



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
First Session

Select Special
Chief Electoral Officer
Search Committee

Monday, May 27, 2013
10:01 a.m.

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Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee

Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont (PC), Chair
Quadri, Sohail, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC), Deputy Chair

Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL)
Eggen, David, Edmonton-Calder (ND)
Goudreau, Hector G., Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (PC)
Lemke, Ken, Stony Plain (PC)
Leskiw, Genia, Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)
McDonald, Everett, Grande Prairie-Smoky (PC)
Saskiw, Shayne, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W)

Corporate Human Resources Participants

Linda Harris	Consultant, Executive Search
Trish Mills	Director, Executive Search

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
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services
Liz Sim	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

10:01 a.m.**Monday, May 27, 2013**

[Mr. Rogers in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, hon. members. I'd like to call the meeting to order, the first meeting of the Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee. I trust that everyone has copies of the meeting materials, which were posted to the committee website last week.

We'll start off introductions, before we go to the agenda, with the Member for Edmonton-Calder.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm David Eggen, MLA for Edmonton-Calder.

Mr. Lemke: Ken Lemke, MLA for Stony Plain.

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

Mr. Saskiw: Shayne Saskiw, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mr. Goudreau: Hector Goudreau, Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley.

The Chair: We might as well have our staff as well.

Ms Sorensen: Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications and broadcast services.

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

Mrs. Leskiw: Genia Leskiw, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake. Welcome to the fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre.

The Chair: Uh-oh.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you, Genia.

The Chair: Well, we might as well, then, just hear from the Member for Edmonton-Centre while we're at that juncture.

Ms Blakeman: Well, thank you very much. I am delighted to be in the fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre but, unfortunately, not in the room with you. I hope to get there soon. Laurie Blakeman checking in.

The Chair: Wonderful.

Ms Harris: Linda Harris, executive search, corporate human resources.

Ms Mills: Trish Mills, executive search, corporate human resources.

Ms Rempel: Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: We've just been joined by Rob Reynolds, director of parliamentary relations. I think I've got his title right.

Now, you have the agenda before you. Could I get a motion to adopt the agenda if there are no changes?

Mr. Lemke: So moved.

The Chair: Moved by the hon. Member for Stony Plain. All those in favour? Opposed? That's carried.

Just to give you an overview of the mandate for the search committee, the mandate of this committee is set out in

Government Motion 31, which is attached just after the agenda, if there are any questions regarding that. Certainly, our entire process will be guided by that motion, which was approved in the Legislature. That's the mandate.

Our next item is the approved committee budget based on the estimates for 2013, and that is attached. I don't think we have to go through that. The budget was approved. Provision was made during the 2013 budget for funds for this committee, so this item is covered. We don't have to worry about a budget. Any questions in that regard?

Ms Blakeman: Yes.

The Chair: Hon. Ms Blakeman, please go ahead.

Ms Blakeman: I'm just wondering if there is money for travel if we want to bring someone in to interview them. Is that included in that budget?

The Chair: Yes, hon. member. All those costs are anticipated, and shortly, a little further down in the agenda, our staff will go through that. The committee clerk has just pointed out to me that we have a \$10,000 item for travel.

Ms Blakeman: Oh, okay. Perfect. Thank you.

Mr. Goudreau: I'm just questioning as well, Mr. Chair, the need for \$4,000 for hosting. I would suspect that a lot of the committees that I've been on never utilized any hosting funds. I'm just questioning why it would be there.

The Chair: Meals. The staff are just telling me that that includes some meals. We will have probably somewhere in the order of at least half a dozen meetings, based on my experience on this committee in the past, so we do have to feed all the members around the table and the staff. I would imagine there might be some other ancillary costs as well, hon. member.

Other questions? Hon. Mr. Saskiw.

Mr. Saskiw: Yeah. I'm just looking at the advertising budget. When you look at the amount proposed for advertising, it's in the range of \$33,000, yet we have budgeted basically twice as much, \$66,000. That's almost a 100 per cent contingency.

The Chair: We have that as item 8, hon. member. When we get there, I know the staff will give us a walk-through of that if you would just bear with us, okay? Thank you.

Item 5 talks about the use of executive search, Alberta corporate human resources. For the past eight officer searches – and I know I and the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre have been part of most of those – we have utilized the services of executive search to assist with all aspects of the search process.

I'm pleased to welcome Trish Mills, who introduced herself earlier. Trish is the director of executive search. She will be again assisting our committee. Joining Trish is Linda Harris, executive search consultant. At this time I'd like to turn it over to Trish to provide an overview of the expertise provided through executive search.

Ms Mills: Thank you very much. Some of the activities that we will engage in and/or undertake to support the committee have already started. That included the preparation of the draft position profile in your package that describes the role and the requirements of the position of the Chief Electoral Officer. We've also worked with the communications area in terms of the draft ad copy that's part of your package. We provided input on the

advertising strategy as well. We will also provide to the search committee a preliminary screening of all the applications that are received on this recruitment process. We'll prepare the resumés and summarize them for you.

If we are requested by the committee, we will undertake preliminary interviews with the candidates and interface with the candidates throughout the process. We will assist the committee clerk in terms of written communications with the candidates. We'll also participate with the search committee, if requested, in final interviews or interviews involving the full search committee with candidates, conduct reference checks and academic credentials checks on top candidates coming out of the interview process. We'll maintain an official competition file as well for the committee and any other services as required coming out of this process.

That's just a brief overview of the kind of support we'll provide.

The Chair: Thank you, Trish.

Questions for Trish?

Seeing none, then we'll move on to item 6, the Chief Electoral Officer position profile. You do have that included. I don't know if the intent was to go through that line by line. Maybe I'll look to Trish for a few comments on this as well. This is consistent with what has been the nature of the position in the past. Certainly, we'll entertain a few questions, but, Trish, maybe just give us a quick overview of the profile, if you would, please. Then I'll entertain some questions if there are any.

Ms Mills: Sure. The origin of this position profile is actually from Elections Alberta, so coming from that office with input of senior staff there. Executive search made some suggested revisions. We circulated it to our colleagues in the Leg. Assembly Office in this room for review. The kinds of changes that we made were very subtle, mostly around reflecting the leadership component of the role and adding information at the end of the profile, the last section, on the search process timelines for candidates so that they'd understand when we might be engaging in interviews. We added a position summary at the very beginning of it as well. So just a little background there.

The Chair: Questions?

10:10

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Chair, there's been a lot of work done, and I appreciate that. Maybe my comments might be too specific, but under knowledge/experience requirements and then back to issues and challenges – and I'm referring to the last page and the second-last page here. I know that in the last four elections that I participated in, I quickly realized that the Chief Electoral Officer and some of the staff did not understand the geographical challenges of the province of Alberta and a lot of the demographics of the province of Alberta. A case in point: we still had some individuals that had to drive well over three hours to go vote. You know, they had to leave the community of Gundy, go into B.C., then back into Alberta to vote, and then do that again. I recognize that there are advance poll procedures that might minimize that amount of travelling, but it was a tremendous inconvenience for some.

We made recommendations to have that changed over the last three elections, and we just couldn't get through, you know, to some of those particular individuals. The shopping patterns and travelling patterns of individuals in large constituencies, and I'm sure it's the same in smaller areas: I really feel that somebody

needs to understand those challenges that are involved and take that into consideration when setting up a provincial election.

Again, I'm not sure if that's too specific or something that we need to look at in the future or if a full team needs to look at that particular aspect, but that certainly would make it tremendously easier for a lot of Albertans to exercise their democratic right to vote.

The Chair: Fair enough, Hector. Certainly, knowing the size of the constituency that you represent and, I think, some of the other northern constituencies, I can appreciate your concern. The point you made about someone having to travel into B.C. and back into Alberta: knowing the nature of the road networks in some parts of the north, I can appreciate that.

I'll get to you in a minute, Genia. I know you've got a large constituency as well.

Trish, I'm wondering if this is something that we could flag to bring out in the interview process or somewhere along that. Maybe both or either one of you from executive search might comment. I agree with Hector. This is something that's vital. I'm just wondering how best we can sort of try to pull this out because I don't know how we would specify it in the profile.

Ms Mills: Well, we could actually add a note in the profile, and I would recommend that. If it is a requirement that you'd like individuals interested in this opportunity to be aware of in advance, I would suggest that we actually revise this profile to include it so that it's addressed there and then raise it as a question in the interview discussion.

Ms Blakeman: Mr. Chairman?

The Chair: I'll get to you right after Genia, Laurie.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you.

The Chair: Just following up on that if I may, Trish. I'm also thinking of the leadership aspect. Certainly, when you hire a person at this level, a big part of the importance we stress is, of course, their ability to lead individuals who have these fine skills to deal with some of these – I wouldn't say small – issues. It's important. Certainly, it's a detail, if nothing else, that the individual should be aware of to be able to make sure that they have people with the skills on their team to answer this. Could you comment on that, Trish?

Ms Mills: Well, the first point under knowledge/experience requirements addresses the leadership and the interest in ensuring that they have the ability to lead, manage, and develop a staff. So it's speaking very generally in terms of leadership. If you were making this comment in relation to the one prior about understanding the challenges for voters, I think we could address that through our questions of candidates in the interview process as long as we do get an opportunity to identify that particular need in the profile as separate from the leadership piece, I would recommend.

The Chair: It's important that that's flagged.

Mrs. Leskiw: On the same wavelength as Hector was on, a knowledge of our aboriginal communities, First Nations and Métis, I think is also very, very important. If we want them to become more engaged in the election process, there has to be an understanding of our aboriginal population in Alberta and also make it as inviting as possible for them to get involved.

I know that last election I had to fight very hard to get a polling booth to make sure each one of my three First Nations and two Métis settlements had voting in their communities because they won't come out of their communities to go vote somewhere else. It just isn't going to happen. Those are just my two bits there.

The Chair: I know that's an important issue on its own. Certainly, those are two real key pieces, I think, as we go forward.

Mrs. Leskiw: It's very similar to, you know, distance and that, but the demographics of our aboriginal population in our communities is also vital to keep in mind.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms Blakeman: Well, I think this starts to get to be a very long list. As you know, once you create a list, if everything isn't on the list, then it's deemed not to be. I think we're starting to get ourselves in trouble. If those two things would go into a special profile, I'm going to be raising the points about the particular difficulties that we've experienced in the core metropolitan areas, things around translation, around the access to buildings, which has been an ongoing problem.

Now, I've made sure that that's on the record, and it's been part of reports and recommendations, so I would believe that any applicant worth their salt would have gone through those previous reports and the recommendations and the changes in legislation and would know all of this. If we're going to start putting it in a profile, then I would want the urban stuff put in a profile. That's the difficulty we're experiencing here. Either all of it is going to go in the profile, or we're going to leave the profile as it is. Really, where it counts is the contract.

The Chair: Laurie, if I may, just to follow up on your point, I agree that it would be tough to start adding another three, four, or five bullet points to the profile, but I think it's important that these points are being made and that they're being flagged by executive search. We certainly will incorporate those into the questions when we fine-tune this and interview candidates to make sure that these people, were anyone to become successful, will recognize the importance of these aspects of the role. Those would be my thoughts.

Ms Blakeman: That's fine. I'm just saying that if you're going to change the profile, then we're going to put the whole list in, not just two.

The Chair: Okay. Point taken.

Back to Hector.

Mr. Goudreau: Well, thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate your comments, Ms Blakeman. I think my thoughts initially were to leave it fairly general and have a point there that said: understand the challenges, including demographics, within the province of Alberta. I used my example to prove a point by thinking much broader than that and recognizing that there are challenges right across the province that, hopefully, somebody would have an appreciation for.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Saskiw: Just looking at this, under section III, relationship to the Legislative Assembly, it does state that "the Chief Electoral Officer is a nonpartisan Officer of the Legislature." Of course, this is a very critical, important, independent officer of this Legislature. I think there has to be some type of delineation of that term,

"nonpartisan," to include having no political affiliation ever in that person's history. I think, especially in this role as Chief Electoral Officer, that you would make sure that there is zero history of any type of partisan political activities.

The Chair: Maybe just to respond, Mr. Saskiw, I certainly appreciate that. Obviously, an independent officer of the Legislature is certainly expected not to be affiliated today and certainly during their tenure to any political party. The whole idea of maybe going back through somebody's history, if they every had any affiliation anywhere, might be a little tough. I'd be a little afraid of maybe any human rights challenges. I just raise that.

Executive search, you've dealt with a lot of this. Could you comment on this, Trish?

Ms Mills: Yeah. Points are taken. The other challenge around that I would raise is the difficulty in screening that and determining that, just as a difficulty in the process.

10:20

Ms Blakeman: Yeah, you've got a constitutional challenge there because people have a guaranteed freedom of association. While you don't want it to be current, Shayne, you actually can't say to someone that you've taken away their right to associate with a particular group in anything they've ever done in their life and that that precludes them from applying for this job. That's unconstitutional.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Blakeman.

Now back to Mr. Saskiw.

Mr. Saskiw: Well, throughout the process is there going to be some type of evaluation of historical political activity? I mean, that's pretty pertinent when you're dealing with a Chief Electoral Officer that is dealing with political parties and has such authority. Is there some type of disclosure requirement, how much they've donated? You know, there has to be some type of analysis of whether or not their independence is potentially brought into question. I'm just wondering what the interview process would be.

The Chair: Mr. Saskiw, you're getting a little deep there.

Our director of parliamentary relations, Mr. Reynolds, is at the end of the table. I'm just wondering, sir, if you might give us, just from a legal perspective, how we might address some of these or whether that's something best left alone.

Mr. Reynolds: Well, I think that certainly Cheryl and the people from CHR could offer advice on this. One of the issues to be concerned about has been pointed out. If you're asking people about their political beliefs and participation prior to, you know, a period relatively around the time they've applied or something, that certainly could be seen, as was pointed out, as impinging upon the human rights legislation. I don't think Mr. Saskiw was in any way going there, but it might make some members uncomfortable: "Are you now or have you ever been a member of X party?" or something like that.

In any event, wherever the committee goes is one thing. I would say that probably we would be reluctant to suggest that questions of that nature pertaining to someone's background or beliefs be asked.

The Chair: Thank you.

Are there other comments or questions around the table?

All right. Seeing none, then again maybe just some clarification. The two points that were raised by both Mrs. Leskiw and Mr. Goudreau, I don't know if we – well, I guess I'll get a sense if we

have consensus as to leaving the profile as is. I know Ms Blakeman raised the fact that there are a lot of issues around the tight metropolitan area. If we start adding a lot of new points to the profile, then it could get rather lengthy. I'm just wondering if we have a consensus that we make sure that those two items are dealt with as we go through the process, that they're raised with any candidates, certainly, that we interview, that they recognize that these are very important factors in being successful at this job. If we're able to go that route, then I would look for a motion to accept this profile as put forward. I'm just wondering your thoughts on that.

Mr. Goudreau: Well, I'm just wondering. I'd be prepared to make a motion to add "understanding the geographic and demographic challenges within the province of Alberta," to leave it as a broad one but as a reminder for us to look at that broader picture.

The Chair: I'll put that on the table, then, as a motion that under knowledge and experience we add a bullet to the profile reflecting the points just made by Mr. Goudreau, an understanding and appreciation of the demographics and geographic makeup of the province.

Ms Blakeman: Well, then I'm going to have to put one forward that talks about, you know, the unique challenges experienced by metropolitan areas in access. As soon as you start with that list – you've got to have the list, guys.

The Chair: Okay. Ms Blakeman, I'm just wondering. Demographics would speak to metropolitan as well, so we have far-flung regions in the north, and we have very tight . . .

Ms Blakeman: No, it doesn't. I'm sorry.

The Chair: It doesn't?

Ms Blakeman: It doesn't. With demographics he's particularly talking about geographic areas. Well, geographic doesn't matter very much in the city. What matters in a city is that people get enumerated – we've got a good list – and that candidates can get access to buildings and that we have the ability for people that speak other languages and are citizens to be able to get information. That's what I'm saying. As soon as you put in there that they have to be aware of the geographics, then I'm going to have to say: yeah, and you have to be aware of this other stuff. A big part of this is the way we look at the candidates' backgrounds. But if you're going to start a list, then we're all going to start adding to it.

The Chair: Okay. All right, Ms Blakeman, I'll leave it at that.

We have some other people that want to get in on the conversation here. Mr. Lemke, followed by Mr. McDonald.

Mr. Lemke: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is she speaking against the motion?

The Chair: If I may, are you speaking against the motion? We do have a motion on the floor, Ms Blakeman. I guess you'd be speaking against that.

Ms Blakeman: No. I mean, this is the problem with this process. I have no difficulty with, you know, us making a point that a candidate needs to be aware of that. My point is that if we're going to do that, then we've got to be fair and list every single concern, whether it's demographic, geographic, accessibility, translation. We're going to have to add to the whole list. I have no

objection to him doing this. I'm just saying that then we're going to have to vote them all through. Are you guys going to support my urban stuff if I support your rural stuff, or are we going to end up with a fight right off the get-go?

The Chair: Okay. There was a question from Mr. Lemke, so I'll let him continue.

Mr. Lemke: Thank you. I'm speaking in favour of the motion. I think that it's broad enough so that it encompasses all of the members' concerns and certainly encompasses the mover's concern. I'm certainly in favour of the motion.

Mr. McDonald: I guess I'm in favour, but I, as with Laurie, have some cautions here. We can be here for days putting items on the list. We have a profile here that's been successful. If you've got issues that you're not satisfied with, we have a Legislative Offices Committee that is more than willing. The chair can accept any recommendations that are brought to the floor, and they can be discussed and added to a profile at any time. I think this is open enough that we can solicit for employment, and that's what this is for. This is not to change the whole profile of the job; it's to find a candidate who's capable of doing the work.

I think we're getting way too much in here. I'm with Laurie on this. If we're going to start this, then we're all going to have a pet peeve at home, something we don't like about the election system. I'd suggest that we've got a profile here. I like it. It's not that bad. I'm not disagreeing that the other points are important. I'm saying that this isn't the place for it.

The Chair: Just to be clear, then, Mr. McDonald, you're . . . [interjection] There seems to be some interference there, Ms Blakeman.

Ms Blakeman: I'm sorry?

The Chair: You seem to have some interference going on there. It's coming through. It sounds like water.

Ms Blakeman: Oh. Sorry. I don't know where that's coming from. Sorry about that.

The Chair: Anyway, just to be clear, then, Mr. McDonald, you're suggesting that the profile is good the way it is but that we can make sure that we cover these sifting through the candidates?

Mr. McDonald: I would suggest that as we move forward, there's an opportunity where if some things come up as points through the discussion, we could certainly send a letter to the chair of the Legislative Offices and ask for them to be incorporated into their system. Clearly, there's a protocol. There's a way to follow this.

The Chair: You're suggesting a way to give some direction to the Chief Electoral Officer from the Legislative Offices Committee?

Mr. McDonald: From the committee.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

I'll go to Mr. Eggen, and then I'll get to Mrs. Scarlett.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thanks, Mr. Chair. Certainly, this is not to say that any of these individual concerns about access to voting are not appropriate and relevant, but may I suggest that this is not necessarily the best place to try to break down the intricacies of geography and demographics? I mean, if we were to make a list – I just tried to write one down quickly here myself. I don't know how university students and their place of residence fits into that

particular motion as brought by Mr. Goudreau. Neither necessarily do linguistic concerns, cultural differences, gender, economic concerns – right? – in terms of people’s level of wealth and poverty, and further to that, you know, perhaps their state of homelessness, the access to identification or not. These are all issues that I deal with in my constituency, so, you know, I just don’t feel necessarily comfortable using just the two generalized words, “geography” and “demographics,” to cover those things properly.

So I would vote against the motion and . . .

10:30

The Chair: Leave the profile as is.

Mr. Eggen: Yes.

The Chair: Okay.

Mrs. Scarlett: Just a point of clarification in terms of the process. Again, the job profile is in support of the words that were written earlier in the document outlining the functions of this position, the basic requirements for the position. Then from there, there’s a series of processes in terms of a first-round interview and second-round interview, and in those interview processes are where you would pull out those very specific types of questions such as the ones that you’ve identified here.

The bullet that currently exists in terms of “related senior level experience administering election processes.” Administering election processes probably encompasses in a very general way all those types of things that you’ve mentioned so far, but most definitely in the interview processes are those types of specific questions relative to: what is your experience, your understanding, your knowledge, and what do you think the challenges would be with respect to that list that we’ve come up with now?

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Goudreau: I guess my understanding of demographics and the definition of that might be quite different. The reason I brought it up is that in a number of instances across the province recommendations that went forward did not work. Let me bring up just one particular issue, and that’s one of languages and how things were posted in the booth. In Falher and in all of our francophone communities there were languages as to how to vote and the procedures that should be utilized during the vote. I believe it was in five or six languages, and French was not one of them. We had been telling that to the Chief Electoral Officer for years, and all of a sudden we’ve got big signs in all sorts of languages, and the francophones are totally ignored in that respect. That causes nothing but grief. Inasmuch as we believe in what happened in the past, it caused issues.

So I use the word “demographics” to hopefully capture all of those kinds of things and not to focus specifically on something. I know there are all sorts of issues throughout the whole thing, and that’s why my utilization of the word “demographics.”

The Chair: Well, just a comment, Mr. Goudreau. Certainly, I would think that in 2013 and certainly in the next election in 2016, particularly in francophone communities, if we don’t have French on the paperwork, it would be totally unacceptable. Someone mentioned earlier about going through the Leg. Offices Committee and what have you. I think that would be a legitimate reason to call that officer before that committee to make sure that, you know, we’re recognizing demographics. We have corners of this province where French is a very significant part of the

everyday language, so I’m hoping that we can meet the needs of everything that’s been raised around the table as we go through this process.

We do have your motion on the floor. It seems that the sense around the room is that maybe it’s not going to pass, but certainly we can call the question and go from there.

Are there other questions? Any other comments on the motion? We’ll call the question, then. We have a motion to amend the profile to include the point by Mr. Goudreau, and then I guess if that passes, we’ll move forward as such. If it doesn’t, then we would look for a motion to deal with the profile as proposed.

Mr. Lemke: Could you just read back the motion, please?

The Chair: Okay.

Mrs. Sawchuk: The motion would be moved by Mr. Goudreau that

the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee amend the Chief Electoral Officer position profile to include a reference appreciating the geographic and demographic issues within the province of Alberta.

The Chair: I would maybe just for the record add that we would add that under A on page 7, under knowledge/experience. I think that’s probably the best place for it.

Mr. Goudreau, you’re good with that?

Mr. Goudreau: I’m satisfied.

The Chair: Okay. So the motion, then, is clear. All those in favour of the motion, please say aye or raise your hands, I guess. The clerk will take note.

Ms Blakeman: I’m going to have to vote against it because it’s going to get us into this whole other . . .

The Chair: Against. Then we’ll do opposed.

Ms Blakeman: Opposed.

The Chair: We have three opposed and four for, so the motion is carried. The profile is then accepted with that amendment.

All right, then, we’ll move on to item 7.

Ms Blakeman: Excuse me. I’d like to make an amendment, please.

The Chair: Well, the motion is carried with that amendment. You’re proposing another amendment to the profile, Ms Blakeman?

Ms Blakeman: Well, that is what’s going to have to happen now. That was my point, that we not get into this.

The Chair: All right, then. Would you speak to what you’re proposing, please?

Ms Blakeman: Under the same heading of the profile I move that considerations regarding language, specialized urban problems, including urban aboriginals, also be a special consideration.

The Chair: I’m trying to get something that we can vote on there, Ms Blakeman. You said: considerations regarding language and urban aboriginals.

Ms Blakeman: And access. Specific issues around urban representation.

The Chair: Access. I'm trying to understand. I think I'm aware of your concern. Is this access to multifamily buildings? Is that where you're going?

Ms Blakeman: Yes. Correct. It's why I didn't want you guys to do this.

The Chair: Sure. Well, Mrs. Sawchuk, can you craft something out of that that we might be able to discuss, and then we'll go from there?

It would be another bullet, then, on page 7 under A. I'm just going to suggest – maybe this will help you – that it include considerations regarding language and urban aboriginals and access to large multifamily buildings.

Ms Blakeman: Sure.

The Chair: All right, then. According to Ms Blakeman that's her motion, so that's on the table. Let's have some discussion on that motion. Any discussion around the table?

Mr. Eggen: Well, certainly the issues that I just brought up on the previous motion must be included, then, as well. You know, the issue about the place of residence for postsecondary students, cultural differences, linguistic concerns, homelessness and the lack of identification that is associated with that need to be included as well. So I'm not sure whether I should just include those in the Member for Edmonton-Centre's as a friendly amendment.

Ms Blakeman: Yeah. I'll take them.

Mr. Eggen: You'll take those?

Ms Blakeman: Sure.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah?

Ms Blakeman: Yes. Absolutely.

The Chair: Mr. Eggen, could you read those again, please?

Mr. Eggen: Sure. You bet.

Mr. McDonald: He's pretty shocked.

Mr. Eggen: Well, no, no.

I mean, again, I really don't think this is the place to do it, but now since we've opened up this door . . .

Ms Blakeman: I agree.

Mr. Eggen: . . . I have included the place of residence for postsecondary students, cultural differences, linguistic concerns, and homelessness.

Ms Blakeman: ID. The issue around ID.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Homelessness and then the issues around identification, ID.

Ms Blakeman: Yeah.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. Okay. Those could be two separate things.

If you would consider that, Laurie, I would be grateful, then. Thank you.

Ms Blakeman: Yes. Definitely. It's in.

10:40

Mr. Reynolds: Excuse me, Mr. Chair. Just a point of clarification, Mr. Eggen. Was it place of residence, cultural differences, language, and then homelessness?

Mr. Eggen: Yeah.

Mr. Reynolds: Was language in there?

Mr. Eggen: Yes, it was. That's right.

Mr. Reynolds: Thank you. Sorry.

Ms Blakeman: The place of residence is specific to the students.

Mr. Eggen: Postsecondary students, right?

Ms Blakeman: Yeah. That's an ongoing issue.

The Chair: Just so we're all speaking about the same thing, I'm going to read what I had. Language was already covered by Ms Blakeman earlier on.

Include considerations regarding language and urban aboriginals and access to large multifamily buildings and to also include issues of residence for postsecondary students, ID, homelessness, and cultural diversity.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. That sounds good. I like that.

Ms Blakeman: Good.

The Chair: That's what I heard you say.

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. That's pretty good.

Ms Blakeman: Yeah.

The Chair: Ms Blakeman, that's what you intended to say based on that friendly amendment?

Ms Blakeman: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. Discussion of the motion, then, with the friendly amendment.

Mrs. Leskiw: I just looked up the definition of demographics, and I'll read it here. It says: "the dynamic balance of a population." Everything that both Ms Blakeman and . . .

Mr. Eggen: That guy over there.

The Chair: Mr. Eggen.

Mrs. Leskiw: . . . the guy over there said fits into the definition of demographics. Like it says here: "relating to the structure of population." Everything that both of you have said is included in the structure of population regardless of if it's rural or urban and so on. Demographics is not only related to rural Alberta. I mean, even the demographics of where you live in Edmonton: from one end to the other communities differ, whether it's linguistic or cultural or homelessness or high-rise apartments or duplexes or low-cost housing. All of that is part of the definition of demographics. I think you're just repeating yourselves.

Ms Blakeman: No. I think it has to go in. If we're going to start talking about how important geographic distance is and access to polls for geographic reasons, then we have to start the list. I've been through this too many times. When you do this kind of thing

and then someone else comes along six years from now and has to try and interpret it, if there's a list, they are going to start to look for what is not on the list. Therefore, we have to put it on the list.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you, Ms Blakeman.
Other comments? Mr. Saskiw.

Mr. Saskiw: Yeah. I just want to speak against this motion. Just along the lines of Mrs. Genia Leskiw and Mr. Goudreau I think that the amendment that's already been provided with respect to demographics is so broad that it would clearly encompass everything that was just listed in the current motion, so I'll be voting against this one.

The Chair: I'll come back to you, Mr. Eggen, but I'm just wondering if there are others before you. Maybe you might summarize at some point.

Others?

Okay. Mr. Eggen, then.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Thanks. I think that the concern that was opened up with this amendment, the first amendment from Mr. Goudreau, was the inclusion of geography, which is a certain subset of the general population. Whenever you're looking at the entire population of Alberta and then start to divide into subsets, geography is one of them. Thus, the other parts of this list must be included. You know, if we perhaps sought to scratch that first amendment or change the first amendment to not include geography, then that would probably cover this a little bit.

The Chair: Okay. Are there other comments?

Okay. Seeing none, then I'll call the question. All in favour of this amendment to the profile – it's a motion, but it's a motion amending the profile – please raise your hands.

Ms Blakeman: Well, I'll say: in favour.

The Chair: We have two in favour. Those opposed? That's defeated.

Okay. We do have a profile, then, that we did vote on. I'm going to move on to the draft search timetable and process, and I'll come back to Trish.

Members should have the timeline document before them. Before I open the floor to discussion, I'd like to elaborate on the process a bit, starting with the suggested meeting during the week of July 1. This meeting would be the only committee meeting scheduled during the summer months. This time period would be utilized by executive search in conducting preliminary interviews of those candidates shortlisted by the committee. Of course, if the committee chooses to meet earlier than the week of September 2 to review the preliminary interview reports, it would shorten the overall timeline. This is just recognizing the nature of summer and the number of things that happen.

The other factors to be considered during the latter part of the process, which could potentially shorten the overall timeline, are (a) the number of candidates shortlisted for the final interview by the committee and (b) the number of candidates shortlisted after the final interview process, which would then require reference checks and security screenings and a return to the committee for a final decision. Ultimately, based on the number of applications received and the number shortlisted for preliminary and final interviews, the timeline could potentially be shortened by a week or so.

Trish, any additions at this point?

Ms Mills: No. I'm just interested in the committee's views of the schedule as proposed.

The Chair: You've got the schedule before you, hon. members. Your thoughts on the schedule? Mr. McDonald.

Mr. McDonald: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'll move that we accept the timetable as it's presented.

The Chair: Okay. The timetable as presented has been moved by Mr. McDonald.
Mr. Lemke.

Mr. Lemke: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a question. I know that I'm going to be away most of the week of July 1. I'm not sure that it matters. I mean, certainly without me there's quorum. To try to find a week that everybody is going to be available I'm not sure is that important, but I did want to put it in the record that I likely won't be able to make that meeting.

The Chair: You can also send a replacement to these meetings.

Now, I do want to mention, though, that as we move forward in this process, substitutions are really hard. We've been through this. Because of the nature of what we're doing, once we start the process and start looking at individuals' qualifications, it's pretty tough to do substitutions. Frankly, we've had situations in the past where people missed one or two meetings. They were not able to be part of the final decision because it's just unfair.

Ms Blakeman: Actually, Mr. Chairman, that's been a motion from me that if you missed any of the interviews, you could not vote in the final selection. You had to be there for all of the interviews in order to vote on the final selection.

The Chair: That is difficult, but certainly I know we've been down that road. I know people are going to make every effort they can to be there, but this isn't a process where you can substitute. To send a substitute who doesn't have a clue about what's been talked about is pretty hard to deal with. We'll do our best to accommodate everyone and try to have, you know, a meeting where we can get as many as possible.

Mr. Goudreau: In that case, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that we would be given a couple of alternative dates. I know that every once in a while we get a notice saying that the next meeting is on this particular date without having any opportunity for input. Sometimes one or two dates as alternatives and a possibility to bring our own suggestions forward would be important.

The Chair: We'll definitely be polling members, hon. member. We'll certainly make every effort that we can to get, hopefully, all of the committee, but if not, then a majority. Hopefully, all.

Mr. Goudreau: Thank you.

The Chair: Certainly, teleconference is still a possibility because all the material will be made available. Obviously, when we start going through candidates, we can courier the material, what have you. We'll make a point of getting the material in people's hands so that people can participate.

We do have a motion on the floor, then,
to accept the timetable.

The draft timetable would now become the timetable. I'll call the question. All in favour of that motion? Opposed? That's carried.

Ms Blakeman: Just to clarify, we now have a closing date that is two weeks from now, June 14?

The Chair: The closing date is two weeks from this Friday, hon. member.

10:50

Ms Blakeman: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. The next item of business, then, will be the draft advertising plan. Rhonda.

Ms Sorensen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think you've all had a chance to read through the proposed recommendations for advertising. We're following a strategy very similar to what has been utilized in the past. I've done some consultation with my LAO colleagues as well as with executive search. We're looking to utilize both a provincial and national print campaign as well as some targeted online initiatives.

The print advertising strategy that we've used in the past that has been successful is that what we actually put in print is a shorter version of the full ad. That just helps shave off some costs for the committee. However, the full ad is available on the online initiatives, so people are encouraged to then go look at the long ad as well as the position profile that would be posted with it.

As you can see in the attached plan, the provincial publications would be the dailies throughout Alberta, including the *Edmonton Journal*, *Calgary Herald*, *Fort McMurray Today*, *Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribune*, *Red Deer Advocate*, *Lethbridge Herald*, and *Medicine Hat News*. The total cost for a one-time run on Saturday, June 1, in the careers section would be about \$11,000.

National publications. Typically we recommend that one national publication is chosen, and we would normally recommend that based on the circulation. As you can see, the *Globe and Mail* does carry a higher circulation, and for three runs – June 1, 5, and 7 – there would be a cost of \$11,657. However, due to our advertising bookings with the *Journal* and *Herald* we get quite a discount on the *National Post* as well. They carry a circulation of 161,500 and would be offering us the same ad at \$1,200, just over that. It is something that the committee might want to consider, looking at one or the other or perhaps even utilizing both.

The total estimated cost for the above advertising campaign is \$25,500. If we were to run the larger ad version as opposed to the shorter ad version, it would add approximately \$7,000 to that cost. This, of course, includes some online initiatives such as posting the advertisement on the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee website as well as links from the Assembly website and Elections Alberta website and forwarding the advertisement to a national network of election offices via e-mail, posting the advertisement on the internal website for the Canadian Election Resource Library, which is an internal site accessed through Elections Alberta, and they'll take care of that part for us.

I guess, Mr. Chair, I'd be looking for any questions and/or approval on the strategy.

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Chair, I know we've had right across the province some excellent returning officers that would understand and might qualify for the Chief Electoral Officer position, but I'm not sure that this would get to them. Again, there are a lot of small rural papers. I'm just questioning as to whether or not we should target them. Especially in the last couple of elections, we've probably had, you know, 150 returning officers that may be interested in this particular position. I know that they're anticipating that this is coming up, or some would be, but whether or not we'd reach them – I don't know if a smaller ad in the rural

papers would work, at least one run to highlight the fact that we are doing this.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Goudreau. Certainly, those of us that cover rural areas know the value of small papers.

I'm wondering. Ms Sorensen, I think part of what you try to do is make sure that you get a paper that covers an entire area. Could you maybe just give us a little bit of what the thinking is behind these large papers?

Ms Sorensen: Absolutely, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Certainly, the weekly newspapers do cover the communities. However, the thought process behind this is that most people going for a job of this stature are going to look at career sections, which appear in daily publications, and that those daily publications do actually cover the majority of the population. It is also our hope that the rural communities that maybe aren't seeing it could be directed to the websites where the advertisement would be posted.

Mrs. Leskiw: I would agree with you. The *Edmonton Journal* and those kinds of papers are accessed in the rural community to a great extent, too, so the rural population who would be interested would be looking at those national papers anyway.

The Chair: Are there other comments or questions? Mr. Eggen.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Thanks for your report. Were you suggesting that we choose between the *National Post* and the *Globe and Mail*? Was that part of your recommendation there?

Ms Sorensen: If I may, Mr. Chair, typically we do recommend that one national newspaper is chosen. However, we are getting a substantial deal on the other national, so I guess I would leave that up to the committee to decide whether they want to do one versus the other or go for both.

Mr. Eggen: I would suggest, Mr. Chair, considering that we are buying an ad in both the *Edmonton Journal* and the *Calgary Herald*, that that takes care of the province of Alberta. The circulation of the *National Post* is substantially smaller if you take out the province of Alberta from the overall number because, as I'm suggesting, we already cover that *National Post* circulation in Alberta through the other two daily papers. If we want to make sure we reach a national audience – that's the intention of buying a national ad – I would say that the *Globe and Mail* probably has a greater reach.

The Chair: Just to be clear, then, Mr. Eggen, are you suggesting that it would be enough to cover Alberta by the *Herald* and the *Journal* and then go nationally with the *Globe and Mail*?

Mr. Eggen: Yeah. That's right.

Ms Sorensen: Just a clarification, Mr. Eggen: are you suggesting that the other dailies, such as the *Red Deer Advocate*, the *Medicine Hat News*, *Lethbridge Herald*, not be a part of it?

Mr. Eggen: No, no, no. I'm just saying that, you know, in terms of that level of paper we're covering the province of Alberta already with these other papers. Yeah, including the *Advocate* and so forth. If you take that number out of the *National Post* number, then certainly the *Globe and Mail* is giving you – anyway, yeah. I would suggest that the *Globe and Mail* is a more appropriate choice.

Ms Sorensen: Okay. I understand. What he's suggesting is that we stick with the daily campaign as well as the one national.

The Chair: Being the *Globe and Mail*?

Ms Sorensen: Yes. I guess I'm just looking for consensus from the committee on that direction.

The Chair: Ms Sorensen, could you just clarify for me, then, what that would mean for numbers? It just removes the \$1,228 for the *National Post*, and then we would add the portion for the *Globe and Mail*?

Ms Sorensen: The *Globe and Mail* is already included.

The Chair: Right. Okay.
Mr. McDonald.

Mr. McDonald: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I'm going to speak against that. I think that, you know, we're only doing this once. We're doing one ad. The additional \$1,200 does carry it to an additional 161,000. Even though it may be duplication, not everybody reads one of the locals such as the *Journal*. I would suggest that with the discounts that have been presented to you, it's a fair deal to cover another 161,000 people that may or may not miss the application. I would have suggested the first suggestion you had, to take advantage of the discount, while speaking against the recommendation.

Mr. Eggen: I think she was asking us to choose, right? You're saying that we tag on the extra \$1,200.

Mr. McDonald: To get the extra coverage.

Mr. Eggen: Right. Yeah. Sure. That would be different from what she suggested, but yeah, I think that's a good idea.

Mr. McDonald: No. She suggested that, but she said that she wanted to leave that up to us.

The Chair: Right. Just to be clear then, if I may, and we'll ask Rhonda. Your proposal was to do both. We would cover the *National Post* at the small cost because we get the discount because we're doing the *Herald* and the *Journal* and some other of

their own publications in Alberta. Then we do the *Globe* as well, and that's one number.

11:00

Ms Sorensen: Yes. If I may just clarify . . .

The Chair: If we took out the *Post*, we'd be saving \$1,200.

Ms Sorensen: Exactly.

The Chair: Gotcha.

Ms Sorensen: So the cost of \$25,000 includes the seven dailies, the *Globe and Mail*, as well as the *National Post*. If the committee chooses to withdraw the *National Post* and go with the larger circulation of the *Globe and Mail*, that would cut the cost by \$1,200.

The Chair: Gotcha. So the suggestion, then, is that we just leave it as proposed?

Mr. McDonald: I don't know. It's what is in the motion.

Mr. Eggen: It was discussion. I didn't make a formal motion.

The Chair: So, Mr. Eggen, if you're willing to move, then, the entire recommendation as is without any reductions based on the discussion we've had, I'd be willing to accept that.

Mr. Eggen: So moved.

The Chair: Okay. For the record Mr. Eggen has moved that the Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee adopt the advertising plan as proposed.

All those in favour? Opposed? That is carried. Thank you.

All we have, then, is other business. Do we have any other business to be discussed at this time?

Seeing none, the future meeting date. We will poll members for that week of July 2 for the next meeting. The clerk will do that shortly after this meeting.

Have we covered everything, Ms Sorensen? Okay. Good.

Mr. Saskiw, you're willing to move to adjourn? All those in favour? We are adjourned.

Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 11:02 a.m.]

