newspapers, I wonder if the radio is not more effective. You folks are the experts in that area, not me, but it just seemed to me that 80 per cent was a heavy weighting. I know that when my paper guy delivers my *Journal*, that I've had for 40 years, he gets in his car and drives away a long ways, but in my observation everybody pretty much turns on the radio when they get into their car. Just a thought there.

Mr. Chair, why don't we go back to you? Then I'll have more after if there's time.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Dorward.

Ms Sales, would you care to comment?

5:20

Ms Sales: I would. In previous years Shaw has actually assisted us with producing a short promo for the fund that they use on

television. I think your suggestion is a great idea, and I think that we can work with Shaw so that it's consistent, what we show online as well as what they're showing on TV. We can provide them with content now because we will have our own content.

Secondly, yes, what we've suggested for newspaper advertising is actually the bare minimum. We're talking about around a hundred weeklies across the province. Generally speaking, when we book them, what we will do is make sure that we've touched on one paper in each community. If there are multiple papers, we will go with the paper with the highest readership to ensure that we're not repeating ourselves and not adding cost. We will definitely do that.

Mr. Dorward: All right. I understand that. I do think that we should be touching all Albertans in that way, and the hundred are probably read much more than the urban newspapers, I'm guessing.

Yes, that's great if you can co-ordinate that with Shaw. I think we really should have a focus on driving people to the meeting, getting them to listen in or watch or stream in or come. With all this video stuff more can be done before hand to drive them to that date.

Thanks so much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorward.

I believe we also have some comments from Mrs. Jablonski.

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you. Good presentation. A couple of questions. The three- to five-minute video, that is going to be entertaining and educational, sounds like it's going to be a good thing. My question is: will it be made available for all MLAs to use when we go to visit people? I go to seniors' centres all the time, and I go to schools, and people are always asking about the heritage savings trust fund. Would I be able to access this in some way so I could show it to others after the meeting, during the whole year, for example?

Ms Sales: I guess that would be up to the committee to decide, but we can definitely ensure that we ask so that we can make it available to you in that way.

Mrs. Jablonski: Right. I don't know if that would be a DVD or a CD or if it would just be on YouTube. I don't know how that would . . .

Ms Sales: Or it could be permanently linked to the website of the committee as well, right?

Mrs. Jablonski: Okay. Those would be two good ways.

Then the total estimated cost is \$57,300.

Ms Sales: Yes.

Mrs. Jablonski: How does that compare to your budget from last year?

Ms Sales: It is higher than last year's. It is higher because we did include some additional advertising. The radio would be additional advertising as well as the targeting of the seniors' groups and the costs to do with targeting the postsecondary students as well.

Corinne, do you have the cost from last year handy?

Mrs. Dacshyn: The communications cost only for 2012 was \$35,550.

An Hon. Member: It's very close.

Mrs. Jablonski: No. It's very much higher. We're at \$57,000.

Ms Sales: Now, that's keeping in mind that there were a few things that did come in under budget last year because we did hold the public meeting in Edmonton. We do estimate high. But, yes, there are additional costs this year because of additional initiatives that we're suggesting. As our reach expands, we need to try to support that growing audience so that we can continue to grow our audience, and based on some of the feedback that we received through our online audience last year, there are different avenues that we would really like to try this year because we think that they would be successful in increasing our reach and, hopefully, our viewership as well as attendance numbers.

Mrs. Jablonski: I'm assuming that we can measure that so that at the end of it all we can find out whether this attempt to reach more people, which I think is a good idea – I'm just looking at the cost – was successful or not.

Ms Sales: Absolutely.

Mrs. Jablonski: Okay. Unlike Mr. Dorward, I think that newspaper advertising is a little more beneficial than radio advertising. I think that radio advertising is a moment in time, and once it airs, it's done, but a newspaper can hang around in a doctor's office or a dentist's office for a little while, and people can see it. I think they're both good ways of advertising.

Ms Sales: Well, we do find that there are so many different radio stations out there that in order to actually reach as many people as you could through newspapers, you really have to spend a lot. This is why we're suggesting newspapers for the rural communities.

Mrs. Jablonski: May I suggest that next year, when you bring this budget back for the following year when we have our public meeting, you show us the outcomes and the measurements so that we can compare and see if we were successful in the new way of advertising.

Ms Sales: Absolutely.

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you for that feedback, Mrs. Jablonski. Next on our list of speakers is Ms Kubinec.

Ms Kubinec: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the good presentation. I had some of the same questions, one being on what was spent last year. Also, just to comment on the video, I think it's a really good idea if we can have it ahead of time to get it up on our Facebooks and for our colleagues to get it on their Facebooks, to do that little bit of a teaser to get people to the meeting.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms Kubinec. Next on my speakers list is Mr. Eggen.

Mr. Eggen: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate your attempts to look for different ways to get more people to observe our proceedings. You know, I have to say, though, last year being my first time, that I really didn't feel, at least anecdotally, that we were reaching a lot of people. One suggestion that I thought of in the interim since last year was that we perhaps shorten that meeting on

television. I don't know if it's mandated by legislation as to how long we have to have it on for, but it seemed to drag on for quite a long time. People don't have these long attention spans necessarily. I think that if we concentrate the message that we have and if we can improve the quality of that program as well, that would help considerably.

Also, I think that it's a good idea to make prepared portions of the show. I mean, I think we sort of did, but, you know, it was almost as though we were just swooping in on a lecture with PowerPoint rather than using production values that are available on television, right? I like the idea of a video straight off as long as we are very careful to ensure that we keep it very politically neutral and that we have a sign-off with everybody. Last year we received scripts, and we weren't given enough time to deal with them, and they weren't, I don't think, entirely neutral, really, right? If we could make sure we just work on something that's informative. I mean, we have lots of experience through LAO videos and whatnot. I've participated in those before, too. Something short and punchy I think would help.

Then, finally – sorry to have so many things in one go here – I just don't know if spending more money is going to increase our exposure necessarily. I think we are compelled to advertise in circulated newspapers, especially in what are considered to be papers of record almost like a gazette – right? – where we're saying, "This is what we're doing; this is a government initiative," and so forth. But, you know, I think we can increase our profile through the Internet and through using social media and not necessarily through spending extra money on radio advertisements.

The Chair: If I can just speak to some of your comments, Mr. Eggen, and thank you very much.

Mr. Eggen: Sure.

The Chair: I would encourage anybody who's on the committee – I know you participated in the event last year, but it's very revealing to watch the video online and to sort of see what folks at home were seeing.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. I think, you know, that's just the way we view things. It's not a reflection of anyone's commitment to this thing.

Then, you know, further to that, just while I remember, if we can concentrate that and then advertise that we can have some time for people to speak afterwards or to have a mingling thing, I think that's a good idea, too, right?

5:30

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Eggen. Thanks for the foreshadowing. We're going to get to that. We have a motion to that effect.

As well as those folks, if you can have a look at that video, we're very open to any new ideas that might make our meeting more palatable in a televised setting, something that can perhaps create excitement rather than help people with insomnia.

To your other comment, Mr. Eggen, this year, rather than having MLA colleagues read those prepared scripts that were associated with the PowerPoint, factual information is going to be delivered by the public servants. Our video presentation is also going to speak to those areas that in the past were sort of read off script, which, again, didn't make for the most riveting television. We will be handling that issue that way.

Mr. Eggen: I thought my part was okay.

The Chair: Your part was outstanding. Your part was particularly outstanding.

We're moving back to Mr. Dorward.

Mr. Dorward: Can we just clarify the time of that broadcast? How long were we last year? Was it an hour and a half?

Ms Sales: It was from 7 to 9.

Mr. Dorward: Oh, my gracious.

Ms Sales: What we can do is that we can always publicize the start time and not put a finish time, and that gives you the opening to wrap up.

Mr. Dorward: Shaw would probably want to know, wouldn't they?

Ms Sales: Actually, they would just switch to planned programming. In past years we have actually ended early.

Mr. Dorward: Well, I would totally be in favour of taking Mr. Eggen's suggestion and moving to an hour and a half.

But just on the video again – sorry to belabour the point – I heard two things here. I kind of made the thought process that we should have a tag line in the video saying: please watch. Yet I heard MLA Jablonski say that it would be good to have this for later. Now I'm wondering. If we don't have one for later, if it doesn't have the tag – I mean, you don't want to have a tag that makes it useless after, but the tag is valuable if we're going to be able to use it before. I'll leave that with you, again, but there is a bit of an issue there.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Dorward.

Last on my speaking list I have Mr. Casey.

Mr. Casey: Second last, which, I guess, is a good spot to be in. I think it's important for us to have a bit of a conversation around what it is we're trying to achieve with this meeting and what's sort of on the table and what's off the table.

Last year being my first meeting, I somehow made the false assumption that we were there as a committee to present the facts and to talk about the facts and to talk about the performance of the fund. I don't want to offend anyone here, but I think it's worth saying that it became extremely politicized. What we ended up with was everyone's political platform from everybody's party being put out on the table.

If that's part of the purpose, that's okay, but I think we need to understand that going in so that everybody understands the rules. If it's not part of it, if we're there to report on the performance of the fund, where the fund has gone and potentially goes next year, that's fine, too. But I would really like to know that. I'd prefer not to get halfway through a meeting and then be somewhat taken aback by the fact that we were in a political discussion among ourselves more than anyone else about where we thought the shortcomings of the fund were or where our party would have done it differently and so on and so forth. I just think it's important that we decide what we're doing at this meeting. If that's what it's for, okay, but let's agree on those rules, and let's agree with what we're trying to do.

The Chair: Mr. Casey, our belief is that the new format is going to take out what may be perceived was a bit of a divisive political bent last meeting.

I also think it's germane to just review what the mandate and our authority as a committee are. If you'll indulge me, right from our committee notes here:

[The committee] annually reviews and approves the fund's performance, business plan and annual report; receives and reviews the quarterly reports on the fund's operations and results; holds public meetings with Albertans to report on investment activities and results; and reports to the Legislative Assembly on whether the mission of the fund is being fulfilled.

My interpretation of our mandate is that we're there to present the facts to Albertans as their government and as their respective representatives. This particular fund is something that I believe in my heart all Albertans can be proud of and should be proud of. I don't necessarily believe it would be in our best interests from any particular party to throw political gamesmanship into what we're trying to present here.

Last on my speaking list, Dr. Sherman.

Dr. Sherman: Last but not least. I like the idea of the civil servants producing a politically neutral video for the sake of advertising it. May I suggest that if it is politically neutral, we give it to the many respective organizations, whether they're the teachers or the nurses or the labour union groups or the business community. Give it to them to disseminate through their social networks, an inexpensive way of getting the invitation out to others by having others distribute it to their networks of 30,000, 40,000.

Our goal is to disseminate information to the public. I personally think it's okay. We are elected representatives. I think it's important for us to answer questions to the public, whether they be political or nonpolitical. It is important for us to debate these policy discussions out in the open. So let's make a goal to get as many people involved as possible. I think that if you disseminate it through other social networks, you'll get a lot more social media and actual input from people attending the meeting. Hey, a little bit of a discussion and debate in the public might be an interesting way to get people out to pay attention. If we're all just going to talk like trained seals off a script, you know, it's going to be as boring as heck.

Those are my two bits.

The Chair: I was a little premature on our last speaker to this point. I believe Mr. Eggen has additional comments.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. Further to that, I guess, just with the very structure that we've built here, with people either there in person or phoning in or tweeting and so forth, they're going to ask a whole range of questions. I mean, we're not going to censor them, right? Who knows what they're going to say? We learned that last year.

We talk about the mandate of the heritage trust fund. You know, we can't separate the political from what is sort of our largest single savings unit. I mean, the two things are intertwined, right? If we can recognize a structure by which that can come out in a more reasonable, slightly different way – there's no way to separate the political and just the accounting of this fund.

Raj is totally right. Probably this could be our biggest asset if we want more people to watch. It makes it more interesting, right?

Thank you.

Mr. Casey: Could I just make a comment back, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Mr. Casey.

Mr. Casey: Just on that, I mean, it goes back to our mandate. If our mandate is actually to establish policy and to discuss policy and to formulate policy in this committee, then I absolutely agree with you that we should be debating that in public. That's fine. But if our role here is to monitor the performance of the fund and to make sure that it is being handled and managed in an appropriate way, then that's where our responsibility lies. If we want to develop policy, then let's talk about changing our mandate so that we can develop policy.

The Chair: Mr. Casey, I'll confirm for you that it's certainly not our mandate within this committee to establish or develop policy. With that said, I certainly understand and respect that what we're speaking to inherently has an element of politics to it, and there is no getting away from that. I think that we here within our roles can and should be able to manage those elements in a manner in which we're fulfilling our mandate while still engaging the public. I'm viewing this as very much an opportunity to engage the public. To that end and trying to be mindful of time, I know that there are perhaps a couple of motions to what we're speaking to, and I'd like to go to Mrs. Jablonski for one of those motions.

5:40

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you, Chair. I do have a motion. I think I mentioned it earlier. I move that the committee allow the educational introductory video to be a permanent link on the Alberta heritage savings trust fund website to be accessed by Albertans throughout the year.

The Chair: Not necessarily through the committee's website?

Mrs. Jablonski: Well, which website?

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Well, the committee has its own website, which I believe is probably the best place for it. The external website that is run by Treasury Board and Finance I don't think would be the right spot to link that to.

Mrs. Jablonski: So we just need to add "committee" to that?

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Right.

Mrs. Jablonski: So a permanent link on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee website. We've just added the word "committee" to that. Okay.

The Chair: All in favour of the motion?

Mr. Casey: Can I ask a question on the motion?

The Chair: You may ask a question on the motion.

Mr. Casey: Thank you. We talk about putting the video on there. I guess what we haven't talked about – maybe that's coming later, so excuse me if it is – is whether the committee gets to approve the video, preview it and provide comments, before it goes online. This should be something that the whole committee approves, not just internally.

The Chair: Mrs. Jablonski, would you accept that amendment to your motion?

Mrs. Jablonski: Absolutely. We could just add that if that's okay, Mr. Chair.

I move that the committee allow the educational introductory video to be a permanent link on the Alberta Heritage Savings

Trust Fund Committee website once approved by the committee, to be accessed by all Albertans throughout the year.

The Chair: We have another question on the motion.

Ms Kubinec: This video that we're going to have on that website: we talked about wanting to disseminate it much, much further with Facebook and that sort of thing, our own Facebook pages. Does that need to be a separate motion?

The Chair: Ms Sales, would you care to speak to this?

Ms Sales: Well, I think that if the communications plan is approved as is by the committee, then we can go ahead and start implementing the initiatives. The video will be one of our first, of course. Once we have a sample of anything to show the committee, we will provide that to the committee for comment. We're hoping to do that sooner rather than later, before the summer breaks, so that we will have something for early fall that will be complete and approved, that sort of thing.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, Ms Sales.

Mr. Dorward, do you have another comment?

Mr. Dorward: Yeah. I'm just wondering . . .

The Chair: On this motion, please.

Mr. Dorward: Yeah. Practically speaking, do we have to have the whole committee doing this, which means that you're calling a meeting at a certain point in time – and we really don't know when – which could be over the summer by the time that you go into production and get things finished? I'm not sure about the timing of that. Then you're talking about bringing in *Hansard* and da, da, da. Can we make it one of those working committees – there is a word for it, Corinne, but I'm not sure what it is – that's off *Hansard*, that includes one member from each of the caucuses, four people that get together and approve the video? You can invite friends, if you want, to come to it, but it's not so official and fancy and can be set up easier and discharged. Does that meet the needs?

Ms Sales: I do have a suggestion. We could post it on the internal website for the committee, and then no matter where you are, you could access it and provide your comments.

The Chair: That's an outstanding suggestion, Ms Sales.

Mr. Dorward: Even better.

The Chair: Okay. So we're going to call the vote on this motion. Mrs. Jablonski, you may read your motion with said amendments.

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the committee allow the educational introductory video, once approved by the committee, to be a permanent link on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee website to be accessed by all Albertans throughout the year.

The Chair: All in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried. Thank you very much, Mrs. Jablonski.

In a number of meetings with our communications team – and I do want to take this moment to thank Ms Sales and Ms Dotimas for their very hard work on the communications plan – one of the elements that we discussed was that we thought that even though this is a televised broadcast, we certainly appreciate and understand that the more people we can have in the seats for our live presentation, the better the energy, the better the overall production

quality will be. So we discussed a number of ideas about how we might be able to attract more people to come to our meeting.

One of the conclusions we reached was that if we could provide a reception to follow our televised event, we may be able to attract more people than if they simply came to watch us have a meeting, the idea being that we'll be able to draw more people who would come to an event with the opportunity to meet with Mr. Eggen and Dr. Sherman and Ms Kubinec afterwards.

I would also hope that we could encourage – we have a number of local MLAs, but for those who are not local, I understand it's prohibitive sometimes to travel for such an engaging televised committee meeting. But if we can leverage some of our respective contacts in the community, I think we should be able to attract a number of people to the audience. Certainly, with the added value of having a reception afterwards, we should be able to and, hopefully, we will be able to attract a sizable crowd.

That said, I'm looking for somebody to propose a motion that the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund hold a reception following the public meeting at the Oasis Centre on October 2, 2013.

Mr. Dorward: I'd like to make that motion, but I'd also like to add that the budget that was included for premeeting food be moved to the postmeeting food so that we don't incur any extra budget. If I recall correctly, we had some funds for a little catered premeeting event. I thought that the money could maybe be moved to the end and that we wouldn't spend any more money.

The Chair: Mr. Dorward, in terms of a reception we're talking coffee and cookies, so we're not looking at a substantial increase to our budget at all, sir.

Mr. Dorward: Okay. I thought the food before was not needed.

The Chair: Any more discussion on that motion?

Mr. Dorward: Okay. I'll do the motion as you suggested, Chair, without the food confusion.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

All in favour? Any objections? That motion is carried. Thank you very much.

We have one additional motion, and I'll be looking for somebody to move that

the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund approve the draft communications plan as presented with the revised motions and that the chair and deputy chair be authorized to work with LAO communications to finalize materials as required.

Ms Kubinec: So moved.

The Chair: Thank you.

All in favour? Are there any objections? We have one objection.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. I thought it was a bit high. That's all. It's the budget, right?

The Chair: The budget.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. Okay.

The Chair: That motion is carried. Thank you.

We are now at agenda item 5, other business. Is there any other business we wish to discuss at this time? Mr. Dorward.

Mr. Dorward: Yes. Mr. Chair, I don't intend to go through this at all, just to table it and give it to the committee members. The Fiscal Management Act was passed by the Assembly, and I did just a one-pager on the effects on the Alberta heritage savings trust fund as a result of the Fiscal Management Act. So I'd ask that this be given to everybody in the room and tabled at this meeting.

5:50

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Dorward. That information is being circulated.

Is there any other business?

Mr. Eggen: Sorry. David, what did you want us to do with this?

Mr. Dorward: I just tabled it in case anybody had any questions on how the heritage savings trust fund will be affected by the new management act.

The Chair: This is public information, so there's nothing presented in this information that should catch anybody by surprise.

Our next agenda item is the date of the next meeting. At the next meeting we will be required to review and approve the heritage fund annual report. That meeting has been scheduled at this time for Thursday, June 20, at 2 p.m.

Now all we're looking for is a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Saskiw: I move we adjourn.

The Chair: Mr. Saskiw moves to adjourn.

Thank you, Mr. Saskiw.

That brings our meeting to a conclusion. Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 5:51 p.m.]

