

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

[3:43 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like to reconvene the meeting. The record should show that the meeting actually began at 1:30 here in the Carillon Room and that we did deal with a couple of matters, then adjourned to the Chief Electoral Officer's office and met with the Chief Electoral Officer and members of his staff and have now reconvened here in the Carillon Room in the Legislature Building.

For those -- I believe Tom was not with us -- it was earlier agreed that we would not deal with the appointment of an Acting Ombudsman today, but more appropriately we should meet with the Ombudsman tomorrow and meet his staff. We do have a written recommendation from the Ombudsman as to whom he believes the Acting Ombudsman should be for the period of time from September 15 until a new Ombudsman is appointed. But we did believe that it would be more appropriate to make that decision once we've met the Ombudsman and his staff. Therefore, we will reconvene following our afternoon meeting at the Auditor General's office. So we start the morning here in the Carillon Room; we then depart together and will go to the Office of the Ombudsman. We then will break. We'll reconvene at 2 o'clock in the Auditor General's office. I think we can reconvene there because we're all walking. It's walking distance, just up the hill. [interjection] No.

Then, following the meeting at the Auditor General's office, we'll come back to the Carillon Room for a short session to deal with the appointment of an Acting Ombudsman and any other matters members feel need to be dealt with. Now, is that over-view satisfactory?

MRS. GAGNON: The visit to the Ombudsman's office in the McKinnon building will take approximately an hour and a half to two hours?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Probably. It was our intent, once we've completed, to come back and break because some members of the committee have other commitments.

So the matter to be dealt with today is item 3 on our agenda, Conference Attendance. You'll recall that at our first meeting I asked members to indicate what conferences they had a preference for, recognizing that some members might not be able to travel this year. We also discussed the opportunity for spouses to travel with members. It would be our intent -- once we've finalized who's attending the various conferences, the administration will do some work with the numbers to see if indeed we have the resources in this year's budget so that spouse's travel can be covered in that. We'll then proceed.

Members would also be aware that by actions taken by Members' Services Committee there's a different rate applied for attendance at our meetings. That will not affect our budget. Obviously, if Members' Services have dealt with that matter, there would be additional dollars coming to our budget. So we shouldn't confuse that with spousal travel at conferences. Any questions on the former?

MRS. GAGNON: Okay. So, just to be clear, for the remainder of '89 any spousal travel is at their own expense?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

MRS. GAGNON: Oh, you will determine . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: What we'll do once we get to our formal agenda item today is formally approve the participants listed, and there's one alteration. Then the administration will check to see what kind of flights they can get and look at hotel accommodation costs, and if we have enough dollars in the existing budget, the spouses will be covered. If we can only cover a portion of it, then we'd apply whatever's left so that all are treated equally.

MRS. GAGNON: Are there any brochures available with the exact start-up time of a conference, for instance, so one would know if one's traveling on the 30th or the 29th?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we've just received the Canadian Ombudsman Conference material. I'm not aware of anything else on the Comprehensive Auditing Foundation or the Governmental Ethics Laws conference.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, the committee does save money on the flight if people book in advance and are able to travel over a Saturday night. For some conferences that might not be possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right, and that's one of the reasons that we need to finalize who's attending various conferences so that our administration can check and make the necessary arrangements.

So if you look at the second page of today's agenda, you'll note that for the Canadian Ombudsman Conference we had Yolande, Don, and Derek. Derek wasn't sure if that's one that he could attend, because of time. He has since confirmed that, yes, he would be able to attend that, and we're assuming that the Acting Ombudsman would also attend that conference. On the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation Stan Nelson had indicated an interest in that as well as the Governmental Ethics Laws conference. Stan has volunteered to go to the auditing foundation conference so that there is representation there, and that would leave both John Drobot and Don Tannas for the ethics laws conference.

Are there any questions about the proposed makeup?

MR. TANNAS: I would be willing to drop the ethics laws conference if someone else wanted to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we passed that hurdle at the last meeting in that we asked people to identify . . .

MR. TANNAS: Okay, but there were two people away, or something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. You're right. There were two people away. I haven't had any feedback. Nothing came through Louise? Who was not present at our last meeting?

MR. HYLAND: I was late, but I was there. I can't remember if this was dealt with before I got there or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are we missing anyone now?

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we have six of the members who are

planning to attend a conference. Alan . . .

MR. ADY: Don's going to two. That's why we had that issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Oh, because Don's name is down for two.

MR. TANNAS: Yeah, that's what I was saying. At the time there wasn't -- and I said I could go to either one of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. I should have caught that, Don, and I didn't.

MR. TANNAS: I would prefer to go on October 30.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's your first choice.

MR. TANNAS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, can we leave it this way: if there are sufficient dollars in the budget to cover members plus spouses, you go to both. If there are not sufficient dollars, you drop your second choice so that spouses can travel with members.

MR. TANNAS: Sure. If that's the case, too, and you want somebody there, I'm quite prepared to pay my spouse's.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think as long as we've got coverage, I feel very strongly about spouses traveling with members, and I think we as a committee dealt with that issue at our last meeting.

MR. FOX: I understand the arguments put forward and that a decision was made last time. It's something I personally feel quite uncomfortable about, and it would be my intention that if Vi were able to come with me, that would be at our expense.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If your wife, say, were to travel with you, it would be at her expense?

MR. FOX: Yeah.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MRS. GAGNON: I would do the same.

MR. FOX: It would just be my preference, Mr. Chairman. We would like to go together if we're able to go, so you might want to keep that in mind in terms of the budgeting of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I'm going to leave the onus on the members to work with administration. If you would like your spouse to travel with you, and you would like to pay your spouse's travel costs, you make those arrangements privately with administration.

MRS. GAGNON: And someone will contact us shortly to determine when we want to leave and that kind of thing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MRS. GAGNON: Because if we want a good fare, we have to book fairly soon. It's just six weeks away, or whatever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. That's one of the reasons we wanted to deal with the matter.

Okay, I ask for a formal motion, then, approving the conference attendance with the conditions as outlined. Tom, any further questions?

MRS. GAGNON: I just wonder if you'd like to open it up for anyone else who might want to go, although, you know, the time has past. Just one last opportunity, maybe. I don't know, Alan; you said you might have missed that part of the meeting.

MR. HYLAND: Because I was tied up before the meeting started. I don't know. I'll check on the 8th, but I don't know what Diane's schedule is, whether we can go or not, or whether I can go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My only unease with not settling it today is that we're going to run out of time on seat sales and packages.

MR. TANNAS: Well, if the one in question is December 5, Tom and I as old travel agents know that that's not a heavily traveled period of time. So, you know, you'd have a couple of days if you were inclined to make a change there. I would be happy to drop out on your behalf if you wanted to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan, do you want your name down, then, on the 8th?

MR. HYLAND: Okay. It may have to be taken off; we'll see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put yours down?

MR. ADY: No, I have too many things on the 8th.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I definitely can't, as much as I'd love to.

MR. ADY: That's to New Orleans, isn't it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Tom, I see you're not down here either.

MR. SIGURDSON: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the same reason I'm not.

MR. HYLAND: Are you two on the same committee?

MR. SIGURDSON: [Inaudible] go to those exciting places like Milk River.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, I hope there's a snowstorm when you're there and you can stay about a week.

MR. FOX: He's riding shotgun on the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right, but we've taken away the bullets.

All right, are we ready, then, for a motion? Tom. With the addition of Alan's name as a possibility, subject to the conditions earlier mentioned? Any further discussion? All in favour? Opposed, if any? Carried.

Any further business today? Derek.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering. Tomorrow when we're meeting with the Ombudsman, you said that there would be one of his staff members there with him, and there would be the chance for us to meet with the Ombudsman to discuss the contents of his letter without . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: First of all, the letter's been circulated to all of our members. Okay. My understanding of the arrangements is that we will meet with the Ombudsman first and in private in his office.

MR. FOX: Okay, good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You might confirm that.

MS SKURA: Okay. Originally he had asked if that was what we had asked for, and he said -- well, what he had asked was whether he should come here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's very different though. He asked if he could come and meet with us here, and I said no; it's not needed.

MS SKURA: Okay. So we will meet with him there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think those arrangements are made, that we would meet with the Ombudsman in his office first. He will then introduce us to his staff. Rather than speaking with him, let's just leave it. If by chance he doesn't arrange to meet with us in private at the beginning, we will meet with him before we leave, without any other staff present.

MR. FOX: To discuss the letter, to discuss the conference, and things like that.

MRS. GAGNON: And the person profile.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, the conference? Why the conference?

MR. FOX: Well, to find out what his advice to members of the committee might be about the conference. He may have had a hand in setting up the schedule at the conference. There may be certain -- I haven't seen the information on the conference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My only reluctance is because of the sensitivity. You know, the 15th of the month is this Friday. Why not stay right away from activities beyond the 15th with the current Ombudsman and wait until we're dealing with the new Act-

ing Ombudsman? I just don't want to get into an area of sensitivity if we can avoid it.

MR. NELSON: Don't upset the applecart.

MR. FOX: Yeah, okay. I was just thinking that there may be, for example, three or four sessions running concurrently; some may have greater relevance to the Alberta . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would think the current Ombudsman would fully brief the Acting Ombudsman, and there will then be an opportunity for those of you going to that conference to sit down with him and go over it in detail, and I think that's very appropriate.

Anything further? Yes, Stan.

MR. NELSON: We were given this afternoon a proposed . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just for information.

MR. NELSON: For information only? We'll be discussing this at some . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not until we get into our budget discussions. That's merely provided for information.

MR. NELSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Chairman, in that I was late, I'm wondering if I might have a copy of what was done.

MS SKURA: Sorry.

MR. SIGURDSON: I was late, not you. Don't apologize.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can you arrange that we can get one extra copy of this so that the three members can each get a copy?

MS SKURA: Okay. By tomorrow, or just as soon as possible?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If possible for tomorrow.

MR. NELSON: Did you have a motion to adjourn?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was waiting for one. Thank you, Stan.  
All in favour? Carried unanimously.

[The committee adjourned at 3:59 p.m.]

