



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Resource Stewardship

Tuesday, June 25, 2019
6:20 p.m.

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Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Hanson, David B., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UCP), Chair
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP), Deputy Chair

Armstrong-Homeniuk, Jackie, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UCP)
Feehan, Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)
Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UCP)
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)
Rehn, Pat, Lesser Slave Lake (UCP)
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Sabir, Irfan, Calgary-McCall (NDP)
Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)
Sigurdson, R.J., Highwood (UCP)
Singh, Peter, Calgary-East (UCP)
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Tuesday, June 25, 2019

[Mr. Hanson in the chair]

The Chair: Okay, folks. I think we'll call the meeting to order. It's 6:20. We gave an extra five minutes so folks could get over, but it looks like we have a full house. I'd like to call the meeting to order. Welcome to members and staff in attendance for the orientation meeting of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship. My name is David Hanson, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul and chair of the committee.

I'd ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, starting to my right with the deputy chair.

Member Ceci: Thank you very much. I'm Joe Ceci. Calgary-Buffalo is my constituency. It's my pleasure to be here with my colleagues from the New Democratic Party and act as the co-chair, deputy chair.

Mr. Sabir: Irfan Sabir, MLA for Calgary-McCall.

Mr. Getson: Shane Getson, Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland.

Mr. Singh: Peter Singh from Calgary-East.

Mr. Sigurdson: R.J. Sigurdson, MLA for Highwood.

Mr. Turton: Searle Turton, Spruce Grove-Stony Plain.

Mr. Smith: Mark Smith, MLA for Drayton Valley-Devon.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Ms Rosin: Miranda Rosin, Banff-Kananaskis.

Mr. Rehn: Pat Rehn, Lesser Slave Lake.

Mr. Yaseen: Muhammad Yaseen, MLA for Calgary-North.

Member Loyola: Rod Loyola, Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Mr. Schmidt: Marlin Schmidt, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Feehan: Richard Feehan, Edmonton-Rutherford.

Ms Sorensen: Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications with the LAO. Good evening.

Mr. Koenig: Good evening. I'm Trafton Koenig, a lawyer with the office of Parliamentary Counsel.

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

Mr. Kulicki: Michael Kulicki, committee clerk.

The Chair: Well, thank you, everybody. I'd just like to take a moment and congratulate Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk on the passing of her private member's bill. That's quite an achievement in a very short time.

A few housekeeping items to address tonight before we turn to the business at hand. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard*. Committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

Our first order of business is to approve the agenda for today's meeting. A draft agenda was distributed to committee members yesterday. Would anyone like to propose any amendments, and if not, would someone like to make a motion to approve the draft agenda?

Mr. Turton: I'll move that motion, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Turton.

Moved by Mr. Turton that the agenda for the June 25, 2019, meeting of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship be adopted as distributed. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

As indicated by the agenda, the purpose of our meeting today is to provide committee members with a brief orientation regarding the mandate and role of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship and to appoint a subcommittee on committee business as required under the standing orders.

First, we have to address the possibility of members participating in committee meetings by teleconference when they are not able to attend in person. Participation in committee meetings by teleconference. Section 6 of the Legislative Assembly Act permits participation in a committee "by means of telephone or other communication facilities that permit all Members participating in the meeting to hear each other if all the members of the committee consent." The committee rooms are equipped to facilitate meeting participation by telephone.

This committee may wish to pass a motion, which needs to be passed unanimously, to approve meeting attendance by telephone for the duration of a Legislature or for the duration of a session. I would suggest that we entertain a motion to permit participation via teleconference for the duration of the 30th Legislature. With this in mind, I would note that a motion to approve teleconference attendance for the duration of a Legislature does not preclude the committee from determining that in-person attendance at specific meetings is required. In those cases a motion would be considered at the end of a particular meeting requesting the attendance in person of all members at a subsequent meeting. Would a member like to make the motion?

Member Ceci: Can I ask a question?

The Chair: Absolutely.

Member Ceci: Strangely enough, this is my first committee that I've been a part of. I was here for four years and did not participate on a committee, but I've been in front of committees many times. Does the teleconference work well? Is it clear? Does it all kind of seem to work seamlessly?

The Chair: I think so. I've called in on a few occasions, as have other members, from Calgary especially. You know, if a meeting is called and it's only for an hour or an hour and a half's duration, that's not worth driving three hours each way. We've had quite a few members that have attended probably the bulk of the meetings by teleconference.

Member Ceci: And is there a quorum that they would fulfill if they're a part of a teleconference?

The Chair: That's part of that quorum. Absolutely.

Member Ceci: Okay. That's great. I'll move it.

The Chair: Okay. Deputy chair can move? Absolutely. Mr. Ceci would move that

for the duration of the 30th Legislature the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship permit committee members to participate by teleconference subject to the proviso that the committee may require members' attendance at a particular meeting upon passage at a previous meeting of a motion to that effect.

Are there any other comments?

We will then call the question. All in favour of the motion? Any opposed?

That motion is carried unanimously.

Thank you very much.

Temporary substitutions under Standing Order 56(2.1). Standing Orders 56(2.1) to (2.4) outline the process for substitution of chairs, deputy chairs, and committee members. For convenience, templates are available on OurHouse for members to use when providing notice of a temporary substitution both for an e-mail communication or for written notice. Please note that it is the responsibility of the original committee member to ensure that a substituting member is prepared for the meeting and has been provided with all necessary briefing materials. If a committee meeting is moved to a different date and you still wish to appoint a substitute, you will need to submit a new notice. If you have any questions about the substitution process, please feel free to follow up with the committee clerk. In addition to official substitutes, Members of the Legislative Assembly who are not committee members or official substitutes may also attend and participate in committee meetings; however, they may not vote or move motions.

Joining us today are staff from the Legislative Assembly Office, who are on hand to provide nonpartisan support to us at all our committee meetings. Joining us at the table is, to my left, the committee clerk assigned to this committee, Michael Kulicki. He is here to provide procedural, administrative, and general assistance as required. He is also the first point of contact for this committee for any inquiries from members, staff, and the public. Second, to his left, is Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel. He is available to provide legal and procedural assistance to the committee as required. Dr. Philip Massolin, manager of research and committee services, oversees committee operations and attends meetings to receive research assignments from the committee and co-ordinate the work of the research team to ensure completion of research requests. Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications and broadcast services, and her staff are available when needed to provide communication expertise to the committee.

In addition to the staff at the table, there are staff from other Legislative Assembly Office branches who support our meetings, including members of Legislative Assembly security services and staff from venue services, who are responsible for managing these meeting facilities. There are the *Alberta Hansard* staff, who run the microphone and other systems during the meeting while also recording and transcribing the proceedings. And although we don't usually see them, there are the technical experts from ITS and broadcasting working hard for us behind the scenes.

The mandate. As this is our first meeting, I would like to provide you with an overview of the committee's mandate and processes. The Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship is one of three legislative policy committees, often referred to as LPCs. Its mandate relates to the areas of Agriculture and Forestry, Energy, Environment and Parks, Indigenous Relations, Municipal Affairs, Transportation, and Treasury Board and Finance. The committee may meet to review a bill or to consider an issue referred to it by the Assembly and can also meet on its own initiative to consider issues within its mandate. The annual reports of government departments and provincial agencies, boards, and commissions are

referred to the LPCs, and these committees may also review regulations and hold public meetings.

In addition, every year when the time comes, we will be actively involved in the consideration of the main estimates. That's kind of the main reason that I wanted to have this meeting here while we were in the spring session because once we come back in the fall, once the budget is released, we will definitely be spending a lot of time in this room on budget debates.

As this is a committee of the Legislative Assembly, we are governed by the procedures and practices of the Assembly, including the standing orders where applicable. However, within these limits we are able to determine our own practices and adjust them as needed to take on various tasks. As outlined in the Standing Orders, primarily in chapter 5, legislative policy committees may take on a number of initiatives or be assigned tasks by the Assembly. In the past, legislative policy committees have often been directed to review a bill after first or second reading or deemed by the Assembly to be a special committee for the purposes of a comprehensive statute review. Under Standing Order 52.03 the committee is able to conduct a review on its own initiative, provided we are able to complete our work and report to the Assembly within six months.

Does anyone have any questions on this topic? Thank you.

6:30

The subcommittee on committee business. As committee members may recall, all legislative policy committees are required to establish a subcommittee on committee business. In this regard Standing Order 52.011(3) states:

At its first meeting of a new Legislature, every Legislative Policy Committee and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts shall appoint a Subcommittee on Committee Business to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair and to report to the committee on the business of the committee.

As indicated, the purpose of this subcommittee is to meet and report to the committee on matters of the committee's business, which would include making recommendations about timelines and review processes. Ultimately, however, the final decision on any of these matters rests with the committee itself. In most cases, unless otherwise directed by the committee, working groups and subcommittees meet in camera with the support of the committee clerk, research and committee services, and Parliamentary Counsel. It is anticipated that this process will apply to the work of the subcommittee on committee business.

Do members have any questions about the establishment of this subcommittee?

Member Ceci: Just a question. Did you say that all subcommittees meet in camera?

The Chair: That is my understanding. Yes.

Member Ceci: Okay. So you need a motion?

The Chair: It's coming.

Member Ceci: Okay.

The Chair: The standing orders require the committee to establish this subcommittee, and we will need to pass a motion to do so. I will ask the committee clerk to read a possible motion into the record for consideration.

Mr. Kulicki: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is a bit of a longer motion, and it's just a draft motion for the committee to consider. I'll display

it onscreen. I'll just read it into the record, and then the committee may consider it. It would be that

pursuant to Standing Order 52.011(3) the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship appoint a subcommittee on committee business to meet from time to time at the call of the chair to consider and report to the committee on the business of the committee; that the presence of all members of the subcommittee is necessary to constitute a meeting; that the subcommittee be composed of the following members: the chair as chair, the deputy chair, and a committee member from the government caucus; and that substitutions from the membership of the committee be permitted on the subcommittee.

Member Ceci: That's a three-person subcommittee.

The Chair: Yeah. That's it, plus the support staff.
Go ahead, Mr. Loyola.

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As you may be aware – I believe that you were on this committee before – I used to chair the committee. In the previous four years, in the hopes of being as transparent as possible, we found it not necessary to have a subcommittee, making sure that all the members of the committee could weigh in on discussions regarding the business of the committee. In my experience, that was the most practical way of moving forward.

I think that it's important for all members to be able to weigh in on decisions of the committee regarding the business and everything else that you've highlighted. I would really recommend to all members that we vote against this motion in the interest of making sure that all of the members of the Resource Stewardship Committee could discuss matters as we move forward. I think that would be the most practical way.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Loyola. I appreciate your comments, but it is according to the standing orders that we have to form this committee. It's a requirement.

Member Ceci: Could I just query that?

The Chair: Sure.

Member Ceci: I'm not sure if Philip or somebody else can address it. Is it a requirement we can choose not to follow?

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Koenig: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This new requirement was included in the standing orders as part of the changes that were recently made, so this is a new requirement. The requirement: I can just read it for all members.

At its first meeting of a new Legislature, every Legislative Policy Committee . . . shall appoint a Subcommittee on Committee Business to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair and to report to the committee on the business of the committee.

So it is a requirement that a subcommittee be created. The proposed wording that the clerk has provided is just a starting point. The parameters of the subcommittee could be different. But it's a requirement under the standing orders that the LPC has one.

Member Ceci: It didn't exist before.

The Chair: That particular standing order didn't exist before.

Mr. Getson: Just a question.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Getson.

Mr. Getson: As a point of clarification, the subcommittee acts on all of the items on the agenda of the main committee, or is a subcommittee spooled up for each one of those subitems, or is there potential for it?

The Chair: My understanding is that the chair can call a meeting of the subcommittee to discuss issues that are coming before the committee prior to, not necessarily that they have to do that.

Mr. Getson: Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Massolin: Could I, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Absolutely, Dr. Massolin.

Dr. Massolin: I think the intention here is that it would act like a steering committee.

The Chair: Mr. Sigurdson.

Mr. Sigurdson: Yeah. I was just going to say that we have a subcommittee on the private members' public bills committee, and it was just for that. It was steering and getting a lot of the direction out of the way so that we're not involving so many people on just the day-to-day housekeeping, and it actually made it far more effective.

The Chair: Thank you.
Go ahead, Mr. Ceci.

Member Ceci: Through the chair to Mr. Sigurdson: is the composition the same as the one that's before us, the one you just mentioned?

Mr. Sigurdson: Correct. It is. Yeah.

Mr. Sabir: Will there be a quorum requirement for subcommittee meetings?

The Chair: All members have to be present.

Member Ceci: Those three?

The Chair: Yeah. The three people that are on there.
Mr. Feehan.

Mr. Feehan: Thanks. It doesn't actually say that in the quorum piece here. Do we need to add it to make sure?

The Chair: Actually, it does. It says that "the presence of all members of the subcommittee is necessary to constitute a meeting."

Mr. Feehan: Okay. Sorry.

Member Ceci: I want to test the will of the committee to see if the membership could be balanced.

The Chair: It's fairly clear on the composition that it is the chair, the deputy chair, and a committee member from the government caucus.

Member Ceci: Well, I think it's amendable, though. Didn't you say that? Didn't somebody say that?

Dr. Massolin: Mr. Chair, it's up to the committee what the composition is.

The Chair: Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Turton.

Mr. Turton: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd feel more agreeable if the composition as listed on the motion stayed exactly as it was.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Turton.

Mr. Getson: I would move that we vote on it at this point unless there's other dialogue or discussion.

The Chair: Do we have a mover of the motion?

Mr. Getson: I'll make the motion.

The Chair: Read it out, Mr. Getson.

Mr. Getson: The motion is that pursuant to Standing Order 52.011(3) the Standing Committee on Research Stewardship appoint a subcommittee on committee business to meet from time to time at the call of the chair to consider and report to the committee on the business of the committee; that the presence of all members of the subcommittee is necessary to constitute a meeting; that the subcommittee be composed of the following members: the chair as chair, the deputy chair, and a committee member from the government caucus; and that substitutions from the membership of the committee be permitted on the subcommittee.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Getson.
All in favour of the motion, please say aye.

Dr. Massolin: It's discussion first.

The Chair: Sorry, folks. I thought we had had the discussion. Any further discussion on the motion, please?

Mr. Smith: Just a question: when will we be determining who is the government caucus member?

The Chair: I would say that we would do that as soon as the motion is passed.

Mr. Smith: Okay.

Mr. Feehan: I could be wrong because I seem to be a bit slow tonight, but it seems to me that on the PAC committee it's a committee of two, not of three, so that there's an even number.

The Chair: Any comments, Dr. Massolin?

Dr. Massolin: It's up to that committee.

The Chair: It's up to that committee to just have two. So we don't necessarily have to have . . .

Dr. Massolin: Again, it's up to the committee.

The Chair: Any other further discussion?

Member Ceci: Which committee was that?

The Chair: Public Accounts.

Member Ceci: And it's at two.

Mr. Getson: I would suggest that the table isn't balanced to start off with, so the subcommittee is reflective of the people at the table.

6:40

The Chair: Okay. Any further discussion on the motion as presented?

Seeing none, we'll call the question. All in favour of the motion, please say aye. Any opposed?

Carried with one opposed.

Other business. Are there any other issues for discussion before we wrap up today's meeting? I would suggest that we address the membership on the subcommittee if we could.

From the government caucus are there any volunteers to sit on the . . .

Mr. Getson: I would.

The Chair: Mr. Getson. Anybody else? Are you guys going to make it difficult, the three of you?

Member Ceci: Anybody want to be nominated?

The Chair: Well, we just need one member. We would have one member and then someone that would volunteer for substituting if needed. We can do it offline, too. Okay. All right. We can do that later. We'll have a sit-down discussion with the three of you and figure out who it's going to be, then, okay? That's all right with everyone?

Okay. If there are no other issues for today, the next meeting will be set at the call of the chair, as required.

Mr. Sabir: Just a clarification. Who will be on the committee from the government caucus?

The Chair: We haven't decided that yet. We have three volunteers. We'll have a huddle and decide. We'll send out a notice.

Mr. Sabir: I think that's something that should be decided before the committee. Isn't that the procedure?

The Chair: Do you think it's necessary?

Mr. Koenig: Well, Mr. Chair, the motion was not passed with individuals named. So it's not necessary, based on the language of the motion that was passed, to actually name who that is from the government caucus, but if you wish to discuss it, that's up to you.

The Chair: I think we'll have a decision amongst the three people that have volunteered, and we'll send out a notice to the committee members afterwards.

The next meeting will be at the call of the chair as business arises or we get an assignment from the Assembly.

If there's nothing else for the committee's consideration, I'll call for a motion to adjourn.

Member Ceci: So moved.

The Chair: Mr. Ceci.

All in favour? Thank you very much. Oh, sorry. Any opposed to adjourning the meeting? I didn't think so. Sorry. I just anticipated. I shouldn't anticipate.

[The committee adjourned at 6:43 p.m.]

