



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature  
Second Session

Select Special Committee  
on Electoral Boundaries

Tuesday, June 2, 2026  
9 a.m.

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Second Session**

**Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries**

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de Jonge, Chantelle, Chestermere-Strathmore (UC)  
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Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)  
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[Mr. Lundy in the chair]

**The Chair:** Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries to order and welcome everyone in attendance.

My name is Brandon Lundy, MLA for Leduc-Beaumont and chair of the committee. I will now ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record. We'll begin to my right.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Ron Wiebe, MLA for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Garth Rowswell, MLA, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

**Ms Ganley:** Kathleen Ganley, Calgary-Mountain View. Good morning, everyone.

**Ms Gray:** Good morning. Christina Gray, MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

**Ms Govindarajan:** Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

**Ms Robert:** Good morning. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

**Mr. Roth:** Good morning. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

We'll now move online to our introductions. I see MLA de Jonge. Do you mind introducing yourself?

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you, Chair, and good morning, everyone. Chantelle de Jonge, MLA for Chestermere-Strathmore.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

For the record I will note the following substitution: Mr. Rowswell for the hon. Mrs. Sawyer.

A few housekeeping items before we turn to our business at hand. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard*. Members participating remotely should ensure they are prepared to speak or vote when called upon, and videoconference participants are encouraged to have their cameras on if possible when speaking. Committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

With that, I'll move to our next agenda item, which is approval of our agenda. Are there any changes or additions to the draft agenda? Seeing none, would someone like to make a motion to adopt the agenda? MLA Wiebe. So moved by MLA Wiebe that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries approve the proposed agenda as distributed for its June 2, 2026, meeting. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed? Online? All right. That motion is carried.

Moving to approval of minutes from the previous meeting. Are there any errors or omissions to note in the draft minutes? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that the minutes are accurate. My quick question is: the minutes refer to appendices in a couple of places, but I can't see the appendices on the committee site. I think we can approve the minutes as is, but I will be just looking to follow up and check on those appendices after the fact. Also, I believe it was with the publishing of these

minutes that the Acting Chief Justice's letter was also going to be made public, so I assume that that's an appendix that I'm not seeing here.

**The Chair:** I might ask the table for quick commentary on that.

**Mr. Roth:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So the appendices refer to the items that are specifically there following in the minutes. For instance, appendix 1 would be the letter, the response from the Acting Chief Justice. Appendix 2 would be the committee's original letter, et cetera. So the appendices correspond to those items specifically that they would follow, and they would be posted. They're part of the minutes package.

**Ms Gray:** It comes together as a package.

**Mr. Roth:** Yes, that's right.

**Ms Gray:** You know what? That makes perfect sense. That's what I would expect. Just reading the minutes as we saw, I couldn't see it that way.

**Mr. Roth:** How it happens, if the committee should approve the minutes: we compile it, it goes to the library, and it becomes accessible after that point.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, MLA Gray.

With that, would someone like to make a motion to approve our minutes from the last meeting? MLA Rowswell. So moved by MLA Rowswell that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries approve the draft minutes as distributed for its May 12, 2026, meeting. All those in favour, please say aye. Online? Any opposed? Seeing none. That motion is carried.

I can now move us on to our next agenda item, which is consideration of applications for the chair of the independent advisory panel. Hon. members, at our May 12, 2026, meeting the committee extended the period of time the committee would accept applications for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel from May 14, 2026, to May 26, 2026. The committee also directed that a letter requesting applications for the position be sent to presidents of all postsecondary institutions in Alberta. In the same motion the committee requested that the Ministry of Justice, the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta branch, and the Law Society of Alberta circulate a letter to all current and retired judges of the Court of King's Bench of Alberta and the Court of Appeal of Alberta inviting expressions of interest in the position of chair of the independent advisory panel. These letters were all sent on May 12, 2026.

The committee received some expressions of interest in the position. Committee members were provided these documents prior to this meeting. At this time I would like to open the floor to a discussion on how the committee would like to proceed in considering the applications received for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel. In order to respect the privacy of any candidates involved in the process, it would be appropriate for the committee to consider moving in camera at this point.

Would anyone like to make a motion in this regard? MLA Wiebe, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to move that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries move in camera for the purpose of considering applications for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel.

**The Chair:** Okay. We're working on our proposed motion.

MLA Ganley, go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned earlier, I do have a motion as well, which I would like to move prior to going in camera. I think that it would be appropriate to allow for some discussion to occur prior to going in camera. I think the public has significant interest in this matter, and once we're in camera, we're obviously off the public record.

I think the factors that are relevant here are that we sent the letter. The Chief Justice, citing irregularities of the process, declined to circulate it. Then, beyond that, we got a response from the Bar Association saying that

Given that . . . [the] Chief Justice . . . has expressed reservations about this selection process and refrained from circulating the letter, the CBA must also respectfully decline the committee's request. The Chief Justices are the proper entities to circulate this notice, and it would be inappropriate for the CBA to circumvent their decision.

The Law Society did not write back, but they did respond to media requests saying that they respect the authority of the Chief Justices over their respective courts and we would have not and would not circulate documents or messages to the court unless specifically requested by the Chief Justices themselves. I think cumulatively what this tells us is that the process – I mean, the entire process is deeply irregular. But the process particularly for selecting the chair has been, I would say, extremely problematic, and I think it's worth having a bit of a discussion where the public can see about what's happening going forward.

I understand that selection committees do tend to proceed in camera to protect the applicants. I do think it's relevant that, without saying the name of any applicants, the committee received only two applications. I also think it is highly relevant whether or not we plan to interview those applicants, whether this committee is going to have the opportunity to ask questions, because even in a selection committee, when it's in camera, you still have the opportunity to interview the applicants, and I think that that is extremely relevant. I think going in camera at this point deprives the public of the opportunity to see some of the initial deliberations. I think that we can all agree not to mention the names of the individuals specifically involved, but I do think that some preliminary discussion around, you know, what information will be disclosed, what questions will be asked, whether the applicants will be interviewed, is all extremely relevant.

So I object. I think this motion is highly premature, and I think the public deserves to see some of those initial deliberations.

9:10

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Ganley, for those comments.

I guess on the technical side I do think we have to address the motion that we have in front of us now and certainly give both sides an opportunity to debate that motion, including perhaps some of your comments you just made. You might get a chance to reiterate. But before I open the floor to discussion, MLA Wiebe, do you mind reading the full motion into our record, please?

**Mr. Wiebe:** I move that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries meet in camera to discuss applications for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel and that only the following remain in attendance: (a) required staff from the Legislative Assembly Office; (b) the two designated staff members from each of the Government Caucus and the Official Opposition Caucus, in accordance with the Committee's direction on May 4, 2026.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Wiebe.

MLA Gray, I did see your hand, but I wanted to give MLA Wiebe a chance to speak to his motion briefly. If you would like to, MLA Wiebe.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Yeah. Conducting these discussions in camera allows the committee members to have candid and thorough discussions regarding applications while protecting the privacy and the professional reputations of the individuals who have expressed interest in the position. I think probably, you know, if I need to say more, I would say that moving in camera helps ensure that the applicants are assessed fairly on their qualifications and experience without subjecting individual applicants to unnecessary public scrutiny during the deliberations and stages of the process.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MLA Gray, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're now at the moment where we have to debate the motion to go in camera because despite my colleague signalling to you and the Clerk that she hoped to be recognized first under item 4, Mr. Chair, your eye was caught only by the UCP side of the room, unfortunately.

The intent of the Official Opposition to try and enter into some discussion on item 4 before we go into camera is specifically because there are a number of very important considerations that we should be discussing before getting into the details around the two applicants and their personal information. I understand the need for that to be in camera, but my colleagues opposite talked about fairness in this process, and that is the number one concern that my Official Opposition colleague and I are trying to address very specifically.

I think moving in camera without this committee having a discussion about the fact that, first, the Acting Chief Justice rejected invitations to participate, far outside the norm, because of Government Motion 37 and the irregularities of what this government is doing with this process, followed by the Canadian Bar Association echoing that message and the Law Society of Alberta. I think that has an impact on the self-nominations that are coming forward in this case. Moving in camera prior to us being able to have a conversation about that – what those very important signals that have been sent from the legal community indicate to us and being able to potentially respond to that I think is incredibly important.

I'm frustrated by the motion. The very first thing this committee does is move to go in camera. I will remind you, Mr. Chair, that the Official Opposition at the outset of this did try to encourage the committee to hold all of the discussions and meetings in daylight. Sunshine is the best disinfectant to try and bring more credibility and more transparency to this process, yet here at the very first opportunity we see the government moving in camera despite our concerns and without even allowing for us to have a conversation about what is going on in this process and what has happened since our last meeting.

So I object to going in camera at this point because I think it's premature. I think we've made very clear statements as to what we hope to discuss before we move into an in camera discussion, and I will be voting against the move to in camera for those reasons.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Gray.

Are there any other members wishing to join? MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Mr. Chair, I just have a few more comments on this process because I honestly had hoped that signalling that at some point we would go in camera to have these discussions would

cause members opposite to be willing to engage in a discussion on the public record. I think it is of significant concern. This is one of the reasons we had previously moved a motion to prevent exactly this, to put all deliberations on the record. I think privileging the interests of the folks who have come forward to put in applications, which I'm not saying is not a thing, over the interest of the public in transparency when it comes to the handling of their right to vote is pretty significant. I think when we talk about fairness, we should also consider fairness to the public, those people that we serve.

Obviously, we both had a number of motions that we wanted to move forward with. Those motions, I understand, would be sort of rendered invalid were we to appoint the chair. I don't really know what the plan is when we go in camera here, but I think my concern is that it will circumvent the opposition's opportunity to speak to the potential candidates for chair, that it will circumvent some of our opportunity to talk about what steps would normally occur.

I just want to reiterate that this work was done. It was done by an independent commission. They produced the first unanimous interim report in 30 years. They produced a final report that was very much like the interim report, as one would expect it to be, being based on the same evidence and the same record. Then we got that minority report, which appears to have fallen out of the clear blue sky and is reflected nowhere on the record. There have been allegations of people associated with the UCP circulating those maps in advance of the committee's report coming out, which I think, Mr. Chair, while not conclusive is deeply troubling and has proven deeply troubling to the public.

Instead of accepting that report, we now find ourselves in the position of this committee. Again I will state that my colleague and I participate because we think that the public has a right to this information and because, otherwise, the committee would, apparently, just go in camera and do its business out of the public eye, where the public cannot see.

I appreciate there may be political reasons for the government not to want this on the record, but I think the public has a right to the information. I think they have a right to know what their representatives are doing in terms of impacting the right to vote, and I think that this, in my view, extremely premature motion circumvents that right.

Yeah. We've seen government members vote against the requirement that chairs tell us if someone attempts to interfere with them. They voted in favour of people who've made political donations. They voted in favour of holding meetings off the record. This process is incredibly problematic, and I think that we should be granted the opportunity to move those motions in the public interest. I think that this is premature. I object in the strongest possible terms.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Are there any other members wishing to continue on this motion?

All right. Seeing none, I am prepared to call the question. All those in favour of the motion in the room, please say aye. Any members in the room opposed, please say no. Any members online who are in favour of the motion, please indicate so. That motion is carried.

[The committee met in camera from 9:19 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.]

**The Chair:** All right. Hon. members, the committee has now returned to the record.

Are there any comments, questions, or motions that members wish to make on this agenda item? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As we come out of our in camera discussion, I would like to make a motion, submitted to the committee clerk as number 6, that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries invite applicants for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel to participate in an interview with committee members at a future date.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you. I just want to make sure. If you can confirm that motion on the screen.

**Ms Gray:** Yes. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** All right, and if you'd like an opportunity to speak to it, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Yes. Thank you. The decision before the committee right now is who will chair the independent advisory panel process created by Government Motion 37. We know that there are two applicants, and during previous discussions the Official Opposition brought forward motions about holding interviews in public, which the government rejected, but the idea to interview or not was not decided. In fact, in the debate on that motion government MLAs specifically talked about the types of interviews and deliberations that are usually done in these circumstances and that they are almost always in camera.

At this point, given that the decision to do it in public versus in camera has already been decided, I'm asking the committee to make sure that we have the opportunity to ask questions of both applicants prior to making a decision. I think it's really critical to figure out the suitability of these candidates but also to ask some pretty important questions about how they heard about the process, about the reaction from the Acting Chief Justice, the Canadian Bar Association, and the Law Society of Alberta, how they feel about those concerns raised, and how that might impact their chairing of this independent advisory panel.

I think asking clearly about their motivations for self-nominating to be chair – I would really like to ask questions about whether they will be seeking a unanimous report or not. I think Justice Miller, with the interim report, being able to get a unanimous report, the first unanimous interim, I believe, in 30 years, was remarkable. I'm curious. These two proponents who are applying: is that something that they will seek to try to do? Are they going to come in to be a bit of a negotiating chair? How will they frame their work? I would ask questions around how much weight they would give the public submissions, how familiar they are already with the current report, especially given the very deep constitutional issues outlined in this well-written report: the recent court decisions and further considerations section; appendix D, talking about the history of the boundary commissions.

If we were to pass this motion, I imagine our applicants would not be surprised to be invited. I think this is something we could do really quickly and have more confidence about who the applicants are, what their motivations are. Do they understand their role when it comes to Government Motion 37? Are they bringing any biases or opinions into this process, so that we can be aware of that?

My final comment will just be that Government Motion 37 is slightly different from the addendum that this committee is supposedly based on, differences about, you know, what maybe Justice Miller's intention was about where impact should have. They're in the addendum, but they're not explicitly stated in Government Motion 37, so asking a chair about: will the chair be looking to honour Justice Miller's intentions that he wrote about in the addendum or be governed solely by the literal

language of Government Motion 37? Those are two very different things.

Obviously, I have a number of questions, and I imagine all committee members could think of questions as well. I think this would be an important and valuable piece of the process, and that is why I move this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Gray.

I saw MLA de Jonge online first, and then I'll maybe go to MLA Ganley after. Please go ahead, Chantelle.

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you so much, Chair. I hope you're able to hear me in the room.

I'm happy to speak to the motion proposed by the hon. member. I first just want to clarify that, you know, the intent of setting up an independent advisory council is specifically to ensure the independence of this process. My concern with the motion is that questions from partisan members, I think, will suggest what the members want the prospective chair to consider instead of relying solely on the mandate laid out in Government Motion 37. It's our duty as a committee to fulfill that motion.

I also think it's important to note that when the applicants applied for the role of chair, submitting to an interview was never part of the process outlined or advertised. So now changing course and requiring interviews at this stage, I think, well, is going to introduce this additional step, and I think that may dissuade the candidates who've applied from performing their role as chair and performing this public service. I think Government Motion 37 is very clear about the qualifications of chair, outlining that the individual who steps in as chair must possess significant qualifications, experience, public credibility, all suitable for leading this electoral boundary review.

Just finally, in closing, it's important to note that when the Electoral Boundaries Commission was struck, no interviews were conducted for chair; therefore, I don't think interviews are required now. So I won't be supporting the motion.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA de Jonge.

MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. I have a number of points to follow up on that. I think the first thing to note is that one of the things I wanted to say on the record is that if you look back to the history of the committee deliberations, it was, in fact, MLA de Jonge who pointed out that the normal process in an appointment like this is to hold in camera interviews. I'm perplexed by the sudden reversal in position on that particular one.

I also think that it is worth noting, and I just want to state for the record, Mr. Chair, that the government motion terms it the "independent advisory panel." I would argue that that's not what that word means. When we talk about their independence: yeah, I would colour that as deeply inaccurate. This is not the same as the commission. First of all, the chair of the commission was picked using the normal process where the court is consulted. This is specifically not like that. In fact, both the Law Society and the Canadian Bar Association have declined to participate because of those irregularities, as did the court.

To suggest that, oh, well, for the commission they don't have interviews: well, yes. The commission is completely different. It is not a subbranch of an MLA committee. It is actually independent, not simply titled as such, and that is the normal process. The chair is selected by speaking to the Chief Justice, which is an important check and balance, right? Like, these checks and balances in the system don't exist just because we love procedure. Well, I mean,

sometimes I like procedure. Anyway, they don't exist for that reason. They exist to ensure that it's not a unilateral exercise of power, that the rights of Albertans are being respected in this process. The commission and whether or not they interviewed in that case is a completely different issue. This process is entirely different from that process.

**9:50**

I also want to note that one of the important things about interviewing the candidate is to get a sense of what respect they have for the process. You know, in light of what has been said by the court, by legal organizations, I think this is incredibly problematic. I think this committee knowing whether the chair intends to stay within the bounds of what was recommended by the commission – the entire impetus for this committee, the entire impetus for Government Motion 37 is allegedly this suggestion that two additional seats sort of be put in north of Red Deer to respect northern representation. I don't agree with that, but that is the stated goal.

However, we have Government Motion 37 that does not respect that, does not state that explicitly. The chair was unable to tell us under repeated questioning whether that would be the case. I think the question of whether an applicant would stick within the four corners of what was submitted to the commission – i.e., the record, the evidence, the input of the public – is important, especially in light of the fact that, again, we have these minority maps that, like, fell out of the sky, that carve things up like slices of pizza if you look at Calgary or Lethbridge or somewhere like that. I think the question is: would the applicant respect what the Premier has stated on the record, which is to say that there would be minimal cascading? We wouldn't see Lethbridge being carved up in the way it was; we wouldn't see sort of Calgary being affected. Or would they be getting information from who knows where?

I think those are all important questions. I think this process has been highly problematic, and this is just one tiny opportunity to have, like, even the slightest impact.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Are there any other members wishing to continue on this debate? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Only to say that Government Motion 37 makes it clear that this committee is who chooses the chair, which means I and all colleagues on this committee are being asked to vote on who should chair. I think it's deeply concerning that I have to choose and vote on any motions without being able to potentially interview the applicants and to ask these more detailed questions. Government Motion 37 gives a group of MLAs assigned to this committee with the UCP majority the power to choose the chair, and now we're being told that we would not be able to interview, something that is a normal and standard process when any committee is selecting someone to do a job, whether it's the Ethics Commissioner, the Chief Electoral Officer, or others.

Government Motion 37 is a completely abnormal and, we believe, unconstitutional process, and now what's being applied to this committee is abnormal from how other legislative committees function. It is really shocking to see this, and I will be voting in support of my motion, Mr. Chair.

With that, I'll conclude my comments.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Gray.

Are there any other members wishing to join in on this discussion?

All right. With that, I am prepared to call the question. In the room all those in favour of this motion, please say aye. Any

members who are opposed to this motion, please say no. Online, go ahead. Opposed?

That motion is defeated.

**Ms Ganley:** Recorded vote.

**The Chair:** We have a request for a recorded vote. We will start with those in the room who are in favour of the motion. Please raise your hands.

**Mr. Roth:** Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

**The Chair:** Those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Wiebe, Mr. Rowswell.

**The Chair:** For those members participating remotely, please turn on your camera and microphone if you wish to vote. When the committee clerk calls your name, please indicate whether you are in favour or against the motion.

**Mr. Roth:** Ms de Jonge.

**Ms de Jonge:** Against.

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Chair, total for the motion, two; total against, three.

**The Chair:** All right.

That motion is defeated.

I'll now open the floor to any additional discussion or motions. MLA Rowswell, please go ahead.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you very much. I'd like to move that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries appoint Brian O'Ferrall as chair of the independent advisory panel in accordance with clause C(d)(ii)(A) of Government Motion 37 passed by the Legislative Assembly on April 21, 2026, to conduct a review of the electoral boundaries of Alberta and make proposals as to the area boundaries and names of the electoral divisions of Alberta in accordance with clause C(e) of Government Motion 37.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Rowswell. Can you please confirm that's the motion as read on the screen?

**Mr. Rowswell:** Yep.

**The Chair:** Okay. If you'd like an opportunity to speak to the motion, please go ahead.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Sure. Yeah. The applicant served as a Justice of the Alberta Court of Appeal and previously as a judge of the provincial court of Alberta, providing significant experience in legal interpretation, procedural fairness, adjudication, and decision-making on complex matters of public importance. Prior to judicial appointments the applicant practised law for several decades in litigation, regulatory, environment, and energy-related matters, including serving as a partner and co-chair of the energy, environment, and regulatory group. This background may provide valuable experience in hearing diverse perspectives, balancing competing interests, and analyzing complex evidentiary and political policy issues. The applicant's combined experience in journalism as well as law and appellate adjudication may also support effective public engagement, communication, and preparation of balanced and reasoned recommendations. Knowledge of Alberta's legal, regulatory, and institutional

landscape may contribute to the credibility, impartiality, and public confidence in the work of the independent advisory panel.

Government Motion 37 had specific criteria, and I think Mr. O'Ferrall not only meets that; he is highly qualified in all of those. I would move that we appoint him.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Rowswell.

Are there any other members? MLA Gray, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you very much. Our motion is to debate appointing the hon. Brian O'Ferrall as the chair of this independent advisory panel. I will agree that this retired justice has significant professional experience and through his CV demonstrates that he would certainly be someone who understands the deeply complex issues that the boundary commission report deals with and what needs to be looked at going forward. Where my concern comes from is, as my colleague MLA Rowswell talked about, the credibility, confidence, and independence, specifically because Justice O'Ferrall has significant political donations to the UCP and to the CPC.

Early in our first meeting the Official Opposition moved a motion trying to suggest that the committee should look for a chair that would be nonpartisan, and our motions to that effect were defeated by government measures. Then the Acting Chief Justice declined to participate. The Law Society of Alberta declined. The Canadian Bar Association declined, leaving us to a position where we only have two applicants and the strongest applicant in front of us is also a UCP donor. It absolutely diminishes confidence, I think, and it's unfortunate that we're not in a position to be able to suggest somebody is clearly and completely neutral when there are political donations in play.

**10:00**

I wanted to put that on the public record as a concern because these are not small donation amounts; they're significant across a number of years. For that reason and the reason that I think we should have been able to interview, I think that we should have had more applicants to consider by working with the Acting Chief Justice and improving the process rather than the government absolutely steamrolling Government Motion 37, which still has questions of clarity and other concerns with it have put us in a position here where we only have two applicants and the most qualified applicant is a UCP donor, I think Albertans will have serious credibility questions about this process and about this resultant report because of it.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Gray.

MLA Rowswell, please go ahead.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Yeah. To address the political donations, you know, much like any other Albertan, retired judges do have an opportunity to participate in the political sphere when they return to their personal lives. Political donations made in compliance with applicable laws do not in and of themselves determine the applicant's ability to perform the role impartially and independently, in the same way that applicants for judicial appointments are not required to disclose past political donations. I don't believe this is necessary in this situation, and I trust that, given his experience as a justice, he will be able to act with integrity and impartiality in this process.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Rowswell.

MLA Ganley, I think I saw your hand.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Now, this applicant obviously has the qualifications necessary in this case. I am not suggesting anything

other than that. I think the problem with what MLA Rowswell is saying here is that what we're talking about is whether or not the person has partisan leanings, whether or not they will be independent, whether or not the interest they consider first will be the interests of the people of this province versus the interests of a political party.

I would say that the entire problem with this process – the entire problem with this process – is having MLAs on a committee that is dominated by one political party make the decisions on drawing boundaries. The normal process of elections is for the voters to pick their representative, not for the representative to pick their voters. The issue of intelligence or understanding of the law or any of that: like, I'm not debating any of that.

What I am suggesting is that the problem here is that the chair of this committee should be, at least on the surface, nonpartisan. I understand that people have political views before they're appointed as judges. I understand that they may resume political activity after they leave the bench. In light of the irregularities of the process, this is one of the reasons that we suggested that we should have a sitting justice, because they are bound by the Judicial Council and therefore this sort of obvious partisan affiliation would be ruled out. It's also one of the reasons that we suggested multiple times that the normal process be respected, as have many others suggested that the normal process of involvement of the Chief Justice should be, yeah, involved.

I think the fact that we aren't able to ask the applicants to speak to that is problematic. I think the fact that we aren't able to ask the applicant other questions, especially in light of the fact that these sort of publicly available donations suggest partisan leanings, is also extremely problematic. The concern here is not one of whether the justice understands the law. It is one of whether there's partisan affiliation, and this entire process is already, in my view, sort of deeply coloured by the fact that this is a partisan attempt by the government, and now the UCP members of this committee, to interfere with Albertans' right to vote.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Are there any other members wishing to join in this debate on this motion?

All right. Seeing none, I am prepared to call this question. All those in the room in favour of the motion as presented, please say aye. Are there any members opposed to this motion? Moving online, if you are in favour, please say aye.

That motion is carried.

**Ms Ganley:** Recorded vote.

**The Chair:** All right. We have a request for a recorded vote. We'll start with those in the room who are in favour of the motion. Please raise your hands.

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Wiebe, Mr. Rowswell.

**The Chair:** All right. Those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

**Mr. Roth:** Hon. Ms Gray, hon. Ms Ganley.

**The Chair:** All right. For those members participating remotely, please turn on your camera and microphones if you wish to vote. When the committee clerk calls your name, please indicate whether you are in favour or against the motion.

**Mr. Roth:** Ms de Jonge.

**Ms de Jonge:** In favour.

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Chair, total for the motion, three; total against, two.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

That motion is carried.

With that, I'd like to open discussion again, or continue discussion, under this agenda item. Any members have discussion or a motion? MLA Ganley, I saw your hand. Please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Thank you. I would like to move a motion that is, I believe, submitted as motion 10. I understand there are questions about how this motion differs from a motion previously submitted by the opposition. Would you like to hear arguments on that now?

**The Chair:** Sure. Maybe we'll just make sure we read it into the record and it's the correct one. Then, yes, please, happy to hear your thoughts on that as well.

**Ms Ganley:** Sorry. Did you want me to read it?

**The Chair:** Yeah. Please read it into the record.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. I make a motion that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries (a) not take any further steps to appoint the independent advisory panel, (b) direct the Legislative Assembly Office to draft an interim report of the committee that (i) recommends that the government move a motion in the Legislative Assembly to rescind Government Motion 37 and adopt the final report of the 2025-2026 boundaries commission, (ii) includes as an appendix a copy of . . .

This is getting complicated. We've got big and little letters, but I guess you can see it, so it doesn't matter.

. . . (I) the letter received by the committee from the Acting Chief Justice on May 6, 2026, and (II) the letter received by the committee from the Canadian Bar Association, Alberta branch, on May 14, 2026, (iii) recommend that if the Legislative Assembly is not sitting at the time the committee's interim report is completed, the government advise the Speaker to recall the Legislative Assembly for the purpose of moving the motion referred to in clause (i) . . .

That's the little "i."

. . . and (c) authorize the chair to approve the draft report.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you. Yeah. Please go ahead with your arguments, including perhaps, as you were suggesting, how it differs from the previous motion.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. Absolutely. A similar motion to this was moved by the Official Opposition previously. What I would suggest is that while the motion itself has only – like, there is a difference. Obviously, we've referenced the letters received by the committee specifically from the Canadian Bar Association, which is new. While much of the substance of the motion remains unchanged, the circumstances have changed. What we had at the time was – I mean, this process is illegitimate. The motion is essentially intended to reverse an illegitimate process and try to go back to something that is a little more fair, equitable, balanced, respects the rights of Albertans: all of the above.

**10:10**

I think what is different now is that we had the Chief Justice come forward and say: look, I don't want any part of this because this is irregular. That was problematic on its own. Now we've seen support for that, and what is referenced here is the letter from the Alberta branch of the Canadian Bar Association that essentially says: "No. We respect the process, so we're not going to go around it. We're not going to go around the Acting Chief Justice because

she has the right to fulfill the role that the Constitution would suggest is hers and that the history of boundaries commissions has respected.”

We’ve subsequently also had a similar statement, which I think is not surprising, from the Law Society, so I would say that the thing that is primarily different in this instance is that the circumstances have changed. The case against this deeply irregular and problematic process is building significantly. It’s not just the court saying that this process is irregular. We now have both organizations that represent the bar saying: you know, we’re not going to allow you to circumvent in this way.

I think, from my perspective, what is different primarily is that this is new. I would also add that clause (b)(iii) is also novel, calling for the Assembly to be recalled, essentially, in order to move forward with a new process. Also, I would say that the facts have moved in terms of we now know that only two applications were received, which is suggestive without, obviously, going into them further.

Yeah. The obvious difficulties with this process are piling up, so I think the change in circumstance and the change in references here make this motion in order. Again, I think the motion itself is incredibly important because this process isn’t legitimate. It’s a process where MLAs draw the boundaries. It’s a transparent conflict of interest, the attempt to sort of circumvent that with the independent advisory – “independent,” again, in air quotes, because that’s what it’s called – panel which sort of mirrors the commission. Like, it’s still reporting to us. Who knows whether it will report on the public record or whether it shall report in camera? We seem to like doing things in camera these days.

I think those are the reasons why it is important and why we should consider it.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Ganley.

MLA Wiebe, please go ahead.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Yeah. Thank you. I don’t support this motion. As noted in the report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, the majority of the commission believes that they would be able to provide Albertans with more effective representation had the Legislative Assembly provided an additional two electoral divisions, bringing the total number of the proposed electoral divisions to 91.

The role of this committee is to engage with the independent advisers who will take the majority report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission and integrate recommendation 5 of the addendum to increase the number of divisions from 89 to 91 for the next general election and ensure effective representation is guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The motion would effectively terminate the process the Assembly specifically authorized before the committee has had the opportunity to fulfill its mandate and receive the panel’s advice. Government Motion 37 was voted on in the Chamber and passed in the Chamber. Whether or not the members opposite like the outcome of this vote is not the grounds to try and work around it. Questions regarding whether Government Motion 37 should be rescinded are matters for the Legislative Assembly itself, and the committee’s immediate responsibility is to carry out the mandate it has been assigned until otherwise directed by the Assembly.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Wiebe.

MLA Gray, please go ahead.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you. I completely disagree with how that member characterizes it. First off, I would like to just quote from the boundaries report page 59. “The majority recommends the adoption of the majority report in its totality.” That is clearly stated multiple times in this report. The Legislative Assembly and this government

were given a majority recommendation, and they, for their own reasons, are doing something else. A more appropriate mechanism for the government would have been to change the number of ridings at the interim report. That has happened in Alberta’s history. What has never happened is something like Government Motion 37.

The idea that Government Motion 37 was passed by the Legislative Assembly, and if the Official Opposition disagree with that vote, that’s not a reason: well, first off, my colleague gave a reason, that being the Acting Chief Justice, the Canadian Bar Association, and the Law Society all declining to participate. The government seems completely unconcerned that the legal community is looking at this irregular process and saying: hey, there’s a problem here. The Official Opposition will happily call it likely unconstitutional and completely inappropriate. The legal community is using language like “irregular,” but that is the reason for this motion. It is not because we don’t like the outcome of a vote, which to be very clear, fell completely down party lines, with only UCP MLAs supporting Government Motion 37. All Official Opposition and other opposition MLAs voted against Government Motion 37, so to defend it as the majority voted in the Assembly is really not the defence that the member opposite seems to think it is.

This motion would absolutely terminate the process because this process deserves to be terminated, and it does so in reaction to new information raised by experts in the field and people that this committee sought to consult. Then they said: no, we won’t because this is really not how it’s supposed to work. This committee has been charged with the stewarding of Government Motion 37, and that would include us sending it back to the Legislature and saying that this should be rethought, which would be the responsible and reasonable thing for this committee to do.

So I fully support my colleague’s motion. I disagree with how the members opposite across the way frame it, and I will repeat again that on page 59 of the report: “the majority recommends the adoption of the majority report in its totality.” There is only one majority recommendation, and it is not Government Motion 37.

**The Chair:** MLA Ganley, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. My colleague has made the case extremely well. I think I would simply reiterate that when we are talking about this process, like, yes, the motion seeks to terminate the process. That’s the intent. I think the process is problematic and I would like it to be terminated. To suggest that a vote of the Legislative Assembly renders that point meaningless is incorrect.

At the end of the day we are talking about the fundamental fairness to Albertans, talking about the right to vote. I don’t care how the UCP members voted, Mr. Chair. I don’t care how they vote in this committee. I don’t care what marching orders they receive. Hopefully, the news release having to do with the decision of this committee shall wait until after the committee has deliberated in this particular instance, but this is highly problematic.

**10:20**

I just want to state one more time because, I mean, the government ministers did this in the House, the members on this committee are doing it now. My colleague has quoted the majority-recommended maps; I would like to quote from page 66, which is the addendum, which reads:

Due to my deep concern regarding the unconstitutionality and administrative law problems of the minority report, I find it necessary to make one further recommendation that my fellow Commissioners cannot consent to.

I will state this and have stated it on the record multiple times. I think it is immensely clear in reading the totality of the report, or

even in reading just the totality of the addendum, that there is a typo in recommendation 5, which was not a recommendation of the majority of the commission. And I would really urge all members to read the full report, or to read at least that full section in advance of quoting it, because I really do believe that this attempt to suggest that the majority wanted this process should be beneath us all.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Are there any other members wishing to join in on this motion?

Seeing none, I am prepared to call the question. All those in the room in favour of this motion as presented, please say aye. All right. All those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please say no. Moving online, MLA de Jonge, please indicate your vote.

**Ms de Jonge:** Opposed.

**The Chair:** All right.

That motion is defeated.

**Ms Ganley:** A recorded vote.

**The Chair:** A recorded vote has been requested. Those in the room who are in favour of the motion, please raise your hands.

**Mr. Roth:** Hon. Ms Gray. Hon. Ms Ganley.

**The Chair:** All right. Those in the room who are opposed to the motion, please raise your hands.

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Wiebe. Mr. Rowswell.

**The Chair:** All right. Once again, for those members participating remotely, please turn on your camera and microphone if you wish to vote. When the committee clerk calls your name, please indicate whether you are in favour or against the motion.

**Mr. Roth:** Ms de Jonge.

**Ms de Jonge:** Opposed.

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Chair, total for the motion, two; total against, three.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

That motion is defeated.

I'll open it back up to any further motions on this topic. MLA Wiebe, I saw your hand. Please go ahead.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to make a motion that the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries direct the Legislative Assembly Office communications to prepare a media release noting the chair of the independent advisory panel appointed by the committee at its June 2, 2026, meeting to be distributed to the media by 3 p.m. on Tuesday, June 2, 2026.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Wiebe. Can you just confirm that that on the screen is what you read into the record?

**Mr. Wiebe:** Correct.

**The Chair:** Perfect. If you'd like the opportunity to speak to the motion, please go ahead.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Yeah. Thanks, Chair. Issuing a formal public announcement through the LAO communications would ensure that a co-ordinated, accurate, and consistent public communications process promote transparency and public awareness respecting the work of the committee and the establishment of the independent advisory panel. Publicly announcing the appointment underscores

the importance of the significant work being undertaken by the chair of the independent advisory panel. I think that's all I would say for now.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, MLA Wiebe.

Are there any members wishing to join the debate on this? MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. I actually had a question to begin with, which is: is it normal for a committee to direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare a specific press release? Obviously, I've not been on every committee that has existed in the time that I have been elected to this office, but I can't think of an instance in which I've seen this before. I guess I'm just querying the process in this case. I'd be interested in any information.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I was just conferring briefly with the table. I might let them jump in. Yeah. It doesn't sound like this is outside of the norm. We've had communications plans released before, I think, including for PAC, but I might ask the table to weigh in quickly if they don't mind.

**Ms Robert:** Sure. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yeah. I mean, this type of committee is, of course, unique. We've never had this type of committee before, at least in my time, but certainly committees of the Assembly direct LAO communications all the time to prepare communications plans, to seek public input, like, advertise on our social media channels. The heritage committee directs communications to, you know, do communications initiatives with respect to the public meeting and things like that every year. So while this specific motion I've not seen before because we've not had this kind of committee, I wouldn't say that it is an abnormal or unusual thing for a committee to direct LAO communications.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

Are there any other members wishing to join in on the debate on this motion?

Seeing none, I'm prepared to call the question. In the room, all those in favour of the motion, please say aye. In the room, any opposed to this motion, please say no. And online?

That motion is carried.

All right. Are there any further motions or discussion on agenda item 4 before I move us on to next steps? MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes, Mr. Chair. I would like to at least attempt to move what is listed as motion 7. Did you want me to read it in or wait for it to go up?

**The Chair:** Just maybe wait a couple of seconds so we can pop it on the screen. Please go ahead and read it into the record.

**Ms Ganley:** Yes. That

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries shall request all applicants for the position of chair of the independent advisory panel to disclose to the committee all past donations the applicant has made to provincial or federal political parties.

I do understand that in this moment we have spoken already about the donations of the successful applicant. I would like to note for the record that donations below a certain amount – it's \$250 provincially; I'm not exactly sure what it is federally – would not be necessarily on the public documentation, because that's how those rules are written. Yeah, I think it's worth having them disclose it in any event.

**The Chair:** Thank you, MLA Ganley.

I will just add that I do not believe that this motion is in order at this time. We've already passed a motion to appoint our independent chair, so after conferring with the table, I do not believe that this motion is in order. All right. So with that, if there's nothing else, last call on agenda item 4.

I can move us on to agenda item 5, which is our next steps, and the first order of business under that is compensation for the chair of the independent advisory panel. I'll maybe add a little context before we entertain motions. The committee may wish to consider how the chair of the independent advisory panel is to be compensated. As committee members are aware, the committee did provide direction on compensating the members of the panel, except for the chair, at its May 4, 2026, meeting.

Now, at this time I would like to open discussion on how the committee would like to proceed on addressing the panel chair's compensation. MLA de Jonge, go ahead, please.

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you so much, Chair. I'd like to move a motion, that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries direct the chair to: (a) negotiate with the chair of the independent advisory panel a proposed remuneration agreement for the chair of the independent advisory panel and provide a proposed agreement on remuneration to the committee for consideration at its next meeting.

**10:30**

**The Chair:** Okay. Do you mind just confirming that that is, in fact, your motion on the screen? I think we have it up there.

**Ms de Jonge:** Looks correct.

**The Chair:** Okay. Perfect.

If you'd like to, please take an opportunity to speak to your motion.

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you, Chair. Essentially, this just authorizes the chair of the committee to engage directly with the selected chair of the panel to negotiate appropriate remuneration and compensation terms on behalf of the committee. I think this approach allows for a more effective and timely negotiation process and an opportunity for the committee to subsequently review and approve the proposed compensation package before any final confirmation. That ensures that the committee retains final oversight and transparency and, of course, decision-making authority respecting public expenditures and the appointment process.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA de Jonge.

Are there any other members wishing to join the debate on this motion? MLA Ganley, please go ahead.

**Ms Ganley:** Yeah. I think what I would like to note for the record here is that what we're talking about here and the chair's specific compensation, which may impact it one way or the other, is a process which is both illegitimate and entirely unnecessary, which is throwing out a process that costs the taxpayer a million dollars and will cost the taxpayer another half-million dollars. It's entirely problematic. I think that referring to it as sort of, like, controlling or respecting public finances is a gross mischaracterization. This entire process has no respect for public finance. This is spending government money that need not be spent on a political party's partisan objectives, and I don't agree with it.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you, MLA Ganley.

Are there any other MLAs wishing to add to the debate on this motion?

All right. Seeing none, I am prepared to call the question. All those in the room in favour of this motion, please say aye. Any opposed? Online?

This motion is carried.

All right. I can move us on to part (ii) of our next steps, which is nomination of other members of the independent advisory panel. Hon. members, clause C(d)(ii) of Government Motion 37 requires that the committee also appoint four independent advisory panel members other than the chair who are not Members of the Legislative Assembly, two on nomination from the Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition in consultation with the leaders of other opposition parties represented in the Legislature and two on nomination of the President of the Executive Council.

Government Motion 37 specifies that the nominees must be Canadian citizens who are 18 years of age or older and are residents of Alberta at the time of their appointment. Further, the two nominees by the Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition and the two nominees by the President of the Executive Council must each include one individual who is resident in a city and one individual who is resident outside of a city at the time of their appointment. Hon. members, when the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Premier make their nominations, they must be in writing to the committee signed by the leader and the Premier, respectively.

At this time I would like to open the floor to any comments, questions, or motions in relation to the appointment process of the four independent advisory panel members. With that, I see MLA de Jonge has her hand up again. Please go ahead.

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you so much, Chair. I'd like to move another motion. Can I read it, or do you want me to wait till it's on the screen?

**The Chair:** Please go ahead and read it.

**Ms de Jonge:** Okay. I'd like to move that

the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries, in accordance with the requirements of clause C(d)(ii) of Government Motion 37, passed by the Legislative Assembly on April 21, 2026, request that the President of the Executive Council and the Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition, in consultation with the leaders of other opposition parties represented in the Legislative Assembly, provide their nominations for members of the independent advisory panel in a written communication to the committee no later than 3 p.m. on Friday, June 5, 2026.

**The Chair:** Thank you, and just confirm that that is correct on the screen.

**Ms de Jonge:** Looks right. Thank you, Chair. I'm happy to provide my rationale.

**The Chair:** Yes. Please go ahead.

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you, Chair. This motion ensures that our process remains in alignment with the direction and the authority previously granted by the Legislative Assembly through Government Motion 37. This motion ensures fairness and consistency between caucuses in the submission of nominees. Both the leaders and caucuses have been aware of the motion since April 20. Furthermore, this motion supports the committee's ability to organize and finalize appointments in an orderly and co-ordinated manner.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

Are there any other members wishing to participate in the debate on this motion?

Seeing none, I am prepared to call the question. All those in favour of this motion in the room, please say aye. Are there any opposed? And online? All right.

That motion is carried.

All right. I think we can move on our agenda to other business. Is there any other business that needs to be addressed?

Seeing none, I will move on to agenda item 7, the date of the next meeting, which will be at the call of the chair.

I can move us on to adjournment. If there's nothing else for the committee's consideration, I will call for a motion to adjourn. That is moved by MLA Rowsell, that the June 2, 2026, meeting of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries be adjourned. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed? Online? All right. That motion is carried.

This meeting is adjourned. Thank you, everyone.

[The committee adjourned at 10:37 a.m.]







