

Title: Wednesday, June 27, 2007 Government Services Committee

Date: 07/06/27

Time: 10:05 a.m.

[Mr. Cenaiko in the chair]

The Chair: We'll call the meeting to order, and we'll thank everyone for being here. I want to welcome everyone, and what we'll do is maybe go around the table and introduce ourselves. I'm Harvey Cenaiko, the MLA for Calgary-Buffalo and chair of the Standing Committee on Government Services.

[The following committee members introduced themselves: Mr. Amery, Dr. Brown, Mr. Cenaiko, Ms DeLong, Mr. Elsalhy, and Ms Pastoor]

Mr. Reynolds: Hello. I'm Rob Reynolds, Senior Parliamentary Counsel.

Mrs. Kamuchik: Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant, director of House Services.

Ms Sales: Tracey Sales, communications consultant with the Clerk's office.

Dr. Massolin: Good morning. Philip Massolin, committee research co-ordinator.

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Corinne Dacyshyn, committee clerk.

Ms Rempel: Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: Okay. We'll move on. All the members have seen the agenda, and I'll ask for approval of the agenda. We need a motion.

Ms Pastoor: So moved.

The Chair: From Bridget. All in favour? Opposed, if any? Carried.

We'll move to number 3, orientation by Senior Parliamentary Counsel. Rob Reynolds.

Mr. Reynolds: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It's a great pleasure to be here at the first full meeting of a policy field committee since they've been established. They arose, of course, out of the House leaders' agreement that was reached by the House leaders on March 7 and subsequently put in place by the revisions to the Standing Orders, which passed in April.

It's a very exciting opportunity to be here and to be participating in this because as the chair just asked, there are other provinces that have similar but not quite identical policy field committees. Of course, Saskatchewan has ones very similar to ours. Ontario also has policy field committees. B.C. has a form of committee that looks at issues mainly and conducts hearings on those. Other jurisdictions have separate committees that look at legislation. They're part of the legislative process. For instance, in the federal system committees of the House of Commons consider bills that are referred to them rather than Committee of the Whole doing it. But this is a first in Alberta, and certainly it puts Alberta, if you will, at the forefront of democratic initiatives as they're called.

As it is the inaugural meeting of a policy field committee, we have some visitors here. David McNeil, the Clerk, is here; Shannon Dean, my colleague, Senior Parliamentary Counsel; Heather Close from the library; other people who are witnessing with great anticipation the proceedings here.

In any event, I'll just start off. Now, I apologize if some of you have heard this before because some of this is similar to what Dr. Brown and Mr. Elsalhy may have heard. It relates to the mandate of the Standing Committee on Government Services. The policy field committees actually have very broad mandates to look at many issues, but right now you're looking at bills, so I'll focus on that primarily right now. The mandate relates to the areas of government services, government organization, personnel administration, expenditure management, capital planning, revenue, justice, international and intergovernmental affairs, trade, aboriginal affairs, policing, and security.

With respect to what's directly on your plate right now, there is Government Motion 21, which was agreed to on May 29, 2007, whereby Bill 1, the Lobbyists Act, was referred to this standing committee for the committee's consideration, review, and comment, with a request for the committee's report to the Assembly on or before the first week of the fall 2007 sitting. Of course, the Assembly under the Standing Orders is supposed to come back on the first Monday in November, which is, if memory serves, November 5.

Of course, Government Motion 23 is very similar except that it refers Bill 2, the Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 2007, to the Standing Committee on Government Services for, once again, the committee's consideration, review, and comment, with a request that the committee report to the Assembly on or before the first week of the fall 2007 sitting.

Now, under the temporary Standing Orders that were passed by the Assembly, obviously, a policy field committee shall review any bill referred to it. Well, that's what you are about to undertake: an order of the Assembly that a bill which, in this case, stands referred to a policy field committee takes priority over any other business that you're doing. Given that this is the only business you're doing right now, it's not really much of a problem.

Of course, I mentioned that there are much greater powers that the policy field committee has, or broader scope. I mean, you have annual reports that stand referred to you. You can conduct inquiries within the mandate of the committee on issues. You can look at regulations. But right now, as I said, you're looking at bills, so I'll continue to focus on that.

Now, there is a distinction between bills referred to committees after first reading versus second reading. There's another committee, Community Services, that has a bill referred to it after first reading. The difference there is that the scope of review, if you will, is broader because the Assembly has not agreed to second reading. Second reading in the Assembly is agreement to the principle of the bill, and once the principle is agreed to, you cannot have an amendment that would run contrary to the principle. Okay? It's like in the House. Amendments that are brought into the House in Committee of the Whole have to fit within the principle of the bill.

In the Lobbyists Act if someone suggested, "I think Kananaskis needs a new park, so I think we should set some land aside for this," that would be outside the scope of the bill. That would not be a permissible amendment. You have to go with what the House has approved here.

When a bill is referred after first reading, the scope is a little broader in the sense that you can look at things that aren't necessarily in the bill or a little bit beyond the scope of the principle because the House hasn't approved the second reading yet. In any event, that's a bit academic for this committee because we have two bills that have passed second reading, so that's what we're dealing with.

Now, you will get into a discussion of how you wish to proceed, and that's entirely up to the committee. Since you're the first committee to be doing this, having a meeting, you're trailblazers in

the field, if you will. Fortunately, we have examples from other jurisdictions as to how they proceed. Certainly, just to go back to what is temporary Standing Order 78.2:

(1) When a Bill is referred to a Policy Field Committee after second reading, the committee may conduct public hearings on the content of the Bill.

(2) No public hearings may be conducted under suborder (1) if the Bill has been subject to committee consideration after first reading.

Well, that's not your problem, so you can conduct public hearings if you so wish.

10:15

Starting off by going to the end, your report, at the end of the day temporary Standing Order 78.3 states:

(1) A Policy Field Committee to which a Bill has been referred by the Assembly after second reading shall be empowered to report the same with or without amendments or to report that the Bill not proceed.

(2) The report may contain a written statement of the committee's conclusions if the Bill was the subject of a public hearing.

When the committee reports, assuming that the committee reports that the bill proceed or proceed with amendments, the bill shall be considered committed to Committee of the Whole Assembly unless otherwise ordered.

But if the committee did recommend that the bill not proceed, a motion to concur in that report shall be put immediately and decided without debate, and if agreed to, the Bill shall be dropped from the Order Paper but if negatived . . .

If the motion not to proceed is negative.

. . . the Bill shall stand committed to the Committee of the Whole.

Anyway, that's how you will end up. At the end of the day your work goes to the Committee of the Whole, and the Committee of the Whole would consider, probably, any amendments that this committee chooses to recommend if you chose to recommend amendments.

The situation in Alberta is a little different than in other jurisdictions in the sense that the committee does report, and that goes to Committee of the Whole. In some jurisdictions the committee is part of the legislative process in the sense that the committee would do its work, there would be a report stage, and then the bill would go to third reading, so this would constitute committee consideration. Now, we don't do that, or we haven't built that into the Standing Orders. I mean, this is a bit of an experiment. We'll see how it goes. It might be that this is something people want to consider at some time in the future.

On to, sort of, some broader considerations, if you will. These committees are different than what has happened before. These are not, if you will, government committees. These are committees of the Legislative Assembly. You say: well, what's the difference? Well, one, obviously: there are members from other parties, other caucuses in the House, on these committees. Because they are committees of the Assembly, you have an independence from government because you report to the Assembly. You don't report to the government on these, which is why, as you'll, I believe, perhaps discuss later in this meeting, you may want to have government officials provide a technical briefing or an overview briefing on the bill. However, that's your decision. You as a committee get to choose which submissions you want to hear. You get to choose when you want to hear them. I mean, you are the masters of your procedure, if you will, and the government or any other entity can't force you to do anything, not that they would. You report to the Assembly.

Yes, Dr. Brown.

Dr. Brown: Yeah. Just a question, I guess. As the government sponsor of the bill, can I be subpoenaed by this committee to give evidence? It's just a facetious question.

Mr. Reynolds: No. It's an interesting question.

Mr. Elsalhy: He'll have to remove his immunity first.

Mr. Reynolds: Well, I'll be getting to immunity in a moment, but I thought that, really, you could just almost wrap it up by yourself there if you're a sponsor/committee member/witness. It would be a rather self-contained process.

Obviously, the committee, I'm sure, will benefit from your knowledge and experience on the issue and your knowledge not only of the special select committee report, which Mr. Elsalhy was on and Ms DeLong and Ms Pastoor for part of it, but will also benefit from your knowledge of the bill, I would imagine.

Mr. Amery: When you say that you can request a government official to provide a technical briefing, would that include the minister or a deputy minister? Who is that government official?

Mr. Reynolds: Well, that's an interesting question. In theory you can request the minister to attend, yes. You can certainly do that.

If you'll just let me go on, I've got some things about the Assembly and how you can actually compel people to attend because these committees are delegates, if you will, of the Assembly, so you are cloaked with a lot of the powers and privileges and immunities of the Assembly. You enjoy the benefits that accrue from parliamentary privilege. Those flow to this committee. Some in particular are the ability to summon witnesses, which I'll get to. There is the protection afforded to members from defamation. There's protection afforded to witnesses who appear before the committee.

I do have a little handout. It's just sections from the Legislative Assembly Act that deal with privilege and committees to an extent. First of all, when I say privilege, privileges are the rights and immunities and powers that accrue to parliaments and assemblies that enable members and parliaments to conduct their work free of hindrance or interference. Of course, the most treasured, if you will, parliamentary privilege is freedom of speech. Under parliamentary privilege of freedom of speech, which has been constitutionally recognized, members cannot be held accountable in another place for what they say in the Chamber, and that applies to committees as well. If you'll note in the Legislative Assembly Act, section 13, it talks about how

a Member is not liable to any civil action or prosecution, arrest, imprisonment or damages by reason of any matter or thing brought by the Member before the Assembly or any committee of the Assembly by petition, Bill, resolution, motion or otherwise or by reason of anything said by the Member in the Assembly or any committee of the Assembly.

That is, if you will, a codification of the principle which is found, as Dr. Brown would tell you, in article 9 of the English Bill of Rights of 1689: proceedings in parliament ought not to be questioned anyplace else.

Now, this privilege extends to committee witnesses too. You won't find it mentioned here in the act, but we come armed with authorities. That's why we carry these big books all the time. We actually use them sometimes. Since I've mentioned the Bill of Rights,

the Bill of Rights, 1689 is not restricted to Members; whatever protection is afforded the Member is equally afforded to the non-Member under the same circumstances. Accordingly, witness, petitioner, counsel, and others whose assistance the House considers necessary for conducting its proceedings are protected by "the rule of Parliament being that no evidence given in either House can be used against the witness in any other place without the permission of the House."

That's from Joseph Maingot's book *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, second edition, pages 36 to 37.

If you're still with me here, you're probably sitting there going: "Rob, you know, really interesting what happened in the 17th century. Thanks very much for that historical update. How does that relate to what we're doing here in 2007? We're talking a few centuries' difference." Well, just to show you that we keep up to date on what's going on, there's a decision by the federal court in May 29, 2007, just a month ago. I find this interesting. Maybe you will too. One of the deputy commissioners of the RCMP gave testimony before the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons, and questions were raised about whether her testimony was as truthful as it might have been. What happened was that the RCMP wanted to conduct an investigation under their code of conduct into what she had said before the Public Accounts Committee.

10:25

The judge looking at this had an occasion to look at the protection afforded to witnesses appearing before parliamentary committees. I won't belabour the point, but I'll just read you a few quotations from the decision, which is Deputy Commissioner Barbara George and the Attorney General of Canada Federal Court decision, May 29, 2007, where she says at paragraph 63:

First, although witnesses before a parliamentary committee are not Members of Parliament, they are not strangers to the House either. Rather they are guests who are afforded parliamentary privilege because, as with members, the privilege is necessary to ensure that they are able to speak openly, free from the fear that their words will be used against them in subsequent proceedings . . . This is related to the more general idea "that whatever is done or said in either House should not be liable to examination elsewhere."

That quotation refers to the House of Lords or the House of Commons in Britain.

Given the overriding importance of the House of Commons as "the grand inquest of the nation", it is fundamental that members and witnesses alike are not inhibited from stating fully and freely what they have to say.

So I think that gives you a little insight into the protections afforded. The judge found that the RCMP couldn't proceed with their internal investigation into what she had said before the Public Accounts Committee.

The Chair: Rob, what if it was a criminal allegation?

Mr. Reynolds: You know, that's a very interesting question. That's sort of one that's a bit open because it's an issue as to perjury. The allegation was that she might have committed perjury, and the judge sort of demurred on the criminal aspects of it as to whether perjury could apply. So that's sort of an open question. I mean, the general principle is that what's said in the committee should not be used for another purpose outside of Parliament. The remedy if someone lies to a committee of Parliament is for the committee to take action against the person by a contempt proceeding.

Just in terms of witnesses – and I was talking about how you can compel the attendance of witnesses – section 14 in the Legislative Assembly Act, that I just handed out, talks about how the Assembly or a committee of the Assembly may by order summon before the Assembly or the committee, as the case may be, any person as a witness and require the person to give evidence on oath orally or in writing and to produce any documents and things the Assembly or committee considers necessary in any of its proceedings or deliberations.

Then it talks about how you can go about doing that.

In our experience it hasn't been necessary yet to issue a summons to a witness. Generally speaking, it's an invitation. It's an invita-

tion, certainly, with respect to members or other members, if you will; there would be an invitation. Usually departments or ministers will co-operate because, I mean, this is sort of the iron fist in the velvet glove, if you will. I mean, if they don't co-operate, if you want to hear from someone and they aren't coming, yes, you can issue a summons. The Speaker can approve it, and it goes out, and the Sergeant-at-Arms rents a horse and trots out and delivers it and all that sort of stuff. He has his sword and, you know, whatever.

Ms Pastoor: I just want to see it.

Mr. Reynolds: Yeah, exactly. He'd be more than happy to do that. I'm sure he won't mind that I said that on the public record.

In any event, moving along from your broad, sweeping powers, I've talked about, briefly, the scope of review on the bills. I've talked about the committee report, the review process. This is something, of course, that's up to the committee, that you'll be discussing. I've talked about how one of the options open to you is to have public hearings. In other jurisdictions there can be an advertisement requesting written submissions. The committee can decide which presenters it would like to hear from. You don't have to hear from everyone who sends in a submission or a request. That's entirely up to you because you may find that some are not, perhaps, as on topic as you think might be useful. Certainly, that's up to you, how you want to do that, the timelines, et cetera, if want to do that.

If you want to invite people to attend, that's up to you, too. The committee can certainly do that, can request people who don't make submissions to appear before you to talk about the legislation. The review process is something you'll get into a little deeper as the meeting proceeds.

I've gone on far long enough. Are there any questions that I might be able to address at this time?

Mr. Amery: I've got a question related to my first question.

Mr. Reynolds: Yes. Here we go.

Mr. Amery: When I look at this bill, it says that the sponsor of the bill is the Premier, right?

Mr. Reynolds: Yes.

Mr. Amery: Can this committee call the Premier?

Mr. Reynolds: Well, if the committee wanted to. I mean, I would imagine that the committee would invite the Premier. Other committees, for instance Public Accounts, I believe, have issued an invitation to the Premier to attend before. The committee can certainly do that, yes, if it wanted to or felt it useful. That's entirely up to you, obviously.

Mr. Amery: Okay.

Mr. Reynolds: Now, if I could just seek your indulgence. I'm looking at my colleague, Shannon, to see if I forgot anything. No. Okay. Thank you very much. Or David. There we go. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Any other questions for Rob?

We have to make some decisions looking at where we want to go down the road. We talked about advertising here. The timelines that we have are quite tight in the fact that summer is going to be difficult to get everybody together. I know that we've got a tentative

meeting scheduled for July 18. I think that at that meeting we'll really set the motion forward for a period of advertising and then setting some dates in September. Then we should be done, I would think, by the middle of October to have a final report, or whatever, generated for the first week in November. Working backwards, we're sort of in a time crunch on both bills, but obviously that means we just have our work cut out for us. We'll have to try to get the dates that we'll need for individuals that are going to make presentations and/or individuals that would make submissions.

Rob, from your thoughts how much time would be required, for example, in September? You're aware of these types of committees. Do we invite six or seven people in? Do we ask 17 people or two? I have no idea, and I don't think any of the other members really have an understanding.

Mr. Reynolds: Yeah. I think Jody is pointing to the agenda. You'll be coming around to this later in the meeting, but if you did choose to ask for written submissions, I'd say that those should probably be in in August, really. Philip can talk about this because usually the process in other jurisdictions is that the head of research sort of compiles the written submissions, you know, so you've got something to look at. It tells you a bit about them.

10:35

The Chair: Tracey is going to do the communications plan.

Mr. Reynolds: Yeah. She'll do that, and Philip will talk about the research component.

The Chair: Do you have any idea, Rob: are we going to get a hundred submissions? Are we going to get two?

Mr. Reynolds: Well, you know, this is something that Dr. Brown and the members of the select special committee on the Conflicts of Interest Act might talk about. I mean, obviously, I can't prejudge, and it's up to the committee. My sense – and it's just an intuition – is that perhaps you would get more submissions on Bill 1 than Bill 2. The Select Special Conflicts of Interest Act Review Committee advertised fairly extensively and hit a lot of stakeholders, and I don't want to say, but the response was – and correct me if I'm wrong – that there were 26 submissions. Some were from people who may not be, you know, as interested this time around because the Conflicts of Interest Act deals with MLAs. I mean, there are some amendments that deal with public servants in the act, but it's a limited class, if you will, who are affected. Now, having said that, that's just my intuition. There could be, you know, a large public uproar about this – I don't know – but it would be somewhat more limited than Bill 1, I think.

The Chair: Okay.

Dr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, I do have some comments, and I'm not sure whether you want me to make them now or when we get down to the decision items on your agenda there.

The Chair: If you can hold off on those, we'll start moving through the agenda, Neil. Rob, thank you very much for your presentation orienting us on this new committee.

We'll move on, then, to agenda item 4. I'm just told – it was announced prior – that Jody Rempel is our committee clerk assigned to this committee. She provides us with administrative, procedural, and general assistance as required. We'll have to exchange contact numbers later as we move forward through the summer because, again, there may be some issues there.

Jody will be working with Philip Massolin, committee research co-ordinator, to co-ordinate the research and the information that's needed or directed by the committee.

Tracey Sales is a communications consultant with the Clerk's office and, again, will be providing communications expertise to the committee.

Rhonda Sorensen, manager of communications services, is unable to attend today, but she will also be working with the committee to ensure that communication needs are met.

Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant, director of House services, will assist us in bilingual issues related to French and English if we need her to do that, but as well she'll be providing assistance to the committee as required. Louise will now inform us on the new administrative procedures which have been adopted for all legislative committees.

Mrs. Kamuchik: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As members are aware, we have undertaken a new way of doing business, if you will, with the establishment of these policy field committees, but it also extends to all the standing committees of the Assembly. Members are issued a binder, which will contain copies of the act. They're personalized binders. As material is ready to be distributed to the members, it will be done through the committee's website. There is an intranet site. Once the notice of the meeting has gone out, a draft agenda will have been prepared by the committee clerk with the assistance of the chair and the deputy chair, and these draft agendas will contain links to whatever documents may be discussed by the committee on that particular day. So that's a new procedure we've undertaken. It will save not only time for the staff, but also would be more ecologically friendly, maybe saving a few trees in the long run. That's the main difference that we are going to be operating.

Jody is the committee clerk.

The members are more than welcome to bring their laptops to the committee meetings. We have hookups that are available so they can access the documents online if they so choose, so that's another way of operating. Members could have done it before, but not too many members took advantage of it. That's mainly the new procedure for operating for all of the committees of the Legislative Assembly.

Jody is a contact between the members and the committee and the contact to the chair.

I believe that's it in a nutshell. If you have any questions, we're here to help and answer them.

The Chair: Any questions for Louise? No. Okay. Thank you very much, Louise.

Next item, 4(b), the Approved Committee Budget 2007-2008. A copy of the approved committee budget for 2007-2008 in the amount of \$58,000 was available on the committee's internal website. The \$58,000 covers pay to members, travel expenses for meetings, and public hearings and hosting during meetings. Although not specifically outlined in this budget document, there was also \$80,000 budgeted for all four policy field committees for advertising. If this amount does not fully cover advertising expenses, funds will be found in the overall committee envelope. All of these budgets have already been approved by the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services. So, then, this item is for information purposes only. There's no requirement for a motion.

If there are no questions on that, we'll move on to item 5, the Draft Timeline for the Review. Now, a copy of the draft timeline was part of the meeting material and was also presented during the session earlier this month with the chairs and deputy chairs of the four policy field committees, which I was unable to make. Is there any discussion on the draft timeline?

Dr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, with your permission this might be an opportune time for me to make some comments on what I perceive the role and the course forward would be for the committee. I don't want to diminish in any way the scope or the powers or the importance of the committee in terms of examining these two bills, but I think that the circumstances in respect of the two bills that this committee has before it are quite exceptional in that we already had a committee of the Assembly that has investigated the area and brought forth recommendations regarding the contents of these two bills. It was an all-party committee of 11 MLAs, and as I look around the table here, I see that there are four of us that were participants in that committee's work.

We had quite an extensive discussion guide, that was circulated in accordance with that investigation of the issues. We had an extensive advertising campaign, which went into all the weeklies in the province as well as all the daily newspapers in the province. I must say that it resulted in very scant input.

10:45

In addition to that and probably more importantly, we did compile a list of stakeholders, which included all of the municipal governments in the province and various other groups that were concerned with issues like the lobbyists' registry and like ethics. We circulated those, and as has been mentioned, we received some input from a number of stakeholders.

Perhaps more importantly, in conjunction with the work of the committee there were a series of information papers that were prepared, which were extensive briefing documents for the members of the committee. Those addressed in considerable detail all of the issues that were set out in the discussion guide, which more or less covered the waterfront in terms of the issues of ethics in government and the lobbyists' registry, which are the subject of the two bills that we have before us. There was a considerable amount of resources, as I said, devoted to investigation of those issues, including comparisons with all of the other jurisdictions in the country, and I think that the background that we have before us is such that we do not have to reinvent the wheel, so to speak.

I realize that it is somewhat exceptional in that in most cases we would go out and do extensive advertising and consultations, but I think that what the committee ought to direct its resources and its endeavours towards would be to perhaps revisit for the benefit of those individuals that weren't on the committee what the briefing was on the previous documents, to make some comparisons with other jurisdictions, to look at the substance of the committee's recommendations and the report of the all-party committee that was tabled in May of last year, and then to look at the text and the substance of the bill that we have before us, in each of those two bills, to see whether or not there are changes that ought to be made.

Now, I'm not saying that we shouldn't consult. Certainly, for those individuals who are stakeholders that replied, I think that an obvious place to start is to circulate copies of the bills to them and ask for further input and their comments on the bills as they were presented and moved into the House, but I believe that it would be a waste of taxpayers' money to advertise the work of the committee in daily newspapers or weekly newspapers. I don't think it would be productive given the history of the previous committee. I think that we ought to concentrate on addressing the particular stakeholders that might have an interest in the content of the bill.

So for that reason, Mr. Chairman, I'm suggesting that we could truncate some of these proposed timelines with respect to advertising and so on and press releases and perhaps even the websites. I'm proposing that what the committee ought to do is a consultation which would be a directed consultation. I guess the analogy would be using a box of .22 shells instead of a case of shotgun shells. We

ought to address the individuals and the parties who would have a specific interest in having input into our deliberations.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Neil. I agree with the fact that Bill 1 and Bill 2 are different. Much more work, obviously, has been done on the committee that you chaired, and our co-chair was on that committee as well. I guess we'd seek some advice from legal counsel as well whether, in fact, the advertising component or the information that we're going to seek out from the public could be this format for Bill 1 and this format for Bill 2 just so we don't repeat everything that the committee did, which, you know, was a nine- or 10-month process.

Mr. Reynolds: I look to my colleagues who are here too, but it's essentially a decision of the committee with respect to how you wish to proceed. Recognizing Dr. Brown's comments – and certainly that may be the wish of the committee – if you did want to advertise for written submissions, of course, that would, as he said, appear in daily or weekly newspapers. Tracey, depending on your decision, will go through that aspect of the communications plan. If someone does write in uninvited and has comments, you know, I'm not sure what the committee would then do with those. It is interesting because this is the first committee to be considering a bill, so as I said, you're sort of trailblazers in this area right now.

I don't know if any other table officers have some comments.

Mrs. Kamuchik: As you've pointed out, Rob, quite ably, it is the committee's decision on how they wish to proceed. Certainly there is a valid point to be made that the material and the input provided to the previous committee, that was chaired by Dr. Brown, is going to be quite valuable. The committee has to decide whether there might be other individuals out there that have since then thought, "Well, gee, maybe I should provide some submission or comment to this particular committee" but at that time had not done so. But, again, it's the committee's decision on how they want to proceed with this particular bill, Bill 2 especially.

Ms DeLong: I'm just wondering: what do you have on the website right now? It seems to me that, you know, in support of Bill 2 – okay? – when we're putting the information in there for Bill 2, I would see that the report of the previous committee should be in there and also the submissions that were made. All the written submissions that were made should also be put there, on the website. I'm sure you could do it in a day, you know, if you had someone to just copy those documents into there. If all of that was in the website and then we just did some general advertising that says, you know, "Before you put your input in, please go to the website and check to see whether your information is already in there," we're not going over past ground.

I do see it as: Bill 1 is quite different from Bill 2 in that we have gone clause by clause in the previous committee through Bill 2. As much as I enjoyed that committee, again, I don't see much value in rehashing all of that information. You know, there were some things I disagreed with. Maybe I'll get another shot at changing things the way I'd like them, but other than that I think that we've already gone through Bill 2. But I see value in going clause by clause through Bill 1 as a committee.

In terms of the advertising I'd just like just some general advertising to go out there and say, you know: submissions have to be in by a certain time, and please go to the website first to see whether your information is already in there.

The Chair: We'll hear from Tracey in a minute.
Bridget.

Ms Pastoor: Yeah. I totally agree with what Dr. Brown said because I was involved with just, unfortunately, the first two or three meetings, which were very comprehensive. I probably would agree with Alana in that perhaps not the submissions but the recommendations could be on the website, and then people could see if what they submitted was actually picked up. I think that might be a quicker way of doing it. I'd like to ask Dr. Brown how much of these two bills – I mean, they sort of overlap in a way. I think this is where we might get bogged down because although they're two separate bills, the issues often overlap. This is a lot of work to do in this very short space of time, in my mind, if we don't sort of put Bill 2 aside because the work is already done.

10:55

Dr. Brown: I'm not suggesting that the work is already done because I'm not diminishing in any way the work of this committee in looking at the contents of the bills as they are and, yes, going through clause by clause in each case. I'm not suggesting that that's inappropriate in any way. What I am suggesting is that we already have a committee of the Legislature, which is an all-party committee, which has done the groundwork with respect to what the issues are. Now, with respect to the aspect of there being two bills here, they both are the results of the recommendations of that all-party committee. They happen to be split into two different bills because of the fact, I guess, that we already had an existing piece of legislation in one case and we didn't have in the other case. So they were split into two different bills, but both of them are the result of the work of the committee.

You know, I would suggest, as I said, that I think that we do have the materials, which, certainly, can be circulated to all of the members of the committee in order to brief them, to bring them up to speed on where those recommendations came from. But I would say that there are several instances, not a lot but several instances, in which the recommendations of the previous all-party committee differed from what you see in the bill. This committee may well want to re-examine in specific detail those areas where they deviated from the original recommendations of the bill.

The Chair: Mo.

Mr. Elsalhy: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The transcripts from the Select Special Conflicts of Interest Act Review Committee are available on the Assembly website. We actually covered two sessions – there was 2005 and then 2006 – and the *Hansard* is available. I think what we should do is cross-link, or have reciprocal links, between our committee website and the Assembly, where in fact those transcripts are available, and then also have a link there for the recommendations report, the final report, which is a sessional paper. People should be able to access it online, Sessional Paper 634/2006.

Anyway, I think we should really populate those links back and forth, so people don't have to look that hard to find them. If they want to submit something on top, you know, after all of this has been available to them, then that's fine. In our committee's mandate we can accept it or decline it or table it or shelve it. It's really up to us whether we want to accept submissions or not.

I think this is an opportunity that comes around every hundred years. The special select committee was actually struck because the act was five years old, and now we have this opportunity, realizing the interest from the Assembly. All 83 MLAs are really interested in, you know, cleaning up some of the areas where we have been the subject of criticism, and MLAs and politicians in general don't enjoy that good a reputation. I think we have an opportunity, and the Assembly recognized this and referred those two bills to us.

The hearings and recommendations from the select committee is one component, but now we have two pieces of legislation, stand-alone, that we should review. I need to seek clarification from Parliamentary Counsel. What happens if we go back in November and tell the Assembly that we need more time? Can we go back to the Assembly and say that we haven't concluded our work?

The Chair: The bill would die.

Mr. Elsalhy: Yeah. That's the clarification that I'm seeking.

Mr. Reynolds: Okay. So you're asking me what would be the exception to the situation involving policy field committees that we've never experienced anyway.

Mr. Elsalhy: Yes.

Mr. Reynolds: The exception to the well-founded rule that's yet to be established. I mean, the Assembly has given an instruction to the committee to report back by the beginning of November. That's the instruction of the Assembly. Now, barring some emergency or other reason, likely the Assembly won't be sitting until the first week in November, right? So the Assembly wouldn't be able to consider a request to extend the time until they reconvene, which is the same time as your report would be due.

I mean, theoretically, I guess it could be possible. I haven't looked up any instances of this, and that would be from other jurisdictions. Generally speaking, I think the advice would be to comply with what the House has instructed the committee to do, which would be to report by early November. This timeline, while it's a different and innovative thing here, with respect to other jurisdictions, they operate sometimes on a shorter timeline with respect to consideration of bills that are referred to them.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Rob. With the committee's indulgence we'll move to item 6 and come back to a motion on item 5 when we get maybe some additional clarification regarding Bill 2.

Maybe we can separate Bill 1 and Bill 2 at this point in time and just speak about Bill 2 and ask Tracey about any of the comments from the committee members regarding the transcripts, regarding the submissions that have been made, if we can in fact ensure that that's available when we advertise but as well if we're going to be seeking out information, seeking out anything additional to what has already been reviewed so we're not going to be reviewing the same stuff that has been reviewed already. But if there was additional information that could go in the advertisement – the committee members that were on that will obviously know that this has been looked at already, so we don't require to go through that. Tracey, can you help us with that?

Ms Sales: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to back up for one second, communications services provides support to the committee in carrying out its public communications objectives. So, basically, whatever you decide your public communications objectives are, we will support you in that role. It's wide open as far as what you would like to do: we will support you in that area.

As such, we have developed a general tactical communications plan, which I believe you all received. Again, this is just very general. Basically, it is possible initiatives that can be undertaken on your behalf. Once you've given us more direction, we can of course go back and, if you like, prepare a strategic communications plan that will meet the objectives that you have set out. But for right now this can give you an idea as to what is possible.

So I'll just quickly walk you through the plan. As you can see, public website is actually one of the suggestions within the plan. That is an item that, of course, the committee can decide to have or not have. As well, the content of that website, again, is open to the committee to decide. So as you direct, we will do. Some of the other tactics that you might want to consider: the media relations aspects, development of visual identity, key public messages. Again, if this is something that you feel you would like to go forward with, we will. If it is something that you feel is not necessary, that is something that we do not have to develop. Advertising is one of the initiatives, and as far as who you'd like to advertise to, the scope, that is a committee decision, and we will follow through on the initiatives that you set forth for us.

Basically, we're looking to the committee for direction on how you would like us to proceed. Whatever your communications objectives will be as far as the public involvement, we can create a more strategic plan for those initiatives if you should so choose.

11:05

Dr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, I'm prepared to make a motion, if you wish, on the issues on the advertising.

The Chair: Okay, Neil. Go ahead.

Dr. Brown: Well, as I said earlier, I don't in any way wish to diminish the role of the committee, but I think that advertising is a fruitless endeavour in this particular case, and I'm prepared to move that the committee not advertise in daily or weekly newspapers.

I'll leave it at that for now. I mean, I don't think we need an advertising campaign. I'd like to deal with the website after we deal with this motion.

The Chair: Okay. So you're just saying paid advertising. You're not talking about the website in your motion, then?

Dr. Brown: Right.

The Chair: I'm not sure if we have to have a motion regarding that, unless we have a motion that says: for Bill 2 we'll be using the website.

Dr. Brown: Well, I think we're dealing with a communications plan there. We have a proposal. I'm suggesting we delete the \$39,731.85 for the weeklies and the \$8,000 for the dailies, that we save the taxpayers \$48,000 by not advertising.

The Chair: Go ahead, Doctor.

Dr. McNeil: I think you have to consider that this is not a proposal, okay? This is just outlining what the possibilities are. We're not advocating anything. All we're saying is: these are the avenues that you can use to contact the interested party stakeholders. I think that Dr. Brown is saying that in these circumstances – based on what he said earlier, the stakeholders are well known – it would be ineffective to advertise publicly based on the kind of response that you got last time with the previous committee.

So I think what Tracey's outlined here is: this is what's possible. Now the committee's got to focus in on: okay, now, what in this instance, in these circumstances, will work to get the feedback that you want? In other words, who are the people you want to reach, and how do you want to reach them? That's the question. Dr. Brown is saying – this is what I'm interpreting, anyway – that based on the last time, the other committee, in this instance, given that you've got, you know, two bills that are quite specific, you probably don't need to. That's how I'm interpreting it: you probably don't

need to advertise. So I just want to make sure that you understand that what Tracey's presented here isn't a proposal. It's just a menu: here's what you can choose from.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much for the clarification. I think that with the previous committee members from that bill on this committee, obviously they have a great deal of insight and can provide that insight to us.

Ms DeLong: I would agree in terms of Bill 2, but Bill 1 really came up.

The Chair: We're just discussing Bill 2.

Ms DeLong: We're just talking Bill 2? Oh, okay.

Dr. Brown: I was addressing both. But, then, I mean, it's up to the chair whether they want to . . .

The Chair: Well, we have to deal with both bills, I think, separately. So I think this is just addressing Bill 2 because Bill 1 never was at that same committee level, was it?

Dr. Brown: Yeah. It's a result of the same committee.

The Chair: Of both? I wasn't aware of that.

Dr. Brown: There were the two bills that came out of the recommendations from the all-party committee: Bill 1 and Bill 2.

The Chair: Oh, okay. I wasn't aware of that.

Mr. Elsalhy: We're not going to make two campaigns. We're not going to have two advertising campaigns, and we're not going to run two ads in each of these newspapers. It costs us just the same amount to advertise that both are being discussed by the committee.

Now, I may agree with Dr. Brown that maybe the cost, you know, could be reduced, but I don't think we should eliminate it altogether. When the new Premier took over, two of his pillars – one is government integrity, and then the other one is open and transparent government. We cannot be open and transparent when we conduct the deliberations and discussions of this committee without advertising to the general public. What if someone who did not submit the first time now wants to submit? Then they could come back and say: "I was never told. I was never informed. You guys never advertised." So I think we should advertise to let people know that this is what we're doing, and if they choose to partake, that's their choice.

It's also to govern with integrity because this is significant. This is important, and this will not come again any time soon. So I think we have a duty to advertise and to inform people of what we're doing.

The website is amazing. It's great. You know, some people like online stuff, but not everybody is Internet literate; not everybody goes to the Internet. Some people, believe it or not, still read papers. We have to reach out to them, and if they choose to come back and submit, you know, ideas or thoughts or recommendations or peeves or rants, let them. I think, yes, maybe we can tinker with the amount, but we shouldn't really eliminate it altogether. So I will be voting against that motion.

Mr. Amery: Mr. Chairman, just a clarification, first, on the end of June 2007 communication. Are we talking about advertising in July?

Ms Rempel: Yes.

Mr. Amery: Yes. Okay. Well, in this case, I really agree with Dr. Brown because July and August are very, very slow months for advertising. People are taking holidays. As a matter of fact, these committees are not a secret anymore. We're already getting letters from interested people who would like to make submissions to the committee, so I think that spending \$48,000 in July and August is a waste of money, a waste of taxpayers' dollars. I would agree with Dr. Brown, and I would vote for this motion not to advertise but contact stakeholders and interested people, the people that we know, the people who were involved on the first committee, when they were doing the first review.

Dr. Brown: I just wanted to suggest that there's another way to get the message out as well as paid advertising; that is, I think the idea of doing a news release is entirely appropriate, and I think we could do that. Perhaps, you know, there'll be some uptake on that. As Mr. Elsalhy has indicated, there is some interest in these issues, and perhaps that's a way of getting the message out there that the committee is holding some deliberations regarding the contents of these two bills.

But I can tell you that the last time that we spent that kind of money, I as chair of that committee felt guilty about the expenditure of taxpayer money because we got virtually zero response as a result of the advertisements in every daily and every weekly newspaper in this province. I can tell you that the profile of this issue in the general public is very, very low. Where we did get some response was from the actual stakeholders that we sent out a package to and asked them for input. But I really do not feel that it will warrant the expenditure of taxpayer money to do a general advertising campaign. You will not get a response. I'd be surprised if you got any responses.

The Chair: Bridget?

Ms Pastoor: Yeah. I think that I probably tend to agree with Dr. Brown. However, under this proposed timeline in September of '07 it says that we'll have public hearings. Now, if there are public hearings, then for sure they would have to be advertised. I don't think we've discussed if we're going to have public hearings, so it's just a little bit convoluted at this point.

Mr. Elsalhy: I appreciate where Dr. Brown is coming from. I sat on the committee, and I know that we were disappointed, that we thought, you know, hundreds of people were going to write to us, and that didn't happen. Yes, you're right: most of the submissions came from identified stakeholders, people who we anticipated were going to write to us anyway. But I still think that we need to advertise this time. It's important for the public to know, and if they choose not to write, then that's fine. I don't view it as waste. This is a warranted expense. You know, we have an entire arm of the government called the Public Affairs Bureau. Their mandate is to reach out to the public and to inform the public. We can argue that maybe some of the messages are wasteful. You know, you get a minister like the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, who sent a discussion guide on land use to every identified stakeholder. MLA offices got them and so on. I haven't even given out one because I told people that it's available; nobody is interested. So that could be viewed as waste.

11:15

I think we are going to be surprised how many people are aware of this issue and how many people are interested in telling us where

we should be going, where we should be taking these two pieces of legislation forward. So, yes, I agree. Maybe we should reduce the cost or select. You know, maybe in Edmonton we don't need both the *Journal* and the *Sun*. Maybe in Calgary we don't need the *Herald* and the *Sun*. But we still need to advertise.

The Chair: I just want to ask Tracey one question regarding Dr. Brown's motion. The website component is there, and it's available. It's online through the LAO, or it can be, so we can have it up and running and all the previous transcripts available. But if we do a news release and we send it out to everybody, that doesn't cost us anything. It's dependent on who picks it up, but I would imagine that most of them will pick it up. It doesn't cost us a cent.

Ms Sales: No. Actually, the first three initiatives that are outlined in the tactical plan – that would be the development of visual identity, key public messages, media relations, and the public website – would be at no direct cost to the committee. Any news releases could be created by communications services on your behalf. We would send them out to the media. We could also link those to the website, but there would be no direct cost for the news releases.

The Chair: Obviously, we'd see a draft news release. We could still ask in the release if we want any submissions.

Ms Sales: Yes. In a release we could invite the public participation through submissions. We could invite the public and the media to public hearings should you choose. We can use them to inform the public of your findings when you're finished your proceedings. We can use the news releases in all of those areas. Basically, what we need the committee to give us direction on is how you want to involve the public in the proceedings, whether you're going to have public meetings, requests for submissions, those sorts of things. Who do you want to involve? The general public? Or if you just want to target specific groups, those are your choices. Again, that will decide, though, whether or not you need to advertise province-wide or something more targeted. What do you want to communicate about your proceedings? Those sorts of items are what we need to discuss as well for communications.

The Chair: I was just going to ask Dr. McNeil for a point of clarification.

Dr. McNeil: I just wanted to have everybody understand that this timeline a descriptive thing. It represents, sort of, all of the things that the committee could do, but it's not saying: you should do this. So in terms of public hearings or submissions or requests for submissions all of those things are decisions that the committee has to make. We're not implying that you have to have, you know, public hearings or you have to do anything. All we're saying is: these are the possibilities, and you have to focus in. The essential question is: how do we reach the people we want to reach to get the feedback we want to get on these two bills? That's the essential question.

The Chair: Alana.

Ms DeLong: Thank you very much. I do agree with Dr. Brown in terms of minimizing the money that we're spending or of making sure that it's effective, any money that we do spend. It does seem that, you know, these advertisements are not bringing us the responses that we need, so I think we need to approach it in a

different way. There is, I believe, one thing that we've got to keep in mind with this advertising and the difference between Bill 2 and Bill 1. When we asked for submissions for our previous committee, we were only asking for submissions around the Conflicts of Interest Act, and at that time the government was very clear that it did not want a lobbyist act.

In terms of the people who would write in or who would ask for submissions, you know, in terms of lobbyists, it wasn't really on the table. So I do believe that we have to really think clearly in terms of the stakeholders in this Lobbyists Act and make sure that the message does go out to them, not just the stakeholders that we were working with with the Conflicts of Interest Act.

The Chair: Okay.

Dr. Brown: Just one comment on that, Mr. Chairman, if I could. Recommendation 1 of the all-party committee was a recommendation that there be a lobbyist registry. It was clearly part of the discussion guide. The question was asked: should Alberta establish a lobbyist registry? It was very much in the forefront of what the discussions were, so I disagree that it was not at the forefront of the issues that the public was aware of. As I said, the public may have been aware – at least, a few stakeholders might have been aware of it – but there was great ennui with respect to the deliberations of the committee. I mean, it was something that did not have a high public profile, but the lobbyist registry certainly was part of it. It was up front, and it was certainly part of the discussion guide that was circulated. It was part of the website. That's the way it was.

Ms DeLong: You know, it was definitely a very large part of our discussions in the committee – I agree with you, Dr. Brown – but in terms of the initial request for information, it was a request specifically for conflict of interest, so I do believe that there are a lot of people that we did not hear from. For instance, a lobbyist act deals with lobbyists, and we did not hear from lobbyists, you know, in terms of our feedback. So I do believe that we've got to request information in that area.

The Chair: Well, I'm not sure if we need two motions, but I'd like to suggest this, and maybe one of the committee members can make a motion. Coming from Tracey's tactical plan here, I think if someone is willing to make a motion regarding the development of visual identity and key public messages, utilizing media relations, and a public website . . .

Ms Pastoor: We actually have a motion on the floor.

The Chair: Yes. Right. Okay. So we'll deal with Dr. Brown's motion, that was moved by Dr. Brown, that the committee not require paid advertising for public input on Bill 1 or 2 in weekly or daily newspapers. Is that correct?

Dr. Brown: That's fine. I would just advertise that in lieu of that, we would issue press releases to the series of newspapers in the expectation and the hope that we would get good publicity out of them.

The Chair: And the website? Make that a separate motion?

Dr. McNeil: Maybe deal with the motion that's on the table, and then a subsequent motion can deal with the press release and the website and so on.

The Chair: Okay. So the motion by Dr. Brown is that the committee not require paid advertising for public input on Bill 1 or Bill 2 in weekly or daily newspapers, period.

Mr. Elsalhy: Can this be amended?

The Chair: Sure.

Ms Pastoor: Could I just ask a question of Dr. Brown? Does that include public meetings, the advertising if we have public meetings? Is that not kind of separate?

The Chair: That's separate.

Ms Pastoor: That would be separate. Okay. If it's separate, I'm fine.

The Chair: We're just talking about paid advertising.

Mr. Elsalhy: But then if you have a public meeting and you want to advertise that, then you're going to pay for it.

The Chair: But you can do that in a news release.
Okay. There's a motion on the floor. Go ahead.

11:25

Mr. Elsalhy: I was going to suggest an amendment. I move that the motion as introduced by Dr. Brown be amended to reflect a reduction in the budget for advertising but not an elimination of the entire budget for advertising.

Dr. Brown: I think I said: paid input, not paid advertising for input.

Mr. Elsalhy: Yes. So the budgeted amount for the paid advertisement could be reduced. Maybe we can talk about, you know, a \$20,000 maximum or something like that but not eliminate it altogether.

Dr. Brown: That's not the motion, Mo.

Ms Pastoor: Could we have that motion read back, please, with the word "input"?

The Chair: Moved by Dr. Brown that
the committee not require paid advertising for public input on Bill
1 or Bill 2 in weekly or daily newspapers.

Mr. Elsalhy: Yes, and my amendment, then, is to have a maximum of \$20,000 for paid advertisement for public input.

The Chair: That's contradicting that motion.

Mr. Elsalhy: Well, he's saying none.

The Chair: Yes. That's what he's saying.

Mr. Elsalhy: So I'm saying halfway.

Dr. Brown: Well, with respect, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the amendment is out of order because the question has been called and I saw people putting their hands up.

The Chair: Well, our legal staff is here.

Mr. Reynolds: Well, to go back to what Dr. McNeil said, my understanding is that this document, this presentation by communications, isn't something that's written in stone. It's just a document to provide some guidance with respect to the ways that you can go. It doesn't say that you must spend \$40,000. It doesn't say that you must spend \$8,000. It's just a guideline as to what you would do if you wanted to proceed.

My initial reaction to Mr. Elsalhy's amendment is that it is a negative of the motion proposed by Dr. Brown in the sense that he is proposing no paid advertising. I hope I'm not doing injustice to the motion there.

Dr. Brown: Public input.

Mr. Reynolds: Yes. I would assume that if that motion was defeated, then your motion or consideration of that issue would follow from that.

Ms Pastoor: I realize that the question is on the floor, but when that was read back in terms of public input – I'd like a comment from communications. I mean, what kind of a message is that sending when we're saying that we don't want public input if it could be interpreted that way? No? Okay. If it can't be, then – I mean, I'm asking you. You're communications.

The Chair: Let's clarify it. It's paid advertising.

Ms Pastoor: Okay.

The Chair: So we can still advertise through news releases and the website regarding meeting dates.

Ms Pastoor: I understand. I'm just thinking of the visual, or the perception.

Mr. Elsalhy: So I withdraw the amendment.

The Chair: Okay. Withdraw the amendment. So the question is on the floor to Dr. Neil Brown's motion. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Dr. McNeil: Might I suggest that the committee might want to focus on what it wants to do in terms of reaching the stakeholders, whoever they are and however you want to do that.

The Chair: Okay. That's a good point because that's, again, as I mentioned, in the tactical communications plan we have. There's no direct cost to the committee for development of a visual identity and key public messages, no direct cost to the committee regarding media relations, and there's no direct cost to the committee regarding a public website. I think we can utilize that.

I'm not sure who had their hand up first here.

Dr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, if I could ask for clarification on this. By visual identity, does that mean developing some kind of a, you know, logo and all that kind of stuff which we would normally use if we were going to advertise and so on? If that's the case, I wonder whether or not you can tell us whether or not that would be done in-house or whether there would be an additional or an incremental cost to the taxpayers of doing so, because I don't think that it's necessary for us to develop a visual identity in the sense of a brand or whatever.

Ms Sales: Right. Thank you. Basically, the suggestion to the committee as far as the visual identity is concerned was that a constant look be used throughout all of the public initiatives. For instance, the website would look a certain way. If you had an advertisement, it would also follow that look. Do you understand what I'm saying? So it aids with public recognition for all of your initiatives. As far as costs, of course, that would be all designed in-house so at no direct cost to the committee.

The Chair: Bridget and then Alana.

Ms Pastoor: Thank you. Basically, Dr. Brown said what I wanted to say because the point is that it doesn't matter which pocket it's coming out of. It's still the taxpayers' dollar; I don't care who does it.

Ms DeLong: You know, in terms of a visual identity I would think that we should have one visual identity for all of the policy committees that we are working with here and everything that we do here, so we're not creating a visual identity for this particular consultation. It should be just whatever is standard.

Ms Sales: Yes. Thank you. Actually, that is one thing that we're working towards: having all of the Legislature committees have sort of a consistent identity for the public. I think that's what you were referring to, Ms DeLong. Yes. We just were throwing that out there for the committee's discussion, whether or not that's something that you would like us to do.

The Chair: Okay. We're going to have to continue on with our agenda.

Dr. Brown.

Dr. Brown: Yeah. Well, I'm going to take up Dr. McNeil's suggestion. I'm going to make a couple of suggestions regarding the way forward in terms of public consultation. I think that rather than going through the list or, as Dr. McNeil referred to it, menu of possible things that we can do here, I'm going to suggest that the committee prepare a press release and send it out to all of the newspapers that are available, that we also prepare a website, and that we develop a list of stakeholders and request their input to the committee, that we actually do a mail-out to all of the identified stakeholders.

Ms Pastoor: If I identified somebody that I thought would be interested, would I be then free to perhaps approach them?

Dr. Brown: Absolutely.

Ms Pastoor: Okay.

Dr. McNeil: I would say that members of the committee would identify stakeholders, we'd put together a list, and then the committee would communicate to all of those people as opposed to individual members of the committee doing it on their own. My suggestion would be that the committee staff between now and the next meeting work with the chair and the deputy chair and the members to develop a list of stakeholders; draft a press release; draft a proposed list; if the committee is going to receive submissions, in what format they want to receive them. So at the next meeting you can come and say: "Okay. We're going to send out this press release, and we're going to send this information to these stakeholders. This is the information that's going to be on the website, and this is how the committee can be contacted and so on." At the

next meeting you can say: “Yes. This is what we want to do.” That’s only – what? – three weeks away.

The Chair: Yes. July 18.

Dr. McNeil: At that point all of that stuff could be implemented to have that feedback back by the end of August in terms of gathering information.

The Chair: I think that’s a very good point. Our next meeting is scheduled for July 18. That would provide the staff roughly three weeks to work on it and then come back, meet, look at that – again, the stakeholders could be listed at that point in time and/or looked at – and then continue on with the timeline in the fall.

11:35

Dr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, in view of Dr. McNeil’s suggestion if you wish, I could make a motion that the chair and the vice-chair in conjunction with the committee staff be empowered to prepare a press release and that they also compile a list of stakeholders for the next meeting.

The Chair: What you’re saying is that it’s not going to be sent out till it’s reviewed by this committee?

Dr. Brown: Correct.

The Chair: Yeah. Okay. Any questions regarding that motion?

Ms Pastoor: Yeah, I probably do have a question. Sorry. It’s just, I think, a question to the vice-chair if I might. In terms of who the actual previous stakeholders were for your committee, they would be listed on this Assembly website? Not? Okay. I just don’t want to reinvent the wheel, so if I could, maybe, somehow figure out what those were.

Mr. Reynolds: I’m sure there’s a list of the stakeholders in the committee records, and that would be reviewed. The plan was that Philip would come back at the next meeting and have the list of stakeholders for you to consider, to add to. It might be circulated beforehand, presumably, so you could come to the meeting or provide your direction, you know, so that it’s as comprehensive as you want to make it. That’s the sort of process I was looking at. Philip, is that your understanding?

Dr. Massolin: Yes, that’s my understanding as well: in concert with the committee I would develop a proposed list, and that list would be submitted for approval.

Ms Pastoor: And it would include the previous?

Dr. Massolin: Yes. I would try to be as comprehensive as possible in terms of, you know, coming up with a list.

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Mr. Chair, I believe the list of stakeholders was at the back of that report, but it is in the committee records, and we can provide it to all members.

Mr. Amery: Just a clarification. In the meantime the letters that we are getting from people who are interested in making submissions to the committee: should we direct them to Phil?

The Chair: To me through Jody.

Mr. Amery: All right.

The Chair: And all that, we hope, will come back at the next meeting as well as over the summer.

I guess the next question would be that we have to look at the timeline as well as the process for individuals that are going to be coming in.

Mr. Reynolds: Just a question that arises from Ms Pastoor’s comments, and it may be early to say. I was just wondering in terms of the timeline, when you get there, if it might be the committee’s intention to actually have public hearings then on the bills based on the submissions, or is it something that you want to evaluate after you see the submissions? Just a timing issue. It might be, I guess, that after you see the submissions, you might say: well, we might want to ask some people to appear. Just trying to sort out the timing, really.

Dr. Brown: Or we could find, Mr. Chairman, that there is remarkable unanimity of opinion amongst the stakeholders and the members of the committee, in which case we may feel that public consultations or public hearings are really not required.

The Chair: And a further analysis of the written reports might provide us with an amendment or changes to any of the clauses.

Mr. Reynolds: So would it be fair to say, then, Mr. Chair, that there would be a deadline for submissions that we could work on sometime in late August? Perhaps at this stage, as I understand it, you might want to leave some time in September open for the possibility of public hearings: just leave that time open in terms of planning so that it would be available to you if that’s the way you wanted to proceed.

The Chair: I think it’s a very good idea. I know the first two weeks of September are going to be very busy with government meetings, government caucus meetings, so we’ll have to look at our calendars and try to send some dates out, what might be the best dates for the majority of our members on the committee, so that we can line them up. If we don’t need them, we can always cancel them, but I’d sure rather have more meetings lined up than not enough. I’ll work with Jody on lining them up because as the chair of the committee and with the instructions from the Assembly I’d like to be ready by the middle of October.

Now, this was the motion moved by Dr. Brown: that the chair and vice-chair in conjunction with committee staff be empowered to prepare a press release and a list of stakeholders for the next meeting.

All those in favour?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? Carried unanimously.

Okay. We’re 20 minutes away from our concluding time here, so can we go back to number 5, Draft Timeline for the Review? I guess we could have a motion on it, but that may be changing on the fly, so to speak. Maybe we won’t entertain a motion for the draft timeline.

Go ahead, Bridget.

Ms Pastoor: Mr. Chair, sorry. You had mentioned that you wanted to be ready by the middle of October. I wouldn’t mind pushing that back to the end of October, which would give us an extra couple of weeks.

The Chair: Well, we'd better be ready for the 4th or 5th of November. That's what the issue is.

Ms Pastoor: Oh, no, I understand.

The Chair: I'd prefer to be ready by the middle of October.

Ms Pastoor: Okay. Do you want to cut it off to the third week?

The Chair: Well, if we need an extra week, we'll have it, but if we put it to the end of October, then we run out of time. So we'll try by the 15th or 20th of October, and that still allows us about 10 days for emergency work by legal staff and legal counsel.

Now, on the agenda under 6(a), Public Input: Written Submissions, Public Hearings. I take it that we've dealt with that, then, through the motion that we just heard. Deadline for Written Submissions: that's going to be coming back to the next meeting from this motion.

Item 6(c), Identification of Stakeholders/Invitation to Interested Parties: that as well has been addressed in this motion.

Item 6(d), Communications Decisions. Those issues I think we've discussed, and that motion was made.

Item 6(e) is Overview Presentation on Bills – Government Officials. So the committee should consider whether or not it is interested in hearing presentations from government officials during the consideration of bills 1 and 2, and these presentations can be coordinated by the committee clerk at the direction of the committee. That's something that if we want to make a decision on today, we can. If not, we can think about it until July 18.

Mr. Reynolds: One of the things that we are concerned with is that I think you'd indicated that the committee could ask the officials who worked on these bills to make a presentation on what they encountered and why things are drafted or if they had any questions as to why this and not that to an extent. Now, of course, you're always open to ask the sponsor of the bill – Bill 2, of course, is Dr. Brown and the Premier – but it's my understanding that these were both drafted by the same department.

Dr. Brown: Justice.

Mr. Reynolds: Yes, the Department of Justice. One of the reasons this is on, as you know, Mr. Chair, is if the committee wanted someone at the July 18 meeting to brief you. That's why it's on at this time. Obviously, this is the meeting before July 18, so we have to set that in motion. If you believe there would be too much administrative work or something at this time, that the meeting wouldn't be long enough, you could postpone it, but the idea of having the officials or whatever is to sort of provide, as they say, the technical briefing on the bill, you know, if you have any questions about how to proceed on it or to sort of give you ideas as to what's behind them. It's something that, I think, you could request the department to be here and to provide.

11:45

The Chair: I think it's a really good idea. The issue is whether we have them at the next meeting or another meeting down the road, but we can obviously entertain having them at the July 18 meeting, which can be longer than two hours if need be. I just want to let the committee members know regarding their schedules.

Dr. Brown: Just one comment, Mr. Chairman. I think it's a good point, and Ms Dafoe from the Justice department, certainly, was

involved at every stage of the drafting of the bill. Perhaps if there are technical questions relating to the actual drafting of the bill, she might be the appropriate person to come and speak to the committee about those technical issues.

Ms Pastoor: This is sort of self-serving, but I won't be here on July 18, so I would miss that, but I have every intention of making every other meeting. I'm wondering if I wouldn't like to speak, perhaps, with the stakeholders and get a whole bunch of information first and then have where they came at it. Given the recommendations and what came out in the bills, I think that would be more helpful, later than before.

The Chair: You know what, Bridget? I think you make a good point other than the fact that I'd like to get the understanding of the bill first, then the stakeholders. Then we can always call them back.

Ms Pastoor: Okay.

The Chair: We can always have them come back to answer questions versus having them doing a presentation to us. You'll miss the presentation, but you'll be able to read it in *Hansard*, so you won't really miss much. Well, of course you would, but you could follow up through *Hansard* on their presentation. It will be the Q and A's that we'll go through, through the submission, through the work that was done by the previous committee. We can draft our own questions to various government officials down the road.

I don't think we have to call the individuals that are sponsoring the bills, myself. Again, that's a committee decision, but I don't think we have to. In this case Dr. Brown is here anyway. I don't think he'll be reluctant to answer questions. Will you?

Dr. Brown: No.

Dr. McNeil: Mr. Chair, it may be useful just to have a motion on the record requesting the briefing from the Department of Justice on the bill, just so that it's on the record in terms of us approaching them with that request.

The Chair: Okay. Can I entertain a motion from the floor? Alana.

Ms DeLong: Yeah. That we have a one-hour presentation on the two bills together, so half an hour on each bill, clause by clause going through them.

Mr. Reynolds: Of course, it's your motion – I wouldn't want to interfere with that – but I'm just wondering if this helps capture your essence here: that

the committee extend an invitation to Department of Justice officials to appear before the committee to provide briefing on bills 1 and 2 at the July 18, 2007, meeting.

That's obviously not my motion – someone else would have to move that – but I'm just wondering if that encapsulates your ideas in any way.

Ms DeLong: That's fine. Absolutely.

Mr. Reynolds: Great.

The Chair: Okay. All in favour of the motion? Opposed? Okay. Carried.

Mr. Elsalhy: Maybe we can also investigate the benefit of inviting the Ethics Commissioner to come and make a presentation to the

committee for the benefit of those members on this committee who were not on the previous one. Maybe the Ethics Commissioner has something to say.

The Chair: Yes. How long?

Mr. Elsalhy: Half an hour. Mr. Hamilton actually has indicated that he was quite pleased that bills 1 and 2 were referred to us. When I was meeting with him to go over my annual submission, he actually indicated that he wouldn't mind appearing before the committee.

Ms DeLong: I would see him as one of the stakeholders that we should be sending a letter to asking whether he wants to speak, but I don't see him as, sort of, part of our orientation. I know that he's a very special stakeholder.

The Chair: Yeah. But I think he can provide a presentation, and then, again, if issues come up during between now and October, we can call him back for questioning. The question is: do we want him here on July 18? Do we need a motion for that?

Mr. Elsalhy: Okay. I so move, and then using some of the excellent language from Parliamentary Counsel to package it.

The Chair: Okay. There's a motion on the floor regarding this invitation to the Ethics Commissioner. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Okay. Do we need a motion just regarding the sponsors of the bills?

Mr. Reynolds: No.

The Chair: No. Okay. So we don't. Okay. So that's (e).

Item (f), Background/Research Materials Required through Committee Research Co-ordinator. Again, briefly, I'll turn the floor over to Philip Massolin just to provide us some research options that may be pursued by committee members.

Dr. Massolin: Thanks very much, Mr. Chair. My name is Philip Massolin, and I am the committee research co-ordinator. I'll be brief about this; I know we're running late. Just to give you a sense of what my role here is, it basically is to provide nonpartisan research through the committee clerk to the chair for the entire committee as a whole, and in this particular committee my role is to support the committee in the consideration of this bill, through all stages of the committee proceedings to do that.

I'll run through some of the services that I could provide. We've talked about them already to some extent. At this point I've already undertaken to provide a draft list of stakeholders. These research services that I'll go through now are based in part on the proposed timeline, and we know that that may change. It's also based on what is done in other jurisdictions.

In preparation for public submissions, public hearings research can – and I say “can” advisedly; just to echo Dr. McNeil's point earlier, we don't have to do any of this, but we can if the committee so chooses – provide press clippings and packages of media coverage on the bill. We can provide cross-jurisdictional analysis, and this is something we've already discussed: help in the finalization of a stakeholders' list. We can provide other briefing material at the behest of the committee and to augment what ministry staff will present when they come to do their presentation. In terms of the submissions themselves, what research can do is that we can provide

a summary of the submissions to make them comprehensible, abbreviate them to organize them according to the clauses in the bill, if that is what is desired.

In terms of the hearings themselves, if that is a route this committee chooses to investigate, we can provide research support during the hearings for questions that arise. We can also provide summaries of the oral presentations as well. The summaries that we would provide during the oral part of the public hearings and the submissions could be grouped together in assisting this committee to write the ultimate report, that will be presented to the Assembly in November. My role could be as well to work with committee members to draft that report.

I don't know if there are any questions.

11:55

The Chair: Thank you very much, Philip.

Do any of the committee members want any research between now and the next meeting? If you can't think of anything, I'm sure that if you give Philip a phone call – you should actually, I guess, go through Jody to request it so that all committee members can get a copy of it.

Mr. Elsalhy: I think that just as a preliminary package if you can just go through the clippings and the media and tell us, you know, what was said about lobbyists in Alberta, what was said about conflicts of interest and elected officials and all that stuff. Maybe we should tell you how far back to go. I'm thinking 18 months, two years, maybe something like that because I don't think it's going to be too many, just as a start point where we can actually check what people said, what the sentiment was out there, comparisons to other jurisdictions that were mentioned in some articles, you know: stuff like that.

Dr. Massolin: Certainly. Just to clarify what you want, you want press reports dating back a certain amount of time – I'll ask you maybe to define that – on both the bills for the next meeting. Is that correct? Okay.

Ms Pastoor: Philip, do you know or are you aware if there's been any polling done on either one of these?

Dr. Massolin: I'm not aware.

Ms Pastoor: And if there might be any results of that?

Dr. Massolin: No. I'm not aware of any. I can't say.

Ms Pastoor: Okay.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much, Philip.

We'll move on to number 7, Other Business. Do any of the committee members or staff have any other issues or business that they want to discuss?

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Mr. Chair, this isn't exactly other business, just a supplemental comment. Jody has sent all of you the link to our internal website, and that is an internal, confidential website for use of committee members and their staff. Her contact information is there as well as her e-mail address. So as you're going through your process with stakeholders that you think of, please do send that to her that way, and she'll include that in the information that's going to the committee for the July 18 meeting.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much, Corinne.

Item 8, Date of Next Meeting. It's scheduled for July 18 at 10 a.m., but if we have an hour presentation from Justice and a half-hour from the Ethics Commissioner, that's an hour and a half, and with the issues that may come up regarding the communication, do you want to schedule it from 10 till 12:30 or 10 till 1? The only reason for 10 is because if you're going to drive up from Calgary that morning, if you leave at 7, you get here at 9:45-ish.

Mr. Elsalhy: You obey traffic laws, don't you?

The Chair: What? No, no. I mean 6:45 till 10 is what I said. Sometimes you forget this is taped.

What would be best for committee members? Is the 10 o'clock starting time okay? Do you want to put an end time on it? That's sort of difficult because I don't want to cut people off, but I don't want to say that we'll go till 4 o'clock either. I would think a maximum of three hours.

Ms DeLong: I'd say: count on lunch.

The Chair: Yeah. Can we have, like, a working lunch? Is it okay to do that? We can? We can have a working lunch. Yeah, with the money we save on advertising, we can have a working lunch. So 10 till 1, maybe 1:30 at the latest. We'll try to schedule three hours. Does that seem like enough time? Rob?

Mr. Reynolds: Yes, that's fine.

The Chair: Okay. Any other questions regarding that?

I'll go over the calendars with Jody, and we'll try to get some tentative dates set up for September. Are there any dates and times preferable for the committee members? I know that we don't have all of them here, but we just sort of have to work with who we have. Is 10 o'clock till 1 o'clock a good time for a majority of members right now, especially those from Calgary? You can drive up that morning or the night before. Is any day in the week better? Or days that are not better?

Dr. Brown: Mr. Chairman, if I could just suggest that perhaps a practice that has worked quite well in some of the committees is to circulate a number of dates and then do sort of a consensus to see which one fits best in most people's calendars. Obviously, not all of us will be available on any given date.

The Chair: No. That's right.

Okay. Now we need a motion to adjourn.

Dr. Brown: So moved.

The Chair: Dr. Brown moved. All those in favour? Thank you, everyone, for coming. We're two minutes over our meeting. That was very good. We've got our work cut out for us, that's for sure. Thank you very much.

[The committee adjourned at 12:01 p.m.]