



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES**

## **Hansard Verbatim Report**

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**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES**

Hon. Dan D'Autremont, Chair  
Cannington

Mr. Warren McCall, Deputy Chair  
Regina Elphinstone-Centre

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff  
Saskatoon Silver Springs

Mr. Herb Cox  
The Battlefords

Mr. David Forbes  
Saskatoon Centre

Mr. Corey Tochor  
Saskatoon Eastview

Mr. Doyle Vermette  
Cumberland

Mr. Randy Weekes  
Biggar

[The committee met at 19:00.]

**The Deputy Chair:** — Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, committee members, Mr. Speaker. We're here tonight for the consideration of supplementary estimates. I'd like to introduce, off the top, Government House Leader Ken Cheveldayoff from the government side; Government Whip Herb Cox. Good to see you here. And on the opposition side we've got Mr. David Forbes, caucus Chair, and Mr. Doyle Vermette, Opposition Whip.

We're joined tonight by the Speaker for consideration of supplementary estimates that have been referred to the House Services Committee. And with that, I would turn things over to . . . Just let me back up a sec.

We're here for consideration of supplementary estimates for the Chief Electoral Officer, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and the Information and Privacy Commissioner. Off the top, I'd like to thank Speaker and the witnesses that have come tonight to describe what the supplementary estimates are for. And with that, I'd turn things over to the Speaker.

**General Revenue Fund  
Supplementary Estimates — November  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Vote 34**

**Subvote (CE01)**

**The Speaker:** — Okay. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Committee officials, it's a pleasure to be here this evening to deal with the supplementary estimates. The first order of business are the supplementary estimates of the Chief Electoral office. And to my right we have Mr. Michael Boda, the Chief Electoral Officer, and, to my left, Jennifer Colin who works in the Chief Electoral office. So, Mr. Boda, if you would care to make any presentations that you might have.

**Mr. Boda:** — Just two brief comments in that supplemental funding requests are being put forward for, first, the Lloydminster by-election, which had a budget of \$385,000. We had advance polls during that by-election. There were three. Regular polls were 42. We anticipate . . . We are currently in the midst of this election, as you will know. We're currently in the writ period, and it will not come to an end until the return of the writ on Saturday, December the 6th, after which we will begin the process of collating the statement of votes and, following submission, review, and audit of political party and candidate expense returns, we'll issue a report on the by-election in September of 2015.

A second supplementary request, I understand, is going forward for facilities for Elections Saskatchewan as we prepare for the 28th general election, to the amount of 792,000. The Board of Internal Economy put forward a motion on these funds in June of 2014, and I wish to thank Central Services, the project team that worked with our team at Elections Saskatchewan to move forward under a very tight deadline and a tight budget to complete this job. And I'm pleased to announce that we have just recently moved into these new facilities. Thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much for that, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Boda. Any questions or comments from the committee members at this time? Mr. Cheveldayoff.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Dr. Boda, and Mr. Speaker, to the officials. 385,000 for the Lloydminster by-election — I'm just wondering if you can put that in perspective and let us know what of that cost is relative to, say, the last by-election that took place prior to this one. Is it a similar amount? Can you go into some detail on that?

**Mr. Boda:** — Yes. Well the budget we put forward of course was \$385,000. The previous last by-election that was conducted was in Saskatoon Northwest in 2010, so four years ago, at a cost of \$270,000. And when accounting for a number of issues such as 3 per cent inflation, along with obviously not every constituency is the same . . . Saskatoon is an urban setting and Lloydminster is a split between urban and rural so there are higher costs that are there. So accounting for all of those, it's our view that it's a very equivalent cost for the by-election of 385,000.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — All right. Thank you. I'm just wondering if I could get an itemized breakdown of the 385,000 and, you know, as much detail as you can provide on the expenses that were incurred to come up with that total amount.

**Mr. Boda:** — What I'll do, perhaps I could ask Jennifer Colin to ask, or provide some of those details for you.

**Ms. Colin:** — What we have is a breakdown of the budget. We don't have the actual expenditures because not all the expenses are in yet. But I can tell you we budgeted approximately \$45,000 for compensation for election officials, including the returning officer, election clerk, and enumerators. We budgeted approximately \$36,000 for the cost associated with polls and that includes both the poll rental as well as the staffing costs. We have a budget of just over \$120,000 for reimbursements to candidates and political parties, and that includes the audit expenses that we do reimburse at 100 per cent.

There was about \$63,000 allocated to costs such as rent for the returning office, rent for computers, phones, other office equipment, telephones, courier, those types of costs. We had approximately \$100,000 for advertising costs and that included the cost of the statutory ads that are required to be placed as well as any cost associated with the design and distribution of the voter information cards. And we had about \$12,000 in other costs including any travel costs associated with travelling from Regina to Lloydminster if that was required, and various costs for printing of any forms that were required.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — All right. I think that provides me with the information I need.

**Mr. Cox:** — I'm just wondering. What did you say the advertising was? Sorry.

**Ms. Colin:** — Approximately 100,000.

**Mr. Cox:** — 100,000.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Mr. Cox, further questions?

**Mr. Cox:** — I'm just wondering. You said 63,000 for rent for the office?

**Ms. Colin:** — We had \$63,000 in what's classified as other contractual services, which includes rent for the returning office. It also includes rent of any computers, telephone systems, printers, photocopiers, all those miscellaneous types of services, including janitorial for the returning office. Those types of costs are included in there.

**Mr. Cox:** — For what period of time would that cover, roughly?

**Ms. Colin:** — The returning office was opened in early November? Early November. Due to the low vacancy rate in Lloydminster, we did have to make a commitment to rent the facility until the end of January, and it was a bit of a higher rent than we had actually previously paid. So there's some increased costs for sure attributed just to Lloyd.

**Mr. Cox:** — For three months.

**Mr. Boda:** — If I can correct, it opened up the end of September, early October. I apologize.

**Mr. Cox:** — Oh, okay. So four months then. Okay.

**The Deputy Chair:** — I've got Mr. Vermette and then back to Mr. Cheveldayoff, and then Mr. Forbes.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you. Dr. Boda, I'm just wondering if you can explain to me the process. I think you mentioned a number of different polling that you had but you also talked about advance voting. And how were those communities or advance polls decided, and who would have requested them? And how does one, I guess, request that to make sure communities have access to advanced voting? Could you explain a little bit of that process?

**Mr. Boda:** — This by-election was conducted under the rules of the 2011, that were followed during the 2011 general election. And basically our goal was to complete the election in a way that it was done in 2011. I can't say that it was our goal. These were the rules that were given to us in order to complete that election.

Our returning officer up there had done a number of elections and so was tasked with conducting the election in the way that she had in the past. The locations that were selected were across . . . There were three starting at the very north and in the middle and in the south. Sorry. The advance polls were conducted in those three locations. In terms of the locations, it has to do with availability of facilities, but they basically were conducted in the same way that we did in 2011 for advanced votes.

**Mr. Vermette:** — I don't know, but I guess I'm just wondering, if someone wanted to look at having it in a larger community, how would they go through if they wanted to do that? Is there a process for I guess the community to ask to have another community considered if it has a large population to be considered for advanced polling?

**Mr. Boda:** — You ask a good question. I believe we're prescribed in the way that we do our advanced polls, and so it's prescribed in the certain number that we would have available for this constituency. If we wanted to change the location, I would have to look at that again. But again, we did this one in the way that we've done it in the past.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you. I have no further questions.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Vermette. Mr. Cheveldayoff.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a further question on advertising. Was the advertising naturally a print advertising that you'd see in newspapers and the like? Was there any other electronic advertising? Maybe you could give us a breakdown of that \$100,000 budgeted.

**Ms. Colin:** — I don't have a breakdown in terms of the budget associated with the various types of media, but what I can tell you is we have used the radio. There was a couple of radio stations in Lloyd as well as two newspapers that were each published twice a week, which added to the cost if we wanted to target both audiences. We also had done some targeted mail-outs to provide information to voters about the identification required at the polls, and so other advertising just to promote the fact that there was a by-election and when it was and how people can vote.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — All right. Thank you. Can I ask that we just get a statement of actual costs forwarded to the committee, when the costs were incurred, and in as much detail as you can provide in these categories. You know, you've given us some four or five different categories here, but there's some quite large amounts, and I'd appreciate a breakdown.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Cheveldayoff. I've got Mr. Forbes, and I'm not sure if I've got Mr. Cox as well. Mr. Forbes.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much. And I just have sort of a general question about the move. So it sounds like the move happened at the same time as the by-election, and so I hope it all went well. Do you anticipate any further needs? Because I know that you were hoping to be able to get into more of the planning for the general election. How did the move go? A few thoughts on that.

**Mr. Boda:** — The move has gone well. I wouldn't say that we have moved. I'd say that we're in the midst of transition.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Oh, you're not in the new place right now?

**Mr. Boda:** — We are in the new facilities. But just like it is moving from one home to another, it does take a little time. And it just so happened that the by-election was pretty much on our moving date, and so we were able to make a few changes as you do when you're an election management body. We're in the business of running elections and happy to do that. And so we delayed the move by a week in order to make that transition. We have been able to maintain the other facilities until the end of December, so we're able to make use of the warehouse facilities there during this transition period as well.

[19:15]

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Forbes. Mr. Cox.

**Mr. Cox:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a general question for my own information here. Do you do enumeration before by-elections as well?

**Mr. Boda:** — Yes we do, by legislation. And again we ran this election under the 2011 rules. You are likely aware that we are anticipating the proclamation of the new legislation on December the 8th so, as a result, we ran the election under the old rules. Under the old rules for the general election, an enumeration can be run outside of the writ period. It was in 2011. But for a by-election, it must be run within the writ period.

And that admittedly created some significant challenges for us in the context of a constituency that has very low unemployment and very high salaries, and we had some challenges there. Our goal is to create the best list possible. And we found some challenges there, but we reacted to those challenges, and we were happy to provide a better list I believe than in the past. And we were able to learn a number of things.

And we're in a preparation mode. We're learning not just for this by-election but for the 28th general election because, as you'll know, we are going to conduct a last enumeration.

For the registered political parties, I will be holding a meeting in January to have a debrief of the by-election. And we will also have a discussion about the upcoming enumeration and what we're doing to prepare for that and how we are preparing to implement the new permanent register, assuming that there's a proclamation of the legislation on December the 8th.

**Mr. Cox:** — Thank you. Where in this budget does enumeration cost fall, just for my information?

**Ms. Colin:** — We had budgeted almost \$28,000 for enumerator costs.

**Mr. Cox:** — And that goes under your officials?

**Ms. Colin:** — Yes.

**Mr. Cox:** — Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Cox. Committee members, any further questions for Dr. Boda and the officials? Seeing none, this is a statutory vote. So that would conclude consideration of vote 34, Chief Electoral Officer, page 12 in the Supplementary Estimates book. And Chief Electoral Officer, subvote (CE01) in the amount of \$1,177,000, there'll be no vote as this is statutory.

So again, Mr. Speaker, and Dr. Boda, and Ms. Colin, thank you very much for the work you do and for coming to join us tonight to talk about these dollars under consideration.

**Mr. Boda:** — Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Chair:** — I'd now entertain a brief recess while we change officials.

**General Revenue Fund  
Supplementary Estimates — November  
Conflict of Interest Commissioner  
Vote 57**

**Subvote (CC01)**

**The Deputy Chair:** — Good evening, Commissioner Barclay. Mr. Speaker, if you'd introduce your official, and we'll get down to business.

**The Speaker:** — Okay. Thank you very much. With me this evening we have the Hon. Ron Barclay, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and as well he fulfills the role of the lobbyist registrar. So, Mr. Barclay.

**Mr. Barclay:** — Thank you very much. Just a little background about what we've done in respect to implementing the new legislation which was passed last year. It's under my office as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I'm now responsible for implementing the lobbyist legislation.

And very recently I gave a report to the Minister of Justice of what we've done, and if I may just go through that very briefly. We have now hired a deputy registrar who will be the face of the lobbyist system, and she will be starting early in January. And we're now in the process of having the regulations passed.

Our next step is to contract an IT [information technology] consultant to determine the most suitable lobbyist registry system. And that's a real challenge because if you don't get the proper system, there's going to be a considerable delay and also large expenses, and we're watching that very carefully. Therefore it's very critical to engage the services of an IT developer to develop, procure, install, test, and implement the lobbyist system.

And after that is done . . . Or before that has been done, we have consulted with the registrars in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario and reviewed publicly the available information in BC [British Columbia] and the federal registrar's office.

We're a little concerned with the delays and the cost, but last week in a discussion with the Attorney General . . . I'm going to meet on Thursday with the president of the . . . which was the old land titles system. Is it ITS? I think that's the new name of the organization. And they have, which was really good news, they're now looking after the registry system in Nova Scotia. And it may well be, after that meeting, we'll get a little better idea of the time and the cost. But in other jurisdictions, we have costs as high as \$1 million, and that's just unacceptable as far as I'm concerned.

Would you like me to go through now sort of the budget and the supplementary estimates? Or does anybody have any questions about the implementation of this system?

**The Deputy Chair:** — I think we're ready for the itemized account of the expenditure, Commissioner Barclay.

**Mr. Barclay:** — The first item is the salary costs. And the new deputy, her salary is going to be \$120,000 a year, and she's actually going to be starting on the 17th of January. That's really a major item. We then have to — I'll just get the exact figure — in May we'll also have to hire a program and administration coordinator. My situation right now, I have a very, very low budget. I am working out of the Ombudsman's office. I share a secretary and I have no employees. So we found it necessary to hire a program and administration coordinator, and that's the next step. And that salary range is between 53 and \$69,000.

There's a serious problem in the Ombudsman's office. We're out of space. With my new staff I'm going to get temporary space in the Victoria Tower. And that cost is estimated at about \$36,000 a year. And the estimate to renovate was 25,000 and we've done that for \$9,000, so we're looking at about \$46,000 for that item. The concern is to hire a consultant to advise us on the proper platform and manage the project, and we estimate that figure would be about \$75,000.

Those are sort of the major, major expenses. And the only other item was the \$25,000 which the board has already approved, and that was to bring our new deputy from Yellowknife, and that was the cost. Does anybody have any other questions?

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you for that, Mr. Commissioner. Committee members, any further questions for the Commissioner? Seeing none . . . Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — A clarification on that 25,000. It will likely be spread over two budget cycles as the employee will not be bringing her children down until after the end of the school year.

**Mr. Barclay:** — And it was also based on the actual costs. If it's going to be less than \$25,000 then they're going to have to have evidence of what the costs were. But I think that's reasonable. I think the cost for the . . . discussing it with the Ombudsman was \$30,000, and that's why we picked that figure. I thought it was reasonable.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much for that, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Commissioner. I believe that concludes consideration of vote 57, Conflict of Interest Commissioner, (CC01) in the amount of \$272,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — So Conflict of Interest Commissioner, vote 57, \$272,000. I'll now ask a member of the committee to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending on March 31st, 2015, the following sums for the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in the amount of \$272,000.

Do I have a mover for that motion? Mr. Cheveldayoff. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much. And thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Commissioner.

**Mr. Barclay:** — Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Brief recess while we get the third and final commissioner on the docket.

**General Revenue Fund  
Supplementary Estimates — November  
Information and Privacy Commissioner  
Vote 55**

**Subvote (IP01)**

**The Deputy Chair:** — Okay. Thank you again, colleagues. We'll resume consideration of vote 55, Information and Privacy Commissioner, found on page 12 of the Supplementary Estimates. Mr. Speaker, if you'd introduce your guests, and then we'll take it away.

**The Speaker:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. With me we have Ron Kruzeniski who is the new Information and Privacy Commissioner. Accompanying him is Ms. Pam Scott and Ms. Diane Aldridge. So Mr. Kruzeniski, if you'd like to present your presentation.

**Mr. Kruzeniski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Our supplementary estimates consist of two, one that was considered by the Board of Internal Economy in June of this year for \$10,000. That was an accommodation of me. My executive assistant came with me. It involved a total cost of \$58,000 but Ms. Scott and Ms. Aldridge were able to find savings in the existing budget of the Privacy Commissioner, so the net differential was \$10,000.

The second matter that the board considered was, and Mr. Speaker asked me in July to consider my plans of what ought to be done in the next five years at the Privacy Commissioner's office and to present to the board in August. We did that and developed, on short timelines, a five-year plan indicating some of the things that needed to be accomplished at the office over the next five years. We made a request to the Board of Internal Economy and they considered and approved a request of \$111,000. And that included basically the addition of two additional staff, one analyst to do analytical and research work in the office, and one early resolution officer to deal with people who phoned in with concerns and to attempt to informally resolve those concerns at the very beginning.

[19:30]

In addition to that, because we were full, it involved some accommodation costs, some extra space which we've been successful in finding in the same building that we're in. And of course, some computer and furniture and other costs, all totalling \$111,000.

So those are the two supplementary estimates that we're asking the committee to consider today. They've been before the Board of Internal Economy. And I can just report to you that since my appointment in July, things have been going extremely well. The staff have done great work and we've made significant

progress dealing with backlogs and streamlining our processes and getting out to deal with public bodies and resolve as many concerns as early as possible. So those are my opening comments this evening, Mr. Deputy Chair, and Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Commissioner, Mr. Speaker, officials. Committee members, any questions, comments, for the presentation? Seeing none, thank you very much, Commissioner Kruzeniski. And again, on behalf of this body, welcome to the post and keep up the great work.

But with that, we'd move to consideration of vote 55, Information and Privacy Commissioner (IP01) in the amount of \$121,000. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — I'll now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2015, the following sums for Information and Privacy Commissioner in the amount of \$121,000.

Do I have a mover for that motion? Mr. Forbes. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — On behalf of the statutory officers, I would like to thank the members of the committee for their indulgence, for their questions, and for their agreement on the supplementary estimates.

**The Deputy Chair:** — The gratitude is mutual, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. And before we get too far away here, we've got a report to be . . . Committee members, I believe you've got in front of you the draft of the 10th report of the Standing Committee on House Services. We require a member to move the following motion:

That the 10th report of the Standing Committee on House Services be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

Do I have a mover for that motion? Mr. Cox. Very good. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** — Motion is carried. Thank you very much. And again, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and officials. And with that, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vermette. Thank you very much. The committee stands adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 19:33.]