



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HANSARD VERBATIM REPORT



No. 4 — October 30, 2018

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

Hon. Mark Docherty, Chair
Regina Coronation Park

Hon. Greg Brkich
Arm River

Mr. Dan D'Autremont
Cannington

Mr. David Forbes
Saskatoon Centre

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Meadow Lake

Hon. Paul Merriman
Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland

Ms. Nicole Sarauer
Regina Douglas Park

[The board met at 12:11.]

The Chair: — All right. Welcome to the Board of Internal Economy for October 30, 2018. It is now 12:11 p.m. I call this meeting to order.

I'm looking for a mover and a seconder, a motion for approval of the proposed agenda. Okay. Mr. Harrison and Ms. Sarauer, seconder. Carried.

Okay, we'll approve the minutes of March '18, meeting 3/18, yes. I need somebody to move that motion. Mr. Merriman. And seconder? Mr. Forbes. Carried.

Okay, I've got a number of items, reports to table. I'll do them one at a time and then we'll keep moving.

Item 1, second quarter financial report 2018-2019 for the Legislative Assembly Service. We're just going to go through. We're just tabling reports. Item 2, second quarter financial report 2018-2019 for the Office of the Ombudsman and the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner. Item 3, the second quarter financial report for 2018-2019 for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and the Office of the Lobbyist Registrar. Item 4, second quarter financial report for 2018-2019 for the Office of the Advocate for Children and Youth. Item 5, the second quarter financial report for 2018-2019 for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Elections Saskatchewan. Item 6, the second quarter financial report for the 2018-2019 Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Item 7, there's three subsections to this item. Number one: the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] accountability and disclosure reports for the fiscal year ending March 31st, 2018. Second part of item 7: Saskatchewan Party caucus audited financial statements for the year ending March 31st, 2018. And subsection 3 out of this item no. 7: New Democratic Party caucus audited financial statements for the year ending March 31st, 2018.

Okay, we'll now move into item no. 8. This is the discussion and decision item: funding requests for the Ombudsman for accommodations. Are there any questions for the Ombudsman and staff?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Are we going to go in camera for questions, Mr. Speaker? Or are we going to . . . [inaudible].

The Chair: — I thought we'd have the opportunity to ask questions here, and then we'll go in camera, if that will work for everybody. So are there any questions for the Ombudsman?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Yes.

The Chair: — Come on and join us. Welcome, Ombudsman McFadyen. Could you introduce your official?

[12:15]

Ms. McFadyen: — Yes. With me today is Andrea Smandych, our manager of administration.

The Chair: — Excellent. Do we require the Ombudsman for any bit of preamble or are there any questions right now? Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Yes. We appreciate the information submitted. But maybe just for the purpose of anyone reviewing *Hansard*, if the Ombudsman maybe would like to outline the submission to the board?

Ms. McFadyen: — Yes. So basically, as most of you know, back in February of this year when we did our budget submission, I gave a forewarning that we may be back if we had found suitable space at a reasonable cost in Regina. In Regina we have been in our same space since 1994 and we've substantially outgrown that space. Our mandate has expanded. We now serve as the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner's office. In 2012 we were given jurisdiction over more of the health sector, the publicly funded health entities. Then in 2015 we were given jurisdiction over municipalities. So with those expansions we have more people working there, and our space has not grown in 25 years.

So right now what we've done to accommodate it . . . We have offices that are designed for one person. We've installed cubicles and made it for two people, which is not really ideal for having . . . Our job is to listen to complainants and talk to them in a confidential manner. And we have an officemate who is trying to analyze a report; someone else is on a phone. So it doesn't make it conducive to do our work. It's not ideal. We also lack meeting space and interview rooms for when complainants come in.

So back in 2015, some of you may remember that we brought forward a proposal to co-locate with other officers in a space in Regina. At that time the proposal, if I recall, we were looking at one-time funding costs of renovations to be about 1.5 million. And then there would be an increase to the officers' rent that they'd be asking for on an ongoing basis. Just because of the timing of when that came through in January of 2015, it did not go.

So in the meantime those other officers have moved on, and they've found suitable space. We have not. We're still in the same space. So what we did this year is we looked around, and usually we would use Central Services inventory first to see if there's anything suitable. We also were very careful. We want to make sure that we're downtown so that we're easily accessible. We try to make sure we are not with any other provincial government institutions. We have to be very careful about a perception that they're not coming from Social Services and coming to our door because we don't want them to think that we're part of the executive government. And especially too with our public interest disclosure mandate, I mean it's very . . . If public servants want to come to us, we want to make sure that they feel comfortable in coming to our offices. So anyway.

So we looked and we did find some suitable space downtown that is already on the inventory for Central Services that they've already rented out. Currently there is the corporate services of Economy is in that building. So they are taking part of the floor and they will be moving out a swing space for them. So if we take that floor and the other part of that floor, it would be a suitable accommodation for us.

The rent is, per square metre, cheaper than what we're paying now in our building, although our costs would go up because we're getting more space. I also note that the square metre cost in this building is cheaper than what we were looking at back in 2015, so I think rents have dropped.

So anyway, we've looked at it now, at our situation. And we've been pretty good fiscally, so we feel that we can pay for the one-time costs ourselves right now to move, move everything, do some internal renovations. But the space is pretty good. We could move into it and do some ongoing renovations while we're there.

The reason why I'm bringing it forward now instead of when we do our normal budget cycle is that we're on a lease now till the end of January. And it would be nice if we sort of had some idea that we would be supported going forward so that we could perhaps enter into a lease or try to reach an agreement on a lease. And then we could move into that space and not double up on paying rent. So that is what we're looking for right now, is just a nod from you that it's okay for us to start these . . . to look at this proposal and find new space in Regina.

The Chair: — Okay. Thanks for that. Are there any questions? Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — No, I appreciate the submission and I would say that I don't have opposition to this. I think actually this is quite an elegant solution in some ways and it's, you know, folks in my ministry are in there right now with corporate services.

One thing I would suggest though — and we can work with CS [Central Services] and ICT [information and communications technologies] to facilitate a transition — I think I would prefer considering this as a part of the broader budget submission though. And we're not saying no; in fact I think that there's a strong inclination in the direction to move in this way. But I think it would be probably better considered in the context of the overall submission going forward, from not just your office but as a part of the entire budget process that we have through the board.

So you know, my concern had been around the sensitivities on time. And I understand you have a January 31 lease date. You know, I think the board would be in a position to give you a definitive answer prior to that because we're going to be doing our budget meetings, I believe in mid-January — is that when we're doing consideration? — and I think we're having presentation prior to that as well, so we'll be able to give you a definitive answer.

And I understand that isn't entirely convenient with January 31, but I guess my question would be whether there's an opportunity to look for a month extension, or something of that sort, pending the board giving formal approval.

Ms. McFadyen: — I think we can deal with that with Central Services, that we can probably go maybe on a month-to-month, and if . . .

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Yes, and we'll have an answer for you. It would just be kind of that one additional month that there'd be some overlap in.

Ms. McFadyen: — [Inaudible] . . . flexible. We can make that work, can we?

The Chair: — Any other questions? Thank you. Thank you. For item no. 9, I'm looking for a motion to move in camera. Mr. Brkich. I need a seconder to move in camera. Ms. Sarauer. Carried. The board will now move in camera.

[The board continued in camera from 12:22 until 12:28.]

The Chair: — We are coming out of camera, so we are back. We are back, everyone, for the return of the Board of Internal Economy. And we have a couple of decisions in regards to motions. We've got one motion:

That the Board of Internal Economy recommends Hon. Ron Kruzeniski be reappointed as the Information and Privacy Commissioner for one additional term of five years in accordance with subsection 38(5) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; and,

That this resolution be transmitted by the Chair to the Government House Leader for consideration by the Legislative Assembly in accordance with subsection 38(3) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, to be effective July 1st, 2019.

I would require somebody to move that. Mr. Brkich. I need a seconder. Mr. Forbes. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[12:30]

The Chair: — Carried. I have a second motion:

That the Board of Internal Economy recommends Ms. Mary McFadyen be reappointed as the Ombudsman for one additional term of five years in accordance with section 3(5) of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*; and

That pursuant to section 27(4) of *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, Ms. Mary McFadyen be reappointed as the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner for one additional term of five years; and further,

That this resolution be transmitted by the Chair to the Government House Leader for consideration by the Legislative Assembly in accordance with section 3(3) of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*, to be made effective April 1st, 2019.

I need somebody to move that motion. Ms. Sarauer. I need someone to second it. Mr. Merriman. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Do we have any other business? Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — We had had some discussion around putting forward support for the report from the Chief Electoral Officer with regard to electoral modernization, and we've had

discussion about that at different points. What we are going to do, and I think there's agreement between government and opposition, is that we will be signalling our support for the implementation of that report through a letter both on behalf of the official opposition and government to the Chief Electoral Officer. Thus the board will not be asked to deal with the issue directly.

The Chair: — Okay. Thank you. Mr. Harrison, we're talking about one letter with two signatures or two separate letters?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — It'd be two separate letters, but they would be of similar intent.

The Chair: — Excellent. Ms. Sarauer.

Ms. Sarauer: — I just wanted to make sure that it's on *Hansard* that we agree with what Mr. Harrison is saying, and we're looking forward to providing the Electoral Officer these mirror letters.

The Chair: — Excellent. Thank you. Is there any other business? Seeing none, I'm asking for a motion of adjournment. Mr. Merriman. This board stands adjourned until the call of the Chair. Thank you all for your efforts.

[The board adjourned at 12:33.]