



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Legislative Offices

Wednesday, October 9, 2019
6:15 p.m.

Transcript No. 30-1-1

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First Session**

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP), Chair
Schow, Joseph R., Cardston-Siksika (UCP), Deputy Chair
Armstrong-Homeniuk, Jackie, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UCP)*
Goodridge, Laila, Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche (UCP)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Long, Martin M., West Yellowhead (UCP)**
Lovely, Jacqueline, Camrose (UCP)
Nixon, Jeremy P., Calgary-Klein (UCP)
Rutherford, Brad, Leduc-Beaumont (UCP)
Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-City Centre (NDP)
Sigurdson, R.J., Highwood (UCP)
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP)

* substitution for Jacqueline Lovely

** substitution for Laila Goodridge

Also in Attendance

Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (UCP)

Legislative Officers

Jill Clayton	Information and Privacy Commissioner
Lorne R. Gibson	Election Commissioner
Del Graff	Child and Youth Advocate
Glen Resler	Chief Electoral Officer
Marianne Ryan	Ombudsman, Public Interest Commissioner
Marguerite Trussler, QC	Ethics Commissioner
W. Doug Wylie	Auditor General

Support Staff

Shannon Dean	Clerk
Stephanie LeBlanc	Clerk Assistant and Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Teri Cherkewich	Law Clerk
Trafton Koenig	Parliamentary Counsel
Philip Massolin	Clerk of Committees and Research 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
Lyndsay Tischer	Acting Director of Human Resources
Jeanette Dotimas	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Janet Schwegel	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

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[Mr. Ellis in the chair]

The Chair: All right. Good evening, everyone. We'll call it to order here. I'd like to welcome members and staff and guests to the meeting of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices.

My name is Mike Ellis, MLA for Calgary-West and chair of the committee. I'd like to ask members and those joining the committee at the table to introduce themselves for the record. I don't believe we have anybody on the phone, so we'll start to my right here.

Mr. Schow: Joseph Schow, MLA for Cardston-Siksika.

Mr. Smith: Mark Smith, MLA for Drayton Valley-Devon, subbing in for Mr. Sigurdson.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, subbing for Jackie Lovely.

Mr. Rutherford: MLA Brad Rutherford, Leduc-Beaumont.

Mr. Long: MLA Martin Long, West Yellowhead, subbing in for Laila Goodridge.

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: Jeremy Nixon, Calgary-Klein.

Mr. Schmidt: Marlin Schmidt, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Ms Gray: Christina Gray, MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Ms Sweet: Heather Sweet, MLA, Edmonton-Manning.

Mr. Shepherd: David Shepherd, Edmonton-City Centre.

Ms Tischer: Lyndsay Tischer, human resource services, Legislative Assembly Office.

Ms Cherkewich: Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk, office of Parliamentary Counsel.

Dr. Massolin: Good evening, Philip Massolin, clerk of committees and research services.

Ms Rempel: Hello. Jody Rempel, committee clerk, Legislative Assembly Office.

The Chair: Well, thank you.

As previously mentioned, for the record I'll note the following substitutions: Mr. Long substituting for Ms Goodridge, and Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk is substituting for Ms Lovely. When we do the in camera portion of this meeting, Mr. Smith was not official for the official substitution, so he will be asked to leave the room when we do the in camera component of this.

Before we turn to the business at hand, a few operational items. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard*. Committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting. Before proceeding further, as this is the first meeting of this committee for the 30th Legislature, I'd like to address the question regarding teleconferencing.

Well, thank you very much. Mr. Sigurdson has joined. Would you mind introducing yourself to the committee as part of the committee?

Mr. Sigurdson: MLA R.J. Sigurdson for Highwood.

The Chair: Fantastic. Thank you very much for being here.

As some of you may already know, section 6 of the Legislative Assembly Act permits participation in a committee "by means of a telephone or other communication facilities that permit all members participating in the meeting to hear each other if all members of the committee consent." Our committee meeting rooms are equipped to facilitate meeting participation by telephone. If this is something that we want to permit, then this committee may wish to pass a motion which needs to be passed unanimously to approve the meeting attendance by telephone for the duration of a Legislature for the duration of the session.

I'd suggest that we entertain a motion to permit participation via teleconference for the duration of the 30th Legislature. With this in mind, I'd 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 is required, so in those cases a motion would be considered at the end of a particular meeting requesting the attendance in person of members at a subsequent meeting. Note: if some members are participating via teleconference for today's meeting, which nobody is, they are unable to vote on this motion. Once the motion passes, then they will be able to participate fully in the meeting. That's just a note for the record.

Would a member like to move that

for the duration of the 30th Legislature the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices 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.

Ms Sweet: Mr. Chair, I will put the motion forward.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Sweet.

All right. Any comments? No. Okay. I don't see any. All those in favour of the motion, please say aye. Any opposed? Thank you.

The motion has passed unanimously.

We'll move to agenda. With that settled, I would draw everyone's attention to the draft meeting agenda. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? Okay. I don't see any. Would a member please like to move a motion to approve today's meeting agenda as circulated? It would be to the effect that the October 9, 2019, meeting agenda of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices be approved as circulated. Would somebody like to move that? Mr. Long. Okay. Just want to be clear here. Mr. Long is moving that the October 9, 2019, meeting agenda of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices be approved as circulated. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed? Okay. Looks like it passed unanimously. Thank you very much.

I guess we'll move to number 3. That's the committee orientation: mandate and committee support. The Legislative Offices Committee mandate relates to the independent offices of the Legislature, in that the committee reviews the business plans and reports of the officers of the Legislature in addition to reviewing and determining the final amount of the officers' operating budgets. The committee annually reviews the compensation of the seven officers of the Legislature and considers their terms of office and requests for reappointment.

In addition, while the office of the Auditor General is responsible for the annual audit of the other independent offices, this committee is responsible for contracting with an independent auditor to complete an annual audit of the operations of the office of the Auditor General.

Reports of the officers include the annual reports, and special reports stand referred to the Legislative Offices Committee by Standing Order 55.01, and the committee may meet to review

reports or to consider other matters such as proposed statute amendments or delegations of authority brought forward by the officers. Are there any questions about the mandate of the committee? Okay.

Seeing none, the committee is supported in its work by the nonpartisan staff of the Legislative Assembly Office. Please forgive me in any mispronunciation of names. Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk, and Jody Rempel, committee clerk, are both assigned to support this committee. In addition, we may be joined at the table by other staff as required according to the business at hand. This evening we have been joined by Stephanie LeBlanc, Clerk Assistant and Senior Parliamentary Counsel; Dr. Philip Massolin, clerk of committee and research services; and Lyndsay Tischer, acting director of human resources. Thank you all for being here.

In addition to those at the table, there are staff from the other Legislative Assembly Office's branches who support our meeting, including Legislative Assembly security services, staff from venue services, *Alberta Hansard* staff, technical experts from ITS, and of course broadcasting.

All right. The general meeting schedule. This committee meets at least twice a year. We'll meet in the fall to do the annual compensation review for the officers of the Legislature. We also hold a full-day meeting on a Friday near the end of November or early December to consider the estimates for each of the offices. In addition to these meetings, we are likely to meet a few more times a year when needed to address officer contracts and issues brought forward by the officers.

All right. Temporary substitutions. Standing Order 56(2.1) to (2.4) outlines the processes for the substitution of chairs, deputy chairs, and committee members. You may prepare your own substitution notice, or for convenience templates are available on OurHouse for members to use when providing notice of 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. Should the original committee member participate in the meeting, then the substitution is no longer in effect. If a committee meeting is moved to a different date and you wish to appoint a substitute, you will need to submit a new notice. Members who are not committee members or official substitutes may attend and participate in committee meetings; however, they may not vote or move motions. If you or your staff have any questions about the substitution process, I'd encourage you to follow up with any of the committee clerks.

6:25

All right. Officers of the Legislature 2019 compensation review. Moving on to our main item of business, I would suggest that the committee along with the appropriate Legislative Assembly Office staff consider moving in camera for our upcoming deliberations as we may be discussing details of the contracts of the officers of the Legislature. A possible motion would be that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices move in camera, including the following Legislative Assembly Office staff: Stephanie LeBlanc, Teri Cherkewich, Dr. Philip Massolin, and Lyndsay Tischer. Could I have somebody move that?

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: I'll move that.

The Chair: Okay. Mr. Nixon would like to move that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices move in camera, including the following Legislative Assembly Office staff: Stephanie LeBlanc, Teri Cherkewich, Dr. Philip Massolin, and Lyndsay Tischer. All in favour, say aye. Any opposed? Okay.

I guess we'll pause to have staff leave the room and anybody who is not a part of the committee.

[The committee met in camera from 6:26 p.m. to 6:37 p.m.]

The Chair: Now that we're back on the record, I'll open the floor for any comments or proposals regarding the 2019 compensation review for the officers of the Legislature. Any further discussion?

Seeing none, I'll ask somebody to make a motion in regard to this. Can I get somebody that would like to make the motion? I'll read it. Anybody?

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: I'll move that.

The Chair: Mr. Nixon. Thank you.

As a possible motion Mr. Nixon would move that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices confirm that the compensation for the officers of the Legislature shall not include any increases or movement within salary ranges for the fiscal year 2019-2020.

I will call the question. All those in favour of this motion, please say aye. Any opposed? Hearing none, that looks like it's passed unanimously.

Before we move on to our next item of business, does anyone have any further comments regarding this issue that we just discussed? I see none.

Okay. Other business, a report on the audit results for the office of the Auditor General. I've got one more brief information item before we adjourn. I'm pleased to report to the committee that on June 27, 2019, the deputy chair and I attended a meeting with the Auditor General and senior staff from his office as well as the audit team from St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman, which is the firm that we have under contract to conduct the annual audit of the office of the Auditor General. I'm pleased to advise that the 2018-2019 audit was completed without any issues identified. As with the other officers, the Auditor General includes a copy of the audit documents every year in the annual report of the office.

Are there any items for discussion under other business? Okay.

Seeing none, we'll just talk about the next meeting date. The next meeting date, as we're getting close to the end of the year, is November 29, which is a Friday. It is common practice that we hold that day-long event to hear from the seven independent officers as we head towards, not presupposing when session is going to end but certainly according to what we do know, the end of session. So November 29 will be the date of our next meeting.

In regard to adjournment, would a member like to move a motion to adjourn?

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: I'll move it.

The Chair: Mr. Nixon. All right. All those in favour of adjourning, say aye. Any opposed? Seeing none, thank you very much. I hope everyone has a great evening.

[The committee adjourned at 6:40 p.m.]

