



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Select Special
Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner
Search Committee

Wednesday, May 24, 2017
6:27 p.m.

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Third Session**

Select Special Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee

Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (ND), Chair
Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (ND), Deputy Chair

Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (PC)
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (PC)*
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (ND)
Kleinsteuber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (ND)
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (ND)
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (W)
van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (W)
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (ND)

* substitution for Mike Ellis

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Shannon Dean	Law Clerk and Director of House Services
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Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Aaron Roth	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Cheryl Scarlett	Director of Human Resources, Information Technology and Broadcast Services
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications
Jeanette Dotimas	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Janet Schwegel	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

6:27 p.m.

Wednesday, May 24, 2017

[Mr. Shepherd in the chair]

The Chair: All right. I will call the meeting to order, the final meeting of the Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee. Thank you to everyone, once again, for your work and your commitment throughout the process.

My name is David Shepherd, MLA for Edmonton-Centre, chair of this committee. I'd just ask that we introduce ourselves for the record before we get started with our agenda. We'll start to my right.

Mr. Malkinson: Brian Malkinson, MLA for Calgary-Currie, deputy chair.

Mrs. Pitt: Angela Pitt, MLA, Airdrie.

Mr. Reynolds: Rob Reynolds, Clerk.

Ms Sorensen: Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications.

Ms Scarlett: Cheryl Scarlett, director of human resources, information technology, and broadcast services.

Mr. Gill: Prab Gill, MLA, Calgary-Greenway.

Ms Woollard: Denise Woollard, MLA, Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Mr. Horne: Trevor Horne, MLA for Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Jamie Kleinsteuber, MLA, Calgary-Northern Hills.

Mrs. Littlewood: Jessica Littlewood, MLA, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Ms Rempel: Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: Excellent. And on the phones? Mr. van Dijken, are you with us?

Mr. van Dijken: Yeah. Glenn van Dijken, MLA for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

The Chair: Thank you.

Just to note for the record, Mr. Gill is of course substituting for Mr. Ellis.

The first item that we have is just to approve the agenda for today as distributed and posted online. Do we have a member that would move that motion? Ms Woollard. Thank you. Ms Woollard moves that we adopt the agenda that we set out for today. All those in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

We then move on to our final deliberations, so at this point I think it would be appropriate for – oh, pardon me. I apologize. One item I missed there. I jumped a little ahead on the agenda. We also need to adopt the meeting minutes from our last meeting, May 18. Do we have any member that would make that motion? Mr. Kleinsteuber moves that we adopt the minutes from the May 18 meeting. All those in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

Then we move on to deliberations. At this point it would be appropriate for the committee to move in camera so that we can maintain the confidentiality of the candidates as we move through the next stage of the selection process. Do we have a member that would make that motion? Mr. Horne. Thank you. We have a motion

to move in camera. All those in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried. The committee will move in camera.

[The committee met in camera from 6:29 p.m. to 6:43 p.m.]

The Chair: All right. The committee is back on the record.

Now that we are back on the record, we would need to have a member that would like to make a motion regarding our draft committee report for consideration. Mrs. Littlewood, you'd like to make a motion?

Mrs. Littlewood: I would like to make that motion. What's the motion? How exactly should I word that, Ms Rempel?

The Chair: Ms Rempel.

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think some wording that might work would be that Mrs. Littlewood moves that

the Select Special Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee approve the draft report dated May 2017 and recommend to the Legislative Assembly the appointment of Marianne Ryan to the position of Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner effective July 1, 2017, and authorize the Speaker to enter into a contract with Ms Ryan effective at the time of the appointment.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mrs. Littlewood: I am honoured to move that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Littlewood. All right. We have the motion on the floor. Do we have any questions or discussion regarding the motion? If not, all those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? On the phone? It appears, then, that we are all in favour, so that motion is carried.

All right. We'll then just ask Ms Rhonda Sorensen, the manager of corporate communications with the LAO, to briefly on the record address the media release and social media postings in regard to our recommendation.

Ms Sorensen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It would be my pleasure at the approval of the committee to send out a news release alerting the media and the public to the chosen candidate. We would also post it on our website and send out some social media posts alerting the media and the public to the committee's recommendation to the Assembly tomorrow.

The Chair: Understood. Thank you, Ms Sorensen.

Does anyone have any questions, comments?

Mrs. Pitt: Just a process question. Do you make a motion in the Assembly, then, tomorrow? How does that work?

The Chair: Okay. Clerk, are you able to give, I guess, a sense of what the next steps would be?

Ms Rempel: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the chair of the committee Mr. Shepherd will be tabling a report in the Assembly that includes the recommendation of the committee, and he will also just send a letter to the Government House Leader in this regard prompting the government motion on the matter.

The Chair: Thank you, Clerk.

I just have one question of Ms Sorensen. The social media posts that go out, then: will they name Ms Ryan, or will they simply refer to the press release?

Ms Sorensen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our plan is not to name Ms Ryan in the social media post and to just draw the attention to the news release that will be posted on the website. The actual social media post will be more along the lines of the header on the news release.

The Chair: Understood. Thank you.

All right. That being the case, then, do we have a motion to approve the draft media release and social media postings? Ms Woollard. Thank you. Excellent. We have the motion, then, that the Select Special Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee approve the draft media release and social media postings as distributed.

All those in favour? Any opposed? And on the phones? That motion is carried.

All right. The last thing we have remaining, then, under other business is the approval of our final meeting minutes. As you're aware, this is the last meeting for the committee. Once we've reported our recommendation to the Assembly, we've completed our mandate, and to ensure that we leave a complete record of our work, we need to consider how the minutes from today are going to be approved. One method that's been used by other committees in the past has been to authorize the chair to approve the minutes after the draft version has been distributed to other committee members for comment. Does anyone have any thoughts on this?

Mr. Malkinson: Barring any objections, I think that would be a reasonable way to do it if that's how that's worked reliably in the past. I trust you, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Malkinson.
Any others?

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Or maybe at the next meeting of the Legislative Offices Committee? Would that be reasonable? No? It can't be done that way?

The Chair: Unfortunately, as that is a different entity, it's not able to approve the minutes of this committee.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Oh, I see. Okay. My mistake. My apologies.

The Chair: Any other comments, questions?

Ms Woollard: I think that sounds fine. I mean, you're going to write them up. We'll have a look at them. Sounds good.

The Chair: Yes. Exactly. I as chair would only authorize them and sign off on them based on the approval of all members after having reviewed them.

If everyone is comfortable with that, is there a member that would like to move a motion in that regard? Mr. Malkinson. Mr. Malkinson is moving that

the Select Special Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee

Say that five times fast.

authorize the chair to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2017, meeting after a copy has been distributed to committee members for comment.

I'll call the question. All those in favour? Any opposed? And on the phone? Thank you. That motion is carried.

All right. Are there any other items for discussion under other business?

6:50

Mr. Reynolds: Mr. Chair, if you'll permit me, I'd just like to say on behalf of the people who support the members that it's been a pleasure to work with you on this and to thank every member for his or her diligence in pursuing this. You've done, in my mind, excellent work. I think it's a real statement that you were able to reach a unanimous conclusion with respect to your work. I know you may take this lightly, but it really is an important part of the Assembly and for the conduct of the province of Alberta when you select the Ombudsman, the first-created officer of the Legislature, and the Public Interest Commissioner. If you'll accept it from me, certainly on behalf of the LAO I'd like to thank you very much for your service and for your excellent work.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Reynolds. I dare say on behalf of the committee that we have greatly appreciated the support of all the staff with the Legislative Assembly Office as well and have greatly appreciated your assistance in helping us move through this process because, I believe, for all of us, this has been our first time doing so, so thank you very much for your help and your support.

Mrs. Littlewood, you had a comment.

Mrs. Littlewood: Yes. Thank you. I just wanted to echo back to the whole committee, everyone that's been supportive to us, all of the human resources department, and the rest of the Legislative Assembly that has helped us and the hiring people. I'm trying to think. Ms Mills and – who were the two people that assisted us?

The Chair: Ms Ellerby.

Mrs. Littlewood: Ms Mills and Ms Ellerby. Yes. They were incredibly professional at helping us through this.

And just for the record I'm pleased to be part of the committee recommending Marianne Ryan for this position because we do appreciate how important this position is to the province, and it is noteworthy and exceptional that she will be the first woman that is recommended to this position.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Littlewood.

Do any other members have questions, comments?

If not, I'd like to thank all the members of the committee as well for your diligence and your patience. I know that this has been conducted at times under less than ideal circumstances. Through the midst of session I greatly appreciate the time you've sacrificed to complete this work.

With that, then, I'll look for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Do we have a motion? Ms Woollard.

Ms Woollard: Sure.

The Chair: Thank you. All those in favour of adjourning the meeting? Any opposed? The committee stands adjourned.

Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 6:53 p.m.]

