



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Standing Committee
on
Legislative Offices

Election Commissioner Search

Thursday, February 15, 2018
9 a.m.

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The 29th Legislature
Third Session**

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (NDP), Chair
Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (NDP), Deputy Chair

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (UCP)
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (NDP)
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (UCP)
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (NDP)
Kleinsteuber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (NDP)
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (NDP)
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)*
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (UCP)
van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (UCP)
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (NDP)

* substitution for Deborah Drever

Public Service Commission Participants

Gail Batog	Consultant, Executive Search
Trish Mills	Director, Executive Search

Legislative Officers

Jill Clayton	Information and Privacy Commissioner
Del Graff	Child and Youth Advocate
Glen Resler	Chief Electoral Officer
Marianne Ryan	Ombudsman, Public Interest Commissioner
Merwan Saher	Auditor General
Marguerite Trussler, QC	Ethics Commissioner

Support Staff

Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Clerk
Shannon Dean	Law Clerk and Director of House Services
Trafton Koenig	Parliamentary Counsel
Stephanie LeBlanc	Parliamentary Counsel
Philip Massolin	Manager of Research and Committee Services
Sarah Amato	Research Officer
Nancy Robert	Research Officer
Corinne Dacyshyn	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>

9 a.m. Thursday, February 15, 2018

[Mr. Shepherd in the chair]

The Chair: All right. Well, good morning, everyone. I'd like to welcome members, staff, and guests to this meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices. I am David Shepherd, MLA for Edmonton-Centre, chair of this committee.

I'd ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, and then we'll hear from those on the phone. We'll begin to my right.

Mr. Malkinson: Brian Malkinson, deputy chair, MLA for Calgary-Currie. Good morning, everyone.

Mr. van Dijken: Glenn van Dijken, MLA, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Mrs. Pitt: Angela Pitt, MLA, Airdrie.

Mr. Horne: Trevor Horne, MLA for Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

Ms Woollard: Denise Woollard, MLA, Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Mr. Nielsen: Good morning. Chris Nielsen, MLA for Edmonton-Decore.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: And good morning. Jamie Kleinsteuber, MLA for Calgary-Northern Hills.

Ms Batog: Gail Batog, executive search.

Ms Mills: Trish Mills, executive search.

Ms Rempel: Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you.
On the phones?

Mr. Gill: Good morning. Prab Gill, MLA, Calgary-Greenway.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mrs. Littlewood: Good morning. Jessica Littlewood, representing Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mrs. Aheer: Good morning. Leela Aheer, Chestermere-Rocky View.

The Chair: Thank you, everyone.

For the record I would note the following substitution: Mr. Nielsen substituting for Member Drever.

Moving on to the agenda, I'd like to advise that I have a brief information item to address today under other business.

Is there anything else, or do we have a motion to approve the agenda as circulated?

Mr. Malkinson: I aim to approve.

The Chair: Thank you. With that motion on the floor, all those in favour? On the phones? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

We then have the minutes from our last meeting. Are there any errors or omissions to be noted? If not, do I have a member that would move a motion to adopt the minutes? Ms Woollard. All those in favour? On the phones? Okay. Any opposed? That motion is carried.

We move on, then, to our main item of business for today, the consideration of preliminary candidates for the position of Election

Commissioner. At this point it would be appropriate, then, for the committee to move in camera to maintain the confidentiality of the applicants as we move through this next stage. Do we have a member that would move that motion?

Mr. Nielsen: So moved.

The Chair: Mr. Nielsen, thank you. All those in favour? On the phones? Any opposed? Thank you. The committee will move in camera.

[The committee met in camera from 9:03 a.m. to 11:21 a.m.]

The Chair: All right. The committee has returned to the record. That brings us, then, to other business.

I have one information item to address under other business. It's just a quick update regarding the 2018-19 estimates for the office of the Election Commissioner. Everyone will remember that a budget for this new office was approved by this committee on January 16, 2018, and then transmitted to Treasury Board and Finance for inclusion in the budget documents this spring.

In a response to a request from the ministry, a two-month interim supply amount for April and May 2018 was also provided for this office in the amount of \$396,000. Basically, what this is is just, again, an amount that will be there to ensure that the office is able to begin and operate starting April 1 in the event that for any reason the budget that's brought forward by the government of Alberta for discussion and vote in the Legislature – should that be delayed for any reason or not be in place for April 1, there would be the supplemental budget in place to allow the office to operate. It is not additional funds. This is not anything that would go beyond the budget that has been approved, but it is simply to ensure that the office would have access to funds in order to be able to operate.

You have a question, Mrs. Pitt?

Mrs. Pitt: I do. Mr. Chair, there are a number of – I apologize. We are no longer in camera. I don't know what to do, but I have a pertinent question.

The Chair: Regarding this item or regarding another item?

Mrs. Pitt: Regarding that item.

The Chair: Okay. If you have a question, certainly feel free to ask, Mrs. Pitt, and we'll answer it the best we can.

Mrs. Pitt: I don't know if I can.

The Chair: You're unsure regarding, perhaps, a piece of information that may be confidential.

Mrs. Pitt: Yeah.

The Chair: Okay. Items that would be considered confidential would be, certainly, any decisions regarding candidates being considered, anything regarding particular candidates being considered and things of that ilk. General discussion around the office and the position would be acceptable.

Mrs. Pitt: We're in grey territory here. Can I seek private clarification from the clerk? I apologize.

The Chair: Certainly. Let's take a five-minute recess and allow you to consult with the clerk. Five minutes.

[The committee adjourned from 11:23 a.m. to 11:28 a.m.]

The Chair: All right. We're back from our recess.

Mrs. Pitt, did you, then, have a question you wish to raise?

Mrs. Pitt: Yeah. Actually, I would like to just ask clarification of supplementary supply for the new office of the Election Commissioner. My concern would be: should a candidate not be available to start the office up and running by April 1, the money would then be unspent and put back into the provincial treasury. That would be a correct assumption.

I cannot ask this question without getting into grey territory. I apologize, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. In general it sounds, Mrs. Pitt, that perhaps you're just looking for at least procedural clarification as to what would occur if we do not have a candidate in place on April 1 to any monies that were appointed for supplementary supply in the event that, I guess, those went forward. Is that anything you could provide clarity on, Clerk?

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just for my own clarity, I believe we're still referencing the two-month interim budget number that the chair has mentioned. That's not additional funds. It's just a portion of the budget that this committee has already

approved for this office. You know, it's just ensuring that it is available if the overall main estimates process takes longer to complete than April 1, which is the date of the next fiscal year.

Again, it's not any additional funding. Ultimately, the budget that is approved is an annual budget. If at the end of the year there were monies that were not expended, then, yes, you know, they would be returned is my understanding. Just because they weren't spent specifically starting April 1 . . .

Mrs. Pitt: Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent. Thank you.

Was there any other discussion, then, regarding that particular item?

Are there any other items, then, to be raised under other business?

Seeing and hearing none, I thank everyone for their time and the efficiency with which we were able to move through our work this morning. As has been indicated, we will meet again on February 27, 2018.

If there's nothing further, could I have a motion to adjourn? Mr. Nielsen, thank you. All those in favour? Any opposed? The committee stands adjourned. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 11:31 a.m.]

