

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

[5:56 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'll officially declare the meeting open. I've asked Michael Ritter to join us today to discuss the report. That's obviously an item we need to deal with at today's meeting. We're also going to deal with some scheduling re Tomislav and the work he's been doing for us. We'll try to get some of that work done and anything else anyone wishes to raise.

So we're ready to proceed with the report. Bob's been working, I believe, with Michael on a draft of what we might use. The intent tonight was to go through that, add to it, subtract from it, get a better idea, and then at a future date come back and finalize it.

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes, I just wrote a rough sort of outline, and I put it on the flipchart.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. PRITCHARD: I start with a covering letter. If anybody's got anything they want to say or something they don't like or want an answer to, just yell it out. You can just have a read through it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, why don't you read what you've got so that it goes into the record.

MR. PRITCHARD: Oh, okay. I can read it into the record.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Because it's in draft form right now.

MR. PRITCHARD: Okay. The draft report and recommendations:

To the hon. Dr. David J. Carter, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, province of Alberta.

The Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries hereby submits a report and recommendations for consideration at the first sitting of the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature of Alberta.

Bob Bogle, MLA, Taber-Warner, chairman.

The next page is just a cover page.

Report and Recommendations: Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries, first sitting of the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature of Alberta.

The all-party Select Committee on Electoral Boundaries was established with the following members, namely: Mr. R. Bogle, chairman; Mr. S. Day, vice-chairman; Ms P. Barrett; Mrs. P. Black; Mr. F. Bruseker; Mr. M. Cardinal; Mr. T. Sigurdson.

The select special committee is to consider . . .

the six things that were given. I don't think I have to read those.

Six parameters were set out in the original mandate. Towards this mandate committee members met with officials from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia to learn of their experiences in the area of electoral boundaries legislation. In addition, a number of Albertans have been called upon as consultants, including lawyers, political scientists, former Electoral Boundaries Commission chairmen and members, and other relevant resources. With the concurrence of the three party leaders, the Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta was invited to join with the committee in an advisory capacity as an ex officio member.

MR. DAY: Former boundaries commission chairmen and members: that's members of the boundaries commission?

MR. PRITCHARD: Of the commissions, yes. "Former Electoral Boundaries Commission chairmen and members." Maybe just to make that clear, I should make that "and" "as well as."

MR. RITTER: On a legal point Bob, I wonder if the committee might consider a word other than "ex officio member," because the Assembly is the only body that can really make anyone a member. I think that what you mean is that you made him an honorary member.

MS BARRETT: Correct.

MR. RITTER: Honorary, I think, would possibly be more . . . Ex officio member means he's a member in full status, the same as Members of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. PRITCHARD: He doesn't vote.

MR. RITTER: Yeah. So I think that honorary member might be a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Agreed with everyone?

MR. DAY: What about just as "in an advisory capacity"? He was actually effective in his advice to us. Does honorary make it sound like it was just sort of a tag-on appointment?

MRS. BLACK: Yeah, just "in an advisory capacity" maybe, a period there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: "Joined with the committee in an advisory capacity," period? Comfortable?

MRS. BLACK: Period.

MS BARRETT: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. RITTER: I think it's important that we avoid any reference to him as a member as such.

MR. PRITCHARD: Thanks, Michael.

The committee has held 28 public hearings in 20 locations; namely, Barrhead, Calgary, Cardston, Donnelly, Edmonton, Edson, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Hanna, High Level, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Peace River, Pincher Creek, Red Deer, Slave Lake, St. Paul, Viking, Vulcan, and Waskatenau. There have been four public hearings in both Edmonton and Calgary, two in both Red Deer and Hanna, and one in all other locations. Six hundred and seventy-four people have attended the hearings, with 284 giving presentations to the committee. In addition, 115 written submissions have been received by mail.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, are we still receiving written submissions?

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes, we are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then there should be a cutoff date.

MR. PRITCHARD: Oh, okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: "This is as of . . ."

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes. "Have been received as of March . . ."

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Anything else on that?

MR. SIGURDSON: That's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Okay.

MR. PRITCHARD:

There are requests for further hearings by Albertans as outlined following:
by constituency and requests for additional hearings, with a notation that constituencies with five or less aren't included.
Bow Valley, 10; Dunvegan, nine; Drumheller, eight; Rocky Mountain House, 17; St. Albert, nine; Stettler, 20; Westlock-Sturgeon, seven; Wetaskiwin-Leduc, five; and Whitecourt, 10; for a total of 95.

MRS. BLACK: The statement "constituencies with five or less": we've included Wetaskiwin-Leduc with five, so "with less than five."

MR. PRITCHARD: It should be "constituencies with less than five." Thanks, Pat.

MR. SIGURDSON: I was of the opinion, though, that every request having been made was on that list that we received the other night. Was I incorrect?

MR. PRITCHARD: No, there were some scattered ones of one or two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Again, you should put as of a particular date.

MR. PRITCHARD: Oh, okay. Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know what date your information is as of.

MR. PRITCHARD: Well, I'm going to put it right now, as of March 14, but I'll probably update this tomorrow when I do it again or whatever.

MR. DAY: Bob, the ones that were less than five – for instance, if there would be one – would any of those include something like a town council as one request, or are these just individuals?

MR. PRITCHARD: Yeah, many of them were on behalf of a council or on behalf of an organization, and a lot of them were individuals as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But you were grouping them on a constituency basis.

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Athabasca, whether it was the town council from Athabasca or Lac La Biche.

MR. PRITCHARD: Yeah, I took it as one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah.

MR. PRITCHARD:

The scheduled hearing in Wainwright was postponed due to weather conditions, which the committee has a commitment to reschedule. Due to these factors plus the opening of the Second Session a motion was passed by the select special committee on March 12, 1990, and I'll put that in from *Hansard*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. DAY: Bob, I'm just straining at gnats. My English training is coming out, maybe, but I would use this in English as misplaced phraseology:

The scheduled hearing in Wainwright was postponed due to weather conditions, which the committee has a commitment to reschedule.

What, the weather conditions?

MR. PRITCHARD: Yeah, the fog.

MR. DAY: Just a small point if you want to alter it sometime.

MR. CARDINAL: It might rain anytime; you know that.

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes, I'll alter that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. DAY: Sorry, if I'm being picky.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. What we wanted to do tonight is go through it for what ideas people have.

MR. PRITCHARD: I don't know where I can get a fog machine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't either, but knowing you, Bob, you'll find one.

MR. BRUSEKER: All you use is ammonia and hydrochloric acid. It's really simple to do.

MR. PRITCHARD: Oh, good.

The committee established and is committed to the principle that no deliberations or conclusions will be discussed or developed by the committee prior to the completion of the public hearing process. Given this principle, which has been articulated to Albertans, and given that there are requests for additional hearings, the following recommendations are respectfully submitted.

MR. DAY: Bob, I'm sorry. Could I ask to read the last paragraph again? Okay. Thank you.

MR. PRITCHARD: Recommendations:

1. The Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries recommends that the Legislative Assembly accept this report as an interim report.
2. The Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries recommends that the Legislative Assembly acknowledge the request of the committee for a fall sitting.

3. The Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries recommends an extension of the due date for the final report of the committee in conjunction with recommendation 2 above.

MR. BRUSEKER: Did the motion that Mike put forward not – I'm just wondering about point 3. Did it not have a firmer date? It simply says "an extension of the due date." I forget the exact wording, but I thought we looked at a time when we were going to tie up the hearing process and table the report. This seems really wide open right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. I missed part of what you said, Frank.

MR. BRUSEKER: I'm looking at point 3. It says "an extension of the due date for the final report . . . in conjunction with recommendation 2." I guess in there I'm wondering: an extension of the due date to what? That's the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the fall sitting.

MR. DAY: To the fall sitting. It says, "in conjunction with recommendation 2."

MR. PRITCHARD: And in 2 it recommends that there be a fall sitting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why not just say, "to the fall sitting," in number 3, rather than "in conjunction with recommendation 2?" Is that your point, Frank?

MR. BRUSEKER: Yeah. I'd also like to clear up a little bit the extension of the due date for submission of the report, because it's not clear what we're asking an extension for, I don't think, in point 3.

MR. DAY: For the final report?

MR. BRUSEKER: For the final report of this committee.

MS BARRETT: Also we need to have it indicated that there will be a fall sitting by approval of this motion.

MR. DAY: Well, if number 3 says, "Recommends extension of the due date for the final report of the committee in the fall sitting," is that tight enough then?

MR. BRUSEKER: "An extension of the due date for the final report . . ."

MR. SIGURDSON: "Fall sitting of the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature."

MR. DAY: Of which century now?

MR. SIGURDSON: Yeah, that's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, "the fall sitting of . . ."

MR. SIGURDSON: ". . . the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature."

MR. BRUSEKER: That's better.

MR. PRITCHARD:

The Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries recommends an extension of the due date for the final report of the committee to the fall sitting of the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature of Alberta.

MR. BRUSEKER: Better.

MR. DAY: Nice and clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything else, Bob?

MR. PRITCHARD: Basically that's it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. What we'll do is review this and get it typed out and then review it again and make sure we're comfortable with the process before we do anything. Okay?

MS BARRETT: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Michael, as far as you're concerned, it looks all right?

MR. RITTER: It satisfies all the legal requirements of an interim report, so I have no problem.

MS BARRETT: Upon approval by the Assembly does it bind us to making a report in a fall sitting, and does it bind us to a fall sitting?

MR. RITTER: The response of the Assembly will be whether or not they choose to follow the recommendations of the committee. After a report is presented, there is usually going to be a government motion or a motion that the report be concurred in, and obviously if the instructions of the committee have to be changed, another motion – it would probably be a government motion – must go on the Order Paper to change the instructions of the committee to comply with the recommendations in the interim report. So it's a multistage process.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would expect each of the caucuses which are represented on this committee to be strongly lobbied by their committee member or members to indeed agree to a fall sitting, because we're sticking our necks out as a committee.

MS BARRETT: Well, what I'm concerned about is that you can have an empty motion that isn't binding on the Assembly: no call for a fall sitting, which is left to the Premier ultimately, and then the automatic reversion to the old boundaries, basically nullifying a year's worth of work.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I believe that's incumbent upon the seven of us to impress upon our respective colleagues, and there are four of us from the government caucus; there are three of you from the two opposition caucuses.

MS BARRETT: I'm looking for a motion that does bind the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. You're a House leader; can you think of phraseology to put in a motion where this committee could bind the House?

MS BARRETT: Yes. "And further, this Assembly resolves that

a fall sitting shall be held . . ."

MR. CHAIRMAN: "This Assembly"?

MS BARRETT: Uh huh. The motion that goes to the Assembly.

MR. DAY: It would be "and further requests the Assembly," wouldn't it? As much as I'd like to because we are pressing for a fall sitting because of this, can we come up with something that binds the Assembly?

MS BARRETT: Yes, of course.

MR. BRUSEKER: If they agree to it.

MS BARRETT: If they agree to it, you bet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, if they agree. Okay.

MR. CARDINAL: Pam, is that something you could discuss into an agreement with Jim possibly?

MS BARRETT: Oh no. You remember, I've had agreements with the Government House Leader before, and you'll see where they got me. No. I mean, if there is any sincerity remaining amongst certain members of this committee, I want to make sure that that commitment is in writing and in a binding form to be approved by the Assembly.

MRS. BLACK: Does that go in as part of the report, or does that go in as a motion to accept the report?

MS BARRETT: It can go in as an accompanying motion.

MRS. BLACK: How does that work?

MS BARRETT: Well, it can go in as part of the report. The recommendations are part of the report, so you can make the fourth recommendation "the adoption of the following resolution."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pam, have you got anything written out tonight?

MS BARRETT: No. I hadn't seen this until just now. I just happen to be able to think on my feet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I appreciate that. Could I suggest, then, that when we come back to review it, you have something that we can look at and give consideration to?

MS BARRETT: I can write it right now.

MR. BRUSEKER: Why don't we try and write it right now, with due respect, because if we're waiting for another meeting and if this gets turned down by the Assembly and we're held to our original time frame, at least as I understood, we're going to have act quickly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I ask for some clarification? We are reporting to the Assembly. We do that through the chairman of the committee. A report is tabled. Period. The government

and the three parties represented in the Assembly are not required to respond to the report that day, that week, the next week. A response obviously will come, but it then switches to the control of the House leaders. Am I right, Michael?

MR. RITTER: That is correct.

MR. BRUSEKER: But as I understand it, is it not also that tabling a report is considered a debatable motion under Standing Orders?

MR. RITTER: Tabling a report is not debatable because it's not a motion.

MS BARRETT: No way.

MR. BRUSEKER: Because we are presenting this as a motion, are we not, of the committee?

MS BARRETT: No. This goes as a report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a report. The motion is what would have to follow in order to do the things we're requesting: to extend the life of the committee and to commit to a fall sitting.

MRS. BLACK: So we're not asking them to accept or reject the report; we're asking only to table the report for review. So there's a difference.

MR. RITTER: That's right. The onus is completely on the House and the House leaders as to what they'll do with the report.

MRS. BLACK: So the motion, then, should be separate from the report?

MS BARRETT: No, it could be right in the report.

MRS. BLACK: After the report is tabled, then the motion should be made.

MS BARRETT: That's right, but it should be in the report. If it is the will of this committee, then it should be in the report.

MRS. BLACK: Well, it is.

MS BARRETT: Okay. So it should be in the report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pam, have you got something you want to put up that we can consider?

MR. CARDINAL: It should go in here.

MRS. BLACK: It is, right there in 3.

MS BARRETT: No. That recommends an extension. You will see.

MR. BRUSEKER: See, point 3 presumes there would be a fall sitting, but it doesn't state anything more than that.

MR. RITTER: But just a point in clarification, Mr. Chairman. All committee members know that no matter what they put in

the report, it is only a recommendation and cannot bind the House.

MS BARRETT: I understand that. The point is that if it's in the report and the report is accepted, then the included motion must come forward.

MR. RITTER: It can be accepted on a qualified basis as well. They can say, "We accept recommendations 1 and 2 but not 3."

MS BARRETT: Sure. Well, if they don't accept this, then we know what game's being played. That's clear enough.

MRS. BLACK: So what else are we waiting for?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, Pam is writing out a suggested fourth recommendation.

MR. DAY: Hey, the rest of it is just top drawer. Yeah.

MRS. BLACK: Looks good.

MR. PRITCHARD: Stock gave me a pass.

MR. DAY: No, I go beyond that: cum laude.

MR. BRUSEKER: A good solid C plus, eh?

MS BARRETT: Four, the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries recommends adoption of the following resolution:

Be it resolved that this Assembly agrees that a fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly shall be held in the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature to receive the final report of the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's put it on for consideration, and we'll bring it back and finalize our report at a future meeting. Fair enough?

MR. PRITCHARD: We have that in *Hansard*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Anything else on the report? Are we ready to move on to reporting?

MR. BRUSEKER: So our next meeting, then, will be to look at this after it's been typed up. If we all agree, then what happens? It gets tabled Tuesday? I presume our next meeting is Monday again. Is that correct?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we're going to talk about our next meeting and also a meeting with Tomislav. But I thought the first step was to have Bob bring forward a draft, look at it, see if it's acceptable. If there were minor or major alterations or additions, we'd need to come back and look at it again. It may be that on the next review we've got some other things we want to consider. So I think rather than saying it will be tabled on such and such a date . . . Remember that the concern I had at the last meeting was whether or not we were under any obligation to table a report immediately following the motion that Mike made. The other Michael has clarified that, no, that's not the case. We're not under that time pressure, so now my concern is that we do it right.

There were some other things we wanted to review tonight.

MR. PRITCHARD: Well, I just wanted to tell you a bit about Tomislav. I saw a bit of a demo this morning on the work he's done, and he's coming along well. I know it seems like he's a bit late. He is a bit late, but it's complicated, and he's working on it. It gets better every time. So I've asked him if he would come with his assistant, Halim, and also with Bill Gano, from upstairs, to meet with the committee. They could all come and meet with us on April 2 if that's . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which day of the week is that, Bob?

MR. PRITCHARD: It's a Monday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Is that date agreeable? Okay.

MR. PRITCHARD: I think the demonstration and the discussion and probably the questions that will fall out of it will be a good hour or an hour and a half. Probably you'll want to devote that whole meeting to the demonstration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. SIGURDSON: What time; sorry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Our regular, 5:45, because by then we'll be into evening sittings, so we'd better . . . You said it's an hour?

MR. PRITCHARD: It's an hour. What's your maximum time when you're . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Quarter to eight. Yeah, if we start sharp at 5:45 and we get through the presentation, there's still ample time for questions and comments.

MR. PRITCHARD: We have it out here on this equipment, so we can sit around and eat out there and have the demonstration at the same time.

MRS. BLACK: I'm going to be absent on March 29.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The 29th. That's a Thursday.

MRS. BLACK: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Just for clarification, this is April 2. Are you all right for April 2?

MRS. BLACK: Yeah, I'm okay on April 2. I'm just looking through here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we should come to a date for our follow-up meeting re tonight's report and recommendations. Next Monday?

MR. CARDINAL: It's open.

MS BARRETT: Would it be a long meeting? I recall that we've been invited to a dinner meeting with the Alberta Association for Community Living.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why don't we, then, not do it on the Monday - to press ourselves - and either do it on the Thursday or the following Monday?

MRS. BLACK: I've already turned the invitation down.

MS BARRETT: I haven't.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is one you want to reconsider.

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, let's not meet on the Monday.

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Chairman, we made a commitment to keep Mondays and Thursdays open, and I think we should address this issue of a draft report as quickly as possible. I'm concerned that if we table a report and if action comes back very quickly - I mean, hypothetically we could get a recommendation saying, "No, we don't accept any of these recommendations; you shall table your report this sitting." If we put this off for another week, we could be very pressed for time. So, respectfully, I would suggest that we should have a meeting on Monday sometime. It may be very brief, but I would not want to put it off.

MS BARRETT: That's fine.

MR. SIGURDSON: I would think it probably will be brief. Is there any way we can slip out right after the question period?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, no. No.

MR. SIGURDSON: We haven't got a budget yet. About 10, 15 minutes? No?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If we're going to stay with the schedule, it's 5:45.

MR. SIGURDSON: Okay.

MR. DAY: What time does the Community Living start?

MS BARRETT: Five thirty. On the other hand, what we could do . . . They usually do a presentation after you eat. What we could do is meet here, and everybody who's sort of committed - I mean, we can all get out of it, but it is an important meeting. We could all go over afterwards, and we could each advise the . . . I have the phone number.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Or would you like to meet a wee bit later?

MS BARRETT: No. Their presentation tends to come a little bit later in the evening, after the meal. So if we met at . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Try to do it at 5:30 and as quickly as we can.

MS BARRETT: Right at 5:30 and then go over afterwards.

MR. DAY: At 5:30 here?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. DAY: Okay, I'll give it a shot.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right; try to be here at 5:30. Michael,

that's all right with you?

MR. RITTER: That would be fine.

MR. BRUSEKER: Perhaps if it's going to be a quick meeting that evening, we could skip the supper portion of it.

MR. DAY: They'll have supper for us at the Community Living.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we'll do that.

MR. BRUSEKER: Go straight to the meeting here and begin promptly at 5:30, or 5:35 perhaps.

MR. PRITCHARD: So you'll be here at 5:30, and it'll probably be a half-hour meeting or something.

MR. DAY: Someone try to adjourn debate at 5:29.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anything else we need to discuss tonight, Robert?

MR. PRITCHARD: No. Well, I had - I don't know if we want to get into this - some stuff we can hand out. When we were here before, I gave a suggested table of contents and some background information we could start looking at, like history and preface and that sort of thing.

MR. BRUSEKER: Is that more for the final report?

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes, it is, and I don't know if you want to . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We spent some time one evening going through it. There weren't many present.

MR. PRITCHARD: Yes, you weren't here, Frank.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why not distribute it so everyone's got a copy?

MR. PRITCHARD: Just so people can take it away. It's typed. If you've got any ideas about other things to put in or other things we can look at . . . A lot of it is work that I could be doing or research I could be getting, information I could get.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Chairman, I've kept all the Mondays and Thursdays open. Do you see the need of our having a meeting on the 22nd, the 26th, and the 29th?

MR. CHAIRMAN: My only concern is Frank's point.

MS BARRETT: Yeah, I agree.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we're best to keep those dates open now until we know. All right?

MR. SIGURDSON: Okay.

MS BARRETT: Uh huh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we'll come back at 5:30 or as close to 5:30 as possible next Monday and go through this again and try

to finalize it. We'll look at the fourth recommended point as put forward by Pam.

MS BARRETT: Could we have this typed up and circulated to us tomorrow in the House?

MR. PRITCHARD: Yeah, I should be able to do that.

MR. BRUSEKER: Even Monday, if it was circulated to us on Monday.

MS BARRETT: I'd rather have it tomorrow if I possibly could. Tomorrow is Friday.

MR. PRITCHARD: I'm not sure that Karen is coming in tomorrow, but I'll try.

MS BARRETT: Even if you just type up the recommendations. I mean, that's the critical part. Type those up and photocopy them and send them in to us in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I again stress the need for confidentiality on what we're doing. Until a report is made to the House, we shouldn't be talking about our deliberations.

MR. RITTER: Mr. Chairman, just one last point. As I think about the very first cover page, I might suggest, so that there's no confusion in the House, that the covering letter insert the word "interim," just for clarification. As it is a tabled document, it will then become available to members of the public. If there's confusion that it is in fact the final report, it could cause problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will we still meet our requirement pursuant to the motion passed last August, in which we were requested to make a report and recommendations in the first sitting?

MS BARRETT: Yeah, sure. A report can be an interim report. It wouldn't violate . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you're comfortable with that, Michael.

MR. RITTER: I'm comfortable with the word "interim" being used.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Fine.

MR. RITTER: And I think that just for everybody's sake it would be better, you know, to avoid any confusion if someone were to assume this were the final report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MS BARRETT: Does anybody have any notion of when we would undertake the rest of these hearings?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As quickly as possible.

MS BARRETT: Meaning what?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want me to speculate?

MS BARRETT: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Assume that our motion is presented to the Assembly and approved and the three House leaders agree that there will be a fall sitting. I think I mentioned in a previous meeting that we'd ask Bob to contact the mayors of the 10 major communities that we're going to visit in the constituencies and begin to set the meetings up in such a way so that as our activities in the House begin to wind down, Bob can trigger our hearings so we'd get out as quickly as possible.

MS BARRETT: You're saying that we'd try to do them in the late spring.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wrap up the hearing process so we can get down to our deliberations and getting our report ready. Assuming a fall sitting, we'd then get our report in right at the beginning of the fall sitting.

MS BARRETT: Sure. Let's just say the House sat till close to the end of June. Are you suggesting that we would go in July then?

MR. CARDINAL: I hope not, Bob.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As House leader for the opposition party, are you signaling me that we'll be here four months this year?

MS BARRETT: No. Let's just say . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's on the premise that with the House going in on March 8, we'd be out in early to mid June and try to do the hearings in late June.

MS BARRETT: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But it seems to me that we cannot postpone the hearings. Even if by chance we're sitting until the end of June, we've . . .

MS BARRETT: Are you sure we don't want to do them during the Easter break?

MR. CARDINAL: Positive.

MR. DAY: Positive, you're right. You mentioned June, Mr. Chairman. Let's assume that if we got out of here in early June, I think that three weeks given to it rather than trying to jam it into 10 days . . . My schedule in June: I've got all these meetings that are hanging there saying, "If out, if out, if we're out."

MS BARRETT: I know. I mean, that's what I'm getting at as well, and I don't want to be doing the hearings in July.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Neither do I, but I think we've got to sit down, then, do some strategizing, and open some slots in our calendars so we go out and give those individuals their opportunity to be heard. It may mean that on a number of occasions there'd be three and four of us, but we've got . . .

MR. DAY: The other difficulty I foresee is if we are giving them dates too early. If for some reason we went into late June and they felt disappointed again . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. The suggestion was that they'd be contacted. We'd know the order, and Bob would contact the mayors and keep the MLAs informed. We'd have a game plan based on how we're progressing in the House. There has to be enough lead time.

MS BARRETT: We can usually guess within about two weeks, within a day, what day the House will conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. As long as there's enough lead time in the communities so that when we go to Wainwright, there's two weeks' notice, they've had their ads in the paper, people are geared up and ready, and we do it. Okay?

Anything else tonight?

MR. DAY: If we're just talking speculation – and, again, this is sheer speculation – if we went to or near the end of June and were able to get a couple in, is there an aversion, as we speculate, about completing them when school goes back in September? Is there an aversion to that?

MS BARRETT: That's exactly what I was wondering about.

MR. BRUSEKER: Completing the hearings in September, you say?

MR. DAY: Again, we're speculating. Let's just leave it at that. It's just speculation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Boy. I've got to express in the strongest possible way my concerns with prolonging the hearing process into the fall. To me, we've got to complete that part of our responsibility. We might need a three-day retreat to sit down and work on our recommendations, but we've got to get at them.

MR. DAY: We could come away liking each other after that.

MR. SIGURDSON: Could you refresh my memory then? The motion that was made Monday night, did that include a cutoff date?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, Mike's didn't include a cutoff date, but Frank did put forward a motion prior to that, which was passed.

MR. DAY: A cutoff date is implicit in these recommendations.

MS BARRETT: But your motion also limited these hearings, correct?

MR. BRUSEKER: My motion limited it to these 10.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, it did. That's another good point. The way the report is prepared . . .

MR. PRITCHARD: This is Mike's motion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's Frank's motion.

MR. PRITCHARD: Oh, Frank's motion? I thought it was Mike's.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I know. I thought we were on Mike's too, but it was Frank's motion limiting the hearings to the 10 communities.

MR. BRUSEKER: The 10 that are listed in the report here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The nine plus Wainwright.

MR. BRUSEKER: Correct.

MR. SIGURDSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And that passed, as I recall, 4 to 2. All right?

Anything else this evening?

MR. BRUSEKER: Can I maybe just ask a question here of Mike Ritter? Given the original guidelines for the creation of this committee, should we be having a recommendation in here that we get a response from the Legislature as quickly as possible, or should we be including that at all? I'm just thinking of a worst case scenario, if they say, "No, sorry; you can't have the extension," and we've got to go ahead and finish it.

MR. RITTER: I think that's implicit in the motion itself. If the Assembly doesn't get back to you soon, then obviously asking them to get back to you soon is redundant.

MR. BRUSEKER: All right.

MR. DAY: Motion to adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A motion to adjourn. All agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The committee adjourned at 6:32 p.m.]