



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature
Third Session

Standing Committee
on
Legislative Offices

Monday, July 26, 2010
2:30 p.m.

Transcript No. 27-3-2

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 27th Legislature
Third Session**

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Mitzel, Len, Cypress-Medicine Hat (PC), Chair
Lund, Ty, Rocky Mountain House (PC), Deputy Chair

Bhullar, Manmeet Singh, Calgary-Montrose (PC)
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL)
Campbell, Robin, West Yellowhead (PC)
Cao, Wayne C.N., Calgary-Fort*
Hinman, Paul, Calgary-Glenmore (WA)
Lindsay, Fred, Stony Plain (PC)
MacDonald, Hugh, Edmonton-Gold Bar (AL)
Marz, Richard, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (PC)
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (ND)
Quest, Dave, Strathcona (PC)
Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon (PC)

* substitution for Fred Lindsay

Legislative Officers

G.B. (Gord) Button	Ombudsman
Brian Fjeldheim	Chief Electoral Officer
Merwan Saher	Auditor General
Neil R. Wilkinson	Ethics Commissioner
Frank Work, QC	Information and Privacy Commissioner

Support Staff

W.J. David McNeil	Clerk
Louise J. Kamuchik	Clerk Assistant/Director of House Services
Micheline S. Gravel	Clerk of <i>Journals</i> /Table Research
Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Shannon Dean	Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Cheryl Scarlett	Director of Information Technology and Human Resource Services
Corinne Dacyshyn	Committee Clerk
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Communications Services
Melanie Friesacher	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Philip Massolin	Committee Research Co-ordinator
Stephanie LeBlanc	Legal Research Officer
Diana Staley	Research Officer
Rachel Stein	Research Officer
Liz Sim	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

2:30 p.m.

Monday, July 26, 2010

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

The Chair: Okay, ladies and gentlemen. We'll call the meeting of the Legislative Offices Committee to order. I trust that everyone has a copy of the meeting agenda and the minutes of previous meetings, which were posted on the committee website last week.

I'd ask that we introduce ourselves for the record. Anyone sitting in as a substitute for the committee member, please indicate so on the record. I note that we have one member joining us via teleconference: Mr. Campbell. Mr. Cao is sitting in for Mr. Lindsay, but he's not here yet. I'll start. I'm Len Mitzel. I'm the MLA for Cypress-Medicine Hat, and I chair this committee.

Mr. Lund: Ty Lund, MLA, Rocky Mountain House.

Mr. Marz: Richard Marz, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Rogers: George Rogers, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon.

Mr. Bhullar: Manmeet Bhullar, Calgary-Montrose.

Mrs. Scarlett: Cheryl Scarlett, Legislative Assembly Office.

Mr. MacDonald: Hugh MacDonald, Edmonton-Gold Bar. Good afternoon.

Mr. Hinman: Paul Hinman, Calgary-Glenmore.

Mr. Quest: Dave Quest, Strathcona.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr. Campbell, you're on, correct?

Mr. Campbell: Robin Campbell, West Yellowhead.

The Chair: Thank you.

As I mentioned, you have the agenda. Would someone move the adoption of the agenda, please? Moved by Mr. Marz. All in favour? Carried.

We have two sets of minutes. We have the minutes from the February 1, 2010, meeting and the February 26, 2010, meeting. We'll do them separately, separate motions. Are there any errors or omissions to note on those minutes?

If not, I'd ask for someone to move the minutes of the February 1 meeting. Moved by Mr. Lund that the Standing Committee on Leg. Offices approve the minutes of the February 1, 2010, meeting as distributed. All those in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

Also, the February 26 meeting.

Mr. Rogers: I'll move those, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Rogers that the Standing Committee on Leg. Offices approve the minutes of the February 26, 2010, meeting as distributed. All those in favour? That's carried.

That takes us to item 4, and since our discussions may address the specific salaries of the officers, I'd ask for a motion to move in camera so the committee can discuss this issue freely. Moved by Mr. Quest. All those in favour? That's carried.

[The committee met in camera from 2:32 p.m. to 2:44 p.m.]

The Chair: Okay, folks. We're now returned to the record. Before I ask a member to move the motion with respect to the 2010-2011 salary review for the officers of the Legislature, I'd just like to note that as of October 15, 2009, there was a salary freeze on all levels of management for the government, and this salary freeze was for two years. This motion is for the year 2010-2011, and the second year, 2011-2012, will be reviewed as per this committee's mandate.

If we're ready for the motion, I'd ask someone to please move this.

Mr. Campbell: I'll move it.

The Chair: Okay. Moved by Mr. Campbell. Mr. Campbell, because you're on a teleconference, I'll read the motion, okay?

Mr. Campbell: Yeah.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Campbell that

for the fiscal year 2010-2011 the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices depart from the compensation strategy adopted at its June 11, 2008, meeting so that the salaries for each of the officers remain at their respective 2009-2010 levels consistent with the salary freeze for management employees announced by the government on October 15, 2009.

Any comments on that motion? Ready for the question? All in favour? Opposed? That motion is carried. Thank you very much.

We've got a couple of other items here. One, I don't know whether all of you receive the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, but there's an interesting article in the summer issue, Funding the Officers of Parliament: Canada's Experiment. If anyone doesn't have it and wishes to see it, we can certainly make some copies for you.

This takes us to the 2010 conference attendance. We've traditionally held a draw for the names put forward for conference attendance when interest exceeds the number of spots available. The committee clerk has received an indication of interest from a number of members already. I'd suggest we go around the table and members can confirm their interest or decline with respect to the two conferences available for attendance through this committee. We'll do the draws, if necessary, today.

The first one is the CCPAC, the Public Accounts conference, to be held August 29 to 31 in Quebec City. It's being hosted by the Quebec House of Assembly, and the deadline for conference registration is August 7. This committee has traditionally sent the chair or the deputy chair and one committee member to attend as observers. The budget provides for two people to attend. I guess I'm just asking if anyone – you've received some notices so far from people that wish to attend?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Actually, not with respect to the CCPAC conference, Mr. Chair. It's for the next one.

The Chair: Okay. Does anyone wish to attend this?

Mr. Rogers: Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the chairman of Public Accounts is planning to attend.

The Chair: Well, no. That would be through Public Accounts. That's not through us. We're Leg. Offices.

Mr. Rogers: Oh, this is in addition to that.

The Chair: That's correct. We're there as observers.

Mr. Rogers: Oh, I see. Okay. Fine.

Mr. MacDonald: For the record, Mr. Rogers, I will not be attending the Public Accounts conference in Quebec City at the end of August. I've decided I would not attend that after the conduct of the committee here. It would be unfortunate for me to go there.

The Chair: Okay. We'll move on to who wishes to attend. I think I plan on attending this one as the chair, and I was wondering if there's anyone else who wishes to attend. If there's more than one, then we'll have a draw for it, I guess.

Mr. Bhullar: What are the dates, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: The dates are August 29 to 31. Mr. Bhullar.

Mr. MacDonald: Are you accepting nominations?

The Chair: He's put forth his intention to attend, and so far it doesn't look like anyone else wants to attend. The motion, then.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Would you like me to read it into the record?

The Chair: Yeah.

Mrs. Sawchuk: I can read the motion if there are no other expressions of interest for this conference. A motion is required that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices designate the chair and Mr. Bhullar to attend the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees, CCPAC, conference in Quebec City from August 29 to 31, 2010.

We will also require the name of an alternate, Mr. Chair, to be approved as an alternate should the chair or designated member be unable to attend. Is anyone willing to put their name forward as an alternate?

2:50

The Chair: If not, then we'll go ahead.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Just go ahead? Okay.

The Chair: Would someone move the motion that was just read by the secretary?

Mr. Quest: Sure.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Quest. Any other questions on it? If not, all in favour? That's carried. Thank you.

This takes us to the COGEL, the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws, 2010 conference, December 5 to 8. It's being held in Washington, DC. The committee budget provides for four attendees at this conference, including the chair, the committee clerk, and two additional members. Before we even bring it up, I just want to note that I won't be attending this one, and someone can certainly go in my place. Who wishes to go to that? Mr. Quest.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Mr. Chair, we did also receive communication from Ms Blakeman, who was unable to attend today. She'd like her name put forward if there is a draw.

The Chair: Okay. Are there any others? We have four.

Mrs. Sawchuk: And we have three spots.

The Chair: I'm not going.

Mrs. Sawchuk: The committee clerk, the chair, and two additional members.

Mr. Marz: Isn't the deputy chair, if the chair is not going, automatic?

The Chair: Not on this one.

Mr. Marz: Okay.

Mr. Campbell: What are the dates of that again?

The Chair: It's December 5 to 8. Were you interested, Robin?

Mr. Campbell: I'm just looking at my calendar here. December 5 to 8. Yeah, I'd be interested.

The Chair: Okay. We now have five.

Mr. Hinman: I guess that if we're going to go to a draw, I'll put my name in, too.

The Chair: Mr. Hinman is putting his name in as well, so we have six now for three spots.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Actually, Mr. Chair, we need three members as delegates, and we need two names as alternates, so we'd be drawing for five names in total.

The Chair: We'll draw for the delegates first. We'll be drawing for three names.

Mrs. Sawchuk: The attendees first?

The Chair: The attendees. That's right.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Thank you. The first attendee confirmed is Mr. Campbell. The second attendee confirmed is Mr. Lund. The third attendee confirmed is Mr. Quest.

Now for the alternates. The first alternate is Ms Blakeman, and the second alternate is Mr. Hinman.

The Chair: Okay. If any of the other three can't attend, then the alternate.

Now that you know that, the clerk will be getting in touch with you tomorrow or some time in the fall to make the necessary arrangements to attend the conference.

Any other items for discussion?

Seeing none, future meeting dates. We'll do the usual polling for a meeting date to review the 2011-2012 budget submissions for the officers of the Legislature once we receive the information on the 2011-2012 budget deadlines.

Anything else?

Mr. MacDonald: The all-day meeting to review the five budgets: will that be in November?

The Chair: It usually is toward the end of November. That's right. We did it at the end of November. I think it took us two days the other time. It was at the end of November, the first week of December. We did it on a Friday.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. And we have no idea when session is going to resume for the fall?

The Chair: Not yet. I haven't heard any word.

Mr. MacDonald: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: All right. Thank you, Mr. MacDonald.

A motion to adjourn. Moved by Mr. Marz. All in favour? It's carried. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 2:55 p.m.]

