



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

Select Special Committee
on Electoral Boundaries

Tuesday, May 12, 2026
11:35 a.m.

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Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries

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11:35 a.m.

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

[Mr. Lundy in the chair]

The Chair: All right. Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries to order and welcome everyone in attendance.

My name is Brandon Lundy, MLA for Leduc-Beaumont and chair of the committee. I will now ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record. We'll begin to my right.

Mr. Wiebe: Ron Wiebe, MLA for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Mrs. Sawyer: Tara Sawyer, MLA for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Ms de Jonge: Chantelle de Jonge, MLA for Chestermere-Strathmore.

Ms Ganley: Good morning. Kathleen Ganley, Calgary-Mountain View.

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

Ms Govindarajan: Good morning. Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

Ms Robert: Good morning. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

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

The Chair: All right. Thank you everyone.

I will note there are no substitutions, and we have no one joining us online.

I do have a few housekeeping 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. As always, please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

I'll move us along to approval of agenda. I have a couple of notes here. First off, hon. members, I'm advising the committee that I will be opening a discussion regarding funding of the independent advisory panel under other business when we get to that portion of the agenda.

I also believe that Member Gray would like to interject at this point on this item.

Ms Gray: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Just on approval of the meeting agenda I would like to move a motion to adjust today's agenda. Our committee today doesn't have the usual notice of motions because everything was brought forward so suddenly, but we have shared our draft motion with the committee clerk in the hopes that it might be able to be put up on the screen just for the ease of all. While he's doing that, I will move that

the agenda for the May 12, 2026, meeting of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries be amended by (a) adding the following after item 3: "4. Discussion and deliberations of letter received from the Acting Chief Justice of Alberta regarding the process of appointing a chair of the independent advisory panel," and then (b) by renumbering the items 4, 5, 6, and 7 as items 5, 6, 7, and 8, respectively.

I'm prepared to motivate if that's up on the screen for all. Yes, thank you. That is my exact motion.

The Chair: Thank you. Are you willing to speak to it?

Ms Gray: I'm happy to speak to it briefly.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms Gray: I believe it might be the intention that we were to discuss this under the existing agenda item 4, but in light of the letter that we've received from the Acting Chief Justice on May 6, in which the justice refused to share the committee's letter with active and retired justices, citing it as a departure from convention and casting this process as irregular, I really wanted to make sure that we designated some time to discuss the letter we've received and what it means before moving on to the next processes as we go through. Our participation as Official Opposition in this process that we in the first meeting very clearly suggested the legitimacy is in question – I think this letter: it's really important that it get canvassed. The only change is to add that as its own agenda item and then proceed with the rest of the agenda.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you for that, Member Gray. Might I just add a brief comment. It was certainly, I guess, the intention that the letter you referenced would be a part of agenda item 4 and fully in order for discussion during that agenda item. I don't know if that perhaps negates the need for this particular motion on the agenda. I mean, all I can say is that the ability to fulsomely discuss that will be provided under agenda item 4. So those are my comments on that. I don't know if maybe you'd reconsider moving this or if we could vote.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much for those comments. I'm still happy to have it as its own agenda item if the committee should agree. Perhaps we'll just move to a vote and see if the agenda changes or not.

The Chair: Sure. Okay. I appreciate that.

Member Sawyer, I saw your hand. Go ahead.

Mrs. Sawyer: Well, I was just going to say that it's already an agenda item, so I just think it's unnecessary to make it its own. That falls under 4.

The Chair: Okay. I thank you for that.

I think it's been good discussion. Unless there's someone else, I am prepared to call the vote on this particular motion.

Seeing none, all those in favour of the motion as presented, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. Okay.

That motion has been defeated.

With that, we can move on to the approval of our agenda. Would anyone like to make a motion to adopt the agenda as presented? I see MLA Sawyer. Moved by MLA Sawyer that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries approve the proposed agenda as distributed for its May 12, 2026, meeting. Any comments? Seeing none, all those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed? That motion is carried.

All right. I can move us on to approval of minutes from the previous meeting. Are there any errors or omissions to note in the draft minutes? Seeing none, looking for a motion to approve the minutes. MLA Wiebe. Moved by MLA Wiebe that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries approve the draft minutes as distributed for its May 4, 2026, meeting. Any discussion? All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed? That motion is carried.

Moving us on to agenda item 4, which is the process of appointing a chair of the independent advisory panel. Hon. members, at our last meeting the committee directed that letters be sent to the Chief

Justices of the courts of King's Bench and appeal of Alberta. The Acting Chief Justice of Alberta provided a response to the committee last week, which was posted on the committee's internal website for committee members to review. The response from the Acting Chief Justice advised the committee that the letter it sent to the two Chief Justices, which the committee had requested be circulated amongst all current and retired justices of the two courts, would not be circulated. Therefore, the committee will need to explore alternative routes for seeking candidates for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel.

I would like to briefly note that, in addition to the motion to send the letter from the committee, the committee also passed a motion to receive self-nominations and expressions of interest from applicants by 3 p.m. on Thursday, May 14, 2026. The committee may wish to consider whether there is a need to extend that timeline given the response from the Acting Chief Justice.

I'll now open the floor to discussions on this topic. MLA Wiebe, please go ahead.

Mr. Wiebe: Mr. Chair, can I move to amend this motion to extend the date?

The Chair: That would be – yeah – allowed if that's something you'd like to do.

Mr. Wiebe: I'd love to make a motion, Mr. Chair. I move that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries extend the deadline for applications for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel approved at the committee's May 4, 2026, meeting from 3 p.m. May 14, 2026, to 3 p.m. May 26, 2026.

The Chair: Wait a sec to put that up.

MLA Wiebe, that's correct on the screen there?

Mr. Wiebe: Correct.

The Chair: Okay. MLA Wiebe, did you want to speak before I open the floor for discussion?

Mr. Wiebe: Yeah. For sure. Thank you, Chair. I'd just like to say that it gives us more time in order to ensure that we receive a strong and diverse pool of candidates. We need to rescind this motion in order to extend the deadline to May 26. While the original goal was to have the chair and the advisory panel in place by the end of the month, we need to adjust the timelines to ensure that this process isn't rushed and interested candidates have time to submit their interest. I'd also like to note the change in time will not impact the advisory panel's ability to deliver its report to the committee by October 22. I think I'll leave it there for now.

11:45

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, MLA Wiebe.

Is there any other member wishing to speak to this specific motion? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

Ms Gray: I will just speak in favour of extending more time in light of the delays that have been identified and only offer just the caution that the committee may need to be flexible. We may need to slide this again; hopefully not. But I'm supportive. This is moving it from Thursday, the 14th, to Tuesday, the 26th, so just more than an additional week here, and I think that would be reasonable.

The Chair: Thank you, Member Gray.

Are there any other members looking to weigh in?

If not, I'm prepared to call the question. All those in favour of the motion as presented, please say aye. Any opposed? All right.

That motion is carried.

We'll continue on under this agenda item. I have MLA Gray next on my list. Please go ahead.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I would like to begin by proposing a motion submitted through to the committee clerk and to the chair. The motion reads as follows:

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries (a) approve the proposed letter regarding the appointment of chair of the independent advisory panel provided by the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods to the chair on May 12, 2026, as distributed, and (b) direct the chair to send the letter to the Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench of Alberta and the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal of Alberta.

While the committee clerk is pulling that up, I will just very quickly read out the text of the letter we are proposing to be sent and then motivate, Mr. Chair.

Dear, hon. Acting Chief Justice of Alberta:

On behalf of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries (the committee) I thank you for your letter of May 6, 2026. We regret that the court has been placed in this difficult position. In order to reset our process and in line with our obligation under Government Motion 37 to appoint an independent chair of the independent advisory panel and to ensure that no retired judge who may be affected by the concerns raised in your letter is considered for the position of chair, we respectfully request a recommendation of one or more sitting justices that could serve as chair of the independent advisory panel. We undertake that the committee will only consider for the position of chair a sitting judge put forward in such a recommendation. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Aaron Roth.

Signed as you as the chair, Mr. Chair.

The reason that I move this motion is because I think it's incredibly concerning, the letter that we received from the Acting Chief Justices and their rejection of participating in this process, citing the irregularity of what's been asked of them. Our concerns raised in the first meeting of this committee were strongly expressed and based around our concern around the legitimacy of this process. One of the ways that we can improve the process and bring legitimacy to it is to make sure that important institutions like the Acting Chief Justices, who traditionally are part of nominating people to the Electoral Boundaries Commission, continue to be part of this. We have supported moving the date to allow for more time. However, I think it's incredibly important that we as a committee do the work that might be necessary to get help from and advice from those independent Chief Justices, who not only are familiar with the process and familiar with being asked to participate on Electoral Boundaries Commission appointment processes but are now raising concerns about the irregularity of what's happening.

I will also note that Government Motion 37 uses the word "independent" repeatedly when it comes to choosing the chair and the panel members. The best way to ensure independence is not to accept or use the self-nominations but to instead ask for and get the recommendations from the Chief Justices. If you want independence, that is what we need. Alternatively, everyone will wonder: of those who self-nominated, who approached them and suggested that they come in and do that? How did they come to this process? What motivations may they bring with them? A recommendation from the Acting Chief Justice, which was something that happened in the main Electoral Boundaries Commission process, should and could happen here, and we do that by engaging with the letter that was

sent to us and responding to the very real concerns contained therein. That is why I have put forward that motion.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Member Gray.

Are there any other members looking to join in? MLA Sawyer, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

Mrs. Sawyer: Thank you, Mr. Chair. While I do appreciate the member and her reasonings, I'm going to respectfully disagree. I do think it's disappointing that the Chief Justice would not send out that letter to include all the judges, both active and retired, because that gives us a larger pool of people to be able to potentially put their names forward. You know, I've said it before, that all of them would be qualified, and I think by having that larger pool, it allows for greater transparency within the process. I think it's very important.

While the member mentioned Government Motion 37, I will mention as well the fact that that motion that we are under instructions to follow very clearly states retired judges as an option – right? – active judges or even postsecondary. In my opinion that is the mandate we're under, so they should all be within our letter that we put forward. For that reason, I'm not going to be in support of that motion.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Sawyer.

MLA Ganley, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

Ms Ganley: Yeah. I just wanted to note that these process things, while they may appear legalistic, generally have a purpose, right? The purpose of the Chief Justice being involved in the selection, normally, of the chair of an electoral boundaries committee is to avoid any potential conflict or appearance of conflict, which is, like, a very critical thing in any form of law, avoiding that sort of potential conflict where someone's motivations may be in the wrong direction. Now, I'm not suggesting that anyone's motivations are in the wrong direction. These rules exist because we don't want to open the door to that. We don't want to open the door to favour trading with the chair of a committee that's this important. That's why the Chief Justice has historically played this role.

Now, I understand that this advisory committee is only reporting to MLAs, who are actually drawing the boundaries, so it's not the same as the commission. But it's clear that the advisory committee has been structured to sort of at least look like a commission, which would normally make the decisions independently, so I think we should stick as closely as we can to that process. I think that the concerns raised by the Chief Justice are incredibly legitimate, and I think that it's now clear that it's not just the opposition, right? It's the Chief Justice as well who has some concerns about this process.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Are there any other members looking to join in on this debate? MLA Gray, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

Ms Gray: Thank you. Just to respond to MLA Sawyer's comments, I think that it would be an absolute mistake to prioritize a larger pool of applicants over a recommendation, somebody selected by the Acting Chief Justice. I think pointing to the previous processes that have been used based on the legislation and the history is incredibly important, and to suggest that the Acting Chief Justice is not perfectly qualified to select a capable and independent chair is bordering on shocking.

11:55

I think that if this committee wants to have any grounds to stand on for the legitimacy of this process – how we've gotten here

already is very out of the norm, certainly not part of what has happened in the past, and as the justice pointed out in their letter, irregular. Trust in this process has already been broken. At the first meeting any motions to increase transparency were voted down by government committee members. If they will not listen to the Official Opposition, I implore them to listen to the Chief Justices and to return to something more in line with the regular process. I think we have that opportunity. I think we resend the letter and make a commitment to allowing the Acting Chief Justices to help us choose a neutral chair to bring some more independence to this.

Again, I will note that Government Motion 37 uses the word "independent" repeatedly, and the way we do that is by putting in a process that makes sense. We've had conversations about retired judges or not, and those motions were decided at the last meeting. I don't mean to relitigate them, but that conversation essentially mirrored specific concerns raised by the acting Chief Justice, and I am concerned that the government wants to be able to choose their preferred chair. That is not an independent choice. That is not an independent process. The independence of the chair is key, and we have the Acting Chief Justice that we can go to if we send this letter and make that commitment.

Again, I think a larger pool is not better. We need a neutral judge for this process, and I think we need to re-engage and send the version of the letter that I have proposed rather than rely on self-nominations and questions of: is this legitimate or not? If you want this process to proceed, I strongly encourage you to support my motion.

The Chair: All right. Thank you, MLA Gray.

Are there any other members wishing to join the debate?

All right. Seeing none, I'm prepared to call the question. All those in favour of the motion as presented, please say aye. Are there any members opposed to the motion as presented?

Ms Gray: A recorded vote, please, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: As soon as I announce that our motion has been defeated. That motion is defeated.

A recorded vote has been requested, so I'll ask that those in the room who are in favour of the motion please raise your hand.

Mr. Roth: Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

The Chair: All right. For those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Wiebe, Mrs. Sawyer, Ms de Jonge.

Mr. Chair, total for the motion, 2; total against, 3.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

That motion is defeated.

I can continue us along on agenda item 4. I see MLA Wiebe with his hand. Please go ahead, sir.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to make a motion and move that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries approve a draft letter addressed to the current and retired judges of the Court of King's Bench of Alberta and the Court of Appeal of Alberta and the presidents of all postsecondary institutions in Alberta calling for self-nominations and expressions of interest in the position of chair of the independent advisory panel provided by the member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti to the chair at the committee's May 12, 2026, meeting, as distributed and directed by the Legislative Assembly Office to provide the letter:

- (1) to the presidents of all postsecondary institutions of Alberta, and
- (2) the Ministry of Justice, the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta branch, and Law Society of Alberta requesting that they:
 - (a) circulate the letter calling for expressions of interest in the position to all current and retired judges of the Court of King's Bench of Alberta and the Court of Appeal of Alberta, and
 - (b) post a copy of the letter on the Legislative Assembly public website and a link to that post on its social media accounts of the Legislative Assembly, and
 - (c) distribute a copy of the letter to media outlets.

The Chair: All right. We're going to work to get that on the screen, MLA Wiebe, just for your chance to review, and then I will give you a chance, of course, to speak to this.

I might just note that the letter referenced in your motion was posted on our internal site earlier this morning as well, so I just want to let everyone know that.

It looks like we have it up. MLA Wiebe, is that what you were hoping to move?

Mr. Wiebe: Yes, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: All right. Thank you. I will now give you a chance to speak to your motion.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the letter speaks for itself. The communication plan proposes multiple ways to communicate the call for expressions of interest. Yeah. The letter and e-mail to the Minister of Justice and the Law Society and the Bar Association: Justice and the Law Society and Bar Association are in the best position to ensure that all letters are sent to all current and retired judges. It's critical that eligible candidates are notified as quickly as possible to ensure that they have ample time to prepare their expressions of interest and CV before the deadline of May 26. I'll leave it at that for now.

The Chair: Thank you very much, MLA Wiebe. I'll now open the floor to discussion.

MLA Ganley, I saw your hand up. Please go ahead.

Ms Ganley: Yeah. I have a couple of points to make and an amendment to move. First of all, we're suggesting to circulate the letter to the presidents of postsecondary institutions, but I understand that the committee has previously decided that only justices and retired justices, the latter over our objections, be considered.

I would also like to point out that I imagine the Canadian Bar Association would have some pretty deep concerns about circulating this letter. Probably similar, although I will let them speak for themselves. I would be interested to know if members reached out before they did this. I would be pretty deeply disappointed in my regulator if the Law Society was willing to circulate this in light of the comments that the Chief Justice has made. I also think that it is very unfair to justices and retired justices to essentially circumvent the Chief Justice in this particular way, so I would like to move an amendment to say that if you are going to try to circulate this letter, that

a copy of the Chief Justice's letter to this committee be attached.

The Chair: Okay. An amendment has been moved. We're just working to get that up on screen. A little patience as we make sure we get this right up on the screen.

Ms Ganley: Yes. Apologies, Mr. Chair. I didn't have specific language. I guess – you know what? I'm going to let them draft, not intervene.

12:05

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms Ganley: Sorry. As that drafting is under way, I have looked back now at the meeting minutes. We were only seeking applications from justices and retired justices. We didn't actually limit the pool. So I do want to amend that statement on my part. I think I misremembered.

The Chair: Thank you.

All right. We have the amendment on our screen. Ms Ganley, do you want to go ahead and speak to it?

Ms Ganley: Yeah. Basically, what I'm attempting to do here is make any potential applicant aware of why we have gone outside the normal process of collaborating with the Chief Justice. I think that applicants deserve to know that and to consider that information when making an application to be part of this process. I know if I was one of these applicants, I would want to be live to those concerns because I think they are legitimate. Because Chief Justices have historically been consulted, the courts will have sort of a record of, like, what normally happens and what the usual process is, and I think that that information is important for any potential applicant before bringing forward their name to be associated with this.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Is there anyone else wishing to speak to this amendment? MLA Wiebe, please go ahead.

Mr. Wiebe: Yeah. I don't think that this letter is important to attach. It already exists publicly, so there's no reason to attach this letter. I would be voting no on that.

The Chair: All right.

Is there anyone else wishing to join in? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

Ms Gray: Just very quickly. I support this amendment by my colleague. I think we would be unfair to judges and others asking them to enter into this without the benefit of the full context. I think attaching the letter would be a simple action that increases the transparency of what is happening and respects the people that we are engaging with on this. So I support this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Gray.

Any others wishing to join in?

Seeing none, I'm prepared to call the question on this amendment. All those in favour of the amendment, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That amendment is defeated.

Ms Gray: Can we do a quick record, please?

The Chair: Sure.

A recorded vote has been requested. Those in the room who are in favour of the amendment, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

The Chair: All right. All those in the room who are opposed to the amendment, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Wiebe, Mrs. Sawyer, Ms de Jonge.
Mr. Chair, total for the motion, two. Total against, three.

The Chair: Thank you.
That amendment has been defeated.
We can continue debate on the main motion. Is there anyone else wishing to join in debate at this time?
All right. Seeing none, I am prepared to call the question on the main motion as presented on the screen here. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed?
That motion has been carried.
All right. Are there any other motions or discussion related to agenda item 4? MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

Ms Ganley: Yes. I would like to move a motion, and I'll thank MLA Wiebe in advance for his support of the motion since he just mentioned the letter being public. That's exactly what I'd like to speak to. I believe the committee clerk has this one already. Basically, the motion I would be moving is to direct that the letter received by the chair of the committee from the Acting Chief Justice of Alberta on May 6, 2026, be posted publicly on the legislative agenda website.
Do you want me to wait for this to . . .

Mr. Roth: Sorry. Can you just . . .

Ms Ganley: Oh. Sorry. That the chair of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries direct that the letter received by the chair of the committee from the Acting Chief Justice of Alberta on May 6, 2026, be posted publicly on the legislative agenda website.

The Chair: Up on the screen.

Ms Ganley: Do you want me to wait, Mr. Chair, or motivate?

The Chair: I think we're – it should be very momentarily, I would think. There we go. We'll refresh here.
Okay. Is that correct, MLA Ganley?

12:15

Ms Ganley: Yes. That is correct.

The Chair: All right. Please go ahead and speak to it.

Ms Ganley: It is my present understanding that the letter is not public. I think in light of the fact that Albertans are deeply concerned about this process – the opposition is on record numerous times citing it as something we believe is illegitimate. We have op-eds and letters and constant public statements from political scientists and members of the bar and many, many other concerned citizens talking about why this process is problematic. I think making this letter public is something that is in the public interest, and I thank MLA Wiebe in advance for his support. I don't understand it to be public currently, but I think that it should be public, and I think that we should all be able to agree that these deliberations should be on the record. That is my reasoning.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Ganley.
I will open the floor for any comments or members to chime in on this motion. MLA Gray. Sorry, go ahead. I saw you first.

Ms Gray: Thank you so much. Just quickly, I support this motion. Our amendments to attach this letter in correspondence that is

outgoing was defeated in part because the statement was made that the letter is already public. This just fulfills that. Again, we're no longer sending this letter out as we solicit self-nominations, but I think we need to make it public and available, again, out of respect for the people who will be involved in this process, for clarity of the public record, and because I think it's important what the Acting Chief Justice has said to the committee.
Thank you.

The Chair: All right. MLA Wiebe, I'll honour your hand. Please, go ahead.

Mr. Wiebe: Thank you. I think I may have misspoke, so I just want to strike that from the record.
Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, MLA Wiebe.
Looking to see if there's anyone else who might be interested in joining our debate on this. MLA de Jonge, please go ahead.

Ms de Jonge: Yeah. Thank you, Chair. Happy to speak to the motion. I don't believe correspondence is typically made public. In that case, you know, I would vote against the motion made by the hon. member to make it public this time.

The Chair: Okay. MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

Ms Ganley: I just want to state for the record, Mr. Chair, that this isn't private correspondence between private parties that I am attempting to make public. It is correspondence about a public process, normally a public process that would be done independently, in this case a public process which is being done by MLAs, which is entirely inappropriate. But in light of the fact that we are where we are, like, this is a communication from the Chief Justice of Alberta about concerns about a process.

She makes no particular opinions at this time on the constitutionality, but it is my opinion that constitutional concerns, specifically the right to vote, is engaged here. I think there is nothing that can be more in the public interest than the public's right to vote. We're not talking about private correspondence. We're talking about correspondence that is highly relevant to the right of every citizen in this province to vote. I think it's pretty critical that it be made public.

The Chair: MLA Gray, please go ahead.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much. Unless the chair or the committee clerk can correct me, the letter as posted does not have anything noting confidentiality. There wasn't any noted confidentiality in the subject line, and as I look at the letter, looking for anything that might be private or marked as confidential, it reads:

Dear Mr. Lundy:

Thank you for your letter of May 4, 2026, addressed to Chief Justice Khullar and Chief Justice Davidson regarding requests for self-nominations by retired or current judges of the Court of King's Bench or the Court of Appeal of Alberta for appointments as Chair to the Independent Advisory Panel.

We have been advised that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries is actively seeking retired judges from both the Court of King's Bench and the Court of Appeal to fill this role. Given this advice and the irregularity of this process, the Courts will refrain from disseminating your May 4, 2026, letter or providing any input on the selection of Chair.

In taking this position, we make no judgment at this time as to the propriety of the legislation, which was enacted after the Electoral Boundaries Commission completed its work. Pursuant to the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, when properly

constituted commissions are established, the protocol has always been that the Chief Justice of Alberta be consulted for advice in respect of presently sitting or retired judges who may wish to offer themselves to accept the role. This convention should be respected with regard to any commissions appointed under that Act.

Signed by the Acting Chief Justice of Alberta.

In none of that did I see any language around confidentiality, so I don't think that the concern by MLA de Jonge that there was an expectation of confidentiality here would be accurate, and I hope all members support publicly posting this to the committee website.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Gray.

I might just provide some information for members. Not trying to influence things one way or the other, but I was advised by the table that the letter would be part of our minutes once those are approved at the next meeting, so that would be posted as part of our minutes for next meeting. I just wanted to make committee members aware.

Ms Gray: Thank you. That is helpful, but given that we have just changed the dates to I think it was May 26 for applications and given that we've already discussed that this is of material interest to anyone applying to be chair and given that we don't know when the date of the next meeting is, if it's going to be posted publicly eventually, let's post it publicly now so that people who are applying are aware of it. There's no reason not to do that. We're just moving that forward a little bit. I appreciate the clarity from the table about how this will become public. Let's just do it now.

The Chair: Thank you for those comments.

Is there anyone else wishing to speak to this motion?

Okay. Seeing none, I'm prepared to call this question. All those in favour of the motion as presented, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. All right.

That motion is defeated.

Ms Gray: A recorded vote, please.

The Chair: Sure. A recorded vote has been requested. Those in the room who are in favour of the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

The Chair: All right. Those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Wiebe, Mrs. Sawyer, Ms de Jonge.

Mr. Chair, total for the motion, two; total against, three.

The Chair: Thank you.

That motion has been defeated.

Are there any other discussions or motions related to agenda item 4?

Okay. Seeing none, I'm prepared to move us on to agenda item 5, other business.

Oh, wait. Sorry. MLA Ganley, go ahead.

Ms Ganley: No, it was under 5. Sorry.

The Chair: Oh, okay.

As I tipped us off, I have a piece of business under other business, and then I will reopen the door for other committee members.

Hon. members, as the committee is aware, clause C(g) of Government Motion 37, which has provided the committee its mandate, indicates that

the committee be authorized to pay the following:

- (i) remuneration and travelling and living expenses of the independent advisors as it relates to carrying out the independent advisory panel's mandate;
- (ii) reasonable disbursements incurred by the independent advisory panel for the effective conduct of its responsibilities.

Hon. members, in the execution of their responsibilities it is reasonable to expect that the independent adviser may incur a number of costs. At our May 4, 2026, meeting the committee approved the remuneration and expenses rubric for independent panel advisers. Other possible costs that might be incurred are likely to include staffing costs – for example, GIS staff necessary to produce maps – software licensing, possibly a report writer, the production of reports and maps, et cetera.

12:25

Based on expenses for the recent '25-26 Electoral Boundaries Commission the Legislative Assembly Office has put together a rough estimate of some costs that may be incurred by the independent advisory panel. Hon. members, I'd like to note that the Legislative Assembly Office had not anticipated the establishment of this committee and the independent advisory review panel when it prepared its '26-27 estimates earlier this year. Therefore, it may be prudent for the committee to consider making a request to the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services for supplementary funding to the Legislative Assembly Office 2026-27 budget of up to \$450,000 to support the independent advisory panel. It is important to note that this request does not mean that the panel will necessarily use the full amount requested, and of course any unused amounts would be returned to the general revenue fund, as is the case with any appropriation. Although the committee does not know all the details of how the independent advisory panel will proceed with carrying out its work, it would be prudent for this committee to make this funding request and to authorize the chair to put forward the request to the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services.

Therefore, I'd like to open the floor to any comments, questions, or motions on the subject of making such a request to the Members' Services Committee. MLA Wiebe, I caught your hand. Do you have a motion or a comment?

Mr. Wiebe: Yeah. I'd like to make a motion. I move that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries authorize the chair to make a request to the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services for the supplementary funding in the amount of \$450,000 to the Legislative Assembly Office for the '26-27 fiscal year to support the committee.

The Chair: Before you formally make the motion official, I think there's one quick update we'd like. If you wouldn't mind reading that into the record, MLA Wiebe.

Mr. Wiebe: Okay. I'd like to move that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries authorize the chair to write a letter to the Speaker on behalf of the committee requesting that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services approve supplementary funding in the amount of \$450,000 to the Legislative Assembly Office for the '26-27 fiscal year to support the committee.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Wiebe. We'll just pop that up on the screen. That is what you read into the record. All right.

Mr. Wiebe: Correct.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Wiebe. Did you want to speak to that briefly?

Mr. Wiebe: No. I think you already laid it out, Mr. Chair, so I think I've got no further comments.

The Chair: All right. Thank you, sir.

Is there anyone wishing to join? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

Ms Gray: As well as noting that \$450,000 is being requested for the implementation of the government's irregular Government Motion 37, I would like to note that more than \$1 million was spent already to develop the Electoral Boundaries Commission report, which included with it a majority recommendation that the government should have implemented. Not only is trust being broken with the Alberta public because of this process, but it is costing taxpayers an extra half million dollars to change and redo something the government should have accepted: the majority report. I certainly object to this misuse of taxpayer dollars for political purposes on behalf of the government, and I wanted to register my objection on the record.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Gray.

Is there anyone else wishing to join the debate?

Seeing none, I'm prepared to call this question. All those in favour of the motion as presented, please say aye. Any opposed? All right.

That motion is carried.

Ms Gray: Recorded, please.

The Chair: All right. We have a request for a recorded vote. Those in the room who are in favour of the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Wiebe, Mrs. Sawyer, Ms de Jonge.

The Chair: All right. Those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

Mr. Chair, total for the motion, three; total against, two.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

That motion is carried.

All right. Are there any other items under new business? MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

Ms Ganley: Yes, Mr. Chair. I would like to move a motion, and I believe that the committee clerk has it. The motion is that

The Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries, having received the May 6, 2026, letter of the Acting Chief Justice of Alberta to the chair regarding the appointment of a chair of the independent advisory panel, direct the Legislative Assembly Office to draft an interim report of the committee, which shall include the following recommendations: (1) that Government Motion 37 be rescinded, thereby dissolving the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries, and (2) that a government motion be introduced in the Legislative Assembly to adopt without alteration the 2025-26 Electoral Boundaries Commission report as authored by Justice Dallas K. Miller, Greg Clark, and Susan Samson, and authorize the chair to approve the draft report after the committee members have had the opportunity to review it.

Did you want me to wait for that to get up before I motivate?

The Chair: Certainly, we're working to get that on the screen, but if you would like to go ahead and motivate.

Ms Ganley: Sure. Essentially, what this does is what we should have done in the first place, which is to say that it gets rid of this committee where MLAs pick their voters, and it instead re-establishes the normal process. I think it was one thing when members of the public were coming forward and making this concern, when we as the opposition were raising this concern, but I think we have some level of validity to that, the Acting Chief Justice, and I think she was careful in her words to not presuppose any potential litigation on this matter or anything like that. It's clear that she has termed the process as irregular. I would term it as illegitimate.

The purpose of this motion is essentially to reinstitute what should have been the case the first time around, which is that we had an independent commission. The UCP were involved in appointing the majority. The chair was picked in the normal process. They recommended maps to the Legislative Assembly, and we should simply adopt those.

The Chair: Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Is there any other member who would like to join this debate right now? I'll go to MLA Sawyer quickly.

Mrs. Sawyer: What I would say – I won't be in support of this motion, firstly. This committee was gathered based on Government Motion 37, and that was passed in the Assembly. The purpose of this advisory panel was to consider the majority report recommendation in the addendum by Justice Miller, so Justice Dallas Miller. You know, that's the work we're here to do. As someone who, as an Albertan, cares about the process that happened, I think it's important for all of us that we have that fair representation within the province as our province has grown. That addendum spoke to the issue. That's why we had the motion that went through. So I'm not going to be in support of this.

The Chair: Okay. Before we keep our list here, I will need to ask for unanimous consent to go past our scheduled end date. If there's any member who does not consent, please indicate now. All right. We now are able to go past our 12:35 end time.

MLA Gray, please go ahead.

Ms Gray: Thank you. Being aware that the Legislature is sitting soon, I won't belabour the points, but I do want to say on the record that we are talking about spending a half million dollars on a process that the Acting Chief Justice of our province declined to participate in because of how irregular it is, that numerous constitutional experts, concerned citizens, and others have objected to this process.

12:35

To be very clear – MLA Sawyer, I'll have to review *Hansard* – but we can't talk about the majority and the addendum as if they are the same thing. There was a single majority report. One of the five panel members also wrote an addendum, but that does not negate the majority report, and it clearly says in the electoral boundaries final report that the majority supports the adoption of the majority report, and that included the chair, Dallas K. Miller. The majority wanted the majority report submitted, and every attempt to give this process even a modicum of independence and fairness is being resisted by government members all the way through.

Government members passed Government Motion 37. Now, anything we do to try to increase transparency has been blocked across these two meetings. I think that an interim report and sending

this back to the Legislature now before the Legislature rises is the best course of action, and I strongly encourage all members to support this motion put forward by my colleague.

Apologies. One last thought, which is the Legislature is currently debating Bill 32, which is fundamental to this because it changes the number of seats in the province. Given Bill 32 is currently being debated, we should pass this motion and get this back into the Assembly so that we can deal with it before the Legislature rises. The government has used a programming motion to limit all debate. We know the Legislature is likely to rise this week, and so the time is now for this committee to do the right thing.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

Anyone else wishing to join in on this debate? All right. Seeing none, I'm prepared to call the question on the motion on the screen. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That motion is defeated

We have a request for a recorded vote. Those in the room who are in favour of the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

The Chair: All right. Those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Wiebe, Mrs. Sawyer, Ms. de Jonge.

Mr. Chair, total for the motion, two. Total against, three.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

That motion is defeated.

Are there any other items under other business? Seeing none, I'll move us on our agenda to the date of the next meeting, which is at the call of the chair.

With that I will move us to adjournment. Is there anyone who'd like to make a motion to adjourn? MLA Sawyer.

So moved by MLA Sawyer that the May 12, 2026 meeting of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries be adjourned. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed? That motion is carried.

[The committee adjourned at 12:38 p.m.]

