



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

Special Standing Committee
on
Members' Services

Wednesday, January 28, 2026
2:30 p.m.

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Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

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Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UC), Deputy Chair

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Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC)*
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Metz, Luanne, Calgary-Varsity (NDP)
Petrovic, Chelsae, Livingstone-Macleod (UC)
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* substitution for Justin Wright

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[Mr. McIver in the chair]

The Chair: We'll call this to order since it is indeed 2:30.

My name, as you know, is Ric McIver, MLA for Calgary-Hays and the chair of this committee. I will ask members and those joining the committee at the table to introduce themselves for the record, and then I will call on members joining the meeting remotely to introduce themselves.

I wish to note for the record the following substitutions: Mr. Luntz for Mr. Getson and Mrs. Johnson for Mr. Wright.

Ms Dean: Good afternoon. Shannon Dean, Clerk.**Dr. Ludwick:** Good afternoon. Dave Ludwick, executive director of corporate services, LAO.**Mr. Joy:** Darren Joy, senior financial officer.**Mr. Koenig:** Trafton Koenig, Law Clerk.**Ms Tischer:** Good afternoon. Lyndsay Tischer, director of human resources for the LAO.**Mr. Eggen:** Hi. I'm Dave Eggen. I'm the MLA for Edmonton-North West.**Ms Gray:** Afternoon, everyone. Christina Gray. I'm the MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods.**Mr. Langley:** Good afternoon. Sergeant-at-Arms Terry Langley.**Mr. Luntz:** Good afternoon. Brandon Luntz, MLA for Leduc-Beaumont.**Mrs. Johnson:** Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka.**Mr. Yao:** Tany Yao, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.**Mr. Roth:** Good afternoon. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.**The Chair:** Okay. Those folks online. Mr. Sabir, you've got your camera on, so you go first.**Mr. Sabir:** Irfan Sabir, MLA, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.**Dr. Metz:** Luanne Metz, MLA for Calgary-Varsity.**Mrs. Petrovic:** Chelsae Petrovic, MLA for Livingstone-Macleod.**Mr. Singh:** Good afternoon, everyone. Peter Singh, MLA, Calgary-East.**The Chair:** I think that's everyone. If I missed anything, someone please correct me. Okay.

Before we turn to the business at hand, just a few operational items. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard* staff. That's a reminder for me to keep my hands off the buttons, and by extension it's a reminder for everybody else. Committee proceedings are live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly television, which we all watch regularly. The audio, videotape, and transcripts of meetings can be accessed via the Legislative Assembly website.

Those participating remotely are encouraged to please turn on your camera, at least while you're speaking, and mute your microphone when you're not speaking. Members participating 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 to the chair or some of the other staff if I'm not bright enough to pick you up fast enough. Please set your cellphones, as I will now, and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting. How do you like that? It was already there.

First item of the agenda is approval of the agenda. Are there any proposed additions or revisions for today's meeting agenda?

Ms Gray: Just only noting that under other business I know there were motions that were submitted, but I don't think we need to change the agenda for that. That's all.

The Chair: Okay. The staff agrees with you.

I see no other changes to the agenda. On the agenda does anybody disagree? Going twice. That's carried unanimously.

Approval of meeting minutes. Any amendments to the minutes of the last committee meeting?

Oh, we needed a mover for the agenda.

Mr. Yao: Sure.**The Chair:** MLA Yao. On that are we agreed? Any opposed? That's carried. Sorry I took the shortcut asking for just opposed.

Now back to approval of the meeting minutes. Any amendments, or would someone like to move the meeting minutes from the last meeting? MLA Eggen has moved it. Any comments? Seeing none, are we agreed? Are there any opposed? It's carried.

That takes us to the Legislative Assembly budget estimates. Okay. On November 27 the committee met and approved the budget parameters document to direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare the 2026-2027 draft budget, which is being presented today for the committee's consideration and recommendations. Members, you have been provided access to an electronic version of the budget binder that includes the budget estimates, which have been developed based on the parameters and include the recommended changes for branch, caucus, and constituency office staff compensation that mirror the Alberta public service.

The operational expense component has been adjusted on the basis of 1.6 per cent inflationary factor. There are also a few one-time spending items pertaining to proposed operational improvements that were also approved with the budget parameters document discussed at the November meeting. With the changes that this committee originally considered back in November, we expect an overall budget increase of 2.4 per cent, or \$2.1 million.

You will notice that the special funding requirements budget envelope has been reduced this year. The Chamber project budget has been reduced as the project nears its end in the 2026-27 budget year. The enterprise resource planning, or ERP, project budget is reduced as we near the launch of our new payroll platform this spring.

The employee market adjustment contingency has been removed as we are now in a position to implement the compensation changes that were announced in the fall for the Alberta public service. Since we know what those changes are, of course, we don't have to set aside money, because there is no just in case.

Finally, the Electoral Boundaries Commission is expected to complete its work in fiscal year 2025-26, so its budget will be wound down. The Clerk will describe these in more detail.

Members, you will notice an approximately \$612,000 increase for the caucus budgets as well as a \$1.6 million increase to the MLA administration budget. This reflects the various member compensation benefits and allowances changes this committee approved last January.

You will notice a \$3.5 million increase to branch budgets. This change is largely related to the Alberta public service compensation

adjustments discussed in November as well as increased software licensing and computer costs.

When taking into account the compensation adjustments and licensing costs increases with the corresponding budget reductions in the Chamber project, ERP, employee market contingency, and the Electoral Boundaries Commission, the net result is a proposed 2.4 per cent increase to the LAO budget. For fiscal year 2026-27 we are proposing a budget of approximately \$91.8 million. Of this, 45 per cent, or \$41.5 million, is allocated to MLA administration; 38 per cent, or \$34.9 million, is allocated to LAO branches; and 12 per cent, or \$11.3 million, is allocated to caucuses. The remaining 5 per cent, or \$4 million approximately, is allocated to special funding requirements described above.

I will now ask Shannon Dean, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, to explore this year's budget further.

Ms Dean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Speaker has summarized the major changes that are being proposed for fiscal year '26-27, and I'll touch upon some additional details. As we've noted, the compensation adjustments for the LAO parallel and are consistent with the Alberta public service compensation for management and opted-out and excluded nonmanagement employees. Committee members will recall that the Alberta public service announced a 3 per cent general pay increase for staff last fall. There are also market adjustments to the management pay grids. The appropriate adjustments have been made to the branch budgets to reflect these changes as well as those relating to the employer portions of statutory deductions and benefits. The branch budgets also include an adjustment to operational expenses based on a 1.6 per cent inflationary factor.

The proposed budget includes a \$2 million provision for the Chamber upgrade project. As you know, there's been significant work that's been done to modernize the Chamber visual and audio systems. This figure will cover the final year of a three-year project and will include millwork upgrades to the Speaker's dais, the Clerk's table, the sergeant's desk, and additional member desks. With respect to equipment and software there will also be improvements made to the communication system, the broadcast cameras, and the crow's nest clock.

We are delighted to say that the enterprise resource planning project, or the ERP, has achieved key milestones this past year. In June we transitioned the accounting system, which is a foundational component of the ERP, and in October members were transitioned to the new payroll system, UKG, and this spring the LAO will be transitioning staff to the new payroll system as well as transitioning salaried staff from a monthly pay cycle to a biweekly pay cycle. This will mark the completion of phase 1 of the ERP project. There will be future phases which deliver enhancements to the accounting and payroll components, but this spring's coming milestone marks the end of the major development piece to this project. The budget impact for fiscal year '26-27 is \$1.3 million.

2:40

Other notable adjustments to the budget estimates. We've touched upon the compensation adjustments for branch staff, and these have also been applied to caucus and constituency staff. This includes a 3 per cent merit adjustment for eligible management and 4 per cent for eligible nonmanagement, and these adjustments have been reflected in the MSA component that deals with constituency staff salaries as well as being applied to the 70 per cent of the caucus budget, which is our estimate of the apportionment for staff compensation. Again, these adjustments impact employer contributions to benefits and statutory contributions. As well, we've included a 1.6 per cent adjustment to operational expenses reflecting inflation, and there has

also been an adjustment to the transition allowance liability which reflects the eligibility requirements in section 9 of the members' allowances order.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, before I turn it back to you, I just wanted to highlight that Capital Gifts is doing very well. We're forecasting over \$100,000 in sales next year, so good news.

Happy to turn it back to you, Speaker.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, Madam Clerk.

I'd like to open the floor at this point to any comments or questions from any of the members present. MLA Gray, followed by MLAs Lunt and Eggen.

Mr. Lunt: No.

The Chair: No? No MLA Lunt; just MLAs Gray and Eggen, then, thus far.

Ms Gray: I think Dr. Metz online threw up her hand as well.

The Chair: And Dr. Metz. Okay.

Ms Gray: My question is related to those employer portion of benefits. At our last meeting we kind of asked about the changes in Bill 11 and how health benefits are being handled, making private plans the first payer, and the answer we got then was that the LAO budget has some cushion for potential cost increases. I was just wondering: in the estimates that have been done here, how much has the LAO accounted for, like, health benefits increasing because of the changes in legislation? If you have that breakdown.

Ms Dean: I'm going to turn it to my team here.

Dr. Ludwick: On the branch budget side of the \$3.5 million increase that you're talking about, \$300,000, rough numbers, relates to benefits, and you might be familiar with some of the health spending account changes that occurred, and about \$174,000 relates to that.

Ms Gray: Okay. Thank you so much.

The Chair: Any more questions? Okay. MLA Eggen.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Chair. My question is in regard to the calculation of MSA according to the population of our constituencies. I don't know if you know that or not. I was just doing the election boundary commission, and they were basing their numbers on sort of a static number from a certain year from Statistics Canada. Many of our constituencies are growing, the population is growing, so how do you make adjustments during the course of the term to account for population increase?

The Chair: What is the schedule we adjust that on?

Ms Dean: I'm looking to Darren on this point, but I believe we get an annual update from Treasury Board and Finance.

Mr. Eggen: So it's adjusted on an annual basis? Yeah. Okay. Thanks.

The Chair: Okay. Next up we've got Dr. Metz, followed by MLA Singh.

Dr. Metz: Hello. Thank you. My question relates to the same thing that Mr. Eggen was raising. We know that the population estimates do come into the amounts that are distributed to the different constituencies, so two questions related to that. Where can we find

the population estimates for our constituencies that come from Alberta Finance? And second: is this going to impact the budget that goes forward for the coming year?

The Chair: Darren.

Mr. Joy: Yeah. Thank you, Dr. Metz. The population numbers we get I don't believe are actually public or published. We get them from Treasury Board, and they're an estimate at a point in time, right? I don't believe that they are published any place.

I'm sorry. Could you repeat the second part of your question, please?

Dr. Metz: Will the changes in population, because we know they're massive in this province, impact the budget for the different constituencies?

Mr. Joy: Yes, it does. Part of the formula to calculate the MSAs does take into consideration population.

The Chair: If I could be so bold ...

Dr. Metz: Right. And has that been accounted for in the budget going forward?

Mr. Joy: Yes.

The Chair: I think Dr. Metz also asked where she would go to find the numbers for her constituency.

Mr. Joy: Right. Well, we ...

The Chair: Just trying to be helpful, man.

Mr. Joy: Yeah. We get them sent to us. Again, I don't believe they're published. I don't know if they're public or not.

Ms Dean: But, certainly, I believe, you could provide them to the members.

Mr. Joy: Yeah, we could.

The Chair: Who would they ask?

Dr. Ludwick: Either myself or Darren. Either one.

The Chair: Dr. Ludwick or Mr. Joy. Okay. Is that helpful?

Dr. Metz: Yes. Thank you.

The Chair: Anything else, Doctor?

Dr. Metz: No. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Okay. MLA Singh.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the presentation regarding the 2026-2027 budget preparation parameters. I commend all the LAO officers and staff for the hard work done. My question relates to the operating pressures in LAO branches there. On page 4, which is the summary of the budget estimates, under (a) Legislative Assembly Office branches what specific factors are driving the 11.2 per cent increase in LAO branches in 2026-2027? Particularly, I'm more interested in the 17.6 per cent increase in corporate services. How much of this growth is structural like compensation and benefits or IT licensing services versus temporary or timing related?

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms Dean: Thank you, Speaker. Most of it is compensation related. I believe about \$800,000 relates to licensing fees and information technology costs, but I will ask Dr. Ludwick to give you the details.

Dr. Ludwick: Thank you very much, MLA Singh. To answer your question, of that \$3.5 million dollar change that you're seeing for Legislative Assembly Office branches, about \$2.5 million of that relates to various compensation-related and benefits-related costs.

To get to your specific question around operations and inflation, about \$57,000 of that amount relates to CPI adjustments, and that's based on Conference Board of Canada benchmarks for Alberta. And then, as Shannon says, about \$838,000 relates to software licensing, computer equipment, computer services that support the LAO members, caucuses, constituencies, and so forth.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Any more questions, MLA Singh?

Mr. Singh: No. I think he's covered most of it. Thank you.

The Chair: MLA Gray, please go ahead.

Ms Gray: Thanks so much. I just have one question. The contingency fund that was called the employee market adjustment contingency fund was there, and that was because of work that was happening and wanting to have that buffer, but I don't see any other kind of contingency fund planning. Is there other contingency money just in case things change in calendar year, or if the Members' Services Committee makes changes to any of the orders, that changes cost, we'll just have to deal with that in year?

Ms Dean: Well, you've correctly noted that we don't have a contingency per se built in for any specific purpose for next fiscal year because the compensation issue is off the table now. We're not anticipating anything else, but certainly, should the need arise, the chair could summon the committee and we could deal with it then.

The Chair: At your service, committee.

Anything else, MLA Gray?

Ms Gray: No, thank you.

Dr. Metz: I'm sorry. I actually have thought of something else related to the last question I had. I'm wondering if we would also be able to get the population estimates that were used for this current year to give us that information. I assume Finance has some pretty good numbers, pretty good estimates of what was used for our constituencies now.

2:50

Then my second question relates to the corporate services budget. Just a minor thing, but there are two additional FTEs, and I'm just wondering what roles they'll do, if it's volume of work or new roles that are going to be funded.

The Chair: First, last year's population numbers.

Dr. Ludwick: Dr. Metz, if you give myself or Darren a call, we are happy to provide you with the current year population data that was used to do the calculations for the current year MSAs. We're also happy to provide the numbers for the fiscal year '26-27 as well.

The Chair: Okay. On the two new FTEs.

Dr. Ludwick: Right. On the two new FTEs, Dr. Metz, what it relates to is that one relates to application services. You might be

familiar. We've got the new ERP coming in. We've got some AI-related activities going on, and that's added an additional load to parts of our IT and B part of the organization. So we're trying to enhance and provide supports there to members relating to that.

The other is relating to broadcast. We've got a lot more activities going on in and around the Chamber relating to committees and so forth, so the goal there is to support our ability to meet our vision, which is to be relevant to all of Albertans in terms of bringing them closer to democracy.

The Chair: Any more questions, Dr. Metz?

Okay. Are there any other questions or comments? I haven't heard any objections although that can change whenever you want to. But based on the fact that we haven't heard any amendments, any objections, any other comments, looking for a mover to adopt the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly of Alberta budget estimate in the amount of \$91,813,000, as submitted.

Is there someone that would care – MLA Yao. On that, are we agreed? Are there any opposed? Seeing none.

That is carried.

That takes us to item 5 on the agenda, the draft members' allowances and expenses reimbursement order set-off. Let me just say this. The next item is a proposed order intended to address a gap in the existing members' allowance framework, which does not provide a mechanism to deal with large budget shortfalls or significant expenditures that do not comply with existing expenditure rules. While these situations are rare, there remains a need for a clear process to ensure that public funds are managed appropriately. The draft order would establish a means for the Legislative Assembly Office to recover public money from the members in circumstances where unauthorized excess or otherwise ineligible expending has not been repaid.

I would emphasize that this mechanism is intended only as a last resort. It is not a substitute for the existing financial controls under which members receive regular updates on their budgets and have sufficient opportunity to make adjustments as needed. Rather, the order is intended in only the most serious situations in which legal obligations such as contractual commitments, credit card charges, other things are to get paid back when expenditures are made beyond what is approved in the budget.

Now, I will point out, first of all, that a similar provision exists at the federal level. Sections 19 to 21 in the House of Commons Board of Internal Economy members bylaw set out processes to address financial noncompliance. We're not really breaking new ground here. We're just trying to be responsible.

I was going to ask if somebody wanted to make a motion, but I think we've heard some feedback from different members. I'm going to make a suggestion here, and you don't have to take my suggestion ever, but here are some of the things we heard about. I think we all are kind of in agreement unless somebody says different. I don't want to speak for anybody. Yeah. You get monthly reports. You know what your staff costs are. You know what your rent is. We know what our normal utilities for our staff offices are, and you know whether you're spending ahead of your budget or whether you've got some room between what you spent and what's in your budget. I think the impression I've gotten from people is they say: okay; well, somebody overspends that by 20 per cent or 5 per cent, whatever it is, it's not really an excuse. But then again, other things come up such as: what if somebody doesn't finish their term?

I think we probably need to do some more work and come back to the committee, I mean, ask the LAO to do some more work and come back to the committee on what conditions would trigger a

personal collection and what circumstances maybe should not. The intention is never to be unfair to members. The intention is never to – well, we always want to treat the members like responsible adults, and we believe members in almost every single case are responsible adults, but sometimes people don't keep track of one thing or another.

There are other circumstances, too. I suppose if there was some kind of – I don't know – legal settlement or somebody quit partway through their term, those are different circumstances, too, I mean, well, extremes. Like, if somebody dies, then there's accounting that needs to be done at the end of that. I'm certainly not extra interested in collecting money from dead people unless it was for behaviour that had gone on for a long time that was negative, but I can't think of a single instance there. Rather, perhaps somebody is ill or someone in the member's family is ill or other personal circumstances, and they felt the need to resign.

I'm going to just suggest, because I don't get to make these motions, that somebody maybe ask for the LAO to come back with some situational examples of how we would handle things, again, in the spirit of that if people's behaviour has been responsible, then they shouldn't have anything to worry about, and if it has been reckless, then perhaps they should have something to worry about but covering a whole bunch of other human circumstances that occur in between those two extremes, right?

Those are my thoughts. Having brought this forward for discussion in the first place and then getting the, frankly, very helpful feedback from Members of the Legislative Assembly on both sides, it seems like it might be appropriate, using some of the examples that people have had, to come back here unless somebody has other questions or something to add to that. I just wanted you to know that since we brought this forward, we heard from people. We've been listening. It seemed at the front of it pretty cut and dried. If somebody's responsible, nothing to worry about. If you're reckless, you should have something to worry about. But then members come forward with a whole bunch of reasonable other circumstances that really could crop up, that perhaps we need to address, too.

Oh, MLA Petrovic, did you have something to say here?

Mrs. Petrovic: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah. I was going to actually agree with you. I had many questions in regard to some of this policy in terms of: you know, what happens if one of my employees has vacation liability and I lose the election? That's something I wouldn't intend on doing, but would I be liable if that's an expense for my MSA? I brought these forward to your office, so I do appreciate that. I think that there are many areas that need to be looked at.

I don't know if right now is the time to discuss some of those areas, but I do agree with you that there does need to be a bit more insight into: what is good spending, and what are those, I guess, unforeseen circumstances? You know, I would hate to, essentially, what you say, pass away and leave my family on the hook of \$15,000 for potential vacation liability and at no fault to myself. Yeah. I don't know if a motion is needed to push this back for continual, but I do agree with you on this.

The Chair: Yeah. Well, okay. So you would agree. I don't think we need a motion for this, from what I understand, but a general direction from the committee to go back and do a little more work and perhaps survey members for situations that they would like addressed through the whips and the House leaders on both sides and directly to the independent members and then tell them that we're contemplating this and if there are situations that you want considered and what might come forward, then give everybody an

opportunity to let us know so that we can hopefully come back again a little more well rounded. I think the concept is still viable or valid, but, again, in between the extremes of everything perfect, nothing to worry about, and terribly reckless behaviour that should be something to worry about, the majority of the cases will probably fall in between, because we rarely see reckless behaviour and we almost always see the other. These other circumstances need to be considered, too. I think we heard that.

3:00

If I don't hear any different, I'm going to take this as direction to come back with a more fulsome report and survey members for things that they would like considered.

Mr. Yao: Yes.

The Chair: No objections to that? Going twice. Having heard no objections to that – we're not making a decision today except to do a little more work and come back with a bit more of a fulsome report for members to consider.

Okay. That takes us to item 6, other business. A motion on notice, moved by someone. Not yet, but it could be that the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare a report regarding the feasibility of permitting claims related to the rental of e-scooters and e-bikes under the transportation order, including (a) whether such claims are permitted in other Canadian jurisdictions, and (b) any associated insurance, regulatory, or liability considerations. Is there someone that would want to adopt and make that motion, or just have questions or discussion on it?

MLA Yao, I'm hearing noises, but you haven't said anything yet.

Mr. Yao: I would like to move a motion that – sorry; even I'm confused a little bit – the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services establish a subcommittee as follows. The subcommittee shall be comprised . . .

The Chair: That's the second motion on notice.

Mr. Yao: That the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services will be making decisions within the next steps of the members' allowances and expenses reimbursement order?

The Chair: MLA Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much. Just while we clear up what motions we're moving, on the general topic of e-bikes, I've heard from staff, caucus staff as well as constituency staff, that when they're doing work for the Legislative Assembly, either for MLAs or in other ways, particularly staff who are working in Edmonton and Calgary, sometimes when they're travelling, taking a taxi or renting a car, staff have made the decision to use an e-bike instead, but we're not reimbursing those claims. I think there's been some discussion between our caucus expenditure officers and the LAO around wanting to be able to reimburse staff when they're using these alternative modes of transport, especially because they often are cheaper and very convenient.

This is not something I'm asking for myself. I don't think I'm going to use e-bikes or scooters any time soon for myself personally, but we have lots of younger people, and to them it makes sense. So the conversation at Members' Services is really to understand, "Is this something possible that we can do?" and what the risks might be. My quick understanding would be that even if the LAO doesn't reimburse someone when they use a scooter, if someone gets hurt, they're still on work time, and they would still be – like, even though it's not something we reimburse, if one of

my staff hopped on an e-scooter to go and do a work-related thing, that would still potentially be a WCB claim. So I'm definitely curious and interested in unpacking more of this.

The Chair: Okay. MLA Yao.

Mr. Yao: Well, I see that she's opening her hands to us here, her arms. I move a motion to this effect because I would think we support that. I would love to study this more. I'd like to move that

the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare a report regarding the feasibility of permitting claims related to the rental of e-scooters and e-bikes under the transportation order, including whether such claims are permitted in other Canadian jurisdictions, and any associated insurance, regulatory, or liability considerations.

The Chair: There's a motion made.

MLA Sabir, did you want to – no? Okay. No comment at this point.

Mr. Sabir: No. I'm good.

The Chair: Okay. Any comments on the motion? Then are we agreed to the motion as moved by MLA Yao? Are there any opposed? Seeing none,

that's carried.

That takes us to the next motion on notice. I think you started to make reference to it, MLA Yao. It's the other one here, that

the special standing committee establish a subcommittee comprised of the Speaker, two members of the government caucus, two members of the opposition caucus, with the mandate of the subcommittee to review the policies and guidelines applicable to member, caucus, and constituency expenditures, the duties of the expenditure officers, and the application of the policies and guidelines to members, caucus, and constituency staff and report to the committee with any of its observations, recommendations, if any. In carrying out its mandate, the subcommittee may utilize the services of employees of the Legislative Assembly Office. The quorum of the subcommittee is three, with a minimum of one member, including at least one member from each caucus. And a member of the committee may substitute for a member of the subcommittee at a meeting provided that notice of the substitution is provided to the committee clerk before the meeting commences, which is the normal procedure.

Is that the motion that you would like to make?

Mr. Yao: Yes.

The Chair: I'm just going to give a little context for those folks that might be at home watching. I think this is a good idea. Some folks at home might just say, "Well, these are just people looking to spend more money," and I think quite the opposite. It's actually looking for clarity. I've heard from caucuses on both sides that the way the rules are written now is not as clear as it could be. All the members want to do is adhere to the rules, and all the staff want to do is correctly apply the rules. When the rules aren't written as clearly as they could be – and, I guess, there have been several examples – or if we don't agree on anything else, we agree that the rules aren't as clear as they could be.

This subcommittee might be a good place, in a bipartisan way, to discuss the rules and get a little more clarity on them so that we don't end up arguing over I'm not even going to call them different interpretations, which is what they are. They're not nuances. They are honest, genuine, different interpretations of words in the English language, and maybe it's about time we sorted that out. There. That is my understanding based on some of the, frankly, complaints that

have come into my office. The complaints usually come down to a different interpretation between the member and the staff expenditure officer.

Any other comments or questions or anything on this motion from MLA Yao? MLA Gray.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much. Thank you, Member Yao, for moving this motion. My quick comment is that on the last item that we were just talking about, would it make sense for us to add it to the scope of the subcommittee? In which case I'm prepared to amend, with everyone's patience, and I'm happy to get feedback. My proposed amendment – and I will wait for the committee clerk to ...

The Chair: Oh, yeah. Okay. Your amendment wasn't put on notice.

Ms Gray: No, it was not, because it just came out of the earlier business of the committee. May I start by requesting consent of the committee to move an amendment?

The Chair: Okay. Does anybody object to MLA Gray adding an amendment that doesn't have advance notice to it, along the lines of what she just tried to briefly describe? Any objections to that? Going twice.

I think you should proceed with your amendment.

Ms Gray: Okay. Feedback is welcome. To the clerk, my amendment, I suggest, would be: after (i) to review, that we have a new (a) and that (a) read: "the members' allowances and expenses reimbursement changes, and" and then the other items would just move down. I'm just adding a new item that simply reads, "members' allowances and expenses reimbursement changes," which is essentially the information request that we made of the LAO under agenda item 5.

3:10

Ms Dean: I have a question. I'm presuming that the initial motion that was carried is still a live item that we're going to be reporting on?

Ms Gray: There wasn't a motion passed. We talked about an information request. Now we're making a specific motion that would put that item for discussion at the subcommittee if everyone is amenable to that.

Ms Dean: Pardon me; I was thinking about the e-scooter piece.

Ms Gray: No. The e-scooter is separate.

Ms Dean: I misunderstood. Thank you.

Ms Gray: Yeah. Very good.

We'll just give you a moment to try and type that up.

The Chair: Okay. So MLA Gray is making an amendment that we adopt the work that the LAO was asked to do by the committee on legal obligations and repayment of overexpenditures and that kind of stuff: including it in the subcommittee work. You want that included in the subcommittee work?

Ms Gray: Correct. The language that I'm using I took from our agenda item 5, so what I've said is that "members' allowances and expenses reimbursement changes" become our new (a), and then it would be a comma, "and," and the rest of it. If you'd rather put it at the back, that's fine. That's absolutely fine.

The Chair: Administratively, somehow, it might seem easier to make it (d) instead of (a), but I think you're getting what you want here if you agree to that.

Ms Gray: As long as we are all clear, that's great.

The Chair: So there's an amendment to the motion. Any discussion on the amendment made by MLA Gray? Any objections? On the amendment, are we agreed? Are there any opposed to the amendment? None, so now the motion from MLA Yao is amended.

On the amended motion, any discussion? On the amended motion, do we agree? On the amended motion, does anyone object? Seeing none,

that is carried.

Okay. Any other business to be raised at this time? Hearing none.

That takes us to agenda item 7, the date of the next meeting. It is at the call of the chair, and the chair will call the next meeting at the appropriate time.

Now we come to the happy place; we need a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Yao: Right here.

The Chair: MLA Yao. On the motion to adjourn, are we agreed? Any opposed? We are adjourned.

Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 3:13 p.m.]

