



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
Fourth Session

Special Standing Committee
on
Members' Services

Tuesday, January 31, 2023
9:30 a.m.

Transcript No. 30-4-2

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Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Cooper, Hon. Nathan M., Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UC), Chair
Williams, Dan D.A., Peace River (UC), Deputy Chair

Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)
Fir, Tanya, Calgary-Peigan (UC)
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
McIver, Ric, Calgary-Hays (UC)
Pon, Josephine, Calgary-Beddington (UC)
Rowswell, Garth, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UC)
Sabir, Irfan, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall (NDP)
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9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

[Mr. Cooper in the chair]

The Chair: Well, good morning, members and those of you joining us around the world. The time is 9:30, and I'd like to call this meeting to order.

My name is Nathan Cooper. I'm the MLA for the outstanding constituency of Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills. I will now ask members and those joining the committee at the table to introduce themselves for the record. I will then call on members joining the meeting remotely to introduce themselves. We will go around the table beginning on my right. We'll start with the clerk of the committee and then on to Mr. Williams.

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

Mr. Williams: Dan Williams, the member of the Legislature for Peace River.

Mr. McIver: Ric McIver, MLA for Calgary-Hays.

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

Ms Bell: Lianne Bell, chief of staff to the Speaker.

Mr. Langley: Terry Langley, Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mr. Deol: Good morning, everyone. Jasvir Deol, MLA for Edmonton-Meadows.

Ms Gray: Good morning. Christina Gray. I'm the MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Ms Cherkewich: Good morning. Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk.

Mr. Joy: Good morning. Darren Joy, senior financial officer.

Dr. Ludwick: Good morning. Dave Ludwick, executive director of corporate services.

Ms Dean: Good morning. Shannon Dean, Clerk of the Assembly.

The Chair: I'd also like to note for the record the following substitution: Mr. Stephan for Mr. van Dijken.

Now to those joining us remotely. Member Sabir, please.

Maybe if you could try again, Member Sabir; we didn't hear you that time. I'm not sure if you're on mute or if we have you muted, but we're currently looking to rectify that situation. If you can double-check on your end.

Let's go to Member Goehring, and we'll see if we have audio from anyone.

Ms Goehring: Good morning. Nicole Goehring, MLA, Edmonton-Castle Downs.

The Chair: Member Pon.

Ms Pon: Good morning. Josephine Pon, MLA for Calgary-Beddington.

The Chair: Member Fir.

Ms Fir: Hi. Tanya Fir, MLA, Calgary-Peigan.

The Chair: Okay. I believe that brings us to the conclusion of the list of those who are joining us remotely, but we still don't have any audio from Member Sabir.

Mr. Sabir: Oh, can you hear me now?

The Chair: Oh, I can hear you very, very lightly. I think there may be a microphone issue on your end. What sort of microphone are you using? Just the computer audio?

Mr. Sabir: Computer audio. Is it better now?

The Chair: Much better. Thank you.

Mr. Sabir: Good morning. Irfan Sabir, MLA, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall. Good to see you. Good to see you here.

The Chair: It's still not amazing, but we'll proceed as necessary. If you have lots of contributions to make, we will adjust ourselves accordingly.

Before we turn to the business at hand, a few operational items. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard* staff. Committee proceedings are streamed live on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. The audio- and the videostream and transcript of the meeting can be accessed by the Legislative Assembly website. Those participating by videoconference are encouraged to please turn your camera on while speaking and mute your microphone when not speaking. Participants virtually who wish to be placed on the speakers list are asked to e-mail or send a message in the group chat to the committee clerk, and members in the room are asked to please signal the chair. Please set your cellphones and other electronic devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

With that, we will move to the approval of the agenda. Is there anyone willing to make that motion? Member Gray. Is there any discussion, amendments, or additions to the agenda?

Seeing and hearing none, I am prepared to call the question. On the motion as proposed by Member Gray that the agenda for the January 31, 2023, meeting of the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services be approved, all those in favour in the room, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

Item 3, the approval of the minutes. Are there any amendments to the minutes from our last meeting or additions, errors, or omissions? If not, is a member willing to move the motion? Member Rowswell. Any discussion on the minutes?

Seeing and hearing none, I am prepared to call the question. On the motion as proposed by Member Rowswell that the minutes of the December 19, 2022, meeting of the Special Standing Committee on Members' Service be approved as distributed, all those in favour in the room, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. Participating remotely, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

Members, that brings us to item 4, which will be the substantive portion of our meeting today. This is the 2023-2024 Legislative Assembly budget estimates and the 2023-2026 strategic business plan. I'd like to introduce our next item, the budget estimates for the Legislative Assembly Office and the update on the strategic plan. Let me start by providing the committee with an overview of the Legislative Assembly fiscal year 2023-2024, and after this I'll turn it over to the Clerk for a more detailed discussion on the budget.

On December 19 last year the committee met and approved a budget parameters document to direct the Legislative Assembly Office to begin preparing the 2023-2024 draft budget presented today for the committee's recommendation and consideration. The

budget parameters approved on December 19 outlined a proposed budget increase of 6.8 per cent to facilitate the required changes that were discussed and approved by the committee. Those adjustments were approximately 3.6 per cent for the LAO branches, 1.9 per cent for MLA administration, .7 per cent to caucuses, and .6 per cent for one-time funding for the ERP project.

Committee members have received the approved budget parameters document as well as an addendum to the parameters. This addendum provides for modification to three elements within the budget parameters document: security for constituency offices, security supports for the Official Opposition caucus, and additional support staffing and other requirements for the Legislative Assembly information technology and broadcast services. With these changes the LAO budget would become approximately \$76.8 million. Of this, approximately 47 per cent, or \$36 million, is allocated to MLA administration; 38 per cent, or \$29.1 million, is allocated to the LAO branches; and 12 per cent, or \$9.2 million, is allocated to caucuses. The remaining 3 per cent, or \$2.5 million, is allocated to election preparedness, enterprise resource planning system one-time costs as well as planning and development.

Before I turn it over to the Clerk to provide a more detailed walk-through of the budget, I will summarize that approximately two-thirds of the proposed increase is driven by the Alberta public service compensation changes and inflation. The remaining one-third of the increase relates to the Assembly office operational improvements that were previously reviewed by the committee.

With that, I will turn it over to Shannon Dean, KC, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Ms Dean: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin with my overview of the budget, I did want to note that we are entering what's anticipated to be the final few months in the life of the 30th Legislature, so I did want to acknowledge my appreciation for the support this committee has provided the Legislative Assembly Office during the 30th Legislature.

To begin my budget overview comments, the budget is based on the parameters document previously approved in December. Again, an overall adjustment is being proposed of 6.8 per cent, or \$4.9 million. This brings the total proposed budget for the Assembly for the fiscal year 2023-24 to \$76,763,000. The 6.8 per cent, or \$4.9 million, adjustment is comprised of the following: a \$2.5 million adjustment to branch budgets, a \$1.5 million adjustment to MLA administration, and a \$523,000 adjustment to caucus budgets. There is also \$400,000 one-time funding for our enterprise resource planning project. Now, as the Speaker noted, these adjustments are driven by three factors: compensation adjustments in the Alberta public service, inflation, and operational improvements that the LAO is recommending.

9:40

First, to summarize the compensation adjustments, we are proposing that staff compensation be adjusted to parallel those changes being made in the Alberta public service. The details on these calculations are set out in the budget parameters document. I would point out that these increases have a compounding effect and also impact the cost of benefits.

Focusing first on branch staff, there will be a merit adjustment of 4 per cent for the estimated 60 per cent of managers who are eligible and 3.5 per cent for the estimated 60 per cent of employees who are eligible. We have also applied a 2 per cent cost-of-living adjustment for all staff.

In addition, announced in November 2022, there was a pay grid realignment for certain nonmanagement staff which was absorbed in our current year budget. We have made that adjustment for the

fiscal year 2023-24 budget, and these adjustments impact staff benefits, resulting in increased employer contributions to the health, benefit, and pension plans as well as the premiums for CPP, EI, and WCB. The above changes amount to approximately 7 per cent with compounding.

Similar changes have been applied to the staffing costs for caucus and constituency employees. Again, these adjustments impact employer contributions to benefits and statutory contributions. For caucus staff these changes amount to an approximate overall 6.4 per cent adjustment, and this is based on the assumption that staffing costs in the caucus budget comprise about 70 per cent. I would also point out that subject to the proviso that caucuses are not bound by GOA salary grids, compensation decisions are made by caucus leadership. Finally, there is a 9.3 per cent adjustment for constituency staff after compounding.

Now, once again, the second factor that is driving the increase in our budget pertains to inflation. A 3.2 per cent increase is being budgeted for operating costs, and we're basing that on the Conference Board of Canada projected consumer price index for Alberta.

Finally, the area of operational improvements that the Legislative Assembly Office is proposing – these were noted in the budget parameters document previously approved last month – includes the following: first, in ceremonial and security services, also known as the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms, we are requesting an additional \$475,000 in new funding for an improved records management system, new equipment, and training costs.

Human resource services is requesting \$380,000 in new funding; \$200,000 of that amount is required for the increase in costs associated with health spending accounts, and the balance is for two new HR consultants to support HR needs, workforce planning, and HRS technologies.

Committee services is requesting additional funding for American sign language, ASL, interpretation for committee meetings. Two hundred and fifty thousand has also been identified as one-time funding related to the election and transition to the 31st Legislature, \$50,000 is being requested to support events on the Legislature Grounds, and as mentioned earlier, we have identified an additional \$400,000 required for the ERP project.

In summary, again, we are proposing a 6.8 per cent adjustment to the estimates for the Legislative Assembly Office for the forthcoming fiscal year. Two-thirds of that amount is attributable to compensation and cost-of-living adjustments to parallel the rest of the public service and a 3.2 per cent inflationary factor applied to operating costs. The remaining one-third pertains to proposed operational improvements, and this amounts to less than a 2.3 per cent increase in the overall budget.

Before I turn the floor back over to you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to you, your staff, the LAO management team in the preparation of this budget. I'd also like to commend all staff at the Legislative Assembly Office for their hard work, dedication, and professionalism this past year. We have undergone many significant changes as public health protocols have shifted during the course of the 30th Legislature, and they have done a tremendous job in ensuring that members have the services and supports they need and that the Assembly and its committees can operate effectively.

In closing, I would add that we will continue to survey members and staff to ensure that we are meeting your needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms Dean.

For the purposes of the record, at approximately 9:35 Member Stephan joined the meeting. Member Stephan, if you can introduce yourself for the record, I would appreciate that.

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

The Chair: Sunny Red Deer-South as well. Thank you, Jason. It's a pleasure to have you here.

I would like to proceed immediately to discussion and/or questions on the estimates and related topics at this point in time. Then, at the conclusion of that discussion, I will call upon Dave Ludwick to provide some comments with respect to the strategic plan, and then we can have some additional conversation should that be necessary at that point in time.

Are there any questions, comments? Ms Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin just by, as the Clerk has done, thanking the Legislative Assembly staff and the team who've prepared this budget. We could not do the work of running the Alberta Legislature without the amazing support that we receive, and we appreciate it very much.

The budget increases that we're looking at today, driven by the three components that have been discussed: compensation is a major part of that. For context and just a little bit of history, I'm wondering if the Clerk can remind us that compensation for staff here has been frozen for many years. Would you mind just reminding us of that for those who might be tuning in for this discussion?

Ms Dean: Thank you, Member Gray. I am looking to my director of HR. I'm thinking compensation has been – 2012?

Ms Tischer: In 2012 there was a freeze, and we've been frozen consistently since 2015.

Ms Dean: Just to get that on the record, in 2012 there was a freeze, and then in 2015 that was reinstated. Yeah.

Ms Gray: Thank you.

Just especially with seeing the compensation speaking strongly in this increase, I think it's important to get that onto the record as well. Many of the staff here, as with government of Alberta staff, have not seen salary increases for many, many years, and given the high inflation that we see, I'm sure that has been adding a lot of financial pressure on the teams who support our work.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: Are there others? Member McIver.

Mr. McIver: Of these increases, is any of that for MLA, elected people's pay increases?

The Chair: The proposed increases in the LAO budget estimates equate to a zero per cent increase for members of the Assembly.

Mr. McIver: I knew that. I just want it said out loud. Thank you.

The Chair: I'm sure that you will recall, Member McIver, that during the 30th Legislature members also received a reduction in the overall compensation to members.

Mr. McIver: Thank you for that additional clarity.

The Chair: Member Sabir.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, let me ask: can you hear me?

There were some amounts set for transition. I'm just wondering: what does that look like for the LAO, and what will that money be used for?

The Chair: Ms Dean, the question is specific to the \$250,000 for the election preparation and transition.

Ms Dean: Sure. Thank you. It's used for admin support in facilities and logistics, human resources, and IT to prepare for office moves, equipment transitions, and staffing changes, also costs relating to procurement and set-up of IT equipment for members.

The Chair: Member Sabir, you will recall that after each election there is significant training of new members and an overall onboarding package that takes place. We bring some additional resources and staff in to assist in that transition. That is also included in the monies that have been budgeted.

Are there other questions, comments? Member Deol, please.

Mr. Deol: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I see the item in the budget for ASL. First of all, I just wanted to thank you and all the members and, specifically, my colleague Ms Renaud, who so passionately advocated for this. My questions on this. Will that allow ASL automatically for all the meetings and to the constituency office? How will this work? Is this by request, or is this automatically there for meetings? Or if this is by request, who would make the request?

9:50

The Chair: Thank you, Member Deol. With respect to the ASL this is a budgeted amount that will cover the costs for ASL interpretation for all committee meetings, including MSC, all of the committees of the Assembly, where the committee undertakes the decision to have ASL services. I encourage all committees to access this opportunity. It isn't automatic, so committees will have to say, "Yes, we will have ASL interpretation" as committees are each the master of their own domain. Now, committee clerks are proactively suggesting that we have ASL, but it is a requirement of the committees to agree. It is only specific to committees, so not members' offices. Members have budgets to provide whatever other services they require locally.

Then the last thing that I will say is that we have been working very closely with those who provide the interpretation services. Having said that, there has been the rare occasion where we have had a meeting and for whatever reason, through illness or otherwise, the service provider has been unable to provide us the service, but wherever possible, of course, they are meeting the needs of the Assembly, and we're very appreciative of the services that they have provided but also acknowledge that there may be occasions where they are unable to for a number of reasons.

Ms Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I just wondered: in preparing this budget, is there an estimate or a budgeted amount for the number of sitting days? I might be wearing my House leader hat here.

The Chair: It's included in the budget parameters document, but I'll defer to Ms Dean for the exact number. I think it's 75.

Ms Dean: It's 75 sitting days.

The Chair: Are there other questions, comments, concerns? Mr. Rowswell.

Mr. Rowswell: On page 25 we see that the ERP integrated system will be receiving a \$400,000, or 36.4 per cent, increase in one-time funding. Page 2 details how, although the project began in '21-22, the LAO has since had to change its approach. Was this additional \$400,000 foreseen as a possible expense when the project began, and what circumstances led to the funding being necessary?

The Chair: Dave, please.

Dr. Ludwick: Good morning, Member Rowsell. My name is Dave Ludwick, and I'm happy to answer your question. What it really boiled down to is that in the last year we've realized that the product that was recommended to us isn't suitable for our particular needs. Long story short, the organization was looking for a commercial, off-the-shelf ERP solution. The product that was presented to us doesn't have the maturity and the sophistication of features that we need for the product. Basically, we are starting a little bit again from the beginning to make sure that we have a solution that's appropriate for the Assembly's needs.

The Chair: Are there other questions?

Seeing and hearing none – if we have some additional comments or questions that arise, we can come back to those – I would like to at this time call on Dr. Dave Ludwick to provide some brief comments in relation to the 2023-2026 strategic plan for the Legislative Assembly Office.

Dr. Ludwick: Good morning, Mr. Speaker and members. My name is Dave Ludwick, and I'm the executive director of corporate services. First of all, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to present here this morning. I'll just take a few brief moments to talk about the strategic plan.

In March of this year, coming up in a few months, we'll be arriving at the end of our current fiscal year 2020 to 2023 strategic plan. Last fall we started with a process of reviewing and renewing our strategic plan for the coming three-year period 2023 to 2026. During the process we engaged staff in several branch meetings to gather feedback and perspective on the progress of the current plan as well as to gain an understanding of the road ahead from the perspective of branches.

We're delighted today to table our fiscal year '23-26 strategic plan, Connecting People to Parliament. In this plan you'll find a slightly modified vision and mission statement, and you'll find a new set of values. You'll find that our goals, while still much the same, have been aligned to reflect the coming transition of Legislatures as well as supporting the efficient operation of the Assembly and its committees.

I just wanted to make a brief comment this morning, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. I'll turn it back over to you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Dr. Ludwick.

Are there any questions for Dave in relation to the 2023 to 2026 strategic plan?

Seeing and hearing none, I'd like to thank Dave and his team for the great work on the strategic business plan and ensuring that the LAO is focused on our core responsibilities, and that, truly, is connecting people to our parliament.

If there are no other questions about the plan or about the estimates as presented, I would like to entertain a motion with respect to the 2023-2024 Legislative Assembly budget estimates. The motion, if someone is willing to move it, would be as follows: that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve the 2023-2024 Legislative Assembly of Alberta budget estimates in the amount of \$76,763,000. I see Member Williams was willing to move that motion.

Is there any further discussion, questions, comments with respect to the motion?

Seeing and hearing none, I am prepared to call the question on the motion as proposed by Member Williams that

the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve the 2023-24 Legislative Assembly of Alberta budget estimates in the amount of \$76,763,000.

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That motion is carried and so ordered.

Thank you, everyone.

Having approved the 2023-2024 LAO budget, an update to the constituency services order is required so that the budget estimates for the 2023-2024 fiscal year are properly reflected in the staffing and operating elements of the member's services allowance. The draft order has been circulated to all committee members, and I would like to open the floor to any questions, comments, concerns subject to the motion.

The motion, if someone is prepared to move it, should read as follows: that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve Constituency Services Amendment Order, 2023, as distributed or as amended. Is someone willing to make that? Member McIver. Thank you.

I'd now like to open the floor for discussion on the Members' Services amendment order should there be any.

Seeing and hearing none, I am prepared to call the question on the motion as proposed by Member McIver that

the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve the Constituency Services Amendment Order, 2023, as distributed.

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, please say aye. Opposed, please say no.

That motion is carried and so ordered.

Thank you, members.

That brings us to item 5 on our agenda, the acceptable use policy, Legislative Assembly Office information technology resources. Members, the committee has received an updated acceptable use policy for IT resources from information technology and broadcast services. It was posted on the committee's internal website last week. An acceptable use policy, AUP, is a document stipulating the best practices and constraints that a user must agree to when accessing a corporate network or using resources provided by the organization. This is a standard document, and in most organizations users are asked to sign it before equipment and credentials are provided. It outlines what is considered acceptable and, more importantly, unacceptable use and is often provided in tandem with a broader security policy.

The current acceptable use guidelines document, Information Technology Services Guidelines for LAO Employees for Acceptable Use of Computers and Network Services, has been in place for many years, with minor revisions made as required. IT and broadcast services recommends the updated acceptable use policy for IT resources be adopted effective at the beginning of the 31st Legislature. The policy would apply to both members and staff. A communication of the updated policy will be sent to existing members and staff. This is part of a larger initiative to ensure safe computing to protect equipment, infrastructure, and reputation. Other elements of this initiative include a security policy and cyber awareness training.

With that, I would like to open the floor to discussion if anyone has any questions, comments, concerns. Member McIver.

10:00

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Speaker. Let me just say that having a strong IT policy I certainly agree with. That's a good thing. Sometimes I have to wonder whether it's a little bit ridiculous, and this is what I mean by that. I had an office change ever so recently, and I couldn't download the ability to print on the printer in my office without having somebody from IT come down. It seems like that's the simplest and lowest risk of things possible, and the IT policy didn't even allow for that to happen. Again, while still

keeping the system secure, is there not a way to ease up on some of the what seem like excessive restrictions on ordinary activity?

The Chair: That is a fair question, and we do have some folks from IT here who may be able to provide some comments. Perhaps . . .

Mr. McIver: Let me also say that an IT person came with a smile on their face and fixed it, but just the fact that you had to get somebody to come to activate a printer that was assigned to me in my office . . .

The Chair: Yes. I do entirely concur with the frustration and what feels like more steps than necessary to complete a simple task. I will say at the outset – and I think this is a fair question for us to sort of navigate – that this particular policy wouldn't necessarily have impacted that challenge, but I'll have Val speak to that and ways that we can also remove barriers for safe usage amongst members.
Val.

Ms Rutherford: Thank you. Hi. I'm Val Rutherford. I'm director of IT and broadcast. I appreciate your comment. There are layers of security we put in place here. I guess that, most importantly, we protect the organization and the network, and everything is connected here, so we try to make things as easy as possible for everybody. I recognize we do put safeguards in place, and, you know, for the most part they work. Your printers are networked quite often. So as soon as you have a device on the network, we have to put safeguards in place no matter what. The consumer market right now allows for so many things, and we have to recognize we're on an enterprise network here and protecting not just the constituency office but our bigger network. We will do our best to make things as easy as possible for everybody. I appreciate you saying that we have a smile on our face because we take pride in that.

Mr. McIver: Again, it's not like people don't come. I just think it's ridiculous. I had to haul somebody up from who knows where to come and enable a printer.

Mr. Williams: Ric, we know you couldn't have done that printer on your own.

Mr. McIver: All right. I have another question, Mr. Speaker, if that's okay.

The Chair: Okay. Is it on the same topic or something . . .

Mr. McIver: No. It's slightly different.

The Chair: Okay. Dr. Ludwick, I believe, has an additional comment with respect to the first question, and then we'll move to your second one if that's fine.

Dr. Ludwick: Just briefly. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much, Member McIver. Just a comment to support what Val said. The organization is particularly sensitive to cyber risk as well, so some of the reason why we take great pains is just to manage that particular risk.

The Chair: Member McIver.

Mr. McIver: Okay. Well, again, let me go to another irritation of mine that almost daily irritates me. Is there not something that we could do to provide guest Internet for things like our constituency offices and such as that and some of the areas of the McDougall Centre or the Federal Building, the Legislature Building, even if it was like the guest Internet was completely divorced from the other systems so that there's

no crossover? It seems like a reasonable public service to offer. For example, when someone comes to my office to get something notarized or something or for whatever reason, whatever their issue or need is, wouldn't it be nice if those people that we serve, the ones that we actually work for, could actually sign on from their phone or their device and grab a document from home that they maybe forgot to bring with them or that they didn't know they needed until they were there? Is there not some type of convenience that we could offer to the people that actually are our collective bosses?

The Chair: Val, if you want to respond to this, I would – I think it's a very valid concern that Member McIver has.

Ms Rutherford: We do provide guest access. You have to request it because it's a timed access, so it's not just a . . .

Mr. McIver: So you have to ask for it every single time; is that what you're saying?

Ms Rutherford: Well, I believe it has a period of time when you request it at the Legislature. We don't have any network resources at McDougall Centre.

Mr. McIver: That's very clear, and it's really an irritation.

Ms Rutherford: In the Leg. Building we share a network – it's separate, of course – with the GOA, and that has been a discussion, whether we'd have an open Wi-Fi for guests, but for our corporate network, which – it doesn't allow guests on our corporate network. But just an Internet access: it is something you have to apply for.

Mr. McIver: Okay. Well, that's a severe customer service shortfall that we should discuss at some point.

The Chair: I think this is a valid point that you make, Ric, and I certainly, from my perspective, will take this back, and we can have some additional conversations about ways that IT may be able to provide a service and, as you've identified, perhaps have some sort of open Wi-Fi network that isn't attached to the overall network and ways that we can address this issue, particularly in the constituency setting. If you have a guest coming here, there's a likelihood that if you wanted to get them system access, you can request a password in advance, and it's not a huge deal. At the constituency level I appreciate the frustration and concern. We will take this as some direction for Dave and Shannon and I and Val to have some additional conversations about ways that we might be able to address this going forward. Obviously, it's not going to be a – maybe not obvious, but obviously it's not going to be fixed prior to the end of this Legislature. But I think it's something that we should look at.

I see Ms Gray is maybe making an indication to provide a comment.

Ms Gray: Yeah. Apologies if I'm being inaccurate, but there is guest access for constituency offices where the password changes each and every day. If you go to OurHouse and you search Wi-Fi, it will take you to the page where you can give somebody access, and I've done that in my constituency office. But the password does change daily.

Mr. McIver: It's inconvenient.

Ms Gray: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. McIver: Honestly, it's not good enough. It's bad customer service. I'm not arguing with what you said, but I think you might even agree with me that the customer service isn't what it might be.

Ms Gray: Your preference would be no passwords?

Mr. McIver: Yes. Yes. Or something that's easier than going through the process that you said where somebody can – no password would be fine, even if it was during hours that the office is open; if there was a switch on the wall or a button that someone, staff in the office, could push when they're in there to provide the public the public Wi-Fi.

The Chair: Let me . . .

Mr. McIver: Hey, I've caused enough trouble. I appreciate that you're going to consider it. Thank you.

The Chair: Yeah. Let's take it back. We'll have some ongoing discussion and see if there are ways that we can address this challenge.

Are there other questions, comments with respect to the acceptable use policy as previously mentioned?

Seeing none, the motion would be that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve the acceptable use policy information technology resources as distributed effective as of the day following the election for the next general election held in accordance with part 3 of the Election Act. Is anyone willing to move that motion? Member Rowswell.

10:10

Any other comments, questions, concerns prior to the call of the question? Seeing none, on the motion as proposed by Member Rowswell that

the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve the acceptable use policy information technology resources as distributed effective as of the day following the election for the next general election held in accordance with part 3 of the Election Act,

all those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That motion is carried and so ordered.

Members, this brings us to item 6, the approval of the January 31, 2023, meeting minutes. As you know, this is the meeting which we are currently in. As such, none of you have the minutes, but this may be the last meeting of the committee prior to the dissolution of the Legislature. It is advisable that the committee consider a method to approve what may be the final minutes for this committee. In other committees the chair has been authorized to approve the final

minutes after they've been distributed to committee members for their review. I would like to open it up to the floor to see if members are comfortable with the approval of the minutes by the chair following distribution to members.

Questions, comments, concerns? If not, I do have a motion that may be moved, that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services authorize the chair to approve the minutes of the January 31, 2023, meeting of the committee after they've been circulated to committee members for review. Member Williams to move that. Are there any other questions, comments, concerns?

Seeing and hearing none, on the motion as proposed by Member Williams that

the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services authorize the chair to approve the minutes of the January 31, 2023, meeting of the committee after they've been circulated to committee members for their review,

all those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That motion is carried and so ordered.

Hon. members, let me just say thank you so much for your effective and efficient work today. Let me extend my deepest gratitude and thank yous to the Legislative Assembly Office staff, the Clerk, all of the team at the LAO for preparation not only for our budget estimates and our strategic business plan for next year but also for the great work that they have undertaken over the last four years.

As we reflect on the end of the Legislature, it is amazing to think of what has been accomplished and, in some respects, what has been endured in what I think will go down as a very significant Legislature in Alberta's history, and each and every one of you were part of that. Thank you to the members of the Legislative Assembly staff who have made that possible. Thank you to each and every one of you. Who knows what the future holds for each of us on this committee or in the roles that we play, but I wish everyone nothing but successes in the future; some more success than others.

With that said, a motion to adjourn. The date of the next meeting will be at the call of the chair. Would a member please adjourn the meeting? Member Rowswell. All those in favour of the motion for adjournment, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. That motion is carried and so ordered.

[The committee adjourned at 10:14 a.m.]

