



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature  
Second Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Resource Stewardship

Lobbyists Act Review

Monday, October 24, 2016  
10 a.m.

Transcript No. 29-2-8

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta  
The 29th Legislature  
Second Session**

**Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship**

Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (ND), Chair  
Loewen, Todd, Grande Prairie-Smoky (W), Deputy Chair

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (W)  
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (ND)  
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP)  
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (ND)  
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (PC)  
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W)  
Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (ND)  
Kleinsteuber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (ND)  
MacIntyre, Donald, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W)  
Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (ND)  
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (ND)  
Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (ND)  
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)\*  
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (ND)\*\*  
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (ND)

\* substitution for Todd Loewen

\*\* substitution for Chris Nielsen

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**10 a.m. Monday, October 24, 2016**

[Loyola in the chair]

**The Chair:** Good morning, everybody. I'd like to call the meeting of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship to order. Welcome to members and staff in attendance.

To begin, I'm going to ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, and then I will address members on the phone. I'll begin to my right. Please take it away, sir.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Don MacIntyre, MLA for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Wayne Drysdale, MLA, Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

**Mr. Dang:** Thomas Dang, MLA for Edmonton-South West.

**Ms Sweet:** Heather Sweet, MLA, Edmonton-Manning.

**Ms Babcock:** Erin Babcock, Stony Plain.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Jamie Kleinsteuber, MLA, Calgary-Northern Hills.

**Ms Woollard:** Denise Woollard, MLA, Edmonton-Mill Creek.

**Mr. Rosendahl:** Eric Rosendahl, MLA, West Yellowhead.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Brian Malkinson, MLA for Calgary-Currie.

**Mr. Koenig:** I'm Trafton Koenig, lawyer with the Parliamentary Counsel office.

**Ms Robert:** Good morning. Nancy Robert, research officer with the Legislative Assembly Office.

**Dr. Massolin:** Good morning. Philip Massolin, manager of research and committee services.

**Mr. Roth:** Good morning. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** Okay. For the record we have Ms Sweet, who is substituting for Mr. Nielsen, and although he's not with us yet, Mr. Strankman, who is substituting for Mr. Loewen.

I will now recognize the members who are on the phone. Mrs. Leela Aheer, how about we start with you?

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you and good morning. Leela Aheer, Chestermere-Rocky View.

**Ms Kazim:** Anam Kazim, MLA, Calgary-Glenmore.

**Mr. Hanson:** David Hanson, MLA, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

**Mr. Clark:** Good morning. Greg Clark, MLA, Calgary-Elbow.

**The Chair:** Is there anybody else joining us on the phones? Okay. I just wanted to make sure.

A few housekeeping items to address before we turn to the business at hand. A reminder again that the microphone consoles are operated by the *Hansard* staff, so there's no need for members to touch them. Please keep cellphones, iPhones, and BlackBerrys off the table as they may interfere with the audiofeed. Audio of committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and recorded by *Hansard*. Audio access and meeting transcripts are obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

Our first item of business will be to approve the agenda. Just to make a note, we did have a motion at the previous meeting which didn't make it into the draft agenda, so I would suggest that we put that under item 5, other business.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Are you talking about the motion that was adjourned?

**The Chair:** Yes. Your motion, sir, that was adjourned.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Any other questions or concerns regarding the agenda?

Hearing none, I'll request a motion that the agenda for the October 24, 2016, meeting of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship be adopted as amended. Thank you, Mr. MacIntyre. All in favour? Opposed? On the phones? That motion is carried. Thank you.

We'll now turn to approval of the minutes from our last meeting. Are there any errors or omissions to note with the draft minutes?

**Mr. Malkinson:** Mr. Chair, I noticed as I was looking through them that I believe Mr. Nielsen's name is spelt wrong on the last page of the minutes.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much for that, Mr. Malkinson.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Are there any other issues or concerns with the meeting minutes?

Okay. I'll ask for a motion that the minutes of the August 18, 2016, meeting of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship be adopted as revised. Okay. Mr. MacIntyre again. Thank you. All in favour? Any opposed? On the phones? That motion is carried.

We'll now turn to item 4 regarding the request from the Ethics Commissioner. Hon. members, the committee has received a request from the Ethics Commissioner for an extension to make her submission regarding the Lobbyists Act until December 6, 2016. The request was posted on the committee's internal website, and it outlines the reasons why the commissioner is making this request to the committee. Is there any discussion on the matter? Yes, Mr. Dang.

**Mr. Dang:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it is really important that we give the Ethics Commissioner as much time as she needs to complete this work. Her submission is going to be so instrumental to what we do going forward, and a three-week extension isn't going to significantly hamper the ability of this committee. I would recommend that all members do vote in favour of this request.

**The Chair:** Mr. MacIntyre, did you want to add anything? I saw that you raised your hand.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** No. I just was going to say almost the same thing as the hon. member did.

**The Chair:** Okay. Then we'll require a motion that the committee grant the request from the office of the Ethics Commissioner to extend the deadline to provide comments in regard to the committee's review of the Lobbyists Act to December 6, 2016.

All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, say no. On the – sorry. Ms Sweet, you are willing to move the motion?

**Ms Sweet:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Thank you. I got ahead of myself there.

We'll go through that again, then. All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones in favour? Any opposed on the phones? Hearing none, that motion is carried.

We'll now turn to research services. We have a written submissions summary document prepared by our support staff. Ms Robert, could you start us off, please?

**Ms Robert:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Committee members would have received through the internal committee website last week a summary of stakeholder and public submissions for the review of the Lobbyists Act. I'll just give you a very high-level summary of the document. I can tell you that there were 69 submissions received, 17 from stakeholders and 52 from members of the public. If you look on page 3 of the document, there's an overview of the issues that were raised in the submissions that were received. I would just highlight for you four or five of them that seem to be very common concerns that were raised.

Lots of the issues raised had to do with the reporting requirements for lobbyists: should it be more detailed, less detailed; should the renewal be every six months, every month but more focused; lots of different concerns like that. There were comments with respect to the 100-hour threshold that is the minimum number of hours for organizational lobbyists to have to register as organizational lobbyists. There were some submissions with respect to exemptions for public benefit nonprofit organizations, who are arguing that that exemption should be maintained, and then other stakeholders argued that it should be removed.

Then the online lobbyists registry: lots and lots of comments about that, about how it needs to be improved. I will note that the Ethics Commissioner has a note on her website that there's a brand new registry that's going to be up and running on October 31. So a lot of the issues that stakeholders and other submitters might have raised might be dealt with in that new registry.

The only other thing I would like to point out to you is that some submitters made requests to make oral presentations to the committee. Some of them made pretty specific requests. A couple of them made requests that they want to be able to provide further comment once the submission of the Ethics Commissioner has been given to this committee. In fact, one company, one lobbyist, asked that all registered lobbyists be given the opportunity to respond to the submission of the Ethics Commissioner. Just so that you're aware of that. Another registered lobbyist asked that an opportunity to comment be given should the committee contemplate any amendments to the act.

That's all I really have to say. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to try to answer them.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Robert.

We'll now turn to questions for Ms Robert.

**Ms Kazim:** I have a question.

**The Chair:** Okay. Please go ahead.

*10:10*

**Ms Kazim:** Yes. Thank you very much, Nancy, for the update on the report. I was going to actually ask about Impact Consulting and Devon Canada Corporation, who suggested in the report that all consultant and organizational lobbyists should be responding to the Ethics Commissioner's submissions directly. I wonder: would these organizations be required to direct their comments directly to the Ethics Commissioner, or has precedence been established in another committee to deal with these types of suggestions?

**Ms Robert:** Thank you, Ms Kazim. I couldn't presume what the committee might like to do with the request, but my understanding from the letters written by Impact Consulting and Devon Canada is that they want an opportunity to be heard before the committee in some form after the Ethics Commissioner's submissions have been given to the committee, just so that they can respond to the recommendations of the Ethics Commissioner. I hope that answers your . . .

**Ms Kazim:** Okay. I have just one more question. Also in the submission, Devon Canada Corporation suggested that grassroots communication not be considered as lobbying. I would like to know if grassroots communication is considered lobbying in other jurisdictions. Would you be able to please explain how other jurisdictions define the correlation between grassroots communication and lobbying, if you found anything during the research?

**Ms Robert:** Thank you. That research hasn't been completed yet. It's ongoing. I could find out and report back to the committee, but I can't tell you just off the top of my head because this exercise was to summarize the issues from the stakeholders. The cross-jurisdictional is a different exercise which will be done. It's not complete yet, but I'd be happy to report back to the committee once I know.

**Ms Kazim:** Okay. No problem. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, Ms Robert.

Any other questions? MLA Woollard.

**Ms Woollard:** Yes. Ms Robert, Global Public Affairs has requested an opportunity to provide additional commentary should the committee make any changes. Has precedence been set to deal with this type of suggestion?

**Ms Robert:** I am not certain. I mean, if an opportunity is given to do an oral presentation and they were invited to do that, they could come and do that. But has a committee specifically asked for subsequent feedback after proposing amendments? I can't say for certain that that is something that a committee has done before.

**Ms Woollard:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Please, Dr. Massolin.

**Dr. Massolin:** Yeah. If I can add, Mr. Chair, to that response. It would be highly unusual and probably inappropriate because the committee would have before it, I think, its draft report at that stage. So the committee is on the verge of reporting, I would think, if I understand the request correctly. I suppose the stakeholder would have the ability to respond prior, you know, in talking about and seeing what kind of response the Ethics Commissioner has or even just the other stakeholders, and perhaps right before the committee you could have a Q and A with that individual, but I don't think it would be appropriate to have it right at the end because the committee is ready to report at that stage. The stakeholder feedback stage is completed at that stage. So, yeah, I would say that that is not normal practice.

Thank you.

**Ms Woollard:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** I'm just going to check with members on the phone. Are there any members on the phone wishing to ask questions?

Hearing none, we'll go on to Mr. Dang, followed by Mr. Kleinsteuber.

**Mr. Dang:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one question about some of the public submissions that were not summarized in this report. I believe five out of a total of 52 submissions were made that were noted as not being relevant to the report. Could you elaborate a little bit on what that actually means? What's the criteria or threshold for what is relevant and what isn't?

**Ms Robert:** Certainly. Thank you. If a reply comes in, a submission comes in, that has absolutely nothing to do with the Lobbyists Act – suppose it's just generally criticizing government policy but not Lobbyists Act policy – then that would not be included in the submission summary because there would be no point. It was general criticisms, generally, about government policy but nothing to do with the Lobbyists Act. One was also a very upset person because of an expropriation process that he had gone through with his land, and he didn't get fair value, he thought, for his land. Again, that really has nothing to do with the Lobbyists Act, so that's why they were excluded.

**Mr. Dang:** For sure. Thank you.

**Ms Robert:** Oh, sorry. I'll just add that the submissions were posted, though. You can certainly read them; they just weren't summarized.

**Mr. Dang:** For sure. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Kleinsteuber.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Thanks. Ms Robert, I was wondering if any of the identified themes, issues, or recommendations might be considered out of scope or out of the mandate of this committee.

**The Chair:** Please go ahead, Ms Robert.

**Ms Robert:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think so. All of the submission issues that were included in the submission summary had to do with the Lobbyists Act, and it's a comprehensive review of the Lobbyists Act. So, yes, I would say that they're all within the scope. I'll just add, of course, that the registry is a process that the lobbyist registrar has. All of the elements of the online registry aren't, you know, prescribed in the act, so the complaints that were made with respect to the online registry wouldn't necessarily be resolved through amendments to the act, but they are to do with the Lobbyists Act, certainly, because the registry is part of the act.

Thank you.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any further questions to Ms Robert?

Okay. Hearing none, we'll now move on to section (c), decision on making written submissions public. This next item on the agenda is the consideration of whether the written submissions should be made public by posting them to the committee's public website.

I would note at this time that it is a common practice, should the committee decide to make these submissions available on the external website, to redact personal contact information, the identification of minors, and any unrelated third-party information. This has been the general practice of committees. Stakeholder letters as well as the advertisement for public input did advise that submissions and the identity of the authors may be made public.

With that, are there any comments or questions with regard to posting of written submissions?

**Mr. MacIntyre:** I think that given the nature of this committee, that it is on behalf of the people of Alberta, the people of Alberta should

be fully informed as to the submissions that we've received. I see no reason or point in withholding that from them.

**The Chair:** Okay. Any other questions or concerns? Okay. Seeing no further comments – well, pardon me. I'll go to the phones just to make a hundred per cent sure. Are there any questions or concerns regarding making the submissions public?

Okay. Hearing nobody with concerns or questions on the phone, could I ask a member to move a motion, then, that written submissions . . .

**Ms Kazim:** Yes. Sorry to interrupt. I just thought that I would be happy to move the motion.

**The Chair:** Okay. The motion would read that written submissions made to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship pertaining to its review of the Lobbyists Act be posted to the committee's external website with the exception of personal contact information, references to minors, and any unrelated third-party information.

That motion is now moved by MLA Kazim. All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, those in favour, please say aye. Okay. I think that's all of them on the phones, but just in case, any opposed, please say no. Hearing none, that motion is carried. Thank you, everyone.

We'll now move on to section (d) of the agenda. The next item on the agenda: the committee should consider whether it wants to hear oral presentations for this review. Should the committee choose to invite oral presentations, we would need to identify specific presenters. I would note that in the 2011 review the committee did hear from presenters.

With that, are there any members who have comments, questions, or suggestions in regard to oral presentations? I'll open it up.

**10:20**

**Mr. MacIntyre:** I would like to make a motion in regard to that if I may.

**The Chair:** Please go ahead.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** That the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship invite the following stakeholders to make oral presentations to the committee as part of the review of the Lobbyists Act, being the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, Hill & Knowlton Strategies, Impact Consulting, Corey Hogan, Len Wolstenholme, and Robyn Crawford.

I believe I've captured those who are wanting to make oral presentations.

**The Chair:** Okay. Can you restate the last two after Corey Hogan, please?

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Sorry. Do you want it in writing? Len Wolstenholme and Robyn Crawford.

**The Chair:** Okay. So we do have a motion on the floor. We'll open up the motion to discussion. Would anybody like to comment? A question on the motion?

**Ms Woollard:** I would suggest that we also invite Volunteer Alberta to present to the committee.

**The Chair:** That would have to be an amendment. You're moving an amendment, then, Ms Woollard?

**Ms Woollard:** Well, I'm not sure. Is the motion specifically to invite the specific individuals noted?

**Mr. MacIntyre:** I don't mind adding it on there if you want to.

**The Chair:** Regardless, it would require an amendment. Do you so move, then, Ms Woollard?

**Ms Woollard:** I so move that Volunteer Alberta be added to the motion.

**The Chair:** For those of you on the phone, I'm just going to review. The amendment is to include Volunteer Alberta in the motion to invite. Okay. I'll have our committee clerk, Mr. Roth, read the entire motion into the record.

**Mr. Roth:** The amendment, Mr. Chair. Ms Woollard moves that the motion be amended by adding "Volunteer Alberta" after "Robyn Crawford."

**Ms Woollard:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. We will now proceed to vote on the amendment. All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, in favour, please say aye. On the phones, any opposed, please say no. Okay. Hearing none, then the amendment is carried and is now part of the full motion.

Before we go to vote on the motion, though, I just want to make sure to do one more check around. Is there any more discussion on the motion as amended? No? On the phones? I just want to make sure we're capturing any comments or questions.

Hearing none. Mr. Roth, could you please read the motion as amended?

**Mr. Roth:** Certainly, Mr. Chair. Moved by Mr. MacIntyre that the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship invite the following stakeholders to make an oral presentation to the committee as part of the review of the Lobbyists Act, being the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, Hill & Knowlton Strategies, Impact Consulting, Corey Hogan, Len Wolstenholme, Robyn Crawford, and Volunteer Alberta.

**The Chair:** All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones, all in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. Okay. That motion is carried. Thank you, everyone.

Now we will be moving on to the next steps in the review. Hon. members, just briefly, the committee has now made decisions in regard to oral presentations, and once those are complete, the process generally followed is to begin deliberations on the issues that have been identified in the review. The Assembly is scheduled to reconvene on October 31, 2016, and the standing orders preclude meeting at times when the Assembly is meeting unless leave to do so is granted. If the committee is wishing to hear from presenters and commence deliberations during this time, it may be required to have several meetings of a shorter duration during the evenings and on Fridays as well.

Are there any questions or thoughts on proceeding forward? Yes, Mr. Drysdale.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd be very opposed to meeting on Fridays. I know it's easy for people in Edmonton to meet on Fridays, but when we've got 10 hours of driving and it's the only day we get to be in our constituency, I'd be not very happy if we had Friday meetings, because I'd like to represent my constituency, not Edmonton.

**The Chair:** Yes. Thank you for your comments. Anybody else?

**Mr. MacIntyre:** I would echo the hon. member's comments. There are a significant number of MLAs from the southern part of this province that would have, really, an inordinate amount of driving to do. We need to get back to our constituents. It's what we are elected to do, represent them, and I think that it would impede our ability to be an effective MLA if we were having to be up here that much.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

**Ms Woollard:** Given that the Ethics Commissioner is submitting her report – it could be any time up till December 6 – it makes sense, I think, that the committee wait until the Ethics Commissioner is ready to present to the committee. Just a thought.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm just going to go to the phones and see if anybody has questions or comments regarding this item.

**Mr. Clark:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Okay. Go ahead.

**Mr. Clark:** Yeah. I think I'll just very briefly concur with the comments. I think that while session is in, we ought to be in our constituencies on Fridays. It is, I think, challenging to be sitting in this committee while session is on. And I agree with Ms Woollard. While we're waiting on the Ethics Commissioner as well, perhaps we can reconvene in December, once session is over.

**The Chair:** Okay. Can I just get a general sense around the room, if people are in agreement, that perhaps we should wait until the commissioner's report is in? I see nodding of heads. On the phone, can I just get a sense from you? Do people prefer that we wait until the commissioner's report is in?

**Mrs. Aheer:** I would agree to that.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you. Anybody else on the phones care to comment?

**Ms Kazim:** Yeah. I would agree as well.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, Ms Kazim.

I think we have a general consensus here that we should wait until the Ethics Commissioner's report is in in December.

Any further comments, questions, considerations to be made? No? Okay. We don't need a motion for that, right? Okay.

Unless anybody else has anything that they'd like to comment on, we'll move to item 5, other business. Hon. members, there was a motion adjourned at the last meeting of the committee. It was moved by Mr. MacIntyre that

the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship petition the Legislative Assembly to amend the standing orders to empower legislative policy committees to prioritize inquiries notwithstanding that a matter of business has been referred by the Assembly.

Are there any comments, questions, or amendments in relation to this motion? Yes, Dr. Massolin.

**Dr. Massolin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry. Not to interfere with this process, but just from a procedural point of view, if a member were to amend this motion by striking out "petition" and adding in "recommend," I think that would improve the motion.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Malkinson, please go ahead.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Thank you very much, Chair. Having thought about the arguments about this from what I remember was Mr. MacIntyre's intention from the previous meeting, you know, I think all members would agree that a significant function of being a member of the Legislature is engaging in consulting with our constituents, which include various organizations from all sectors. I mean, this is something that members do on a daily basis or should be doing on a daily basis in their constituency offices.

**10:30**

I'm confident that there are other ways that we can engage, and by doing that in our constituency offices, I don't think we necessarily need to do it here in this committee. With this committee, like other committees, we are here to serve a very specific and important function based on the mandate that is given to us by the Legislative Assembly, and, you know, we should be prioritizing matters that are given to us by the Legislative Assembly. Often in various committees we have statutory limits where we do have to review things within a certain time period. I think that breaking with the standing orders potentially could be detrimental, so I would not be in support of this.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Malkinson.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Well, obviously, I disagree with the hon. member. The purpose of having people come and address this committee as a committee is to have all of us in one spot at one time to make it convenient for Albertans to come and address the issues that they want to address to a standing committee. The purpose of a standing committee's existence was to invite opportunity for Albertans to come and talk to us about the issues that are important to them. When we have a standing committee that is this one in particular, Resource Stewardship, I think it only sensible that for persons within our province that want to address a number of people at one time who are specifically concerned with resource stewardship, that opportunity should be given to them.

As we all know, in this particular review process that we've been going through, we meet infrequently. There's a substantial amount of time between our meetings, and I see no reason why we shouldn't be working and hearing other persons who have been waiting substantially long periods of time to come and address this committee. To deny them that is to deny democracy, so I do not agree with the hon. member's position on this at all.

I believe that we should be making a recommendation – and I will accept that amendment from Dr. Massolin – to the Legislative Assembly to amend the standing orders to empower these committees to prioritize inquiries, taking into consideration the matter that we have been given to deal with by the Assembly. But when we have time, which this committee does, I believe we should be opening up the doors to allow those organizations or people who've wanted to talk to this committee for a long time to come and talk to us. We should be here for them. That's our job.

**The Chair:** Just a note, Mr. MacIntyre. If you wish to accept Dr. Massolin's suggestion to change "petition" to "recommend," you'll have to make a motion. Oh, pardon me. Someone else – yes, indeed – will have to make a motion to amend.

Mr. Drysdale, do you wish to make such a motion?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Sure. I'll make that motion to amend as per Dr. Massolin's wording.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. Roth, please, if you could read the amendment.

**Mr. Roth:** Moved by Mr. Drysdale that the motion be amended by striking out the word "petition" and substituting "recommend."

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Everyone knowing clearly what the amendment is, I'll now proceed to ask for a vote. All in favour, please say aye. All opposed, please say no. On the phones, all in favour, please say aye. On the phones, anybody opposed?

**Mr. Hanson:** Could we get a recorded vote, please?

**The Chair:** Okay. We'll now move to a recorded vote. We'll start over here on my right. If you could state your name and then your vote, please.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Don MacIntyre. I vote aye.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Wayne Drysdale. Aye.

**Mr. Dang:** Thomas Dang. Aye.

**Ms Sweet:** MLA Sweet. Aye.

**Ms Babcock:** Erin Babcock. Aye.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** Jamie Kleinsteuber. Aye.

**Ms Woollard:** Denise Woollard. Aye.

**Mr. Rosendahl:** Eric Rosendahl. Aye.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Brian Malkinson. Aye.

**The Chair:** We'll now move to the phones.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Leela Aheer. Aye.

**Mr. Hanson:** David Hanson. Aye.

**Ms Kazim:** Anam Kazim. Aye.

**Mr. Clark:** Greg Clark. Aye.

**Mr. Strankman:** Mr. Strankman. Aye.

**The Chair:** Am I forgetting anybody on the phone? I believe I have everyone. Okay.

Mr. Roth, could you read out the vote?

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Chair, total for the motion, 14; total against, zero.

**The Chair:** Okay. That amendment passes. Thank you.

We're back to discussion on the original motion as now amended. I have on the list first Ms Sweet, and then we'll go to Ms Woollard.

**Ms Sweet:** Thank you, Chair. Just in regard to the motion around making the priority, I agree that we need to be transparent. We need to be able to meet with Albertans and have conversations around their concerns. The only piece that I struggle with within the motion is the word "priority," and the only reason for that would be the fact that we do have the legislative referrals that are mandated due to the legislation that currently exists. Some of those have timelines, meaning that within the legislation it may be required that they have to be reviewed every four years. So those have to be prioritized just due to the stipulation within those pieces of legislation. My only

concern would be that if we say that we're going to prioritize other pieces of work over top of legislative work, we may compromise the ability to get the time allotments completed on time.

**The Chair:** Okay. Before we go to Ms Woollard, Mr. MacIntyre and Mr. Drysdale would like to reply.

**Mr. Drysdale:** I had asked to be on the list before. You recognized me once a while ago, so just whenever. I don't care.

**The Chair:** Oh. Okay. Pardon me. I'll recognize you after Ms Woollard if you don't mind.

Mr. MacIntyre, you'd like to reply?

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Thank you. I thank the hon. member for that. Can we have a discussion, then, about amending that to take out the word "prioritize"? The issue that I'm trying to address is this issue of exclusivity, that we are exclusively bound to deal with just that which we have had referred to us. I don't think anyone here – at least, I don't think anyone here – has a problem with us listening to Albertans. If we can rehash the wording of this so that the recommendation to the Legislative Assembly is to amend the standing orders to empower us to deal with issues, when time permits, that may not be specific to what has been referred to us, that's the goal of this motion. I would invite MLA Sweet to suggest an alternate wording here.

**Ms Sweet:** Can I just ask for a point of clarity? Is that not within the mandate of the committee already?

**The Chair:** We'll go to Parliamentary Counsel.

**Mr. Koenig:** Could I just ask for clarification on what the question is exactly?

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Ms Sweet:** I guess I'm just curious as to: does this committee not have the capacity to have their own consultations on issues that may be relevant to the committee without it being referred?

**Mr. Koenig:** Yes, Mr. Chair. The committee, of course, is empowered or authorized under the standing orders to initiate its own inquiry. However, under the standing orders that exist, there's also a priority for any matter that's been referred by the Assembly. I think the phrasing that's usually used in these cases is that a committee is a creature of the Assembly. The committee is created to carry out work as provided by the Assembly, and the standing orders reflect that that work or those orders are prioritized. However, in cases where that work has been completed, there are opportunities under the standing order for a committee to initiate its own inquiry.

**Ms Sweet:** I guess, just based on that, then, that if we removed the word "priority," we would already be abiding by the standing order for the committee as it already exists because we are dealing with referrals from the Legislature, but there is capacity that if there is an issue that needs to be addressed, that can already happen anyway.

**10:40**

**Mr. Koenig:** That can. Just to make the point clear, however, there isn't a practice where a committee will be examining two issues simultaneously. If there is an inquiry that is referred by the Assembly to a committee, that takes priority over everything else. Those other inquiries would not proceed until the matter from the Assembly was finished or completed by the committee.

**Ms Sweet:** Okay. Does that meet your need, Mr. MacIntyre, or no? I'm not sure.

**The Chair:** Mr. MacIntyre.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Thank you. The issue that I have is that I understand that once we have completed the work that was assigned to us as a committee by the Legislature, we are then free to carry on with some other kind of work. However, when we have two-month, three-month pauses where this committee isn't doing anything and we're waiting for something – for example, now we're going to be waiting for the Ethics Commissioner's report to come in – in the meantime, when we're just on pause, I see no reason why the committee could not open the doors to Albertans to come and address the things that they wanted to bring to this committee. It's not interfering in or impeding the work that we're doing on that which we have had referred to us at all because the committee is on pause, and the committee ought to have the liberty to be able to address these other things.

As it currently stands, the standing committee can only discuss and deal with one little thing at a time, and until that one thing is all wrapped up, there's nothing else we can do. In the meantime months and months and months go by. There are organizations that have wanted to talk to this committee for a very long time, over a year, and they can't because this committee is stuck on whatever we have had referred to us. But we have had these long pauses, and I see no reason why we couldn't come to work and deal with some of these things, listen to some of the things that Albertans want to tell us as the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm going to recognize Ms Woollard, and then I'm going to go to Mr. Drysdale and then Mr. Malkinson.

**Ms Woollard:** Thank you, Chair. I think one of the issues I have here is that we're not saying that we don't want to engage with and listen to all sorts of Albertans and groups, but if the Legislative Assembly presents us with a mandate to do a certain job, that has to be our priority until it's finished. It is not to say that groups of people have not got other ways of communicating with government and government members. It seems to me that there should be a way for people to be able to communicate and to express their concerns.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** That's what standing committees are for.

**Ms Woollard:** I appreciate the time that all the various organizations took to write to the committee, but I think we have to maintain the procedures that are in place, which really do make sense, to make sure of the things that are considered priority by the Legislative Assembly, which is the body of which we are a part. I support continuing in that route.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Before we go to Mr. Drysdale, I just want to give opportunity for those on the phone to see if they want to get on the speakers list. Anybody wanting to make a question or comment? Okay.

We'll go on to Mr. Drysdale, then.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A bit of it's a repeat, but I agree, you know, that the matters referred to us by the Legislature take priority and that this committee has to deal with them first, but as we've seen today, we're not meeting again until December 6. That's a priority we'll deal with, so we just sit around and do nothing for six weeks. If there are people that want to present to this committee, why can't we take an hour sometime in the next six



weeks and listen to some of them? The legislative duty is a priority, but that doesn't mean we don't breathe or that we do nothing else till that's done with. I think we can take presentations. I know of at least two organizations that asked me if they could present to this committee. I said, "Work through the chair," and I'm sure you've had requests. I've been here for eight years and sat on committees like this if not the same, and we met with different organizations upon request.

If we don't have a referral from the Legislature, I guess we do nothing, then. I don't know. Like, there could be a year or two without referrals. So, you know, I think it should be a priority from the Legislature. We'll deal with them as expediently as we can, but as of now we're sitting till December 2. We didn't do much all summer.

I don't see why we couldn't take presentations from I'm not saying every individual person that wants to talk to us – they can do that in our offices – but from large organizations that specifically want to deal with resource stewardship issues. I think we should take those presentations. I think the word "prioritize" – the chair and the committee used to meet as a committee and say: we have all these requests. Then we'd go around the table and say: which ones should we meet with first? We'd get that far down the list. The committee as a whole could meet and decide which ones we meet with, but we should at least be meeting with some, I think.

So I'll be in support of this.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Malkinson.

**Mr. Malkinson:** Thank you very much, Chair. Just responding to the hon. member's point, I mean, you know, if somebody was looking at a vacuum, it would seem like perhaps we're not doing something for the next six weeks, to December 2. I know that just earlier in the discussion today, when we were speculating when we would have our next meeting, there was talk about: you know, we'd be busy back in our constituencies; we want to meet with our constituents.

Also, during that time there's going to be a sitting of the legislative session. I'm sure all of us are preparing for the debate for that. Any time we have something that comes from the Legislature, the breaks between meetings are times that we spend researching and looking at submissions and other items that are coming down in the other committees that we sit on. You know, we are looking at and researching and reading up on the matters that are before this committee.

I imagine that on this committee in particular the Ethics Commissioner's submission is one I'm going to be looking very forward to and plan to read and think about in its entirety in preparation for the next meeting. So, you know, in a vacuum it may seem like breaks, but there is, in fact, a lot going on that this committee is doing behind the scenes and that members are doing on other committees as well.

I appreciate the point of the hon. member who moved this motion. I understand his point. However, I feel that the way the standing orders work currently is the way we should go forward. If there's a point in time where we don't have something that's referred to us from the committee, nothing currently prevents us from doing exactly what the hon. member is intending, but for now I can't support this.

**The Chair:** Okay. Again I'm going to go to the phones, just to make sure that there's no one wishing to get onto the speakers list.

**Mr. Strankman:** Mr. Chair, Rick Strankman, Drumheller-Stettler, would like to speak when you get a chance. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Sure. Anybody else on the phones wishing to speak?

Okay. Hearing none, we'll go to you, Mr. Strankman.

**Mr. Strankman:** Thank you for that, Mr. Chair. I, too, can concur with Mr. MacIntyre's frustration at the committee level here going forward. I also have sat on some of these committees, and I think Albertans would find it a waste of time or misuse of time – I'll correct myself there – when you see a committee named Resource Stewardship dealing with something like privacy and the whole act and implications of it. It's frustrating because many people don't understand how the committees work and how they go. Only with the recent changes to legislation do those of us on committees not get paid separately, over and above our normal stipends, for this to happen.

I think it's frustrating, and I just simply want to make it known that I agree with Mr. MacIntyre's version that Albertans need more and more ways to make their positions known to those of us in the Legislative Assembly, and however that can happen, we need to try to encourage and endorse that.

I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

10:50

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Strankman.

Any other comments? Yes, Mr. Drysdale.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to add one thing, and maybe I can clarify it here. I know I had different stakeholders come to me and say that they wanted to present to committees or government and were having trouble doing that. I know that in the past we used to meet lots in rural caucus; like, every week a couple of stakeholders. A lot of the stakeholders that come to me have rural issues or resource stewardship issues. I'd just like clarification: is there a rural caucus that they could present to? Then they wouldn't have to come to this committee. I've been told that there is no such thing anymore, so maybe you could clarify that. It might help if they had another avenue for stakeholders so they could talk to the government or an all-party committee.

**The Chair:** Anybody care to respond? No?

**Mr. Drysdale:** I take it there's no more rural caucus. You know, it's just that stakeholders want to present and be heard by the government or an all-party committee. I think that the job of government is to listen to the stakeholders and Albertans on the different issues. So if there's no other avenue, I don't see why this committee couldn't fill some of that.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** You're welcome, Mr. Drysdale.

Any further questions, comments, points of consideration?

**Mrs. Aheer:** Mr. Chair, it's Leela here.

**The Chair:** Yeah. Please go ahead, Mrs. Aheer.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Just to elaborate on what Mr. MacIntyre was saying, I would like to ask for some clarity. I understand that the Ethics Commissioner will be reporting on December 6. Is that correct?

**The Chair:** Her request has been to extend until December 6. Potentially it will be December 6, but it could be earlier.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Okay. My question and perhaps comment in regard to what the other hon. members are saying with regard to having stakeholders with regard to resource stewardship coming to present

is: do we have any particular time constraints or anything around when those people would be able to come and present? Given that we are not going to be potentially doing anything with regard to this particular issue until December 6, when the commissioner brings forward her report – that’s at that time, but do we know when, then? If this committee is going to vote against having other stakeholders come in at this point – and I’m sure there are many that would like to meet with us as a committee – when is, then, the time frame going to be made available to these groups to actually present to us, and is that going to be known to these people so that, at the very least, they understand the time limitations or the time in the future as to when they will be able to present?

Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** You’re welcome, Mrs. Aheer.

I’ll turn it over to Parliamentary Counsel to respond.

**Mr. Koenig:** In terms of how the committee wishes to hear from stakeholders, for stakeholders who wish to appear before the committee prior to the commissioner’s report being provided, it is at the discretion of the committee as long as those stakeholders are commenting on the inquiry, the issue before the committee at present. As I mentioned earlier on, there isn’t a provision to have simultaneous inquiries, inquiries happening at the same time. How the committee wishes to deal with stakeholders’ oral presentations with respect to the Lobbyists Act is at the committee’s discretion. However, stakeholders who wish to make presentations or submissions to the committee on a different topic: that would be dealt with under the standing orders after the Lobbyists Act review has been completed.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

Please go ahead, Ms Robert.

**Ms Robert:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I’ll just add one thing. Impact Consulting, which is one of the organizations that the committee has asked to come and make an oral presentation, did specifically ask to be given an opportunity to submit to the committee once the Ethics Commissioner’s submission was in. The others that are on the list for oral presentations did not, but Impact Consulting did.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you, Ms Robert.

Unless there are any further questions or comments . . .

**Mr. Hanson:** It’s David Hanson here, if I could.

**The Chair:** Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Hanson.

**Mr. Hanson:** Yeah. I just want to clarify what I think Mr. MacIntyre is looking for. When we are given a mandate by the Legislature to deal with one item, like we’re dealing with right now, it’s just that when, you know, we’ve set dates for consultation and we’ve set dates for the Ethics Commissioner’s report, in the meantime we’ve got three or four months sometimes where the committee is just sitting and waiting for these reports to come in. What we would like to do is simply be able to address other issues that Albertans want us to talk about in the meantime, while we’re waiting, with no interference at all with the committee. But as the standing orders read right now, we’re kind of paralyzed by that mandate. What we’d like to do is just recommend to the Legislature to relook at the standing orders to give us a little bit of leeway in times when the committee is sitting and, you know, waiting for reports to come in so that we can address some other issues.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. I believe that we’ve heard from most on the committee. If there is no problem, then I’m just going to move to the motion.

Mr. Roth, could you please read the motion into the record again.

**Mr. Roth:** Moved by Mr. MacIntyre that the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship recommend that the Legislative Assembly amend the standing orders to empower legislative policy committees to prioritize inquiries notwithstanding that a matter of business has been referred by the Assembly.

**The Chair:** Okay. All in favour of the motion . . .

**An Hon. Member:** I request a recorded vote.

**The Chair:** A recorded vote? Okay. Thank you. A recorded vote has been requested. We will start to my right, please, with Mr. MacIntyre.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Aye.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Aye.

**Mr. Dang:** No.

**Ms Sweet:** No.

**Ms Babcock:** No.

**Mr. Kleinsteuber:** No.

**Ms Woollard:** No.

**Mr. Rosendahl:** No.

**Mr. Malkinson:** No.

**The Chair:** We’ll go to Mr. Strankman on the phone.

**Mr. Strankman:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Aye.

**Mr. Hanson:** Aye.

**Ms Kazim:** No.

**Mr. Clark:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. Roth, could you tally the results and inform the committee?

**Mr. Roth:** Mr. Chair, the total for the motion, 6; the total against, 8.

**The Chair:** Okay. That motion is defeated.

Committee members, it’s been brought to my attention that although we have agreed to extending the Ethics Commissioner’s report until December 6, we didn’t specifically ask the Ethics Commissioner to come and do an oral presentation. I’d just put that out for your consideration. Perhaps if people do want the Ethics Commissioner to come and do an oral presentation, we should put a motion forward.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** That’s a good idea. I’ll move that.

**The Chair:** Okay. Mr. MacIntyre moves that the Ethics Commissioner be requested to come and do an oral presentation to the committee.

**Mr. Strankman:** Mr. Strankman would like to second that.

**The Chair:** No seconder is required.

All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed? Okay. On the phones, specifically, all in favour, please say aye. Any opposed on the phone? That motion is carried.

Does anyone have other committee business that they wish to raise?

Okay. If there is nothing else for the committee's consideration, I'll call for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Rosendahl moves to adjourn. All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. On the phones? Okay. Thank you very much. That motion is carried.

[The committee adjourned at 11 a.m.]









