



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature
Third Session

Select Special
Ombudsman
Search Committee

Monday, January 31, 2011
2:45 p.m.

Transcript No. 27-3-1

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Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee

Mitzel, Len, Cypress-Medicine Hat (PC), Chair
Lund, Ty, Rocky Mountain House (PC), Deputy Chair
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL)
Hinman, Paul, Calgary-Glenmore (W)
Lindsay, Fred, Stony Plain (PC)
Marz, Richard, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (PC)
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (ND)
Quest, Dave, Strathcona (PC)
Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon (PC)

Corporate Human Resources Participants

Jean Easton	Consultant, Executive Search
Trish Mills	Director, Executive Search

Support Staff

W.J. David McNeil	Clerk
Shannon Dean	Senior Parliamentary Counsel/ Director of House Services
Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Law Clerk/Director of Interparliamentary Relations
Micheline S. Gravel	Manager – House Proceedings
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Liz Sim	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

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[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

The Chair: I'd like to call the meeting to order and welcome everyone. It's the first meeting of the Ombudsman Search Committee. I trust that everyone has a copy of the meeting agenda and other meeting materials, which were posted on the internal committee website. Does anyone not have the items? If not, we'll move on.

I'd ask everyone to introduce themselves for the record before we get started. I'm Len Mitzel, the chair of the committee.

Mr. Lund: Ty Lund, Rocky Mountain House.

Mr. Marz: Richard Marz, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Lindsay: Fred Lindsay, Stony Plain.

Mr. Rogers: George Rogers, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon.

Ms Blakeman: Laurie Blakeman, once again welcoming everyone to the fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre.

Ms Sales: Tracey Sales, communications services with the Legislative Assembly Office.

Ms Mills: Trish Mills, with executive search in corporate human resources.

Ms Easton: I'm Jean Easton, with executive search.

Mr. Hinman: Paul Hinman, MLA, Calgary-Glenmore.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you. I think there are a couple more members that'll be in very shortly.

Is someone prepared to move to adopt the agenda, please?

Mr. Rogers: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Rogers. Any amendments? All in favour? That's agreed.

The mandate of the search committee is set out by Government Motion 28, which was posted on the committee website. This item is for information purposes only unless a member has any questions in this respect.

Okay. This takes us to item 4, and that is the budget. The committee's budget estimates were drafted on the basis of estimates from recent select special committees and approved by the Members' Services Committee at its December 8, 2010, meeting. I think it's important to note, too, that it's anticipated that most costs related to the committee would be processed in the new fiscal year, and costs which occur in 2010-2011 will be accommodated within the global committees budget envelope. Any questions from the committee with regard to the budget?

Ms Blakeman: Yeah. Just a little clarification on that one. So you're expecting that a significant portion of this budget might be expended in 2010-2011 before the end of the fiscal year? No. It'll be expended in 2011-2012.

The Chair: That's correct.

Ms Blakeman: Okey-dokey, then. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Marz.

Mr. Marz: Yeah. The bulk of expenditures is advertising. Could you just briefly give what type of advertising that would be? The majors across Canada?

The Chair: I think probably we'll get to that when we go through executive search and the program they're planning on using. So if there are no other questions with regard to the budget – it's mostly for information – we can move on.

Ms Blakeman: I'm sorry. There actually is one thing. By the time this comes up for discussion, we're most of the way through our budget, and we don't really have the room to manoeuvre on it. Have we considered whether we'd want to set some of this money aside to perhaps offset the travel costs if we had a candidate that we wanted to bring in? Inevitably, or at least for the last several ones I've been on, the discussion has come up about whether we wish to offer them some travel costs to get here so that we could interview them rather than doing a phone interview, but at that point we're so far along that we've expended most of our budget. Did we want to discuss that here and allocate some money to that?

The Chair: I think there's a figure of \$7,000 set aside for travel on this.

Ms Blakeman: That's anticipated travel of the possible candidates or even taking us to Calgary or something?

Mrs. Sawchuk: It's any travel costs related to the committee satisfying its mandate. When the costs come through, whether it's for a candidate who has come in for an interview and the committee has agreed to cover the cost, whether it's for a member's travel expenditures outside of session, it's travel. Period.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. And this would be enough to cover a reasonable amount for all of those categories?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Mr. Chair, I'd have to definitely go back, but I think the most we've ever spent on candidate travel that I'm aware of is about \$4,000.

The Chair: I think our travel as well was once we'd shortlisted, and then they had to come to visit with the committee. Before that, a lot of it was done by phone.

Mr. Marz: Does the travel include accommodation? You also have to put these people up.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yes.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. That's good. That's what I wanted to know. Thank you.

The Chair: Any other questions on this?

Okay. We'll move on, then, to the use of executive search. As set out in item 3 of Government Motion 28, the committee will again be calling on executive search, corporate human resources, to assist with all aspects of the search process. Ms Trish Mills, the director, and Ms Jean Easton, the executive search consultant, will be assisting the committee. You're here today. Thank you. Welcome.

Trish, for the benefit of the committee and members who may not have participated in a search committee before, could you provide a brief overview of the services that your office will be providing for the committee?

Ms Mills: Yes. I'd be pleased to do that. One thing we've done already in advance of this committee is contributed to the drafting of the advertisement copy and the position profile, that are in your

packages, in collaboration with the committee clerk, communications, and HR offices of the Leg. Assembly Office. We've also consulted with the Ombudsman in developing that draft profile. We've given input and consultation on the recruitment strategy, that we'll discuss as we work our way through the agenda here.

Once the recruitment is under way in terms of advertising, we will receive from the committee clerk a copy of all the applications that come in on the competition, and we will do a preliminary screening based on the criteria set out in the advertisement and the profile. We'll prepare a package, including that preliminary screening, with copies of the resumés for each of the committee members. If requested by the committee, we will conduct preliminary interviews of candidates selected by the committee and prepare and deliver interview reports back to the committee. We will work as an interface with the candidates throughout the process. We'll assist Karen regarding written communications as needed with the candidates. We'll participate in or sit in on the final interviews if the committee wishes it and conduct reference checks on final candidates coming out of that process.

The Chair: Any questions of Trish?

You did talk about that position profile as well, you know, and working in concert with the Ombudsman we have now to prepare for the search process. So if there are no other questions on that, I think that this probably will require a motion to adopt the position profile as distributed. Are there any questions on this, or is anyone prepared . . .

Mr. Marz: I'll move that.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Marz that

the Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee adopt the position profile as distributed.

Any questions? All in favour of that? That is carried unanimously.

This takes us to the draft timeline. You can see by the draft timeline, if you have that there in front of you, that the intent is to have the committee's mandate completed by the end of June. These search committees typically complete their mandates within four to six months of commencing a search. A formal designation of an Acting Ombudsman to cover any period that the position may be vacant can be handled by the Standing Committee on Leg. Offices. Our committee clerk, Karen, has worked with executive search and LAO communications in drafting a proposed timeline, and you see it there in front of you. Are there any questions related to this timeline and the process?

Mr. Marz: I have no problem with this particular timeline. Depending on the whole process after we do interviews, it could perhaps indicate that we wouldn't be happy with any of the applicants, and we'd have to kind of go out there again. As long as there's flexibility that would allow us a bit more time to do that.

Mr. Lund: The advertising – and the only reason I'm bringing up advertising now is that I'm curious – doesn't start until the end of this week, and if we're going nationally, it would seem to me that by February 25 could be pretty short.

2:55

The Chair: Trish, any comments?

Ms Mills: That's a three-week advertising period, which is fairly standard or even a little bit longer than standard in our experience. I know that on some search committees we've done up to a month, but in terms of looking at the calendar with the committee clerk, we felt that a three-week advertising period would be sufficient and work well around the timelines, you know, with session sitting.

Mr. Lund: I guess, in light of the fact that we need to report to the House, it's highly unlikely that the House is going to be sitting on the 27th.

The Chair: That can be covered, according to the standing orders, by Lieutenant Governor in Council, and then it can be ratified at the next sitting.

Mr. Lund: Uh-huh. I see. I was not aware of that.

Mr. Hinman: Then it's not ratified, though, till the fall. Is there provision that he'll actually be in?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Mr. Chair, there is, actually, a provision in the Ombudsman Act that refers to the period when the Ombudsman is appointed outside of session until it's ratified in the Assembly.

Mr. Quest: Just a couple of questions if I may. Just looking at the total advertising budget – I came in halfway through the last recruitment – is this sort of typically the range that we're spending to advertise for these positions, \$57,000? No?

The Chair: I think that, as it's suggested on the stuff that Ms Mills had, the estimated entire campaign may be from \$16,000 to \$20,000 and fall well within the range of the \$57,000 that is set there. It's probably a good idea to have that set just in case. What happens if you have to readvertise? If the candidates that come forth aren't qualified and you have to readvertise, there's a cost incurred then. So I think they put the budget at \$57,000, and the suggestion is that their campaign may only cost a maximum of \$20,000.

Mr. Quest: All right. I just would have assumed that in this day of electronic media we could probably get away with considerably less. That's why I raised the question.

Mr. Hinman: So on that advertisement did you say earlier that they're going to explain a little bit what they were actually going to do?

The Chair: I believe so, yes. We'll get to that in the next item, actually.

Mr. Hinman: Okay.

Ms Notley: We're looking at the timeline, right?

The Chair: We're working on the timeline, yes.

Ms Notley: So my question is: why do we end the interviews on the 30th and then spend a month waiting, till June 27, to meet on the outcome of those interviews?

The Chair: I'd ask Ms Mills to perhaps comment on that.

Ms Mills: Well, one thing that time is allowing for is the appropriate background checks, and depending on the number of candidates we're doing that on, you know, that would give us time to do references, the security screening piece, and co-ordinate.

Karen, do you have anything further that you want to add around the committee schedule?

Mrs. Sawchuk: I think we counted three to four weeks, which is generally the amount of time when you're looking at the security checks, so we took it from the last date because we did show a three-week possibility for interviews. It's depending on members' availability whether it's the week of May 16, the 23rd, or the 30th.

So we took it from the 30th. You know, we're working with possibilities right now and nothing else.

The Chair: I think that as we move forward, we can probably set those dates firmly. I'd also note here that it says the week of the 27th or earlier depending on the date of the final interviews that you have.

Ms Notley: Yeah, and earlier is better. I mean, the week of June 27 just appears to be a very awkward time for most people to suggest that we're doing that. You know, a week or two earlier, perhaps, would be fine.

Ms Blakeman: At various times I would have said that three weeks was the outside, but it has taken us that long, especially now that we've added on the financial security. That one always takes longer. Then we've also had situations where we had a question based on their reference and financial checks, and that involved another round of meetings. So I would have said that three weeks was probably the outside, right?

Ms Notley: Yeah. And, again, if we end up meeting on the 16th, why we need to also budget three weeks for interviews is also a bit – I don't know that we would typically take three weeks just to interview.

Ms Blakeman: No, we don't, but in trying to schedule us at some point, we have moved back and forth across three weeks.

Ms Notley: Right. Hence my inquiry about trying to schedule us in what already on the face of it appears to be an awkward week. That's all.

The Chair: You're absolutely right. If, in fact, we can do the interviews on the week of May 16, it stands to reason, then, that the final can be two weeks earlier than the 27th. You have to move everything; that's right.

Any other questions with regard to this item on the timelines? Okay. I think I need a motion, then, to adopt the timeline as distributed. I think it is open enough that we have the flexibility there.

Mr. Rogers: So moved.

The Chair: Moved by George that
the Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee adopt the draft timelines as distributed.

All in favour? Opposed? That is carried.

This takes us to the draft advertising plan and the advertising copy. I guess we have Ms Sales here to address this item. She has completed the draft advertising plan and ad copy for the committee's consideration, and I believe that executive search also assisted in this process.

I'll turn it over to you, Tracey, to lead us through the plan. Feel free to call on either of the others as we go through this.

Ms Sales: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the materials were posted to the committee site last week, I'm just going to touch on the finer points of the plan. Basically, we're recommending a combination of conventional newspaper advertising to target province-wide and online advertising to target nationally. In addition, we are also suggesting direct liaison with specific groups.

As far as the newspaper advertising is concerned, if you look at the package, there is a short ad on page 2. The short ad we've created to run in the newspapers. This smaller ad will keep costs at a minimum. This ad will double run in the recruitment sections for the *Journal* and the *Herald* and a single run in the following dai-

lies: the *Fort McMurray Today*, *Medicine Hat News*, *Lethbridge Herald*, *Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribune*, and the *Red Deer Advocate*. As I said before, the newspaper advertising will focus province-wide.

For national exposure we'll be looking online. The online ad will be posted on working.com as well as applicable professional job sites. Of course, we'll also utilize the committee website, the Legislative Assembly job website, and the office of the Ombudsman website for this exposure. In addition, we're suggesting that we directly liaise with the Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman, and the Association of Canadian College and University Ombudspersons.

As was mentioned by the chair earlier, the full plan is expected to come in anywhere between \$16,000 and \$20,000, \$20,000 being the high end. As you can see, that fits well within the committee budget.

Attached are the short ad and the long ad. The long ad will be what runs online. Are there any questions?

Mr. Lund: Why is the salary not in the short ad?

Ms Sales: Okay. Thank you. That's a good question. Actually, in conversations with executive search as well as human resources of the Legislative Assembly Office it was suggested that the short ad basically entice people to go to the website to see the long ad for more information. Often the wage is a big enticer, so by not putting the wage in the short ad, it encourages people to go to the long ad, and it keeps costs down because we have less copy on the short ad. That was the strategy.

Mr. Lund: Okay.

3:05

Ms Mills: I can add further that, again, it's a consistent practice not to put in the salary for these senior-level positions.

Just to comment further on Tracey's comments, we want to drive potential candidates to look at the website for the longer ad as well as the position profile for more details.

Mr. Lund: Thank you.

Ms Mills: You're welcome.

The Chair: What you're saying, in other words, is that if they're truly interested, they'll actually move to the website, and they'll get all the information there, then.

Ms Mills: That's right.

The Chair: Okay.

Any other questions? We're satisfied with the advertising proposal? Then I'd call for a motion.

Mr. Lund: So moved.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Lund that
the Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee adopt the advertising plan as presented.

I just want to note very quickly, back to the draft timeline, that you'll notice that March 25 was the date when this committee would be meeting to shortlist. Prior to that, the timelines are set up with executive search. So the next time this committee would be meeting to look at the candidates and do the shortlisting. I guess you can mark that in your calendars.

Karen has also mentioned that it is a Friday. I think the meeting will take about two hours. Would the committee be agreeable to

an 8:30 start, finishing at 10:30 a.m.? It's the 25th, and it's a Friday. Any objections to starting at 8:30 in the morning? Hearing none, okay. So the next meeting will be on March 25 at 8:30 in the morning, and it's suggested that it's perhaps two hours. Thank you very much.

Ms Blakeman: Can we do some of these other dates? Because we know more or less where they need to be, can we try plugging these in? Trying to organize this group closer to the date is even more challenging. So if we got in first with this committee, that might help us.

The Chair: Well, the next one is either the week of April 25 or May 2.

Mr. Lund: The thing is the preliminary interviews.

The Chair: We don't do those.

Unless you want to just block off those two particular weeks, the next time we meet is the week of April 25 or of May 2 and, after that, May 16, 23, or 30. I would suggest maybe to just be aware, especially of the first one. Block them both if you wish, and as soon as we can, we'll certainly let everyone know which one it is. The other one, though, May 16, 23, or 30, would be very difficult to do. I know it's difficult, and we're going way ahead.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. If you guys don't want to, all right.

Mr. Marz: Are we assuming that all of these meetings are going to start at 8:30?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Mr. Chair, when we were trying to work this out for a Friday the week you've been here for session, we just figured it would work well for members. They'd still be here, have the meeting, and it'd be early enough for them to still head home, that kind of thing. It's really up to the committee.

Mr. Marz: April 25 and May 2 are Mondays.

The Chair: That's the week of.

Mr. Marz: Does that conflict with any legislative breaks or anything like that? Did anybody check that out?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yes, we did go online with the calendar when it came out last week. Actually, this was done in advance of that. I think we're pretty well looking at Fridays, no matter how we do it, until we maybe get into interviews. That's about the only time. We've I think asked that the committee maybe look at meeting even during a constituency week just because of the timing. For the most part we were trying to stick to Fridays.

The Chair: When we do the interviews, too, it depends on how many we decide to interview as well after we go through the short list as to how long it's going to take, whether we can do it in a day or it's going to take two days.

Ms Blakeman: Can I just ask how many people on this committee are coming from out of town at this point? Four? So that's half the committee?

The Chair: I think that would be five.

Ms Blakeman: If they're trying to get on the road, then we can suck it up and get here early.

Ms Notley: What are we talking about right now?

Ms Blakeman: Well, 8:30 on Fridays, generally.

Ms Notley: Oh, any Friday.

Ms Blakeman: Well, yeah. We haven't picked them out. It's just if we're going to start at that time or not.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Mr. Chairman, I've got the sessional calendar up. The week of April 25: Monday, the 25th, is Easter Monday; on the 26th, 27th, and 28th members are in session. So it would be Friday, April 29. At the time we did this, we didn't have this calendar yet.

Then the week of May 2 is a constituency week. So, you know, if members were wanting to meet that week, if they're either coming in . . .

The Chair: You're looking at the Friday, and then you've got the next week off.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yeah.

Ms Blakeman: So it's probably April 29.

Mrs. Sawchuk: It's a Friday.

Ms Blakeman: I'm just going to mark that.

Mr. Marz: I take it you don't want to work during constituency week.

The Chair: The next week is constituency week.

Mr. Marz: The week after constituency week.

Mrs. Sawchuk: No. The week of April 25 is a sessional week. It's the week after, the week of May 2, that is now a constituency week.

The Chair: We're in session on the Tuesday following Easter Monday.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yeah, for three days. The 29th is the Friday if we wanted to confirm that one, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: I think that we can look at the 29th, then. The next one I don't think we can do, so mark the 29th.

Okay. Any other business? Then I'll entertain a motion for adjournment.

Mr. Lindsay: So moved.

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Lindsay. All in favour? That's carried, I think.

Thanks to executive search for coming out. We'll look forward to things as we move along.

[The committee adjourned at 3:13 p.m.]

