

[Chairman: Dr. Carter]

[1:05 p.m.]

MR. SPEAKER: Good day, ladies and gentlemen. With respect to the agenda that you have in the front of your binders, with regard to item 7, Other Business: number one, we'd like to add Constituency Office, RITE Telephone Lines; number two, Canadian Airline Ticket Program; and number three, Visa Card.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, are you accepting requests for additional under Other Business? Can I request, then, a review of the noncorporate *Hansard* price for a subscription, please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Noncorporate.

MS BARRETT: Yes. Noncorporate subscription.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. I don't know if it's an item of business. It was going to be a request for certain items of expenditure. Is that a motion, or is that a new item?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As it relates to . . .

MR. TAYLOR: It's a motion for a return, only it's to the committee here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I'll put down an item: New Business, 7(5); Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.
Any additional? Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Members' Benefits.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Any others? Okay. The agenda then calls for the approval, 2(a), of committee meeting minutes of February 8. Moved by Cypress-Redcliff for the adoption of the minutes as circulated. Question? Most of it will end up coming . . . Thank you. All those in favour of the adoption of the minutes of February 8, please signify. Opposed? Carried.

Item 2(b), approval of February 9 committee meeting minutes, moved by Rocky Mountain House: any questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the approval motion, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Item 3, to review the '88-89 Legislative Assembly budget estimates. The Clerk would like to take us through these, please.

DR. McNEIL: Yes, the budget you have before you now reflects a .2 percent increase over the '87-88 estimates and an \$80,000 reduction from what was in front of you the last time. That \$80,000 proposed reduction occurs in two areas. Under General Administration we propose to save \$5,000 by reducing our programming costs, and that will arise because of the systems upgrade; that's on page 12. That's a reduction from \$10,000 to \$5,000 in programming costs which relates to savings we anticipate because of upgrading the system, which we budgeted for.

The second reduction is in the cost of the constituency office pilot project of \$10,000, due to the fact that we anticipated pay-

ing \$12,500 to either PWSS or an external consultant to assist with the pilot project. Because PWSS has given us a person, gratis, in effect, we anticipate not spending \$10,000 there, so we reduce that EDP pilot project cost by \$10,000.

The third area is reduced rate of the systems upgrade in the administration area, and that's a savings of \$10,000 as well, because he's saving \$25,000 in General Administration within those three areas in total.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I would be prepared to move that we accept, under General Administration Office, estimates dated February 23, 1988, reflecting an estimate of \$482,781 for the fiscal year 1988-89.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That motion, then, encompasses pages 12, 16, 17. Is that right? Thank you. Discussion? Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed, if any? Carried. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Gary Sandberg has joined us, and he's with our office. The chief of staff is on vacation or lost in the Olympics; I'm not sure which.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Clerk, we're now back to MLA Administration. Is that our next . . .

DR. McNEIL: Potential savings which we incorporated into the bottom line, which would result in a .2 percent reduction in the '88-89 budget, over '87-88: in the first area, we anticipate a saving of \$25,000 by reducing the scope and length of the role of the EDP co-ordinator to developing a strategic plan only, rather than working on both the strategic plan and the pilot project, in that we do have the resource now, gratis, from PWSS. Potential savings there are \$25,000. We had initially budgeted \$60,000 for the upgrade of the MLA accounting system, and if we slow the rate of development of that process, we believe we can save \$30,000 in '88-89, so with a total potential savings there of \$55,000 over what the previous budget had stated: \$5,388,093 for '88-89 for MLA Administration.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, in looking at the motion that was passed in the previous meeting relating to travel throughout the province of MLAs and researching how ministers' offices are paying for travel, I would like to propose a motion that would restore the unlimited travel within the province by the leaders of the political parties, and that that unlimited travel would be just the leaders, not somebody designated by the leaders but just the leaders, and it would be for their use within the province of Alberta.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a motion before us with respect to the travel for the leaders of the political parties. Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Chairman, I would like to propose a motion to accept the revised estimate dated February 24, 1988, reflecting an estimate of \$5,388,093 for MLA Administration, 1988-89 fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Discussion? Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion as proposed, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

All the other documents reflect the changes that were made?

DR. McNEIL: The documents reflect the decisions made at the last meeting.

DR. ELLIOTT: Question, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Grande Prairie.

DR. ELLIOTT: The motion that was just made with respect to unlimited travel for leaders of the parties: does that have an impact on the motion that we accept the figure that was given in the administration budget? Was that motion with respect to unlimited travel going to mess up that figure that was presented after the question? Do we have to make that now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we have room.

DR. McNEIL: My judgment is that we would have room. When we had initially set the . . . On page 2 of the MLA Administration budget, we adjusted item 1 down from \$228,570 to \$217,142. Based on that, the Members' Services motion related to restricting air travel. When we did an analysis on the impact of that, we came to the conclusion that that \$10,000, \$11,000 reduction was a very conservative estimate. So I believe there is room there to accommodate air travel for the leaders without having to adjust the figure further.

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, if we're just on questions for clarification, I wonder if I could discover the intent of the committee or administration or the chairman even -- I don't know who -- with respect to the limitation of five flights per year per MLA that is not related to travel between constituency and travel. It seems to me that hitherto the motions we've considered in this committee have often been applied on a caucus-by-caucus basis; that is, on a global basis rather than individual. Would it be wrong to interpret that that motion which passed last month would entitle each caucus to, for instance, pool the five trips per journey to a maximum according to the number of members in that caucus? Is that permissible or available in the interpretation?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, as an interpretation that would be absolutely wrong. It was designated as per member, not per caucus, and I think had the intent of the motion been to allow members to pool, it would have been worded as such, but it's specifically designated per member.

MR. HYLAND: Same comment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's a fair interpretation, because it's all under individual members' benefits and individual members' travel allowances, so it would be five per member no matter what part of the House they come from. Now the passage of this other motion helps solve the problem, I trust, with regard to the leaders of the parties.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, of course it's understood that that wouldn't be pooled.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Indeed.

There is one other item we wanted to bring to the attention of Members' Services Committee, and it was with regard to the ACCESS Network television coverage of the House for question period. Subsequent to our last Members' Services Committee meeting, I met with the manager from QCTV, the ones who look after the main signal, and then also met with the president of ACCESS, Peter Senchuk, about what indeed were the exact costs. We have one letter here to be distributed so that you'll see the areas that are being covered throughout the province and the costs that are involved. In the budget figures that are before you, this would look after what could be construed as a normal year of operation in terms of the House. But if the House were extended for longer periods of time, then the costs would go up. But you'll see from the covering letter a one-time cost per session of \$1,200 for the microwave and then the additional charge of \$1,498 for each 30 days.

Also there, you have the letter of July 8 of '87 where we had what the costs were estimated to be last time, for '87. Then the other pages, of course, give you a listing of where the signal is carried within this province. When I was at the west coast last fall, I was interested to discover that we're a daily feature into Comox, B.C.

So this information is before you. If there are no objections -- if there are any questions, we'd try to answer with it. Is it fair to assume that the signal, then, for question period will continue to be telecast throughout the province on this basis? Agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: On that matter, Mr. Chairman, was there any thought or did we come up with any cost? I believe they put it on a special type of satellite now, but I'm thinking of the conventional satellite, access on Anik D or . . . I think there are two satellites that are reachable by Canadian rural communities.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, going by memory, with the proposal to use satellites to develop the ACCESS Network on television and replace the traditional contract ACCESS had with television stations across Alberta, a contract was worked out with the owners of a high-powered satellite. The one downside of that contract was that it meant that to receive the signal on the ground, you would require another dish, a special dish. An ordinary dish that will receive signals off Galaxy 1 or Satcom 1 is receiving a signal off a low-powered satellite. You can't mix the two. That was one of the considerations the ACCESS board looked at, but because the cost to ACCESS was so significantly lower, they chose the option of the high-powered dish.

In the case of the reception coming to someone like QCTV, it meant the expenditure of \$1,000 or \$1,200 for yet another dish. To help those communities where there are schools or

community halls not served by cable television, ACCESS in consultation with the now Department of Transportation and Utilities provides a one-time grant. So when you're traveling through the country -- I'm sure you've got a number of schools in Westlock-Sturgeon, as I do in Taber-Warner, where you will see a dish on the roof of the school or right beside the school. In all likelihood that dish was provided with funds from ACCESS and Transportation and Utilities to bring in the signal in a special way.

The other downside is that if you're trying to receive the same signal on your acreage or on the farm, an area that's not served by a cable company, the only way you can receive the signal is by purchasing the dish, and there's no assistance through ACCESS or Transportation and Utilities to do that. That's your own outlay.

MR. TAYLOR: That's a very good explanation. Through the Chair to the Member for Taber-Warner, do you recall the difference in money that they were talking about by accessing -- pardon the expression -- the low-powered, common satellite versus accessing the high-powered satellite?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, while I have an excellent memory, it's short at times. No, I can't recall that. But it was significant enough from the investment point of view of ACCESS that the board accepted that, recognizing the one downside.

MR. TAYLOR: Could it be a request, Mr. Chairman, that the Clerk maybe sometime in the future just find out what that difference is and report it? ACCESS engineers and chairmen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Note made.

All right, ladies and gentlemen, with respect to item 3 so that we have it entirely correct for the record, could we have one motion omnibus approving all of the budget estimates in total, as have been brought forward to the committee, so that we can forward them to the Provincial Treasurer? Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, thank you. All those in favour of the motion for approval of them? Thank you. Carried.

Okay, ready?

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Chairman, there's an issue related to the fact that in budgeting under General Administration this year we broke the budget down into three different sections: General Admin, MLA Admin, and House Services. There is a question as to whether or not we want that breakdown to appear in the estimates this year which is different from previous years -- in other words, a more finely detailed breakdown of the budget.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, you may have left me behind in that last motion, but were we approving all of the elements under House Services, and we're now ready to move to the Speaker's Office?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All the adjustments had been made all the way through the book was my understanding. Is that not right?

MR. BOGLE: Well, why would we change the process? We've been dealing with it on an item-by-item basis. We dealt with General Administration and MLA Administration; we're now dealing with House Services. I thought that's what we voted on and that we would next go to Speaker's Office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My understanding was that after MLA Administration, we have approved General Administration changes, MLA Administration, House Services changes. Right? Members' Indemnities and Allowances was previously approved, and with regard to section 4, the Speaker's Office... All right.

My colour coding here didn't show me to have any other revisions that we'd already done in the previous meetings, so we're going to have a coffee break for five minutes. Thank you.

[The committee recessed from 1:28 p.m. to 1:35 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, there was a bit of confusion at the Table, so I wonder if the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon could ask the House for its indulgence, please.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. I thought I was approving all the blue pages. This shows you that I see them so rarely in my correspondence. Therefore, I'll withdraw the motion, and we can start over again to make it more to the point. But I thought I was just approving blue pages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the permission of the House is...

MR. TAYLOR: May I ask permission, Mr. Chairman, to withdraw that motion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we have unanimous consent to withdraw? Those in favour, please signify.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you very much.

MR. TAYLOR: I would move, then, that we approve the MLA Administration portion and the House Services portion of the budget as presented today, pages 1 to 15 inclusive. Is that the way to read it? That would make it easiest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Section 2, House Services: approval to revise documents as presented. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

With respect to the Speaker's Office, section 4. Dr. Elliott.

DR. ELLIOTT: I'd like to move that the Speaker's Office estimates dated February 4, 1988, reflecting the estimate of \$294,380 for the fiscal year 1988-89, be accepted.

MR. SCARLETT: I'd just like to point out to the committee members that this budget was revised since the last time they saw it, in that we are now budgeting for half a secretary for the Deputy Speaker and the Deputy Chairman of Committees, where previously we had budgeted for the full secretary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call for the question on the motion.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the revised budget for the Speaker's Office, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

The next section, I understand, is with regard to 10, Legislative Interns. Again, the revised document. You should have a blue page, page 2, and a revised 4.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I think there's some information relative to a slight reduction in costs that I haven't been able to identify in my book. If the Table could assist, we may be able to proceed with the motion and formalize it.

DR. McNEIL: Page 2 reflects the reduction from six to four in terms of Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits. Page 4: in terms of the reduction from six to four, there are some minor savings with respect to costs of seminars and travel, reducing that budget on page 4 by 7.2 percent, from \$6,660 to \$6,182, approximately \$400 of savings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any . . .

MR. BOGLE: I move that the budget, as revised, for Legislative Interns be accepted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Two pieces of correspondence have been circulated. One is from the leader of the Representative Party, and the other one is from a professor at the University of Calgary, with respect to the internship program. I believe all members previously received copies of the correspondence from the Member for Little Bow.

There's a motion on the floor. Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the revised budget for the internship program, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: I'd like to request, Mr. Chairman, that the opposing votes be noted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure; any time. Edmonton-Highlands, Edmonton-Strathcona, Westlock-Sturgeon. Those in favour, since we're identifying everyone, would be Taber-Warner, Calgary-Glenmore, Barrhead, Cypress-Redcliff, Grande Prairie, Innisfail, Rocky Mountain House.

The Chair understands that there is to be a further motion with respect to identification of budget elements.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that this Special Standing Committee on Members' Services request the hon. Speaker to request the Provincial Treasurer to list the amounts to be provided for each opposition party individually and each branch of the administration office individually in future Legislative Assembly estimates, as separate subvotes under Vote 1.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously.

Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I move that the hon. Speaker transmit to the House leaders a request from the Mem-

bers' Services Committee urging the House leaders to consult with each other and their respective caucuses to seek unanimous support relative to amendments to the Legislative Assembly Act and the MLA Pension Act. [interjection] I'm sorry; I guess I'm getting crossed up here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps you could cut the sound system off until we're ready.

MR. CAMPBELL: I'll come back with this one later on, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry.

Okay; moved by myself that the Legislative Assembly's estimate of \$15,828,149 for the fiscal year '88-89 be accepted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: I'm sorry I had to go into that dialogue there. I just wanted to know if you were on your toes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we've had sufficient discussion over the last couple of months, but any discussion?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Item 4(a) on the agenda: Review of Form of Agreement for VISA Card-Holding Members. Clerk?

DR. McNEIL: Yes. A number of meetings ago members requested that a form of agreement in a two-part format be drawn up for signature, and that draft agreement was circulated to members. I did receive some feedback on it, and that item is included.

Subsequent to doing that, I've had a review of the usage of the Visa card, and I thought it appropriate that this information be shared with the committee. It may be the committee's wish that this be considered in camera.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A motion?

MR. BOGLE: So moved, Mr. Chairman: that we now move in camera to discuss the use of VISA cards.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour of the motion, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much. Sound system off.

[The committee met in camera from 1:46 p.m. to 2:22 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members of the committee, we're dealing with item 4(a) on our agenda, Review of Form of Agreement for VISA Card-holding Members. It's the interpretation of the Chair that an additional memorandum will go out to caucus Whips to inform their members as to what use the VISA cards may be employed and also the necessity for having the receipts from the VISA cards delivered to the administrative office as quickly as possible. What is the wish of the committee with regard to the declaration, that that also should be undertaken?

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, I move that we table that consideration at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. A motion to table. Those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Thank you. That's efficient direction.

May we move on to item 4(b), Review of Draft Constituency Office Staff Contract. Are we finally at the stage where this might be given approval for use?

MS BARRETT: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. A motion from Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Yes. In moving the adoption of these two different contracts, I'd like to indicate it is my understanding that members of the Assembly may choose to use either contract, depending on the circumstances and their interpretation of the circumstances, which doubtless will be legitimate. As we all know, some MLAs keep many staff people who work a few hours a week, in which instance a contract of personal employment would not be appropriate. Some prefer the fee-for-service contract as a matter of principle, and for them that may be appropriate. It seems to me that the drafts have met the concerns -- to my knowledge, at any rate -- of the chiefs of staff and constitute the latitude that has been requested from members of the Assembly.

So with those remarks, I move adoption of these drafts to replace the current basis upon which constituency office staff are employed or on fee for service or what have you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I certainly can support this as long as it's clearly understood that the member has the choice of using either (a) or (b): that either we can continue with the existing operation with no further restrictions on how we contract with our staff, or if we wish to go to the fee-for-service contract, we may do so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's the general consensus or general understanding. Also, this does not imply that you have to go out and reassign all of the staff that are around. All right. A call for the question.

MR. WRIGHT: Just further discussion, Mr. Chairman. The fact is, nonetheless, that the advice we received from Parliamentary Counsel was that it is not merely a matter of our choice. We have to have an informed choice, bearing in mind the principles that he referred us to. I hope members will bear that in mind in making that choice.

MR. BOGLE: Yes, but also recognizing that there's a difference of opinion in the legal community on the matter, and knowing the strong feelings that some of our members have, if we were to find in six or eight months' time that we're told, "Oh, we're sorry; option (a) isn't as clear," then we may want to revert right back to the system we have today. In other words, we feel so strongly about it, and based on the in camera discussion we had over possible interpretations, that members who currently contract out services would want to continue to do so under exactly the same parameters as they do today. And we know that some other provinces are doing that.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Chairman, just for the information of

the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, I would remind him that when the original contract was drawn up, it was drawn up by two members of the legal profession, one of whom has suggested since then that it isn't right. So . . .

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, that was exactly what I was going to say: that the previous one -- I believe the Parliamentary Counsel that's been involved in the redraft was also Parliamentary Counsel when it was drafted, as well as the Chairman and Speaker at that time being a lawyer. And we thought we were doing right then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think we now have a call for the question. All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much.

Item 4(c): Smoking Restriction in the Legislature Cafeteria.

MR. TAYLOR: As I recall, that was a case that when I introduced it last time, the members were to go back to their caucuses and then we were going to be prepared to vote today. So I don't think there's much discussion, unless you want me to repeat the motion. I've certainly discussed it with my caucus, and they don't think there should be smoking in the Legislature cafeteria. So if it's necessary, Mr. Chairman, to repeat the motion . . . I think the Member for Barrhead at the time was also in concurrence, but somehow or another the thing got delayed, so the caucuses were to look at it.

So I repeat the motion now, knowing that the caucuses, I'm sure, have had time enough to look at it. In the spirit of great athletic activity that's sweeping over the province now, and that it's fit to stay in good health -- after watching two weeks of the athletes of the world perform in Calgary, I'm sure . . .

MR. BOGLE: Sixteen days.

MR. TAYLOR: Sixteen days. Okay; two weeks plus two.

I'm sure that now there should be no problem at all in voting that smoking be disallowed in the Legislature cafeteria. I so move, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. So any motion would be, though, "to recommend to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services," because we don't have jurisdiction over the Legislature cafeteria. It would be a recommendation to the minister to declare it nonsmoking. All right.

Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to speak against this motion. The fact is that I understand there are 45 seats reserved for nonsmokers. I guess certainly the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon should realize that, you know, this building is for all Albertans. So I'm objecting to this motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Other discussion?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to reiterate my support to this particular motion. It was given some time ago. I'm amazed that the leader of the Liberal Party could actually find unanimous support from his caucus with respect to any matter. On the basis of that and on the basis of my newfound approach to clean living and cleanliness, I think it would be very appropriate. I'd just as well become one of those now in the majority who wants to persecute the minority.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Further discussion? Is there a call for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion as proposed by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, which is of the nature that the committee recommends to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services that the Legislature cafeteria be declared a nonsmoking area. Those in favour of that motion, please signify. Opposed? The motion fails.

Item 4(d), Report on Investigation to Upgrade Telephone System for After Hours Calls. This issue was raised by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

DR. McNEIL: Mr. Speaker, I would request that this item be tabled for the next meeting so that we can complete our investigation into the situation. We have not done so.

MR. HYLAND: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Cypress-Redcliff that the matter be tabled to the next meeting. Those in favour, please signify. Carried. Thank you.

Item 4(e), EDP Pilot Project.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that the constituency office pilot project be expanded to include the Speaker's constituency office, in light of the fact that additional equipment can be made available at no charge and that no additional funds are required beyond the original amount budgeted for the project.

Mr. Chairman, in speaking to that motion, I don't know these points as fact, but I take it on trust from the Clerk of the Assembly. It seems to me that since you have a constituency function to perform and if the pilot project can be expanded at no charge, it's reasonable to include it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your support. A call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much.

Item 5, Members' Services Orders: some cleaning of cobwebs from the closet, I believe. Mr. Clegg, would you like to speak to it, please?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, there are two separate matters here. The first one is the question of the automobile allowance, the mileage allowance for members attending committee meetings. This is at 17 cents at the moment. In February of 1987 an order was passed which dealt with a mileage allowance for members on their general duties as MLAs. My scrutinizing of the record shows that this matter was dealt with by a series of drafts which were produced and changed and worked on over rather a short period of time before a meeting. In my office I never particularly turned my mind as to what other connected matters might be reviewed at the same time. We were rather busy in trying to reflect the wishes of the members in getting that particular amendment through. Subsequently, it was noted that there was another order which deals with a different kind of

circumstance, and that is the mileage allowance we pay to members when they're attending committees. The two things are different issues, but it does seem illogical that there should be two different rates per kilometre applied, and therefore it has been proposed by this order before the committee that the order establishing rates for committee be amended to bring it to the same rate per kilometre; that is to say, to be adjusted from 17 cents to 21 cents as the regular rate for ordinary travel on an MLA's normal business as MLA.

MR. BOGLE: A question for clarification. If, as an example, for the last meeting of this committee or Heritage Savings Trust Fund or any other standing committee, if a member did claim mileage based on 21 cents, is the Parliamentary Counsel now telling us that that was invalid?

MR. M. CLEGG: The order which governs mileage payable for committees is set at 17 cents. The order which governs other things is 21. [interjection] That's right; 18 cents. Mr. Scarlett's just reminded me.

MR. BOGLE: I'm not sure I understood the answer relative to the question.

MR. M. CLEGG: The answer is that the correct rate is 18 cents for committee mileage.

MR. TAYLOR: Can we expect something on the Supreme Court to ask them for that 3 cents back? Would they have oversay?

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, I guess my question would be: if that's the case, why can't we make the Members' Services order to start the same day the other one was, so that we don't run into this predicament of there's probably three or four heritage trust fund meetings and maybe one or two Members' Services meetings? If that's the case, we're going to be paying back, and that's going to get complicated if we don't have both Members' Services orders coming into effect on the same date.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, there is a restriction on this committee in that it cannot pass retroactive orders. It was only empowered to do that at the very, very beginning of its function under one of the sections where it was given a chance to opt to pass some orders that were to be effective from the beginning of that particular fiscal year. But where we sit now, we cannot pass any order which is retroactive. There would be some complication in making adjustments if it should turn out by [inaudible] that some are necessary. But the sums of money would not be great, even with a 3-cent difference. Even 1,000 kilometres was only \$30. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I doubt that's . . . All right. Time out for a minute. There's got to be a way to solve this thing. We have here a form that we've been circulating for months which says 21 cents. The proposed order makes sense and has to be carried, I would hope.

Then we have to have another mechanism to give approval to what indeed was the practice prior to today. Surely there must be a means for that, because we've been covering it in our budgets. Because there has to be some way that'll legitimize what has already been taking place -- for how many months? When was that last Members' Services order signed?

MR. M. CLEGG: It happened in 1987.

[The committee recessed from 2:39 p.m. to 2:44 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee members will come back to order.

With respect to this mileage, Parliamentary Counsel is going to review the minutes and so forth of a year ago, and in the meantime we'll take the understanding that it is indeed legitimate for everyone to have been charging 21 cents per kilometre in driving. We'll come back to that item later in the afternoon.

So let's go to this next section here under 5, resolution with respect to repealing various orders of the committee. Mr. Clegg, please.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, these orders were passed several years ago at a time when the classification and salary levels of various of the officers of the Assembly were not certain; there were not adequate guidelines available to deal with them. We were coming out of the situation which preceded the Members' Services Committee having the powers it has now, and the committee passed orders to establish the classification and salary levels of those particular officers at those particular times. Those orders were intended to be a temporary arrangement to fix a particular classification, a particular salary range, at that time. They have fulfilled their purpose -- the officers of -- and to the most part now, or at least to a significant part, different people have different salary levels. Their classifications have been established and will remain, unless they're reviewed, where they are.

Consequently, because those orders specify specific salary levels which are now completely out of date, my view is that they are spent provisions. In other words, they've carried out the purpose for which they were passed and they should be repealed, not only because they're spent but because they state something which is no longer relevant -- it's now out of date. These are the orders relating to the Clerk, the Clerk Assistant, the Parliamentary Counsel, and the Editor of *Alberta Hansard*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we need to repeal them individually, or can we do an omnibus to include all four?

MR. M. CLEGG: You can do an omnibus, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Cypress-Redcliff to repeal Members' Services Committee 1/84, MSC 6/84, MSC 7/84, and MSC 8/84. Discussion? Call for the question. All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you very much.

As soon as you have a solution to our other issue, please come back. Thank you.

Item 6 on our agenda, Legislature Child Day Care Services. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: If I may distribute the motion, Mr. Chairman, that I would like to have the committee consider.

Speaking to the motion, Mr. Chairman, I tried to make the motion as broad and acceptable as possible. I've worked some with the other caucuses on putting the motion together so that it doesn't offend anyone, philosophically anyhow, as to private versus public sector or just how we go about it. I think the point to recognize is that within the area of the Legislature, some of our staff -- on their own volition, I might add; I hadn't thought

about it -- who are in the child-raising years did circulate about 300 surveys and found 105 answers on the 300. Other checking which I've done lately indicates about 1,700 employees in the two- or three-block area here. If you used a normal rule of thumb of 20 percent having families, that would be around 340 families around the area that possibly could make use of a day care centre.

I believe it also maybe telegraphs a bit of a message to the private sector out there, the corporations or large hirers of people, particularly with the large number of women in the work force today -- running over 50 percent in most cases, and certainly in this area much more than even 50 percent -- and the fact that most single parents are women and the supervision of many of the child-raising activities, even in a normal marriage, falls to women that are working. I think it telegraphs a message to the private sector that day care centres that are in the immediate vicinity of the workplace should be looked at and possibly -- I wouldn't go to the extent that they should be encouraged vis-à-vis the ones that are in the vicinity of the home, but at least work done by the employer to try to enable a workplace day care centre to take place.

Workplace day care centres up to now have been shunted to the side because of the expensive cost of land downtown where the offices are, because of the nonavailability, you might say, of mothers and people who are working part-time in the day care centres. But this is a chance to try to get a day care plan going in the Legislature area. It might be private; it might be public; it might be co-operative. But I believe it's something the Clerk's office could do and report back to us, because certainly the numbers are out there. Certainly our surveys indicate there's a need, and they would look at it very seriously. I'm not talking about something that's heavily subsidized. It would depend on the plan that would come back. So I would like to see our committee vote for this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In principle, I think the idea of pursuing an investigation into a child care centre for the provincial government employees, who tend to be concentrated in an area around 107th Street somewhere south of Jasper Avenue, is particularly good. I'm a bit concerned, however, that it talks about a child day care service at the Legislature in this motion. The reason is that it sort of leaves a sense of elitism; that is, the Legislature can have it but all you other folks who work at different buildings just have to go the extra distance. I think that if this committee is to be struck -- and I certainly support the striking of a committee. I remember when I was in research, when Grant Notley was here, he talked about this very thing: a government centre child care service that would be located somewhere in the vicinity but probably in the centre of the buildings that tend to be occupied by the provincial government in this area. I think he had a good point, that one wants to be fair to everybody and not simply make such a service most conveniently available just to members of the Assembly or people who happen to work under the dome.

So I'm not sure if an amendment would be . . . Well, yes, I think I will sponsor an amendment to the motion: that it read as is, and in the middle of the sentence, where it says "for consideration of a child day care service at the Legislature," I would have the words "at the Legislature" struck and replaced with "in the vicinity of the provincial government buildings around 107th Street and 100th Avenue."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking to the amendment, Taber-Warner.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, it seems highly unlikely to me that a child care centre can be accommodated in the Legislature per se whether we as a committee believe that to be the case on a unanimous basis or not. I say that in light of the fact that space in the building is so tight. We all know that and the fact that each of us have part of our caucus functions in the Legislature Annex building. So it was a given to me that this proposal is really looking at a child day care service in the vicinity, possibly the Legislature Annex building, possibly up the street at the Haultain Building. From a practical point of view, I can't see where you'd put a child care centre in this building.

On that basis I was prepared to support the motion in general, because all the member is asking is that consideration be given. If we deem that there is indeed a need and there is either a private-sector operator or a nonprofit society organization prepared to provide the service and meet provincial standards, then the next question would be finding suitable space and trying to negotiate a price that's reasonable so the centre could operate. If indeed all those things happen, it would then come back for final recommendation here. In other words, the motion is to look at a plan for consideration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Also, the understanding that if the motion were to pass, the Clerk would also have to be involved with Public Works, Supply and Services. Other discussion?

MR. WRIGHT: Are we speaking to the amendment?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. We're on the amendment -- the location.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. Well, I think we should simply say it should be available for the public service, but perhaps that's understood.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the amendment.

MR. TAYLOR: I'd like to speak against the amendment, much as I appreciate the thing behind it. I think we're moving ahead light years to get a workplace day care considered rather than a geographic area. What I'm hoping will come out of this may be an example by other large employers or groups of employers downtown. Whereas I think if we go in here saying, "Well, we're going to put a day care centre in for everybody in the area regardless of who their employer is," this is accented toward an employer-initiated but hopefully worker-run and financed day care. I think we complicate the issue when we say, "Well, it's going to be for everybody that lives in the area." I think that's something maybe we could do at the next stage. But I think employer-initiated day care centres is what I'm trying to get through here, not that this is a geographic area without day care therefore the government should do something. It's not that. It's an area where we have a huge employer; therefore the employer should be initiating something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was going to invite Ann to stand up and make a statement with respect to day care, but... Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to clarify for the member who's sponsoring the motion that my concern is not

that we shouldn't have on-site child care. My concern is that it's pretty darned elitist to start at the top. That is, you know, the decision-makers, the people who already invoke a fair amount of cynicism amongst the public mentality would, I believe, legitimately perceive that to be extremely elitist. Oh, worksite day care is fine, you know, as long as it goes to the power brokers in the society, but everybody else has to go a few blocks. That's my whole point in introducing the amendment. The amendment says: let's start it, and for public employees -- that is, provincial public employees -- at a central location that isn't elitist, so that the folks who work up in the Workers' Comp building or the folks that work in the other...

MR. TAYLOR: Point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a point of order.

MR. TAYLOR: What are you reading, or what did I hand you? Because we're asking for the staff of the Legislative Assembly and any provincial government employee. Certainly the huge numbers of female office workers around here I don't think are the elitists, the economically elite.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hold on. A non point of order. Good try for clarification. Nevertheless, the Member for Edmonton-Highlands has now completed summation and therefore is in the process on her amendment.

MS BARRETT: I was interrupted. I'm almost complete.

I didn't say that this wouldn't be available for other public employees. My point is: why is it that MLAs and the people who work in this building shouldn't have to share a block walk with the people who work closer to Jasper Avenue? There is a predominance of provincial government business within this vicinity -- that is, 106th, 107th, 108th Street between 97th and 99th avenues -- and I think those folks, you know, should have consideration as well. My amendment does not call for the worksite location to be precisely in this building, and it is that to which I draw our attention. I think we should be looking in the government centre so that maybe everybody has to walk one block from the building where they work, which is a whole lot better than some people having to walk four blocks in the winter from where they work. That's my point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour of the amendment, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no. The amendment is defeated.

Back to the main motion.

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to add this. Certainly I've had representation from my secretary in this regard, and I would suggest that with the people that were canvassed, probably we'll even have problems putting this together, fully realizing the relationship between a parent and the baby-sitter they have employed now or, i.e., a nanny. So at this particular time, I would go along with the motion and certainly see if there's any possible way this particular organization or whatever could be put together.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The call for the question on the motion. Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously.

[The committee recessed from 3:02 p.m. to 3:13 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. The next item of business we have here is under item 7, Other Business. First is just some information about the airline ticket program, the availability of the coupons. Clerk.

DR. McNEIL: The coupons are available to members, and we've proceeded to purchase a number of coupon books. There's a saving on one book, which contains seven tickets, of \$116.15. So we will be able distribute these coupon books to members.

MRS. MIROSH: Just a question for Dr. McNeil. Are you saying that we can't purchase our own? Because my travel agency picks up a percentage as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your personal travel agency or some other?

DR. McNEIL: I don't see why you could not do that. We felt that since the individual travel is charged back to the Assembly, we should take advantage of, in effect, bulk buying, because we do gain a higher percentage saving in buying them in bulk. We save about 21.6 percent if we buy 50 books and 17 percent if we buy one book. So we wanted to try to purchase before the year-end the number of books that we can use by the end of December of '88 to take maximum advantage of that offering.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We want to save the money here instead of for your travel agent.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, we're just talking about airbus? We're not talking about Time Air?

DR. McNEIL: We're talking about airbus.

MRS. MIROSH: Isn't Time Air [inaudible]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, but the coupon availability was just for the major corridor.

MS BARRETT: Well, as I don't fly that major corridor, I wonder if I could request that the Clerk provide a memo, if not to every MLA at least to the House leaders, so that we can get this information to the people who do fly that route regularly so that maximum advantage can be taken.

DR. McNEIL: It is our intention to do that. This just happened in the past week or so; our intention was to send a memo out to all members advising them of the situation.

MR. WRIGHT: How does a coupon work?

DR. McNEIL: The coupon is good for one flight between Calgary and Edmonton or Edmonton and Calgary. You buy the minimum of one book, which contains seven tickets or seven coupons. The regular price is \$654.15, and you get it for \$538.

So you're just saving about 17, 18 percent.

AN HON. MEMBER: [Inaudible] procedure called the Quick Ticket?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Quick Ticket; that's what it is. You walk up, present it, and away you go. Okay.

Mr. Scarlett, with regard to constituency office and RITE lines.

MR. SCARLETT: David is looking after that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

DR. McNEIL: Yeah. There's been some investigation of the possibility of including constituency offices on the RITE line system, so that you can call to a constituency officer from a constituency office throughout the province on the RITE line. In order to assess this possibility, we would like to undertake a pilot project with about half the MLAs, that decision being based on trying to minimize the cost of installation of the system so as to get the maximum number of members involved at the minimum cost in the pilot project. Over a period of a number of months we would assess the impact in terms of costs of being on the RITE system and then assess as to whether or not in the long run it would result in long-distance charge savings by being on the RITE system.

Rod has done a fair amount of investigation. I've been away, so he can provide a little more detail than I can.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As to how many and what locations on the RITE phone.

MR. SCARLETT: It's proposed that all the members of the Members' Services Committee's constituency offices be tied in, as well as -- and there may be an overlap here -- the 38 cheapest, tying into RITE line. That would include all Calgary offices, as far as I know, and a number of rural offices. The cost is going to be borne by Public Works, Supply and Services, so there's no cost to the Legislative Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Edmonton-Highlands, Cypress-Redcliff, Rocky Mountain House.

MS BARRETT: Well, as Rod so kindly anticipated my question and answered it without my having had to ask it, I will now move, then, I suppose, if it's our authority to do so, that we request this pilot project to be launched.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We have a motion.

MR. HYLAND: One of my questions was answered, the one relating to who's paying for the pilot project. The second one is relating to a problem that I remember having constituents phone about, and that was that the RITE system closes down for lunch hour and closes at 4:30 or 4 o'clock or something like that. How do we get around that? Most constituency offices are open -- or at least mine is -- through the lunch hour, because we find that's when a lot of traffic comes in. Then we have to go back onto the regular phone system. I suppose, although maybe there's no way of knowing it -- it seems like any time I've tried to use the RITE system it's full up anyway. It's quicker -- you get fed up, and you go through the long-distance system to get

your calls through instead of sitting there waiting to dial and dial and dial.

MR. SCARLETT: I've had discussions with the Public Works people. It is my understanding that they have improved the system dramatically in the last year, so that you should very rarely find a time period in which you cannot get through to your constituency; in other words, the line being busy. It is also my understanding that with the inclusion of the constituency offices on the RITE line, it does not necessarily mean that it would run on the same hours as your constituency office and not as the RITE line operators are on. So it would run through noon hour, although it would close down at 4:30.

DR. McNEIL: If I may make a comment on this. On the RITE system you don't always have to go through the operator. You can dial the prefix and then the number, if you're calling a government number or calling from Edmonton to the constituency office. If it's on the RITE system, you can dial directly without having to go through the operator. PWSS indicates that there is about a 5 percent chance now of getting a busy signal. That's their statistics anyway.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean on the first line, not on the second.

Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to bring up a point, and at one particular time I explored this. The fact is that some members in the city of Calgary -- I believe they can direct dial right into Edmonton to their office. I just bring that up. I explored it. The reason I was doing that at that particular time was the fact that from the constituency point of view it was a long-distance phone call from, say, Sylvan Lake to Rocky Mountain House. Then, of course, they changed it so that you could access it through Red Deer on the RITE number. But I was just wondering if there's any way that that can take place. The one in point that I remember was the Hon. David Russell, who had his calls come straight through to his office.

MR. SCARLETT: There are instances presently where that does occur. What we're proposing is that by putting the constituency office on the RITE line, a constituent would phone that office. The constituency secretary could transfer that call up to Edmonton at no cost because it's on the RITE line. So the constituency secretary would, in effect, become an operator.

MR. CAMPBELL: I see. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. That clears that up.

MR. BOGLE: Well, I certainly don't want to be negative to a concept that's being developed with the thrust of improving service. But I would like to restate for the record my understanding of the way the RITE system works, and that's just so there's no misunderstanding or expectations by members who represent constituencies some distance from Edmonton.

We have a RITE office in Taber. If a constituent is trying to use the RITE line, it's not a case of a direct line from Taber through to Edmonton; it's accessing Taber to Lethbridge, then Lethbridge to Calgary, and then, I believe, Calgary to Edmonton. So if any one of those three lines happens to be at capacity, or groupings of lines, if . . . I don't know how many lines there are between Calgary and Edmonton; if there are 100

and all 100 are busy, a call doesn't go through. So it should be understood that the farther you are away from Edmonton, the more lines you have to go through, the greater the likelihood that you're going to get a busy signal. I know the service has been improved -- I've spoken to the RITE operator on a number of occasions in Taber -- but there is still that situation which needs to be accepted as part of the physical plant as it now exists.

MR. HYLAND: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We do have a call for the question. One last comment.

DR. McNEIL: I think it's important that as a pilot project we set it up so we can assess what value it is to each constituency office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a motion and a call for the question to go ahead with the pilot project. Those in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

The next item I have is VISA card, but it really means a credit card universal application. Earlier today there was some discussion with regard to perhaps doing a test project with the use of a universal gas credit card. Whether you want to deal with that today, or we'll hold it till our next . . .

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Chairman, why don't we pick whatever the number is -- three or four or five -- and get on with it. Let's try it. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. If it works . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: I thought we had agreed to explore the possibilities of the fourth option, I think it was, earlier. Had we not? Haven't we dealt with this . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was in another general discussion. So this would regularize that.

MR. WRIGHT: I move that the option numbered four, I think, in the earlier listing of options by the Clerk, be explored.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a call for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Next item. Edmonton-Highlands, some discussion with regard to noncorporate subscriptions to *Hansard*.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This pertains to a discussion and a decision that we made about a year ago, the consequences of which I had not anticipated. We agreed in this committee -- I reviewed the transcripts -- to change the price of the *Hansard* subscription to consumers outside of the Legislative Assembly and departments to reflect the real cost of production. At one point there was consideration that it should be even as much as \$175 a year per subscription. I recall that I had made motions to amend that motion and asked that the committee support a \$60 annual subscription rate for individuals and \$125 for corporations.

What's come to light since then, and it's the reason I asked for it to be discussed today -- and I do apologize for not having had the time to put it in a memo beforehand -- is that nonprofit organizations who live on shoestring budgets very often are being charged the corporate rate. I couldn't tell you the budget implications with respect to *Hansard* income, which doesn't appear, as I recall from looking at the budget notes last month, to be all that enormous in any event. If we could consider a motion -- and I'll try to read from people's comments before I actually sponsor a motion -- if we could consider specifying that "corporate" means "as in the business sector," not "as in the not-for-profit sector," so that some of those organizations don't have to lose their subscriptions. Some of them find them extremely important, as you can well imagine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a motion before us. Was there a rate in that?

MS BARRETT: Pardon me?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Was there a figure in that?

MS BARRETT: Well, the fee structure as it stands is \$60 individual per year and \$125 per year for the corporate rate. But we never did define "corporate." I guess what I'm asking in this decision is that corporate be defined as the business sector as opposed to the not-for-profit organizations.

Let me explain something that I put in a letter recently. The easy way out for some of these organizations that have very tiny budgets is to ask for one of their employees to take out the subscription as an individual -- right? -- and then the company or the organization would pick up the tab. But, you know, what do you really accomplish by doing that? You're just forcing people to sort of lie to get around the system. Rather than asking them to do that, maybe we could just be straightforward with it and acknowledge that corporate means as in business for profit and not the nonprofit sector.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Rocky Mountain House, followed by Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah. I guess, Mr. Chairman, I have some problems with this. Maybe I don't understand it correctly. But for a business that's not making money ... Maybe I just don't understand it correctly. Actually, I guess it's like farming. You went into farming to make a profit, and you found out it just wasn't quite that way. However, that's the ... [interjection] I guess you could put that question out, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to support the Member for Edmonton-Highlands. I think there are a number of nonprofit organizations that use *Hansard*. As a matter of fact, they maybe even use it more than most because they are very closely associated with the public sector and in lobbying and in presenting views. I would suggest that it wouldn't be that difficult to police. I think all that would be necessary is that any corporate subscription -- now we charge all corporations, but any group that has a charitable receipt number should, then, be allowed to have the private rate. In that way it administers it, and if it's a nonprofit organization, it will have a receipt number. Consequently, that solves the system and makes it easier for the

people doing it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that the friendly amendment, Edmonton-Highlands?

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, almost. My friend Gordon tells me, and points out accurately, that there are a couple of organizations who have yet to receive their charitable status number. Some of them have a problem with recognition, like the Writers' Guild. It's a nonprofit association, but they have yet to receive ... I mean, I think in principle it's a good idea that that be one of the criteria by which it would be judged, but I think, generally, we agree people are going to be honest, and I think we could allow the honesty of the individuals and the corporations to guide us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You're in danger of going on too long and closing the debate on the motion, hon. member. I'm sorry.

MR. WRIGHT: I don't think she had formally moved a motion before. She said: if I could move that the previous motion be amended to read "corporations other than nonprofit and societies" and "private" to read "other."

MS BARRETT: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion?

MR. HYLAND: One quick question. Where do we put municipalities, just for one?

MS BARRETT: I believe municipalities are incorporated, but I don't know that they are necessarily for profit, so I wouldn't think they should be paying the higher rate. I mean that's open for discussion. I don't want to complicate this too much.

MR. CAMPBELL: I don't really think it could be complicated too much more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When we thought we were trying to get some more money back in to cover the cost of paper, we're not doing it.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Chairman, may I remind the committee that what we realized was that the cost was about \$60 a year per subscription, but in order to make up some more money was the reason I proposed the differential rate. I mean, it's true. Some of the subscriptions would change from \$125 to \$60, but I don't expect it's all that many. [interjection]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're now on an amendment. I won't recognize you're going to close the debate. So Cypress-Redcliff, on the amendment to the motion.

MR. WRIGHT: Mine was just a point of information; namely, that the nonprofit and societies would not include municipal corporations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: I can support what the Member for Edmonton-Highlands is trying to do, but I have trouble with the wording when we say ... Then we put exceptions to

municipalities. Where do we put irrigation districts? You know, I agree with small groups; fine. But we're getting hung up on this thing. Let's put our intention out there in the motion, and let's have *Hansard* read the motion, let's see how they judge it, and then maybe we'll have to get back in it again. But let's give it a whirl without making it too complicated, because we're going to sweep too many in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The amendment: corporations other than nonprofit and societies. So the intent, in the positive way, is that the offer is open for nonprofit organizations, and it's this . . .

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I think that to be clear now, we should repeat the word "corporations": "other than nonprofit corporations or societies."

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. That's the intent of the amendment.

Is there a call for a question on the amendment? All those in favour of the amendment, please signify. Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

On the motion as amended, call for the question. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Mr. Clegg, if we might come back to Members' Services Orders, do you have a solution to propose?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, there are one or two alternates and factors which have come up which I would appreciate discussing with the Chair during a recess, if that's possible.

MR. BOGLE: Could we move on to other business first?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All righty. Westlock-Sturgeon had an item under new business.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, I had a motion. I had originally, Mr. Chairman, put it out. I'll circulate it to the . . . It was an effort to find out, what I thought was more properly through the Legislature, the costs of the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, who is a member of the OCO committee, as to what the charges have been on airplane trips since the start of the fiscal year. I was going to file it for returns, but Legislative Counsel suggested that this is the proper way for me to proceed because it involves a member's expenses.

MS BARRETT: Could we get copies of that?

MR. TAYLOR: Oh, I'm sorry. Seeing that I apparently can't ask the question in the House or file a return in the House -- it is not a question that's relevant . . . As you know, the answer's important, Mr. Chairman. You would tell me to put it on the Order Paper. But seeing as the Order Paper, according to Legislative Counsel, is not the place for this, I gather . . . I notice Counsel is here. He might want to explain that this is the proper place to ask for that information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, it strikes me as innovative. I will have to take some counsel on it. That could be done at the break as well.

One comment, Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Well, it does occur to me that the information that might be acquired in this regard would appear distorted if it

wasn't put into a comparative context of other MLAs who are from Calgary. It's not like one doesn't want to get to the bottom of any issue, but it doesn't seem fair, at the surface of it, asking for the traveling of one MLA as opposed to all of the others who reside in Calgary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, we will just hold it. I need to take some advice. I'm not sure we can accept it.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, perhaps it could be . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Perhaps you could join us . . .

MR. TAYLOR: [Inaudible] for dates when the Legislature sat, from April 1, which is the beginning of this financial year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's sufficient, thank you. [interjections] No, we've got some more motions. I'm going to take some counsel on this matter, and then we'll come back to it.

The next thing I have here is members' benefits. Taber-Warner, was it?

MR. BOGLE: Yes, and Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Member for Rocky Mountain House.

MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to make the motion:

That the hon. Speaker transmit to the House leaders a request from the Members' Services Committee urging the House leaders to consult with each other and their respective caucuses to seek unanimous support relative to amendments to the Legislative Assembly Act and the Members of the Legislative Assembly Pension Plan Act addressing:

1. re-establishment grant for MLAs as unanimously ratified by the Members' Services Committee February 2, 1987, and;
2. providing for retirement if pensionable service and age equals or exceeds 55 for an MLA, as unanimously ratified by the Members' Services Committee February 2, 1987, and;
3. providing for a 10 percent employee/employer contribution towards the MLA pension plan.

MR. TAYLOR: For a point of information, what's the contribution towards the MLA pension plan now?

MR. CAMPBELL: I believe it's 7.5 percent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you.

Might we adjourn for five minutes, please, to discuss the matter of the Members' Services orders.

[The committee recessed from 3:42 p.m. to 3:48 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, ladies and gentlemen. First, with respect to the previous comments by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't aware, and I'm

afraid I made a mistake. I didn't realize that items such as this will come up eventually in the public accounts. I had thought that it was pooled and I wouldn't be able to get at it and this was the only method. Therefore, with the concurrence of the rest of the committee and in view of the fact that the information will become public in time, I'd like to withdraw my resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Is there unanimous consent?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Item 5, Parliamentary Counsel, with respect to Members' Services order in transportation.

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, the reason there are two separate orders which deal with mileage is that the Legislative Assembly Act does specifically authorize this committee to set a rate for committee mileage. That's the historic background to it.

Now, in 1986 at the July 29 meeting the basic automobile mileage rate which is provided for in the transportation and administrative services order for all mileage which is generally to do with a member's duties, not including the committee mileage -- that was under discussion, and as a result of that, an amendment was passed.

A review of the minutes and what was said by the hon. Member for Barrhead, who introduced the issue at that particular time -- it is clear from reading what he said and how the committee discussed the matter that he was addressing the issue of the general mileage rate which had been set for members in the context of the broad picture rather than just in one limited area. If I may quote very briefly, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Kowalski said:

The kilometre rate is one that this committee has looked at over the last number of years . . . Essentially what the committee used as a principle and the target in terms of allocating the . . . rate . . . was based on 3 cents less than what was used in the public service . . .

The public service rate was 21 cents and is now 24 cents. I'm just summarizing what was said.

So at that stage the discussion was being set in the context of all automobile rates which this committee has the power to set, being based on that public service 21 cents less the 3 cents. I believe, on reviewing this, that what the committee did in the motion it passed -- when the order was prepared by me subsequent to that meeting, it should have included a consequential amendment to the committee allowances order which would make the same adjustment. This would bring them both in line and would make what appears to be the intent of the committee carry through into both orders. I think that is the correct interpretation of what was meant, because there was no indication that they intended to repeal the committee travel order.

The general transportation services and administrative services order does have maximum limits to it. The committee allowances order is separate and apart from those limits and is outside, for the very obvious reason that a member may find himself on a committee which has a very large number of meetings. He may incur enormous mileage in attending the meetings of that committee. There have been committees of this Assembly that have met 20 or 30 times, and a member might incur 500 or maybe even 1,000 kilometres quite easily in attending that one committee's deliberations. Therefore, it would seem quite

logical and quite in concordance with the committee's deliberations that the committee mileage should remain a separate provision.

But again, both in how the Member for Barrhead introduced the matter and the subsequent discussion, it does appear that the committee was trying to deal with the general level of mileage allowances for automobiles rather than a particular section in a particular order. Therefore, my suggestion is that this order be rewritten to reflect what now appears to have been the intent of the motion, to contain a consequential amendment to the committee allowances order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Which would necessitate bringing this back, then, at the next meeting? Or are you able to give the draft of it today, and we can give the approval?

MR. M. CLEGG: Mr. Chairman, if the committee were to resolve to follow this recommendation, then I would take that as a resolution which would instruct that interpretive measure to be carried out immediately.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that the committee recognize that the order of whatever date in July 1986 it was embrace all mileage allowance for MLAs regardless of the capacity, and that all consequential orders from that ought to be written.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Discussion? Call for the question.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour, please signify. Opposed? Carried unanimously. Thank you very much.

Any other items of business?

MR. HYLAND: I think you'd better ask the question you started asking before I make my motion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The date of the next meeting.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Chairman, I don't have the wording of the motion that we passed a year ago in front of me, but I do remember the thrust, which was that with the exception of some emergency matter where a meeting might be called by the Chair while the spring sitting of the Assembly is in session, we would not meet again until immediately after the House rises -- in the month of June, I presume. I'm not sure it's appropriate to be as specific as we were the last time, but if there's a concurrence that we follow that process, then in consultation between the Speaker and the parties represented in the committee, we could find a date for a meeting once the House has in fact closed in the spring.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. All those in favour of adjournment, please rise.

[The committee adjourned at 3:55 p.m.]

