

1:08 p.m.

Wednesday, March 13, 1991

[Chairman: Mr. Bogle]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I declare the meeting open. Louise is just checking to see if Don is coming. As far as we knew, he was. Yolande and Stan are not able to be with us today.

Could we first look at the agenda. When the meeting was called, we had confirmation from Pat Ledgerwood that he would be with us and give us an update on his position regarding the Parliamentary Counsel contract. He notified Louise on Monday of this week that he is unable to come today. He's in hospital for some minor surgery and is therefore unable to come, so we won't be able to deal with that matter today.

MR. HYLAND: We don't have any correspondence on that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeah, we do have a letter. Was that letter circulated?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: I haven't seen the letter. I can get one to your office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did it not come to you?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Not yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. We do have a letter in which the Chief Electoral Officer and the Parliamentary Counsel have agreed to break the contract. I apologize that it's not here today. I will ensure that copies are sent to you this afternoon. The Chief Electoral Officer was going to give the committee an update as to costs and how he planned to cover those costs relative to his budget. I'm sorry; I thought the letter had been distributed. I'll see to it that you receive that letter.

We then have our committee's budget estimates, which have been cleared through Members' Services Committee. We then have the 1991 Conference Attendance, and we'll go through that in some detail. I'm pleased that of the nine members of the committee we're able to accommodate six in terms of their first preference.

Are there any other items that should be added under item 7? Louise?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: None that I'm aware of.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any from the committee's perspective? I'm assuming the date of our next meeting is going to be left to the call of the Chair. We normally don't meet when the House is sitting unless there's an emergency. If there is something that requires our attention, we'll get together when the House is sitting. Otherwise, it would be some time post sitting.

Is the agenda acceptable, then, as presented?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion? Tom? Thank you. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Moving on, then, to the minutes of our last meeting.

MR. HYLAND: I'll move that we accept the minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let's just take a minute on them, Alan. Page 1.

MR. HYLAND: If Louise gets this printing any smaller, we'll all need glasses to read.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought it was just my eyesight, Alan. Page 2. Page 3. Page 4.

MR. HYLAND: I have a question on page 3.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes?

MR. HYLAND: The subject of our next meeting, which is probably after session, would be the report from the Auditor General about that charge-back that we had?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We've got a number of things. We have one, item 5, Charge-back of Audit Fees - Commercial Entities Being Audited by Auditor General. Yolande had requested the matter of the Ombudsman's position in Newfoundland, and that's at the end of the agenda list. I guess we're still awaiting a formal response regarding the Public Accounts Committee, although a report was given to us. Was that through Members' Services?

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Through Members' Services for CPA conferences.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But that still needs to come back to this committee. The Auditor General, the charge-back of auditing fees, Alan, that you just raised, and the Chief Electoral Officer on any costs associated with the termination clause in the contract. Unless there's need for a special meeting, those items would not be dealt with until post session.

Anything else on page 3? Page 4? Page 5? Page 6?

Now, Alan, your motion's in order.

MR. HYLAND: I move we accept the minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Alan that the minutes be accepted as presented. All in favour? Carried unanimously.

As I indicated, we won't be able to deal with item 4, the report by the Chief Electoral Officer, so that will be held in abeyance.

Item 5 is the Report on Approved 1991-92 Committee Budget Estimates. All of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the various standing committees were invited by Members' Services to come in and participate. Some questions were raised about various aspects of budgets, but the budget as presented by the Legislative Offices Committee was approved as presented. Any questions on our budget?

Yes, Jack.

MR. ADY: I just wonder if either you, as chairman, or Louise could give a little explanation of the Professional, Technical, and Labour Services. I'm not clear on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's our contract with the Auditor.

MR. FOX: Kingston Ross.

MR. ADY: Oh, I'm sorry. Okay. I knew that number should mean something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They have since written back and confirmed that they believe they can do the audit within budget, as they did last year.

MR. HYLAND: Could we come back and say, "Yes, we accept it, and if you go over, we won't pay you"?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, but we'll send them a copy of today's *Hansard* with your comments.

Any other questions on our budget? Okay. We don't need a motion to approve; we've already done that. That was here for information's sake.

The next item is item 6, 1991 Conference Attendance. What I've compiled is a list of the submissions that the members of the committee presented indicating their first, second, and in some cases third choices for conferences. I sat down with Louise early last week and attempted to match this. We looked at conferences attended by members last year. I'll use, as an example, Derek. Your first choice was the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference. You attended that conference during the current fiscal year, and that was one of the factors we looked at in moving you from that position to your second choice, which was the Canadian Ombudsman Conference. As I said, it's rather remarkable that we're able to meet so many of the first-choice recommendations of members in the balancing. So what we've got is the proposed motion.

Would you make a copy of that, please, Louise, and then everyone can have it.

1:18

MRS. KAMUCHIK: Sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe I'll just go through the list while Louise is coming back with the wording on the proposed motion. We've got John and Tom for the Australian council on public accounts; Al and myself on the Public Accounts Conference, which is in Winnipeg; for the Canadian Ombudsman Conference, Derek and Stan; for the ethics laws conference, Jack and Don; and on the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation Conference, Yolande, and I would propose that Louise attend that conference as well.

MR. HYLAND: Do you think you and Stan could get along for four days together?

MR. FOX: It may challenge us.

Mr. Chairman, I should advise you that I may not be able to free my schedule at that point in time, September 15 to 18. Since that time, we've come up with some conflicting caucus responsibilities, some outreach things that we're doing. At what point would we need to notify Louise to confirm our availability?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What I was hoping we would do is identify - this doesn't have to be in a formal motion - a backup individual for conferences so that if, at the last moment, someone is unable to attend a conference and we've already paid the registration fee, if there's another member of the committee who could attend, they would do so.

MR. HYLAND: Does that take Tom out at the same time?

MR. FOX: I'm not sure. I think it's a different week. We're dividing the caucus up and doing outreach in Cypress-Redcliff and Taber-Warner and Cardston, wherever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good. Come on down. I'd love to have you.

MR. ADY: Come down where you can't do any harm.

MR. FOX: He's certainly a confident old fellow, isn't he?

MR. CHAIRMAN: When you have the kind of plurality he has, you can do that.

MR. FOX: We've got a tentative agenda that will require both of us.

MR. SIGURDSON: I'll give you an undertaking to fill in for you. At this point I can fill it in and mark it up.

MR. FOX: Your week is different there?

MR. SIGURDSON: Yeah. I'm sure that my week is different.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why don't we take a short coffee break.

[The committee adjourned from 1:22 p.m. to 1:33 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're back on the record now. Do you want to read that into the record?

MR. HYLAND: Moved by myself that the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices representation at the following 1991 conferences be approved: Australasian Council of Public Accounts Committees Conference, John Drobot and Tom Sigurdson; Conference of Legislative Auditors, Bob Bogle and Alan Hyland; Canadian Ombudsman Conference, Mr. Fox and Mr. Nelson; Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference, Mr. Ady and Mr. Tannas; Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation Conference, Mrs. Gagnon and Mrs. Kamuchik.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion on the motion? Ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is called. All in favour? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

We do have the backup names in the event that one of the delegates is unable to attend at the last moment.

If there's no other business - and we've previously agreed that the next meeting would be at the call of the Chair and would not occur until after the end of the spring sitting unless there's an emergency - we're ready for a motion to adjourn. Jack. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

[The committee adjourned at 1:35 p.m.]