



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature  
First Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Community Services

Wednesday, October 15, 2008  
5:50 p.m.

Transcript No. 27-1-5

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First Session**

**Standing Committee on Community Services**

Rodney, Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC), Chair  
Hehr, Kent, Calgary-Buffalo (L), Deputy Chair  
Benito, Carl, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC)  
Bhardwaj, Naresh, Edmonton-Ellerslie (PC)  
Chase, Harry B., Calgary-Varsity (L)  
Doerksen, Arno, Strathmore-Brooks (PC)  
Johnson, Jeff, Athabasca-Redwater (PC)  
Johnston, Art, Calgary-Hays (PC)  
Lukaszuk, Thomas A., Edmonton-Castle Downs (PC)  
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP)  
Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC)

**Bill 18 Sponsor**

Blackett, Hon. Lindsay, Calgary-North West (PC)

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Rachel Stein	Research Officer
Liz Sim	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

5:50 p.m.

Wednesday, October 15, 2008

[Mr. Rodney in the chair]

**The Chair:** Good late afternoon, early evening, ladies and gentlemen. It is 5:50. I appreciate everyone running over from the Leg. before we have to run back to the Leg.

I would like to call the meeting to order and welcome everyone and remind everyone, of course, that we do not need to touch these microphones in this committee room or the other. They're being operated remotely by our ever capable *Hansard* staff. One more reminder about BlackBerrys. I will not forbid you to have them. Go ahead and have them, but keep them closer to the hip. If they are on the table, they seem to counteract the great communications that do occur. Along those lines I do want to remind you also that our meetings, this one and all of them, are indeed audiostreamed live on the Internet.

With that I will ask our hostess, in the respect that she's not on the committee per se but she represents this riding: why don't you just start us off, if you would, in your fine style.

**Ms Blakeman:** I would. My name is Laurie Blakeman, and I would like to welcome everyone to my fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre, in which we are able to enjoy a fall sunset through the bare trees sort of look to my riding. Welcome, everyone.

**Mr. Chase:** Harry Chase, Calgary-Varsity, who is thoroughly appreciating the taxpayers' funding of this delicious dinner provided for us by the Legislative Assembly Office. We will work hard to earn our meal.

**The Chair:** Wow. Editorial comments during the introductions. Isn't this fabulous.

What do you have to tell us today, sir?

**Mr. Johnson:** Jeff Johnson, Athabasca-Redwater.

**The Chair:** That's correct. Thank you. Onward.

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** Dave Rodney, your chair.

**Mr. Hehr:** Kent Hehr, Calgary-Buffalo.

**Mr. Johnston:** Art Johnston, Calgary-Hays.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Janice Sarich, Edmonton-Decore.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Naresh Bhardwaj, Edmonton-Ellerslie.

**Mr. Doerksen:** Arno Doerksen, Strathmore-Brooks.

**Mr. Reynolds:** Rob Reynolds, Senior Parliamentary Counsel.

**Ms Stein:** Rachel Stein, research officer, Legislative Assembly Office.

**Ms Sorensen:** Rhonda Sorensen, manager, communications services, Legislative Assembly Office.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Tom Lukaszuk, Edmonton-Castle Downs.

**The Chair:** Thanks, folks. In the interest of expediency let's move on to item 2, the approval of the agenda. I wonder if I might have someone move that the agenda for today, the October 15, 2008, meeting of the Standing Committee on Community Services be adopted as circulated. I see Harry Chase. All in favour? Any objections? That motion is passed.

**Mr. Johnston:** I just need some technical assistance. I'm missing a cord. I wonder if I could . . .

**The Chair:** Karen will take care of that. That's a good segue to thanking Karen Sawchuk, who is sitting in for Corinne Dacyshyn today. They're both great, with super experience and expertise.

Adoption of the minutes. Would someone care to move that the minutes for the September 25, 2008, meeting of the Standing Committee on Community Services be adopted as circulated. I see Arno. We'll get to you later. Everybody is just wanting to move on, so let's find out. All those in favour? Anyone opposed? That motion is carried as well.

On to item 4, review and approval of the draft report. Is this true, Karen – do you know? – that Rachel Stein will be reviewing the draft report?

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Rachel. Yeah. I think that after that if we have motions, perhaps we can entertain them then.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Mr. Chair, I was reviewing the *Hansard*. First of all, I must apologize: I was not present during the last meeting. But I did review the *Hansard*, and I have some comments and a possible motion stemming from the last meeting. When would be the best time?

**The Chair:** I think it may be after Rachel's had time to share.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Thank you for that.

Rachel, the floor is yours.

**Ms Stein:** I didn't have extensive commentary to make. I think the report is relatively self-explanatory. The one page that probably would require the most attention would be page 5, which shows the recommendations that the committee has proposed to make to the Assembly. The report also includes a list of the submissions and the presentations that were made to the committee as well as the committee members on page 3 and the substitutions for committee members who were absent on particular meeting days.

**The Chair:** Okay. Great. Mr. Lukaszuk, then, I think is next unless you have anything else to add, Ms Stein. No? Mr. Reynolds, did I see you looking to add?

Okay. Let's move on to our speakers list. The first person I have is, indeed, Mr. Lukaszuk. Good ahead, please.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I indicated earlier, unfortunately, because of other conflicting commitments, I was not able to be here at the last meeting, but I did read the *Hansard* because I thought today's meeting would be the meeting that would be approving the report. I have somewhat of a concern with a motion that was passed at the last meeting, and I'm going to have to

seek your guidance or Parliamentary Counsel's guidance on how to deal with it. There was a motion passed that was put forward by the Member for Edmonton-Centre, and the motion read

that the Government of Alberta pursue as soon as possible introducing legislation that is comparable to the Government of Ontario's Ticket Speculation Act or modifying of the Fair Trading Act in order to protect Alberta's cultural workers and institutions.

Mr. Chairman, having reviewed that motion and the mandate of this committee and how authoritative this committee could or should be relevant to mandating the government to do anything or not do anything, I believe that a more appropriate motion that could have been or maybe should be on the table today – and I will be putting it forward as a motion – is that that phrase, instead of reading as I read it prior, read: that the Minister of Service Alberta review the Ontario Ticket Speculation Act with the objective of determining whether or not Alberta's Fair Trading Act requires amendments in order to maintain the protection of Alberta's consumers and cultural industries.

The reason I'm saying that, Mr. Chairman, is that I'm not sure how many members around this table have actually become familiar with Ontario's act. I'm sure it's a pretty good piece of legislation. It was passed in the Legislature. I am personally not very familiar with it, and I am not sure how applicable it would be in Alberta. To mandate a government – any government – to simply adopt an act, lift it and bring it to the province, I believe would not be appropriate, nor would it be responsible, so I am putting a motion forward that the minister definitely consider it and look at it and review it and see how appropriate it is for Alberta and then make decisions accordingly.

**The Chair:** Very good. I have at least one other person on the speakers list, but before I have that person speak, I wonder, Mr. Lukaszuk: would you mind reading into the record just one last time what your motion would read exactly, please.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** It reads that the Minister of Service Alberta review the Ontario Ticket Speculation Act with the objective of determining whether or not Alberta's Fair Trading Act requires amendments in order to maintain the protection of Alberta's consumers and cultural industries.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Mr. Lukaszuk, you will offer that to the committee clerk for hard copies.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Yes. Actually, I typed it up, and I will offer it.

**The Chair:** Thank you. As members know and as Ms Blakeman knows, she's a guest. She's not actually on the committee, but of course MLAs are welcome to sit and to offer thoughts but not bring forward motions or vote unless they are a designate officially. In your capacity as guest, Ms Blakeman, would you like to offer your comments?

**Ms Blakeman:** The motion as it appears in the final report is not exactly as I made it. It has been slightly reworked to appear as a recommendation from the committee. I was quite careful when I crafted this because my motion had said "the committee recommend to the Legislature that the government pursue introducing legislation similar to," et cetera, et cetera. My concern was that the committee is in control of its own affairs. It can recommend, as empowered by the standing orders, to the Legislative Assembly on a fairly wide context, but I don't think it's appropriate to tell the government or any minister what they should do. I think the suggestion needs to come from us to ask them to pursue it.

6:00

I don't care if it's the minister pursuing it as named individually or the government generally doing it. I don't care. My concern is about protecting our cultural workers because there's a fair number of them, and I don't want to see a province where we would knowingly withdraw protection from a group of citizens and do nothing to put that protection back in place. I don't know why the member feels as strongly as he does.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, Ms Blakeman.  
Mr. Chase.

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. The way I see the motion is that it was a recommendation to the Legislature. It was arrived at, proposed, and then agreed to by all of the members of the committee, a nonpartisan committee. In that same nonpartisan spirit, obviously, at that time it was thought to have some wisdom behind it. It's not tying either the minister's hands or the government's hands. It's simply making a recommendation. As such, had I been here to vote on it, I would have supported it, and I support the original intent.

**The Chair:** I will turn it over to Mr. Lukaszuk to close and Mr. Reynolds to offer his insights as well, but just before I do, sir, are there any others who want to get on the speakers list? No? Okay. Then, Mr. Reynolds, if you could offer your insights, please.

**Mr. Reynolds:** Yes. Well, I don't actually have many insights about this. It's a procedural matter. I assume that Mr. Lukaszuk's motion would be to amend the draft report by striking out the last paragraph and substituting what he had just suggested.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** That is correct.

**Mr. Reynolds:** I just didn't want any confusion that both would exist, just to make clear that your amendment would strike out what's there.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** That is correct, Mr. Reynolds.

I'm overhearing my colleague from Edmonton-Centre saying yes, he wants to strike it because that would take my name off it. Ms Blakeman, through the chair, if you are willing to put the motion as I have worded it and have your name on it, I am more than happy to share it with you. It's not about the name of the carrier. If you are willing to put a motion forward as I have drafted it, I would be happy. It's not about a name on a motion.

My concern, Mr. Chair, is that as it appears right now in the draft report, it is very prescriptive in a manner that compels the government to adopt the legislation of Ontario and implement it in Alberta, as opposed to my motion that says that we should review the legislation from Ontario, determine its application for Alberta, and then if good, adopt it, if not, not so. However, I frankly could not care less whose name is attached to this motion, so if Ms Blakeman for one reason or another chooses to put that motion forward and agrees with it, I would be more than happy to have her further it.

**The Chair:** As chair I appreciate the offer, but for our colleagues, who both happen to be from Edmonton in this case, the truth is that no names are going to be on this anyway, are they? They're recommendations from the committee. So I don't think that's a danger. I think the question is: does this improve our recommendations? Does this, indeed, continue to protect the cultural employees, or is it a step backwards?

I will open the floor one last time for speakers because I don't

want this to go around and around, and often we're encouraged to speak maybe once or perhaps twice maximum. Mr. Lukaszuk, I'll get you to close after we find out last call for speakers. I see Mr. Chase. I see Mr. Doerksen. Is there anyone else who would like to get back on the speakers list before Mr. Lukaszuk? Mr. Hehr. Okay.

**Mr. Chase:** I would just like to ask legal counsel for an interpretation of the original motion that was agreed to by the members of this committee previously. Is it his legal opinion that there is a compulsion forcing either the Legislature, the government, or the minister to adopt the Ontario example?

**The Chair:** Should we come back to you, sir, on that, or do you have a comment for Mr. Chase?

**Mr. Reynolds:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I may, Mr. Chase, are you referring to the motion that was presented by Ms Blakeman, or are you referring to the motion that was just moved by Mr. Lukaszuk?

**Mr. Chase:** I was referring to the motion made by Ms Blakeman. It's my understanding that committees can only basically make recommendations. They can't compel either ministers or the government to act in a certain way. The whole point of our committee is to be the sort of Senate equivalent of sober second thought and to potentially speed up the process in the Legislature. So I'd be interested in: does this compel? In any way or fashion does the committee have the ability to compel? I think that's at the heart of this discussion.

**Mr. Reynolds:** Well, that's an interesting question, but in terms of this motion that Mr. Lukaszuk has moved, it's my understanding that the heading to this recommendation says, "The Standing Committee on Community Services recommends to the Assembly that the Bill proceed and further recommends that . . ." So it would be my impression that what Mr. Lukaszuk is suggesting is a recommendation from the committee that the Minister of Service Alberta review the Ontario Ticket Speculation Act.

**The Chair:** Indeed. That's exactly what I see.

**Mr. Reynolds:** Yes. It is just a recommendation. I don't think this is compelling the government, but of course it's from a committee, which would carry, I would imagine, large weight. The difference is that after first reading of a bill your scope for making recommendations is a bit broader than perhaps after a bill has received second reading. That's why I believe that in the standing orders it refers to the committee citing its observations and recommendations with respect to a bill.

**Mr. Benito:** Mr. Chair, sorry for being late, but can I just hear the recommendation again of Mr. Lukaszuk?

**The Chair:** Let's read it one more time. Indeed, as Mr. Reynolds has suggested, the proposed motion actually has the word "recommendation" as the first word. It's the recommendation that the Minister of Service Alberta review the Ontario Ticket Speculation Act with the objective of determining whether or not Alberta's Fair Trading Act requires amendments in order to maintain the protection of Alberta's consumers and cultural industries.

The gentleman beside you has the floor. Mr. Doerksen.

**Mr. Doerksen:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In thinking about the

discussion that we had at our last meeting and also taking into consideration Mr. Lukaszuk's comments regarding his proposed motion, I think that it does capture the concern that we had at our last meeting. In fact, in the absence of a full understanding of exactly what Ontario's Ticket Speculation Act contains, I think it's a reasonable approach to suggest or to recommend that there be a review of that in the interests of our overall concern. So I'd be inclined to support that suggestion by Mr. Lukaszuk.

**The Chair:** Very good. Thank you.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, I sort of see where this is going. Nevertheless, I felt that the first motion that we passed was sufficient. It's understood that we're making recommendations to the government. We couldn't all of a sudden as a committee say to change X, Y, Z, and the government would go ahead and jump to it and do that. We all have an understanding here at this table that what we send are recommendations. I think it's sort of innocuous that we're even having that sort of debate here.

There is one thing, actually. If we are going to go forward here – it sounds like that's the general tenor of where it is – I think I would like to even propose an amendment to Mr. Lukaszuk's amendment here, then, if we're in this thing. I don't know if I'm out of order here or whether it's the right time for it. I think cultural industries implies one thing whereas the wording in Ms Blakeman's of "cultural workers" was the heart and soul of what we were getting at. We were looking at protecting our cultural workers, who are in the process of being, you know, taken advantage of. Although "cultural industries" could be broad enough to imply it, the reason we were looking at this bill was to protect cultural workers. So I'd ask if we could work that amendment in. If we are going to go that way as a group, which that's where I'm thinking it is, then I would actually ask to make the words "cultural industries and cultural workers."

**6:10**

**The Chair:** In the spirit of all-party co-operation as my co-chair why don't we turn to Mr. Lukaszuk and say: would you be open to a friendly amendment? So then it would read at the end of the statement: Alberta's consumers and cultural workers and industries. Are you open to that, sir?

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Certainly. Yeah, by all means. That's not what was motivating me to amend that initial motion brought forward by the Member for Edmonton-Centre. So by all means. If that makes it more palatable, certainly.

**The Chair:** Okay. That is, indeed, the end of the speakers list. We do want to work in all-party co-operation. Absolutely. This proposed motion changes things slightly, not completely, and I believe that the spirit of the original intention is in there. It's a little bit more broad. With that, I will call the question. The motion reads that

there will be a recommendation that the Minister of Service Alberta review the Ontario Ticket Speculation Act with the objective of determining whether or not Alberta's Fair Trading Act requires amendments in order to maintain the protection of Alberta's consumers and cultural workers and industries.

All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand or otherwise indicate. All those opposed? That motion is indeed passed.

Thank you, colleagues, for your co-operation in that respect. We will move on.

**Mr. Chase:** I just wanted to indicate that Ms Blakeman has a course

tonight, and she had to leave. She may have indicated that at the beginning of the meeting, but I didn't want any misinterpretations.

**The Chair:** Oh, no, no. That's completely understood. We all sit on many committees, and I know that other colleagues respect that as well. We appreciate that she has experience and expertise and she's shared that with us.

We do need a motion to make this change to the report. Mr. Johnson, you indicated you might be open to that.

**Mr. Johnson:** Do we need to meet again to have this report go out, or can we just authorize the chair to make minor changes and finalize it?

**The Chair:** It depends on what the motion is.

**Mr. Johnson:** Based on motion approved here. Okay, well, I have a motion that the Standing Committee on Community Services recommends that Bill 18 proceed and approve the committee's report outlining the committee's observations, opinions, and recommendations with respect to Bill 18 with the recommendation that the chair be authorized to work with the committee staff to incorporate and approve the final changes made by the committee at the October 15 meeting.

**The Chair:** Yes. The speakers list starts with Mr. Chase. Who else is on the list to entertain or discuss the motion? Mr. Chase, Mr. Lukaszuk.

Go ahead.

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. In the discussions that the committee has had, was there any resolution of the concern about the inability to access the regulations prior to making recommendations? That seemed to be at the heart of a lot of the discussions that people in the industry provided for us, and I wondered if any resolution has come, before we send in our committee's recommendations.

**The Chair:** Right. I do remember, sir, that you were able to join us by phone. There was a resolution.

I won't jump in because I've two people on the speakers list, Mr. Lukaszuk and then Mr. Doerksen.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** I just wanted to ask Mr. Reynolds for his view of this motion that's now before us. I noticed that there was a sense of discomfort. I just wanted to make sure that he's comfortable.

**Mr. Reynolds:** It's just, if you'll permit me, Mr. Chair, that often in committees it's subject to review by the chair and the deputy chair.

**The Chair:** Are you suggesting that we have a friendly amendment to the motion?

**Mr. Reynolds:** It's not my role to advise the committee on what they should be amending or what they should be doing. I'm just telling you what the situation has been with other committees.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Since Mr. Lukaszuk had the floor in asking that question, go ahead, sir.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** When our other let's call them sister committees are drafting this motion – this would be a standard motion that would be introduced at the end – is that how they're moving forward?

**Mr. Reynolds:** Mrs. Sawchuk has some experience with this and can clarify.

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** Other committees have been deferring to both the chair and deputy chair for various motions, so it's different.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lukaszuk, are you offering that as a friendly amendment?

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** To be honest with you, Mr. Chairman, it's semantics. There really isn't – let's be honest – much of a role to be fulfilled the moment we approve this report and the report is tabled. However, I definitely would like to see all the committees working around similar or possibly the same parameters. So if there is already a precedent set with other committees, perhaps we should then follow in line. If Mrs. Sawchuk is assuring us that other committees are proceeding with the chair and deputy chair, then I don't see why we shouldn't do it as well.

**The Chair:** Let me ask two people if they're open to that. First, the deputy chair.

**Mr. Hehr:** Yes.

**The Chair:** You're open to it.  
Mr. Johnson, are you?

**Mr. Johnson:** Yeah, you bet.

**The Chair:** Okay. Then we will proceed with the speakers list. Mr. Doerksen, did you care to comment?

**Mr. Doerksen:** I'll actually pass. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Very good.

Back to Mr. Chase's comments. I thought that perhaps, sir, you might be referring to the fact that there was quite a lot of discussion about regulations. The truth is that our rule is to comment and give recommendations about the legislation; regulations to follow. The truth is that we know that there have been many years of consultation in various forms on this. It's common practice that ministries would continue to dialogue with groups. But, again, it's not our job to compel about regulations. Our job is to take a look at the legislation as it is and make recommendations, and that's what we're doing.

Mrs. Sarich, do you want to make a comment about that?

**Mrs. Sarich:** Thank you very much. I guess just two items. If we all agree with the friendly amendment to the original motion, I'd like, if possible, for that motion to be read back.

**The Chair:** Well, that's common practice before we vote. I promise that that will always happen.

**Mrs. Sarich:** The second comment is that I appreciate the observation by Mr. Chase. The mandate of our committee here was very clear as espoused through *Hansard* records. The mandate was for us to look at Bill 18. I did raise at one of our previous meetings that perhaps there could be some consideration of the recognition of the stakeholders who brought to the attention of this committee that they would like some opportunity in the future to be involved in whatever the process is on the regulation piece. I believe that because these

meetings are held in public, certainly those that observe these proceedings, you know, might make note of that for future reference. That's a possibility.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Chase to close.

**Mr. Chase:** Yes. I want to make the committee aware of the potential of a sort of dissenting opinion, an addendum kind of thing to the report. This came up in the committee on energy. I gather that this is also a standard practice now with the nonpartisan committees, that if there is some aspect of the overall recommendation that causes concern, then there would be the opportunity provided to include those concerns.

**The Chair:** So are you bringing forward a motion, sir?

**Mr. Chase:** Well, I'm just saying that this appears to be standard practice with all the other nonpartisan standing policy committees, that a dissenting report could be added to the recommendation. In other words, unanimity is not required. I just want to make sure that this committee recognizes that reality.

**The Chair:** I won't make comment on that right now.

Mr. Lukaszuk, did you have a comment?

6:20

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** I think I do. Unanimity, indeed, is not required, but reports are carried by majority. Keep in mind that this is part of a reading of a bill. Every member over here who is a voting member is a member of the House, so when this report comes before the House and further readings of the bill take place, there is nothing precluding any member of this committee from rising in the House and speaking to the report and speaking to any aspects of the report in a dissenting manner and voicing on *Hansard* their disagreement with any aspect of the recommendations or anything relevant to the report.

I am just questioning the wisdom of creating yet one more mechanism of recording dissenting votes or drafting dissenting reports when in 10 or 15 days' time you will be rising in the House and speaking on the record to the report and the reading of the bill, and you can dissent as much as your heart desires and disagree with every single statement made at this table.

**The Chair:** Mr. Reynolds, the second-last word is yours. I'll have the last word on this.

**Mr. Reynolds:** Yes, of course, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

I just thought I would read Standing Order 68(2), that says, "The report of a committee is the report as determined by the committee as a whole or the majority of it but shall include any dissenting or minority reports concerning the report or parts of it."

**The Chair:** Sorry. Could you read that last clause?

**Mr. Reynolds:** Absolutely. "But shall include any dissenting or minority reports concerning the report or parts of it."

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, thank you for that update. To remind Mr. Lukaszuk why dissent should be recognized, it's that it is democracy. Often democracy is painful, awkward, and makes things go the extra mile. That's why I think a dissenting voice, for whatever it's worth, should be looked at. Maybe we look back at this bill and

say: well, on the record, this was here, and this will lead to another; I'll get a good idea next time, much like at one time I know that global warming wasn't recognized by your party whereas now it is. You know, maybe if some of those dissenting reports would have been attached, we would have figured things out quicker. That's why dissent should be noted and put on democratic things of this nature.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Well, sir, it's a very interesting topic change, topic shift, sort of like a green shift, I guess it would be, wouldn't it? Yeah.

Well, then, I would ask our legal counsel: what would be the mechanism in place to record these dissenting opinions or votes? All members are on *Hansard* arguing in favour or against. Votes take place. They're recorded, who is in favour and who is against. If there is a member who dissents from the opinion of the majority, would it be then incumbent on the member to draft a dissenting opinion and have it included in the report? If that's the case, I guess if such members want to undertake the task of drafting their own reports and having them included, all power to them. My comments are that if you want to, go ahead, but instead of doing that, you could simply rise in the House and achieve the very same goal of putting yourself on the record and dissenting and disagreeing with this committee.

**The Chair:** I don't want to go round and round and round. Let's give Mr. Chase the last word on this after all of those who want to speak on this topic. We have a motion on the floor from Mr. Jeff Johnson that we need to vote on. So is it the will of the committee that we vote on Mr. Johnson's motion?

**Mr. Chase:** This would be the amendment of including the vice-chair?

**The Chair:** Yeah, including the friendly amendment. That's where we went a little bit sideways.

Let's do that. The question has been asked to be called, with clarification from Mrs. Sarich first.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Point of clarification, Mr. Chair, just on the friendly amendment and motion that we'll be hearing and voting on. I'm just wondering: since we've received some counsel as to what the standing rule is for the dissenting comment, would that also include participation by the chair and Mr. Hehr, the deputy chair, to examine those dissenting comments? You know, does something like that have to come back to the committee, or do we leave that in the hands of the chair and vice-chair?

**The Chair:** According to the motion you would be leaving it in the hands of the chair and the vice-chair.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Okay. Unless there are any other procedural nuances that we need to be made aware of.

**The Chair:** Then I will read it as amended. Moved by Mr. Jeff Johnson that

the Standing Committee on Community Services recommend that Bill 18 proceed and approve the committee's report outlining the committee's observations, opinions, and recommendations with respect to Bill 18 with the recommendation that the chair and deputy chair be authorized to work with committee staff to incorporate and approve the final changes made by the committee at the October 15, 2008, meeting.

All those in favour? Any opposed? Then we will move on.

There is an outstanding issue here, obviously, raised by Mr. Chase.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Sorry, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I'll allow a friendly interruption. Go ahead.

**Mrs. Sarich:** My deepest apologies for interrupting the flow and process of our meeting, but there seems to be some kind of comment that's coming from counsel that needs to be heard by the committee, I'm assuming.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Reynolds:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, I was trying to respond to your question, and I was just seeking clarification where you were saying: does this report come back to the committee? I would say, based on the motion that you just passed, no. It would be up to the chair and deputy chair.

With respect to if there was a dissenting or minority report, no, that wouldn't go to the committee because it's an exception to the committee's motion. The committee as a whole makes a recommendation. If the majority agrees to it, that's the report of the committee. A dissenting or minority report, according to the standing orders, is included in what we could call the report, but it's not part of the committee's recommendations or report. It's included in the document, and it says: dissenting or minority report. That would be presented at the same time, but obviously it's not the report, so it wouldn't come to the committee.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for your patience regarding that piece of information.

**The Chair:** Oh, no problem at all. We need to get this right. We have different people from different sides of the House, all corners of the province. We're not going to agree on everything, but I trust we can agree on this: we are here to work together in the spirit of all-party co-operation to make Bill 18 the best possible bill it can be for all Albertans, specifically with respect to the classification of films, so that parents and kids and everyone can go to the films that they want to that are appropriate, and they have all the information they could possibly have to make the best choices that they can before the fact. That's what this is about.

I would trust that if there is something coming forward from Mr. Chase – and I expect this because he's a trusted colleague – it would be very positive. You're a positive guy.

**Mr. Chase:** Of course. How could it be otherwise?

**The Chair:** It's about encouragement and the best it can be.

Let's move on to item 5, Tabling and Release of Committee's

Final Report. As you all know, and those faithful listeners on the Internet and those who read the *Hansard* know, we as a committee must report to the Assembly in the fourth week of this month, October 2008.

Rhonda Sorensen is our manager of communications services, and she would like to address the committee about the news release and other considerations respecting the public release of the reports after they have been tabled in the Assembly. The floor is yours.

**Ms Sorensen:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As you may recall, when we began this process, the communications plan recommended that we do a media relations component at the end of the committee's work, which was approved. I just wanted to gain a little bit of direction from the committee. In past practices we haven't released the information publicly, even though it's being discussed in a public forum, until the report is actually tabled in the House, just as a matter of procedure. I guess I'd be looking to the committee for their advice and their support in drafting a news release working with the chair and deputy chair. That release would be given to the media once the report is tabled.

**The Chair:** I've looked around the table, and I believe I've seen every head nod in agreement. I don't think that's a stumbling block.

**Ms Sorensen:** Perfect.

**The Chair:** My next point in my notes is that I'm wondering if we can have agreement to send notification – Rhonda, perhaps you could guide us on this – by e-mail to all those individuals and organizations who wrote to us or made an oral presentation that the reports will be available on the committee's website after they're tabled.

6:30

**Ms Sorensen:** I don't mean to put you on the spot, Mrs. Sawchuk, but it might be better in your hands.

**Mrs. Sawchuk:** The committees branch will definitely look after that with the permission of the committee.

**The Chair:** Once again I see all heads nodding in agreement, so we can move on.

Is there any other business that committee members would like to discuss today? No. Then the date of the next meeting, since the ever-capable deputy chair and I will with your trust, committee members, take this forward, will be, indeed, at the call of the chair.

I would be happy to entertain a motion to adjourn. Mr. Bhardwaj, let's give that one to you. Thank you very much.

Thank you, everyone, and we will be in touch with respect to polling you when we need to have the next meeting.

Thank you, *Hansard*, and thank you, Alberta.

[The committee adjourned at 6:31 p.m.]





