



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature
Second Session

Select Special
Chief Electoral Officer
Search Committee

Thursday, November 19, 2009
4:47 p.m.

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**Select Special Chief Electoral Officer
Search Committee**

Mitzel, Len, Cypress-Medicine Hat (PC), Chair
Lund, Ty, Rocky Mountain House (PC), Deputy Chair
Bhullar, Manmeet Singh, Calgary-Montrose (PC)
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL)
Campbell, Robin, West Yellowhead (PC)
Horne, Fred, Edmonton-Rutherford (PC)
Lukaszuk, Thomas A., Edmonton-Castle Downs (PC)
MacDonald, Hugh, Edmonton-Gold Bar (AL)
Marz, Richard, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (PC)
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (ND)
Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon (PC)

Support Staff

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Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Shannon Dean	Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Communications Services
Melanie Friesacher	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Liz Sim	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

4:47 p.m.**Thursday, November 19, 2009**

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

The Chair: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We should get started, I think. I would like to call the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee meeting to order.

We'll have everyone introduce themselves for the record. I'm Len Mitzel, Cypress-Medicine Hat. I chair the committee.

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

Mr. Campbell: Robin Campbell, MLA, West Yellowhead.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Thomas Lukaszuk, Edmonton-Castle Downs.

Mr. Horne: Fred Horne, Edmonton-Rutherford.

Dr. McNeil: David McNeil, Clerk of the Assembly.

Ms Sales: Tracey Sales, communications consultant with the Legislative Assembly Office.

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

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

Ms Blakeman: Laurie Blakeman. I'd like to welcome everyone to my sunseting constituency of Edmonton-Centre.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you.

Before we call for a motion to approve the agenda, I'd like to just provide notice that we'll be calling on our communications staff to speak to issues under other business. Can I have a motion to approve the agenda? Moved by Thomas that the agenda for the November 19 meeting of the committee be adopted as circulated. All in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

Can I have a motion to adopt the minutes of the November 16 meeting? Moved by Mr. Campbell that the minutes of the November 16 meeting be adopted as circulated. Any errors or omissions in those minutes? Hearing none, all in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

This takes us to item 4, the draft report of the recommendation for the position of Chief Electoral Officer.

For the record Mr. Bhullar and Mr. Marz have also joined us in our meeting.

Before we adopt our draft report on the record, I'd like to report to the committee on the meeting with our candidate of choice, so I'd ask for a motion to move in camera for a few minutes.

Mr. Rogers: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Rogers. All in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

[The committee met in camera from 4:49 p.m. to 5:11 p.m.]

The Chair: Okay. We are back on the record, and I'd ask Mr. Lund to make a motion, please.

Mr. Lund: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee approve the draft report dated November 19, 2009, and recommend the appointment of Olaf Brian Fjeldheim to the position of Chief Electoral Officer and authorize the Speaker to enter into a contract with Mr. Fjeldheim effective at the time of the appointment.

The Chair: Any discussion in this respect? If not, I'll call the question on the motion. All in favour of that motion? Opposed?

Ms Blakeman: Opposed.

Mr. MacDonald: For the record, please, Mr. Chairman, I would like my name noted as opposed to this recommendation.

The Chair: There were two opposed.

Ms Blakeman: Yes.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much.

This takes us to other business. I'd like to call on Tracey Sales, communications consultant for the LAO, to address the media release with respect to the Chief Electoral Officer appointment.

Ms Sales: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've prepared a draft news release, that Karen is handing out right now. As the committee's recommendation was just announced, it is now public. As this is a topic that could be of interest to the media, I'm recommending that the committee approve the release, to be distributed immediately following this meeting. The wording of the release is specific to the fact that the committee is only announcing their recommendation and that the motion will still need to go before the House, but this will ensure that the media has accurate information to report.

The Chair: Thank you, Tracey.

Any questions from the committee? Mr. MacDonald.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first paragraph: "The all-party search committee mandated . . ." I would like to see that worded differently. One would assume that the all-party committee agreed unanimously to support this recommendation for the appointment of Mr. Fjeldheim to the role of the Chief Electoral Officer, but I think it should be noted that it wasn't unanimous.

The Chair: I think that in the motion it mentioned it wasn't unanimous. Certainly, there'll be an opportunity as well in the House when the report is presented to the floor, I believe.

Mr. MacDonald: For the record, when will this motion be? Will it be Motion 18?

The Chair: I believe it'll be next week.

Ms Blakeman: It'll go on notice on Monday, so any time the government calls it.

Dr. McNeil: It could be debated as early as Wednesday.

The Chair: Mr. Rogers, then Mr. Marz.

Mr. Rogers: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With all due respect to the

Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, I really believe he's splitting hairs. The committee had a mandate to select a Chief Electoral Officer, and the committee will recommend. The fact that it was not unanimous is a matter for the record but certainly, I believe, has no part in the release. This concludes the work of the committee. I really believe, with all due respect to the hon. member, that your trying to change the wording here is just splitting hairs.

Mr. Marz: Just a point, Mr. Chairman. The correct name for this committee is the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee, if that would be suitable.

The Chair: It says all-party search. That's correct. It should be select.

Dr. McNeil: Put the official name in there is what you're saying.

Mr. Marz: Yeah. Put the official name in. Everybody knows the official name. It's an all-party committee, but probably the correct way to do it is to properly name the committee.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you. So noted.

Mr. MacDonald: The wisdom of Mr. Marz. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Are there no other questions?

Mr. Lund, you are prepared to make the motion that the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee approve the draft media release as distributed and that the committee chair be designated the primary spokesperson in this respect.

Mr. Lund: I have.

The Chair: Are you ready for the question? All in favour of that motion? Opposed? That motion is carried.

Ms Blakeman: That was the media release motion.

The Chair: With regard to the media release is someone prepared to make the motion on the suggested amended change?

Mr. Campbell: What amended change?

The Chair: That instead of saying all-party search committee, it's Select Special CEO Search Committee.

Mr. Campbell: Yeah, I'll make that motion.

The Chair: All right. Any other questions on that? All in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

Okay. I'll be tabling the committee report next week.

Any other items for discussion under other business?

If not, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the committee and the support staff for their hard work and for accommodating the search schedule. It's been a long one, and our mandate now is complete.

Would someone move that we adjourn? Moved by Mr. Bhullar. All in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 5:16 p.m.]

