



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Legislative Offices

Monday, June 24, 2013
11:33 a.m.

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Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Cao, Wayne C.N., Calgary-Fort (PC), Chair
McDonald, Everett, Grande Prairie-Smoky (PC), Deputy Chair

Bikman, Gary, Cardston-Taber-Warner (W)
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL)
Brown, Dr. Neil, QC, Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (PC)
DeLong, Alana, Calgary-Bow (PC)
Dorward, David, Edmonton-Gold Bar (PC)*
Eggen, David, Edmonton-Calder (ND)
Jablonski, Mary Anne, Red Deer-North (PC)**
Leskiw, Genia, Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)
Quadri, Sohail, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC)
Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont (PC)
Wilson, Jeff, Calgary-Shaw (W)

* substitution for Neil Brown

** substitution for George Rogers

Legislative Officers

Jill Clayton	Information and Privacy Commissioner
Del Graff	Child and Youth Advocate
Peter Hourihan	Ombudsman, Public Interest Commissioner
Lori McKee-Jeske	Acting Chief Electoral Officer
Merwan Saher	Auditor General
Neil R. Wilkinson	Ethics Commissioner

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer Participants

Benedicta Pui	Senior Management Assistant
Bill Sage	Acting Director, Election Finances

Support Staff

W.J. David McNeil	Clerk
Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Law Clerk/Director of Interparliamentary Relations
Shannon Dean	Senior Parliamentary Counsel/ Director of House Services
Cheryl Scarlett	Director of Human Resources, Information Technology and Broadcast Services
Philip Massolin	Manager of Research Services
Stephanie LeBlanc	Legal Research Officer
Sarah Leonard	Legal Research Officer
Nancy Zhang	Legislative Research Officer
Nancy Robert	Research Officer
Corinne Dacyshyn	Committee Clerk
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Christopher Tyrell	Committee Clerk
Leah Kirtio	House Services Administrative Assistant
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services
Jeanette Dotimas	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Janet Schwegel	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

11:33 a.m.

Monday, June 24, 2013

[Mr. Cao in the chair]

The Chair: First of all, I want to call our meeting to order. I'm pleased to chair the meeting of the Legislative Offices Committee. Since my appointment, in fact, this is the first time I've chaired this meeting. I would like to welcome all the hon. members, staff, and guests to the meeting.

I would like to ask the members and those joining the committee at the table to please introduce themselves for the record. Those who are substituting for another member, please say so as well. We also have, of course, members waiting on the line. Please introduce yourself as well.

Now let's go around the table. I'm Wayne Cao, MLA, Calgary-Fort, chair of the committee.

Mr. McDonald: Everett McDonald, deputy chair, Grande Prairie-Smoky.

Mr. Quadri: Sohail Quadri, MLA, Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Mrs. Leskiw: Genia Leskiw, Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

Mrs. Jablonski: Good morning. Mary Anne Jablonski, MLA, Red Deer-North. I'm substituting for MLA George Rogers.

Ms Blakeman: Good morning. I'd like to welcome each and every one of you to my fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre. My name is Laurie Blakeman.

Mrs. Scarlett: Cheryl Scarlett, Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Sage: Bill Sage, Elections Alberta.

Ms McKee-Jeske: Lori McKee-Jeske, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and currently acting in the role of Chief Electoral Officer. Good morning.

Ms Pui: Benedicta Pui, Elections Alberta.

Mr. Eggen: Good morning. I'm David Eggen, MLA for Edmonton-Calder.

Mr. Reynolds: Good morning. I'm Rob Reynolds, Law Clerk and director of interparliamentary relations.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: Well, thank you.

How about our members on the line?

Mr. Bikman: Gary Bikman, Cardston-Taber-Warner.

Mr. Wilson: Jeff Wilson, Calgary-Shaw.

Mr. Dorward: David Dorward, standing in for Neil Brown, the MLA for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

The Chair: I think those are all the members on the teleconference.

The meeting materials were posted on the committee's internal website last week. If anyone requires copies of these documents, please let our committee clerk know about it.

First, before we go on, there are a few housekeeping items to address before we turn to the business at hand. The microphones that we have are operated by the *Hansard* staff. Please, just like me here – I have my cellular phone in my pocket now, away from the table, because it can interfere with the audio system. The audio

of the committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and recorded by *Hansard*.

The first item on our agenda. Please, hon. members, you have the documents. Look at the agenda. We have 10 items on the agenda. An hon. member to move?

Mr. Quadri: I can move the agenda.

The Chair: The hon. member Sohail Quadri has moved that the agenda be accepted. Thank you. All in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

All right. Hon. members on the teleconference, do you want to say something? I assume your silence is approval. Are you still on the line?

Mr. Wilson: That's a strong assumption, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. Do you support it?

Mr. Bikman: Yes.

Mr. Dorward: Yeah. Fine.

The Chair: Okay. All right. It's carried, then, unanimously.

Now we're going to the minutes of the last meeting, February 14, 2013. You've probably already scanned through it. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, Laurie Blakeman, has moved that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted. All in favour? How about on the phone line? Okay. The minutes of the last meeting are accepted.

Now we get to the items for the meeting here. There's a request for supplementary funding for 2013-2014 by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer. I'd like to welcome Ms Lori McKee-Jeske, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer as well as Mr. Sage and Ms Pui to the meeting. The committee is considering a request from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer for supplementary funding. Members should have copies of Mr. Fjeldheim's correspondence, dated April 4, outlining the request, and Ms McKee-Jeske's revised request, dated June 17.

Ms McKee-Jeske, please go ahead and give your presentation. If you could keep your remarks within 10 minutes or so, this will leave us sufficient time for questions by the committee and explanation.

11:40

Ms McKee-Jeske: Thank you, sir. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to provide some additional information in support of our supplementary funding request. Introductions have already taken place, so with your permission I'm just going to move straight into our presentation.

Brian Fjeldheim, the former Chief Electoral Officer, submitted a request to the committee for \$155,000 to accommodate the completion and support of our new quarterly reporting system. I revised the requested amount to \$135,000 to reflect actual requirements for this fiscal year, following the expenditure of approximately \$80,000 that was incurred and absorbed within last year's budget. We began work on this project immediately following the December 2012 passage of the legislation, given the advent of quarterly reporting in January of 2013.

The legislative change, as shown here, requires all constituencies and all political parties to file four reports per year, identifying the contributions they received for each quarter, including nil reports if applicable. Filing requirements for political entities went from this, where annual financial statements were based on a calendar year and due by March 31 of the following year, to this, where

quarterly reports are due 15 days after the end of each calendar quarter. The annual financial statements you'll see are still required.

I would like to note that there were a number of legislative changes that affected our workload, which we have been able to accommodate within our current staff complement and budget, including the oversight of political party leadership contests. In fact, we're currently supporting one party that commenced a leadership contest on April 6 for a vote that will take place on September 21.

The demands of quarterly reporting, however, were significantly more than we could manage within our budget and staff complement. Prior to the legislative change we would have an annual volume approaching 400 financial statements in a nonelection year, and that combines both constituency association and party statements. This volume approximately doubles in an election year and triples the year after new electoral division boundaries are adopted, which occurred in 2012. As you can see from the figures that are highlighted in green, we accommodate some significant peaks in our workload already. With the legislative change our finance area has close to 2,000 financial statements to manage in a nonelection year, up significantly from the previous annual volume of 400. With quarterly reporting you can see that these peaks increase exponentially, as shown in the figures highlighted in yellow.

There were three main components in our supplementary funding request. The first was for the completion of an online filing application at a cost of \$68,000. When we reviewed the quarterly filing requirements, we saw a need to offer a simple, secure method for filing that would accommodate the tight timelines faced by political entities while helping to reduce the likelihood of human error and the filing of multiple reports where corrections were needed. With quarterly reports due in our office 15 days following the end of the reporting period, the time to complete, sign, and submit those reports is limited. The online solution makes it easier for political entities to meet the statutory deadlines and allows us to manage the filing, receipt, tracking, and disclosure on a timely basis.

The system was open to users on April 2 of this year to allow for filing of the first-quarter reports, that covered the January 1 to March 31 period. First-quarter results have been extremely positive. Political entities achieved 98 per cent compliance the first time through. All parties and 375 of the 382 constituency associations filed on time. Over 80 per cent of those reports were filed online. Users have expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the system. To further improve it, we've asked all users to provide us with their suggestions for improvements for consideration in version 2.

The second main component is a completion of educational resources at a cost of \$12,000. We prepared three online videos to promote compliance through education, which is one of our main objectives. The first video is an introduction which explains the purpose and requirements of quarterly filing, provides the deadlines and the different options for filing, and provides contact information for the support available through our office. The second and third videos provide specific step-by-step instructions to constituency associations and to parties for use of the online system. With your permission we'd like to show a very brief clip of the constituency association video now. This clip is one that would be viewed by a user following a description of the log-in process.

[A video was shown from 11:45 a.m. to 11:47 a.m.]

Ms McKee-Jeske: Okay. Well, that was a demonstration of how it's not supposed to work. We did have a bit of a disconnect there between what we would normally see on the screen and what we were seeing here following connection with the projector, so I apologize for that. It worked quite well when we tested it earlier. For anybody who would like to have a look at those videos, I'd be quite happy to give them our website address. Normally it works perfectly. It indicates to the user each of the different components of the screen and indicates where they need to supply information. I hope it still gave you a bit of a look and feel of the training resources.

The style is very basic. It's suited to an online application, and it's appropriate for users with different levels of experience with these online systems. Again, feedback from users on this component has been positive, and we've been so pleased with the response we've received that we want to explore the use of similar online training resources for our election officers.

The last component is the addition of a dedicated staffperson to administer quarterly reporting at a cost of \$55,000. This will allow for the recruitment of an FTE at the administrative 4 level. It's near the upper end and includes benefits, so the actual expenditure may be lower. Currently we have a temporary person doing this job and have found it to be a full-time requirement. We do expect that the demands of the position will remain constant.

The person in this role is responsible to update the resources that are provided to political entities, send ongoing reminders with respect to the deadlines, which go out by letter and by e-mail, and track quarterly reports so that appropriate reminders can be sent to late filers. Again, you'll see that we focus considerable effort on helping political entities achieve statutory compliance with this requirement. The staffperson provides ongoing support to political entities by e-mail and by phone, and one important aspect of this is ensuring system security through the management and provision of the user IDs and passwords.

As you folks know, constituency association affairs are managed by volunteers, who may or may not be familiar with similar systems. In addition, we find that there is constant transition as there are new people becoming involved at the constituency association level. So we expect that our support of first-time users will continue even as the system matures.

The staffperson also reviews the quarterly reports and posts them online to allow for public disclosure and identifies nonfilers and errors for appropriate follow-up.

Now, as for outputs this is an example of the information that's posted on our public website following the data entry process. Quarterly filed reports appear online for public viewing along with a search function so that a member of the public can determine if a particular person or organization has made a political contribution. Four of these reports will be posted each year for each constituency association and each party. If you have a look at our website now, you will see the reports posted for the first quarter.

11:50

Disclosure of contribution activity occurs on a much more timely basis than in the past. Prior to the requirement for quarterly reporting a contribution made in January would not be reported until March 31 of the following year, approximately 15 months after the contribution was received by the chief financial officer. Now a January contribution is posted in this format online by mid-April, approximately three months after receipt of the contribution.

The recent legislative change introduced an important new responsibility to our finance area. The supplementary funding we've requested will allow us to manage this activity with appropriate education and support to facilitate timeliness, accuracy, and compliance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope this information has been helpful.

The Chair: Well, thank you, Ms McKee-Jeske.

Now we come to questions and answers. Ms Laurie Blakeman.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you. I have three questions, so maybe I could do two and then go at the end of the list, come up again.

My first question. You are reducing the amount that you're requesting in the fiscal year that we're in to \$135,000. You mentioned that \$80,000 was spent in the previous fiscal year. Does that mean that we're looking at an annual operating cost for this program of \$215,000, which is the \$135,000 plus the \$80,000? That's the first question.

Ms McKee-Jeske: The total cost is \$162,000 for the system plus \$55,000 staff salary cost. We don't expect to spend \$162,000 each year. Typically what we see is somewhere in the neighbourhood of 15 to 20 per cent of system costs that we would spend on things like edits and updates to the system. As the platform that we run all of our computer systems on changes, we would incur some costs there. We would think it would be something in the neighbourhood of \$32,000. The \$55,000, the salary cost, would be an ongoing annual cost.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. Just to confirm, then, somewhere between \$87,000 and in heavy years possibly a \$217,000 operating cost for this program, minimum and max, approximately.

Ms McKee-Jeske: Yes.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. Good.

Second question. What happens in a situation where the party which is issuing the tax receipts receives money on behalf of a constituency association but doesn't pass it on to the constituency association in the fiscal period? This happens to me all the time. If I'm doing a report for the 1st of January to the end of March, I know they've collected money on my behalf every month on a monthly donation scheme, but I'm probably not going to see that money until maybe June, and it comes in a lump cheque. Sorry. Is it cash or accrual? That's what I'm asking. Should we be reporting that we think there's money coming but don't actually have it, or do we wait until it's in our hands and then report it?

Mr. Sage: With your particular party they issue the receipts centrally, so it's all reported under the Liberal Party name. It won't show up in your constituency association as a contribution that you've received; it will be reported in the party's hands. So they should pick it up on the date that it was received as opposed to the date it was transferred to you.

Ms Blakeman: A supplemental, then. I could be just doing nil reports because I'm never showing any money coming. Well, I mean, it's coming to me eventually, and it was tagged for me, but the receipt is issued by the main party.

Mr. Sage: Right.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. Back on the list, please.

The Chair: Back on the list.

The hon. David Eggen.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for your report. I'm curious. You are asking for a dedicated staffperson, a full-time job. I'm just wondering if you have broken down what percentage of your other staff's time is being taken up with this new legislation. I can see the number here, but have you sort of done an FTE equivalency to demonstrate the use of your staff on this new program?

Ms McKee-Jeske: We are currently covering the requirements for the quarterly reporting with a wage person who is doing this job on a full-time basis.

Mr. Eggen: Without other staff helping out, then?

Ms McKee-Jeske: Without additional staff involvement. Correct. It is handled by one FTE, we're finding, at this point.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you.

The Chair: Any other hon. members?

Ms Blakeman: I don't know what was behind the idea to move to this legislation, but I am just finding it an incredible drain on volunteers and, as we know, an additional cost that we hadn't been bearing before. So if this committee has any influence on the government, might I suggest we try and influence them to abandon this system? You know, I'm all in favour of transparency and accountability, but this just seems to be incredibly onerous and is costing us money. I guess that's not a question; it's a statement.

You know, for volunteers out of the community – and we all know we're fighting for volunteers against the local hospital foundation and the daycare centre and the kids' soccer. To ask people to now be filing something four times a year, which sort of has a frisson of importance around it, "Don't screw it up, or you could end up in jail" – I mean, I'm just kidding here, but it is an important task, and people have to take it seriously and do it to the best of their ability. It's a real drain on our volunteers.

If we have any influence, perhaps we could use it to get the government to reconsider this questionable piece of legislation.

The Chair: All right. Well, thank you, Ms Blakeman. That's a very interesting thought, but the issue here is the Chief Electoral Officer's need for supplementary funding, so let's focus on that. Thank you.

Anybody else? Any hon. member on teleconference? No?

Well, then, hon. David Eggen, your turn.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Thank you. In your presentation you talked about compliance rates, which seemed pretty good. I'm just wondering: in these first few months of this new reporting regime have you been giving some, you know, remedial time and/or provision for people to make adjustments to accommodate for this new legislation, or is it just straight up? Have you penalized anybody yet?

Ms McKee-Jeske: Thank you for the question. Yes, we've tried to do our best to notify people of the timelines first off, but we did expect that some people may have some issues with the technical part of the system and with providing the necessary information on the timeline they had. There were only a few constituency associations that did not file on time. We provided them with additional support to come into compliance.

The first thing we would do is provide a warning to late filers. We have the option, if it continues, of providing a letter of reprimand, an administrative penalty, and possibly deregistration in the case of ongoing failure to file or late filing. Cancellation of registration, if it occurs at the constituency association level, does require additional work on your volunteers' part. So we try to do our best to make sure we help them file on time. It involves more work on our part, too. Ultimately, they still have to file all the financial statements that were overdue.

Mr. Eggen: Thanks. I'm glad to hear that it's at your discretion and, considering it's a new process, that we offer some accommodation. As we've said here already, it's entirely volunteers that are doing this, and it's potentially a deterrent to, you know, participating in this democratic process if people feel like they could be held legally responsible and face penalty for participating in this part of our democracy.

Thanks.

12:00

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Eggen.

Any other hon. member wish to comment? How about those on the line?

I don't hear any, so we shall come to a conclusion now. I need a motion with respect to this supplementary funding.

The hon. member Sohail Quadri.

Mr. Quadri: Yes. I move that

the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices approve the request by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer for supplementary funding for the 2013-2014 fiscal year in the amount of \$135,000 to cover the additional costs related to the quarterly reporting by the political entities and that the chair on behalf of the committee forward the request to the President of Treasury Board and Finance minister.

The Chair: Having heard the motion, let's have some discussion on the motion. Does any member wish to discuss the motion itself? Does anybody on the phone line want to comment? The hon. Mrs. Jablonski.

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to say that I would encourage everyone to support this motion. As the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre has pointed out, it requires a lot of extra work on the part of our own constituency associations and our volunteers, so I can understand that it would be quite a lot of extra work by the office as well. So I am supporting this motion, and I encourage all others to support it.

The Chair: Thank you.

Any others?

Seeing none, then I shall call the question. Those in favour of the motion as stated?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: The motion is carried.

Ms McKee-Jeske and your staff, thank you very much for the presentation. The committee will communicate with your office on our decision in an official manner.

Ms McKee-Jeske: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

The Chair: Thank you.

Item 4 on the agenda is done.

Now we get to item 5, which is the report on the 2012-13 audit of the office of the Auditor General. The chair and the deputy chair met earlier this morning with the Auditor General, senior staff from his office, as well as the audit team from St. Arnaud Pinsent Steman, the firm under contract to conduct the annual audit of the office of the Auditor General. For the committee's information, the 2012-13 audit was completed without any issues identified, and the final draft report of the auditor is being distributed to the members for their information. That's it. I have informed you of that.

Now we are on item 6, which is a discussion regarding the 2013-14 annual compensation review. Members should have a copy of the current primary motions document, which was posted on the committee's internal website. This document highlights the motions made by this committee starting in 2008 on compensation strategy for the officers of the Legislature as well as the identified motion's classification of the officers as set by the committee, utilizing the classification schedule for senior officials within the public service of Alberta.

We'll be discussing individual salaries and classifications of the officers of the Legislature as well as acting pay for the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, so I would suggest that we move in camera. Of course, any decisions of the committee in this respect will be made by motion once we return to the record.

Ms Blakeman: Excuse me.

The Chair: Yes.

Ms Blakeman: Why would we be moving in camera when we're just talking about ranges? We're not talking personal salaries here, are we?

The Chair: We could discuss individual salaries and classifications.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. I'd really prefer if we were to work toward a position where we could discuss them without the personalities involved because this is not a transparent discussion. We go in camera, nobody remembers how we do it from one to the next, and it always leads to confusion. If people's personal details are being discussed, then obviously we have to go in camera, but it doesn't make it a transparent system.

Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. We have individual information to discuss, so I need a member to make a motion to move in camera.

Mrs. Jablonski: I move that we move in camera at this time.

The Chair: All in favour? Any objections? Two objections. The motion is carried.

[The committee met in camera from 12:08 p.m. to 1:21 p.m.]

The Chair: Well, hon. members, we are now back on the record, out of camera. We will continue our discussion on the items regarding the annual compensation review and the acting pay of the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer.

Now I need an hon. member to move one of the motions, which is the motion regarding the annual compensation review of the officers of the Legislative Offices. All right. Hon. Laurie Blakeman, please read the motion.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you. I would like to move that in accordance with the requirements to review annually the salaries of the officers of the Legislature, the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices affirm and apply the compensation strategy for the officers adopted by the committee at the June 11, 2008, committee meeting and that each officer be advised of his or her salary entitlement for the 2013-14 fiscal year and be compensated effective April 1, 2013.

The Chair: Having heard the motion, those in favour of the motion please indicate so. The motion is carried, and it's unanimous, no opposition.

The hon. Mary Anne Jablonski on the second motion.

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to move that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices approve the payment of a salary equal to 78 per cent of the development maximum for the senior officers, C range, to Ms Lori McKee-Jeske, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, retroactive to April 24, 2013, and to continue until such time as a Chief Electoral Officer is appointed.

The Chair: Thank you.

Having heard the motion, those in favour of the motion please indicate as such. It's unanimous. The motion is carried. All right. That's item 6 done.

We'll go right into item 7. This is regarding conference attendance and reporting on the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws conference, December 8 to 11, 2013, in Quebec City. The association comprises members of ethics, elections, information, and privacy offices as well as oversight organizations. The committee budget covers the attendance of the chair, the committee clerk, and two committee members. As well, two members will be identified as alternates should someone be unable to attend. If necessary we will conduct draws for delegates and alternates.

Would those members interested in attending the conference please identify themselves? Then we'll draw if there are more than two people. Okay. So put your name in. How do you do that now?

Yes, Mary Anne?

Mrs. Jablonski: Mr. Chair, I wonder if this was discussed with Mr. Rogers prior to this meeting.

The Chair: It was posted, and it was sent to all the members over a week ago.

Mrs. Jablonski: So he's aware of this?

The Chair: I expect so.

Mrs. Jablonski: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Quadri: How many people are going to go?

The Chair: Three. The chair and three. If I cannot go, I'll have an alternate.

Would anybody on the phone lines like to attend. Jeff?

Mr. Wilson: I will not put my name forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Dorward: I have not been directed by Dr. Brown to put his name forward.

The Chair: Okay. Yeah. Right.

Mrs. Sawchuk: I just want to verify the names that have been put forward. The first two names drawn will be designated as delegates. The second two names drawn will be designated as the alternates.

Mrs. Leskiw: The first alternate and second alternate.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yes.

But first I want to make sure we've got everyone's names. I've got Mr. McDonald, Mr. Quadri, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Eggen, and Ms Blakeman. Was there any . . .

Mr. Dorward: Could I interject, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Yes. Go ahead, David.

Mr. Dorward: Just to make sure there's not a communication error here, I don't see any downside in including Dr. Brown in that. If he was one of the first two and did not want to go, then one of the alternates could go. If he was an alternate, he may not get picked, and if he did get picked, it could be somebody lower on the list. Therefore, I'd like to have Dr. Brown included.

The Chair: Okay. His name is in: Neil Brown.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Okay. So we're going to do the draw, Mr. Chair, right now. We'll let Leah pick the first two names.

Ms Kirtio: It's exciting. Dr. Brown, Mr. McDonald.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Okay, Mr. Chair. The names Dr. Brown and Mr. McDonald have been chosen as delegates to the 2013 COGEL conference.

Now we'll do the draw for the two alternates. The first alternate is Mr. Eggen, and the second alternate is Mr. Quadri.

Ms Blakeman: If they all turn it down, can I put my name in for the last place? Okay.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yeah. We've done it before.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. Thank you.

Mrs. Sawchuk: She's on the record.

The Chair: Okay. We have done the draw exercise for attending. We need a motion to provide members so that we have the correct wording necessary. Who is going to move that for me?

1:30

Mrs. Leskiw: It is moved by Genia Leskiw that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices approve the chair and Dr. Brown and Mr. McDonald and the committee clerk as attendees and that the alternate members are Mr. Eggen and Mr. Quadri and Ms Blakeman for the 2013 Council on Governmental Ethics Laws conference in Quebec City from December 8 to 11, 2013.

The Chair: Having heard the motion, all those in favour please indicate as such. Any opposed? Seeing none, the motion is carried.

All right. We have something to do with the report of the last COGEL conference.

Ms Blakeman: I think the report was actually circulated. It was on the website. I think I was the third alternate last time and ended up going. It's a great conference, but it's very intense. There's no lunch. There's no dinner. There's nothing put on. There's no

spousal program. It's just get at it and work really hard. For me, with my interests, it's a really great conference.

I went to a number of the ones that were updates. I attended the civic and demographic engagement, how to increase voter turnout; campaign finance update; the must-know litigation – all the litigation sessions are really interesting because they tell you where things are going wrong, where people are suing or where they're being brought up on charges, so you can tell where the system fails – i-voting, which is the Internet voting; the latest development in cloud computing because there are so many pitfalls in that; and then the lobbying update. I think I did a bit of the elections update, freedom of information update, the round-table, and then fear factor: can you bite the hand that funds you? They were for the most part great sessions. If they weren't, then I just left and went to one that was more interesting. It is an intense

conference – there's no question – but an excellent one.

Thank you.

The Chair: Well, thank you, Ms Laurie Blakeman.

Now we are getting close to the end. Any other business?

Seeing none, what about the next meeting? We'll have to decide it later and communicate it to all the members.

We need a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Quadri: I move to adjourn.

The Chair: Okay. Mr. Sohail Quadri moved to adjourn. Those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. The meeting is adjourned until next time.

[The committee adjourned at 1:33 p.m.]

