

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

[2:52 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We'll convene the meeting. Let's first deal with item 3, the search committee's recommendation. Tom and I are waiting with bated breath.

MR. ADY: No decision.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, I should just say at the outset that, first of all, there were 249 applications. We had hired a consultant in Darwin Park, through his company, who gave the committee exceptional service, along with Grant Nicol from the personnel office. Both were exceptional in offering the committee assistance and what have you.

MR. FOX: Can I suggest we go in camera at the appropriate time, Mr. Chairman? You'll know when that time is appropriate. Just a reminder.

MR. NELSON: Through the selection process the committee met when appropriate to discuss the candidates in an open and frank fashion. I would like on the record to indicate my thanks to the committee, because they all worked very hard and diligently and spent a lot of hours in reading and considering each applicant in the fullest manner. I think the manner in which our committee members handled themselves was - I would use the word "professional." I want it put on the record to thank them.

We initially brought the 249 candidates who originally applied down to 18. Subsequent to discussion we then went down to six; subsequent to that we made a decision. At this point I would like to request and move that we go in camera.

[The committee met in camera from 2:54 p.m. to 3:04 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are now ready for our motion.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move the recommendation of the Ombudsman select search committee: that Mr. Harley Johnson be offered the position of Ombudsman at a salary of \$85,000 per annum, with the anniversary date being April 1, 1991.

MR. ADY: Nothing on time for . . .

MR. TANNAS: I was going to say: his duties to commence when mutually agreeable.

MR. NELSON: I don't think we need to say that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further question on the motion?

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question has been called. All in favour? Let the record show it's carried unanimously.

I'd like to, on behalf of the Legislative Offices Committee, commend the search committee for the many, many hours of hard work you've put in on this very difficult and most demanding task. On behalf of all Albertans, thank you.

We can go back to our agenda. We have a couple of budgetary matters to deal with, and I would like to recommend that we go in camera for a couple of moments and then come back out

to deal with them as specifics.

MR. SIGURDSON: So moved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Tom. Question? All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

[The committee met in camera from 3:06 p.m. to 3:27 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're now ready for a motion re the Ombudsman's budget estimates, 1990-91. The first item we're dealing with is under the element Total Supplies and Services and specifically item 712N, Other Purchased Services. Do we have a motion?

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that we amend item 712N to read \$1,500 and, therefore, the Total Supplies and Services beneath that to \$230,500. The grand total at the bottom would read . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. Stop there. We're dealing with the supplies and services element.

MR. SIGURDSON: He's just giving you the subtotal, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TANNAS: There's a subtotal and a full total.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we have another motion before we deal with the complete total for the office?

MR. SIGURDSON: But he's making this subtotal read effective for this particular motion; then we'll deal with the other motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry. Maybe I'm misunderstanding. Go ahead.

MR. TANNAS: . . . that the total for that column read \$1,228,900.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, that's wrong. Could we stop the tape, please.

[The committee met in camera from 3:29 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.]

MR. TANNAS: [unrecorded] read \$1,228,900 as in Schedule A of the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Budget A. Okay.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question has been called.

MR. FOX: Well, just to make it clear on the record here, the understanding is that should the new Ombudsman determine that a move is required to fill the Calgary vacancy created by the retirement of the senior person there, the Ombudsman would make the appropriate decision. If there are needs that arise as a result, the committee would . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, there are guidelines provided in the subsistence, travel, and moving expenses regulation effective

June 15, 1988, which clearly set out a process to be followed by the Ombudsman, and if there's any further question, it's to be clarified with the Public Service Commissioner. If the dollars can't be found within the budget, the Ombudsman has the opportunity to come back to the committee. Okay?

Anything else on Don's motion?

MR. HYLAND: For the second time, question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ready for the question? The question's been called. All in favour? Let the record show it's unanimous. Thank you.

I wanted to clarify one matter relative to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer. Members will recall we dealt with the budget at our last meeting, and on that date we had received a letter from the Chief Electoral Officer. He wanted to advise the committee that in the correspondence which all members have, the Chief Electoral Officer states that he is revising the original office budget for the 1990-91 fiscal year on the understanding that the committee wishes me to make the following assumptions.

The first two assumptions relate to the Election Act and the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act, neither of which we expect to be dealt with by the Assembly in the spring of 1990.

Item B deals with the 83 provincial electoral divisions, and again the assumption that no amendments would be made prior to March 31, 1991. Members are aware that we now have a select special committee working on electoral boundaries. The mandate of the committee is to report to the Assembly during the spring sitting in 1990. Assuming the Assembly then creates an Electoral Boundaries Commission, that commission would do its work. Looking at past commissions, it's taken approximately a year or a little more for a commission to do that and report back. So both of the first two assumptions seem relatively straightforward.

It's the third assumption I am a bit concerned about.

There will be neither a need for a Provincial General Enumeration, nor will there be a Provincial General Election, prior to December 31, 1991.

I don't recall anyone at this committee making that assumption. We clearly discussed the electoral boundaries matter relative to a commission and its work, but the mandate and the responsibility for holding an enumeration in 1991 clearly falls within the mandate of the Chief Electoral Officer. Now, if, when reviewing the budget next year for the 1991-92 fiscal year, the Chief Electoral Officer wishes to make arguments that dollars need to be set aside for enumeration, then those matters can be dealt with at that time. So it was my intention to include reference to this in the communication to the Chief Electoral Officer.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, the situation with regard to enumeration. He's going to do an enumeration in 1991 anyway. It's two years after an election. It'll probably be done in September, so we'll be into a circumstance there that we'll have to provide those moneys.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Under the Election Act, 14.1(2), "the Chief Electoral Officer may . . ." So if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied because of the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, he could waive the enumeration in the fall. This committee isn't giving him any direction one way or the other.

MR. NELSON: Well, I think he has to come back with a recommendation and an assumption.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, a year from now when we're dealing with next year's budget.

MR. NELSON: Oh, yeah.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I probably should put on the record, because I was asked on the record to check with the Government House Leader relating to the first two items discussed, (a) and (b) in that letter, the Election Act and the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act. In conversation the Government House Leader felt much the same as the reasons previously given, that because of the committee and things like that he didn't see and at the present time it wasn't on his list to be looked at in this legislative session. I think that would lead one to believe that if there's no action, there's no need for a lot of new costs of printing, and I think it was wise to drop that from the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anything else on the matter of the office of the Chief Electoral Officer?

Okay, moving on then. Yes, Don.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering whether or not . . . When we moved the budget, I said that I amended Budget A. Is that enough for the acceptance of the vote? Should I also have mentioned that we amend and move to have it accepted as amended?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You made specific reference to reducing 712N by \$25,000, to \$1,500, and you gave the new total figure of \$1,228,900.

MR. FOX: You said as presented in Budget A.

MR. TANNAS: So that's sufficient? Okay, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are we ready, then, to move to item 2(b) on our agenda? That's discussion of the 1990-91 committee budget estimates. You recall that we had a couple of small items to clear up on our own committee budget.

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Yolande.

MRS. GAGNON: Just to refresh our memories, was it the matter of an automobile being provided for the chairman and whether that was a duplication that you wanted to clarify?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was one of the things. I think on page 1 we questioned hosting.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Hosting was reduced by \$300.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As a result of our discussion.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Yeah. The auditing firm of Kingston Ross's expected fee was reduced from \$16,000 to \$12,500. That reflects the new changes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the two items that were adjusted are under Supplies and Services, the last two items.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: If I may, Mr. Chairman, as well there was a question at the time about the radio in the chairman's vehicle, and that's been removed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Now, are there any other adjustments on page 1, Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: No. No changes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 2?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: No, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 3?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: No. No changes.

MR. NELSON: Well, the chairman's vehicle is still there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute.

Are you on page 3, Tom?

MR. SIGURDSON: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. NELSON: That was one point, but go ahead, Tom.

MR. SIGURDSON: The other point, Mr. Chairman, is that I get some mixed messages. I'm told that the accumulation of air travel points that we collect are not allowed to be expended, ever. I don't know if that's the case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, it's not.

MR. SIGURDSON: It's not the case?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The leader of your party went to a conference in Yukon using bonus points for your caucus.

MR. SIGURDSON: Okay. Would we, then, be allowed to use our bonus points on conferences?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to comment on that, Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Yes. You would be able to as long as you're attending a conference as a representative of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and you would be attending these conferences in your capacity as . . .

MR. SIGURDSON: Because that may reduce costs as well.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Right. That would reduce the costs.

MR. SIGURDSON: Although we wouldn't be able to budget for that reduction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the short answer on the chairman's vehicle question is that I had asked whether there was merit in addressing it in various committees. I don't think that's been

done, so I believe the costs are still built in.

MR. FOX: Built in, but it may not be applicable, depending on . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: It likely won't be.

MRS. KAMUCHIK: That's right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Page 4.

MR. HYLAND: Unless we get rid of Bogle.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 5. Page 6. There you see the auditing fees. Page 7.

MR. HYLAND: I figure the chairman isn't going to be too hard on his car. He's only going to spend \$300 keeping it going.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 8.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I move that we accept the . . . Oh, did we?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Well, we're ready to accept with revisions.

MR. HYLAND: . . . revised version of the estimates for the Standing Committee on Leg. Offices for '90-91.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further questions? All in favour? Opposed, if any? Passed unanimously. Thank you.

MRS. GAGNON: We've been good to you; you be good to us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

Other Business. Do we have any other business, Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Not that I know of, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other members have other business to raise today?

We don't have a date for our next meeting. I don't think there's a reason to name it today, is there?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: No. At the call of the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In all likelihood there would not be one for some time.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I move that the next meeting be at the call of the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

MR. HYLAND: It's not unanimous. Derek wants it sooner.

MR. NELSON: Before you go, can I have our Ombudsman select committee sit down and . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you. We're adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 3:41 p.m.]

