



Standing Committee on Agriculture

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
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Regina Northeast

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Watrous

Pat Atkinson
Saskatoon Nutana

Bob Bjornerud
Saltcoats

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Cypress Hills

David Forbes
Saskatoon Idylwyld

Carolyn Jones
Saskatoon Meewasin

Ron Osika
Melville

Randy Weekes
Redberry Lake

The committee met at 10:00.

The Chair: — Okay. Seeing everybody here, I'll call the meeting to order. And I guess the first item of business is the perusal and hopefully adoption of the steering committee report.

I already got a copy of this the other day in the House, and I'm sure everybody had the opportunity to go through it and read it in detail. So if there's any questions of the steering committee?

Ms. Atkinson: — Can I make one suggestion. When the Standing Committee on Health Care met and put forward their outline as to how their committee hearings were going to proceed, they indicated that if the committee called a witness, and if that witness asked to be reimbursed, then there was reimbursement to the witness. I'm talking about expert witnesses.

The Chair: — Yes. Again, I made the assumption that that would go without saying because when the committee would require a person to incur expenses to appear before them, it would be the responsibility of the committee to compensate the said individual for such incurred expenses. And the rules do provide for that. Yes.

Ms. Harpauer: — Then the steering committee already . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — It's just not referred to in the draft report.

Ms. Harpauer: — It's not mentioned in the draft report.

The Chair: — But the rules provide for that.

Ms. Atkinson: — It's just not mentioned in the draft report, I wanted to clarify that.

Mr. Kwiatkowski: — It's just redundant since the rules do actually deal with that, so it's understood if that's all right.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that you've circulated this and I looked at it quickly and said it looks fine.

But I'm wondering about item no. 6, and whether or not 20 minutes, including time for questioning by the committee, is adequate.

The Chair: — That was discussed in some detail by the steering committee and it was felt that it was adequate, simply because it is a one-issue issue we're dealing with, it's not such a . . . for example, Health and the health issue had many branches of it that one could go into. This is a very specific question and it's to deal with basically that one question, so the 20 minutes should be adequate for any presenter to be able to state their case.

Ms. Jones: — It is a single question, but I think it has multiple answers and reasons.

The Chair: — It does, but at the end of the day it's still a single issue — a single issue and a single question. And it was felt by the steering committee that 20 minutes would be adequate.

Ms. Atkinson: — I think we also understood that, depending on the number of people requesting to appear before the committee, that we were flexible.

The Chair: — Yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — And people could be given a longer period of time if we have fewer than the allotment . . . fewer people than the allotment of time.

The Chair: — Yes, it would be adjusted and if we had 20 groups or individuals come forth wishing to make presentations, we have ample time to give them more than 20 minutes. But if we have 250, then I think we want to restrain them to answering the question yes or no, basically. And if it's yes, to what degree.

Ms. Jones: — Fine.

The Chair: — Any other questions? Then if . . .

Mr. Forbes: — I'm just curious about these dates and attendance. These will be meetings just for receiving presentations; there won't be any business at these committee meetings?

Ms. Harpauer: — No, what happens at committee meetings is they give their presentation; that gives each of us an opportunity to ask them any questions to clarify the information they've given and then the researcher records and does the report, yes.

Mr. Forbes: — Good.

The Chair: — Any other questions? If not, then could we have a motion to accept the standing committee's report.

Ms. Harpauer: — I make a motion to accept the report. Oh, can I do that? I'm on the committee. Yes.

The Chair: — Agreed. Carried.

The next item of business would be the structuring, I guess you would say, of our first immediate business and that would be receiving the ACRE (Action Committee on the Rural Economy) report.

Ms. Harpauer: — Oh, before we even go on to that . . . No, that's okay. The questions I have are on the ACRE report. Sorry.

The Chair: — Okay. No, problem. So we have set aside and agreed upon setting aside the time from 7 o'clock until 10:30 on Monday, the 29th, to accommodate the ACRE committee.

There's been a request from Donna that, by her leader, requesting some time on the agenda to ask questions. I haven't had a chance yet to run it past the Premier, but have talked to the Minister of Agriculture and basically what he would like is either the Premier or himself be given the same amount of time, which is only fair.

Donna and I also spoke to the member of the third party, Mr. Hillson, who we thought would be only reasonable that we

approach him and offer him an opportunity to ask some questions too. And he suggested that he would like to have 15 minutes.

So I suppose my suggestion is that we would allow the Leader of the Opposition a set amount of time. In this case, to keep things balanced and equal, I would say 15 minutes. We would accommodate either the Premier or the Minister of Agriculture the same accord, and the member of the third party the opportunity to ask questions for 15 minutes.

Ms. Harpauer: — Technically we can't refuse anybody.

The Chair: — Technically we can't refuse anybody, but we would like to have . . . (inaudible) . . . structured.

Ms. Harpauer: — I just feel that if Elwin would like to, I'd like to let you guys know in advance, to have the same courtesies.

Ms. Atkinson: — Let me just ask a question. So if we have 15 minutes for three people, that's 45 minutes. We don't know how long ACRE is going to make their presentation. I guess I ask this question: what is the purpose of this committee?

Ms. Harpauer: — Basically it's to present what their findings are and . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — No, I know. But my point is that we have nine . . . Is it nine members on this committee? Nine members. I'd like to be able to ask questions. I'm sure every member on this committee wants to be able to ask questions. There are nine of us. So then we put three other people into this; we now have 12.

And three of those people who aren't on the committee are going to be given 15 minutes to ask questions. That's 45 minutes. We only have three and a half hours. My question is: how long is ACRE's presentation? They have eight subgroups. They all want to be able to speak. That's 80 minutes. We're now into 80 minutes plus 40 minutes. That's 125 minutes. That's two hours out of a three and a half hour process.

And then there's nine of us that have been struck with asking ACRE questions. I don't know how this works, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Well this is for discussion here.

The Clerk's just informed me that in his discussion with the Chair of the ACRE committee, she informed him that she thought that the committee would want two hours to make their presentation.

Ms. Harpauer: — I have no problem with it not being 15 minutes. Like 15 minutes is quite an extended period of time. I don't have a problem with that.

I just realized, if he asks even two questions, I want to give you a heads up, that he might. Because I think it's only fair. Then the Premier or the Minister of Agriculture realizes that in advance.

I question that Elwin would take 15 minutes.

The Chair: — Well the 15 minutes came about as a suggestion from the third party member. I mean that's for discussion here. I'm just relating to you the content of the conversations that Donna and I have had in the House with members.

Now the final decision of course lays with this committee. We haven't made any decisions; we're just relating to you the information.

Mr. Forbes: — I was going to say, the questions shouldn't have a lot of preamble. Like I think 15 minutes is quite a long period of time, and particularly for I think the third party, I would say five to seven or eight minutes . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I think it's pretty short . . . I . . . you know. They should be well-directed, well-thought-out questions.

Ms. Harpauer: — Technically we can't restrict him. Like if Jack decides to get up, there is not a . . . we can't stop him from getting up.

Ms. Atkinson: — I think in fairness to the private members that are members of this committee, that we need to be able to ask our questions first, given that the legislature has tasked us with this obligation, I guess. And I think what we need to determine is how many minutes will we require to ask our questions. And I really don't know until I see the final report, which none of us have yet.

And this is Wednesday and the . . . you know, we get to question ACRE on Monday evening. So when do we get the final report even though it's . . . We do need to be able to be given an opportunity to look at it. I don't want to be reading it and then — that night — and trying to ask questions.

The Chair: — Hopefully we'll have — and when I say, we, I mean members of the committee — will have a copy of that report no later than Friday. That's what the minister's office told me yesterday.

Ms. Atkinson: — I guess the other thing is does ACRE need two, two hours.

The Chair: — That's the next question.

Ms. Harpauer: — . . . have two hours, I'm assuming this thing will be extremely detailed which, then you don't have as many questions possibly. But two hours is a long report.

The Chair: — Okay. Maybe the first item we want to settle is how . . . what period of time do we, we as a committee feel comfortable in allotting to the ACRE committee to provide its report?

Ms. Jones: — I was still on the previous topic.

The Chair: — Oh, I'm sorry.

Ms. Jones: — But I will speak to this one as well since I have the floor. In terms of the argument that we can't stop them, if we can't stop them then we can't stop any member from asking questions. And I think we either need a rule that nobody will ask questions other than the committee or it's a free-for-all. Because I don't think you can then say to any interested

member, well, we'll only let the leaders and the . . . independent member or the independent Liberal ask questions.

So I think we're . . . I think we need to make a decision either the committee asks the questions or it's open.

And the other issue in terms of . . . What was the other issue, Ron?

The Chair: — The length of time for ACRE to . . .

Ms. Jones: — Right. Well again my understanding is that there's eight subgroups plus, I'm sure an overall presentation.

So at a minimum — maybe two hours is too much — but at a minimum I think 90 minutes would be required. That's 10 minutes per presenter. That's not a lot of time for the issue. And they've put a lot of work into it and I think the whole idea of having them report to the Assembly is to give them an opportunity to explain the work that they've done. So I don't think you can . . . In terms of the length of time, I mean I think we have to allow them at least 10 minutes each.

Mr. Weekes: — Just my thoughts on the time, I think it's important that . . . well from our leader's point that he wants to ask a few questions. Now whether it be 15 minutes or not, I don't know if that's necessary. If we wanted to reduce the time to 10 minutes question period or even less, I don't think we . . . I think we should look at that.

But I think it's important that that be allowed and it's . . . and even though according to the rules that it could be open to all members. I think this . . . We've agreed at the last committee meeting that we don't impose some rules within our own caucuses to make this happen.

Far as the ACRE report, I'm just wondering just for clarification, if there's eight subcommittees I assume each committee would make their presentation. We'd ask questions of each subcommittee as we go along through the night or would we wait until they're all done and then ask the questions?

Ms. Harpauer: — From my understanding they would do their whole presentation and then . . .

Mr. Weekes: — They would do their whole presentation and then . . . but then we'd ask questions.

Ms. Harpauer: — That's what I've understood from anyone I've talked to.

The Chair: — That's the way I understood it too.

Mr. Elhard: — You know I think that given the substantive nature of the topic that ACRE was charged to review or study, you know I think they should have as much time as they feel is necessary to make the points.

You know there's no sense in charging 50 people with the obligation of coming up with ways to revitalize the vast majority of our provincial economy and then say, but you've only got 90 minutes or some many minutes to do it. That's a serious and substantive topic and I would like to give them

whatever opportunity they feel they need to make a thorough and detailed presentation.

Having said that and having, you know, indicated how important I think that would be, if there's time following that for questions, I think the questioning time should be allotted primarily to the committee — to the members of the committee. That's the job we were given, that's our obligation and responsibility. And if there is time left over then we could allot a brief amount of time to the two leaders, especially the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.

Frankly, I don't understand the rationale. I can't accept the rationale that the single member of the third party should have equal time to question. It's as though he's assuming he has the same leadership responsibilities and obligations as the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, and that's simply not the fact.

Ms. Harpauer: — The difficulty comes in . . . like in this room we can agree what we want to take back to our caucus as far as the leader . . . you know, the two leaders go. However, we can't dictate what Jack can or will do. You know, like if he stands up to ask a question, do we ignore him? You know, we've got to come some sort of agreement, I would think, with him in advance, because by the rules of the committee, we can't stop him.

Mr. Elhard: — I suppose my response to that is that we can't stop him from asking questions, and that's not the intent. But the intent of the suggestion is that we as individuals on this committee are charged with that responsibility, so let's take our time doing what we were asked to do, and do our questioning first.

I don't think there's anything that prevents us from saying that that's sort of the way that things are going to unfold. And if there's time left over, we would make it available to the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and then, if there's time left over, maybe the member of the third party could have access.

Ms. Atkinson: — I'm not a mathematician but the way I look at it, we have 210 minutes — three and a half hours. If ACRE requires an hour . . . or two hours, that's 120 minutes. If the leaders and the independent member require 30 minutes, we're down . . . you add the 120 and the 30, you're at 150 minutes. And then you have 60 minutes for all other members of the legislature.

A Member: — What about us?

Ms. Atkinson: — So I guess I mean there is . . . we have 210 minutes. ACRE requires two hours. Now I think that we could talk to them about, is there a way to shorten this up and still be heard, because it's important that you be heard. But we also want to be able to ask . . . have a dialogue. And I think that's what ACRE was about, was having a dialogue with Saskatchewan, particularly rural Saskatchewan. If the leaders require time we could have 12 minutes each and six minutes for the independent member who does represent the Liberal Party in the legislature. And then the committee members would have 60 minutes and there are nine of us.

Ms. Harpauer: — I have no difficulty if the leaders have none whatsoever. I don't know how we want to deal with the third party on that, but I have no problem with that.

The Chair: — I appreciate your timing. I just wondered if . . . Does the committee feel the leaders need 12 minutes? Personally, I don't think so.

Mr. Elhard: — You can give them 12 minutes, but whether they get questions . . . You know, the number of questions they want to pose in 12 minutes is another thing entirely. It depends on the length of the answer. You know, you might . . . depending on the question, you might only get one question in, in 12 minutes. So I guess that's what I find difficult about the time frame. Because you're giving them 5, 10, 15 minutes to ask questions but will that meet the objective depending on how the answers are handled?

Mr. Forbes: — I'm just wondering about the questions from the leaders and if, because of the nature of receiving the report and thanking, you know, the work of ACRE in preparing this report, whether it would be more appropriate to have them do almost the concluding comments or remarks right at the end.

We know we have . . . say 15 minutes before the end, we let the Leader of the Opposition have five minutes to thank the committee, and then we have the Minister of Agriculture or the Premier thank the committee, and then we have you thanking the committee for their work. We know that that's towards the end.

As opposed to questions because, you know, the nature of the questions . . . And I think we had talked about this last time whether the questions can be directed through the committee in written questions or whatever might be a way of funnelling the questions. So I guess what I'm suggesting is, does the leader need time and really want questions or want an opportunity to respond to the . . .

Ms. Harpauer: — It's really difficult because we haven't seen the report. We don't know . . . like it's very, very difficult. Will he have a question? I don't know. He had just approached me and said that he would like the opportunity to personally ask a couple of questions. And I said that I would talk to the committee about that and let them know that he was wanting to do that because that gives an equal opportunity to your party.

He didn't indicate to me that he wanted a great length of time by any means. He thought that they were an important enough committee that they should receive recognition and acknowledgement from the leaders.

Ms. Jones: — Well, I personally think that any questions that any of our leaders have can easily be directed through the committee. I think that if the leaders want some recognition in the process, then thanking the committee would be an adequate way to do it.

And I do believe that we have been charged with the responsibility of receiving the report, that anybody can put their questions through the committee, and that I think it would only be a public relations exercise to have the leaders questioning. And so I am opposed to giving any leader an opportunity to

question. At the end, a five-minute thank you to the committee, I could agree with. But I don't . . . I think it's a slippery slope.

Mr. Forbes: — No, I just think that the five minutes will meet the needs of the leaders acknowledging the work of ACRE and what they've done. And any specific questions really that evening should be for getting information from ACRE and could be well met through the committee, so . . .

Mr. Weekes: — Well, if we're talking about giving the leaders five minutes at the end, I mean that . . . I think we should give them the opportunity to ask the questions for five minutes and not have them make a . . . say the thank you's at the end. I mean, that's really . . . I mean, that's up to the committee and the Chair of the committee to do that.

If it's equal time for the leaders, I think they should be . . . if we're worried about the time, I think we could, I think we could limit it to five or ten minutes per leader rather than use that time just for thank you's at the end. That's really, quite frankly, a waste of time in the sense of substantive questioning or information.

Mr. Elhard: — I just want to ask the members opposite, have any of you attended any of the presentations by the subgroups of ACRE as yet? Have you heard anything that they have . . . you know, I had the privilege of attending one in Maple Creek, where two people from the ACRE committee came out and just spoke on basically one area of expertise or of development that they had been part of. And their presentation took the best part of an hour, in that single area alone. And now we're saying that there might be eight areas that need to, you know, have the same opportunity to develop the area of expertise that they were charged with.

And so I think that there are going to be lots of questions. I don't think we as individuals will run short of questions. And that's why I'm concerned that the ACRE committee get as much time to make their presentations as possible.

Having heard a little bit from the presentation in Maple Creek, I think they've got some very good ideas — very valuable ideas, very important ideas. I don't want to discourage any attempt to elaborate on those ideas, so that again is why I'm pushing for giving them the maximum amount of time we feel we can.

In terms of the question period, if we don't have an hour's worth of questions I'd be very surprised — just ourselves. So we may not have a lot of time at the end of the presentations. But if we do have time, I mean if there is time left, then I think we should say, you know, if the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have specific issues that they want to address, let's do it. Maybe we don't have to set that time aside today in a hard and fast way but I don't think there's anything that would prevent them from having a few minutes at the end.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Chair, we have 210 minutes. ACRE has indicated to you that they require 120 of those minutes. That means we have 90 minutes for the committee to question or respond to the ACRE report either through comment or questions. And there's nine of us; that means 10 minutes each. I don't know if we can prevent anybody from asking a question. We are sitting in the legislature and we can't prevent people

from asking questions.

But I think we can have a certain amount of protocol in terms of how we proceed. And I think it's fair that we need to probably talk again amongst ourselves as to how we might proceed.

I think it would be proper protocol for someone from the opposition and someone from the government in an official way to thank all for the work of ACRE, whether it's the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture. And they may have a question as they're doing their thank you's, but I really do think that the committee should be given the vast amount of the time to ask the questions.

So if it's 10 minutes between the two, I think that would be fair — and then 80 minutes for the committee.

Mr. Kaczowski: — Just an observation I've seen in terms of the way some other committees have operated, and including the Committee of the Whole House. Quite often, a committee may decide that one side will have 15 minutes or 20 minutes, then the other side will have 15 minutes, 20 minutes, and then rotate back and forth. And it's up to each side as to who wants to speak, who wants to present, and sort it out amongst themselves.

In that way you've got an even cut-off. If all of you members don't want to answer questions, want to have someone else answer a question, you're free to use that time as you wish.

It's just a thought, whether that would simplify the process at all. When Mr. Fyke appeared there was an arrangement amongst the House leaders that one side got 20 minutes, the other side got 20 minutes. And if it happened twice, there was a recess, and then Mr. Hillson was given 20 minutes at some point in the middle of that.

That might make things simpler.

The Chair: — Yes. And then any . . . any member of either side of the House can . . . during that period of time if they so wish, and agreed to by their colleagues . . . can ask the questions.

Ms. Harpauer: — Now because of the time restriction . . . with the Fyke Commission it was quite lengthy, but we'd probably want instead of 20 minutes, 10 minutes.

The Chair: — So, Madam mathematician.

A Member: — Yes.

The Chair: — . . . so that we would have . . . if we . . . if ACRE was given two hours to make their presentation, we would have 90 minutes then.

Ms. Atkinson: — Between nine members of the committee.

The Chair: — . . . 90 minutes. If you took off . . . that would give us four rotations of 10. And five minutes on either side to wrap up. Introduction and the . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — I understood that the Chair during the Fyke

Commission hearings asked questions, so it is . . .

The Chair: — Yes, I think . . .

Ms. Harpauer: — . . . a few of them but they're not restricted, I don't think.

The Chair: — But they're not restricted from not answering . . . asking questions. During PAC (Public Accounts Committee) for example, the Chair would ask questions of the officials. Usually after all the other members have asked their questions, but I don't think there's any restrictions from the Chair asking questions.

Would that be an acceptable option? That we, as Viktor has suggested, allotted time to each side, 10 minutes to each side, then any member of that side could ask questions.

Ms. Atkinson: — You know, obviously that we need to have a meeting of the steering committee just to work this out. I think we need to check with our Minister of Agriculture and the Premier, does he . . . do they want to speak, they may not want to. You need to check with the Leader of the Opposition, how much time does he . . . you know, what's acceptable. And then try and work out how we'd allocate the 90 minutes.

Mr. Forbes: — I would feel more comfortable if we just kept the questions as much to the committee as possible. And would the process be that once the committee, we've run out of questions, then we open it up to the floor? Or does someone at the back all of a sudden get to . . . and then you have to recognize that person . . .

The Chair: — I think the option is here is either we keep all the questioning to the committee members, allow no one else to ask questions, or we follow Viktor's suggestion and then allot each side a certain period of time. And then each side can choose from their own ranks who wishes to ask questions and so on and so forth.

Because I mean, you can't restrict anybody from in the House from asking questions. So I mean we have to have some sort of a gentleman's agreement in place and method we're going to handle it. And I don't think you . . . unless we have allotted time for each leader and/or his designate to ask questions but then, you know, you open it up. And I don't know that . . . It should be either/or, I think.

Ms. Harpauer: — I think we should do the 10-minute increments. I think we all understand in this room that our sentiments is that committee will be asking 99.9 per cent of the questions. If we just have . . . I mean, I can't see it being any differently. And if we do it, I think in the Fyke Commission hearing, it worked very well to go from one side then to the other in time allotments.

Mr. Elhard: — I think that would be an easier way to manage this whole thing, is say okay, each side will have alternating opportunities to question at 15- or 20-minute intervals. Ten minutes is too short, if you don't mind me saying so, because you can't follow a line of questioning in 10 minutes. You know, you can't develop a good series of questions if you've got something on an issue. And I think that you need more time

than that to kind of follow through in an area.

The Chair: — If we give ACRE two hours to make their presentation, then we only have 90 minutes left for questions. We're going to have to allot 10 minutes — I would think five minutes for opening and five minutes for closing. So that narrows it down to 80 minutes.

So then to have a balance, how do you work 80 minutes into any other balance other than 10-minute sections?

Mr. Elhard: — Twenty-minute sections. Twenty times four.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thirty, thirty, ten and ten.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thirty, thirty, ten and ten?

The Chair: — Or you could do it that way, I suppose.

Mr. Elhard: — Something like that, yes.

Ms. Atkinson: — Now of course my mathematical mind is thinking of five committee members on one side, four on the other. So I was doing government, opposition; government, opposition; government, opposition; government, opposition; government.

If you do the 30, 30, 10, and 10, and then 10 — whether it's five minutes at the front end or five at the back end — then my thought of five versus four doesn't work well.

The Chair: — But by allotting time it's then not only restricted to the members of the committee, it's restricted to the members on that side of the House.

Ms. Harpauer: — . . . minutes.

Ms. Atkinson: — No, I'm thinking of allocation of time. There are more government. I'm not trying to get into a debate, but there are more government members on this committee than opposition members, so if you're allocating time based on numbers, it means that the government members should get a few more minutes to ask questions.

Ms. Harpauer: — Is that what happened with the Fyke Commission, that the government members got more time or was it equally allocated?

The Chair: — Okay. That was done in the Committee of the Whole; it wasn't a standing committee. So it was equal.

Ms. Atkinson: — So if it's equal then, we could do 30 minutes, 30 minutes, 10, 10 — and then the last 10 could be five at the front end and five at the back.

Ms. Harpauer: — I think that's an excellent idea.

The Chair: — Okay.

Mr. Elhard: — Have you got any minutes in there for Jack?

Ms. Harpauer: — Oops.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, that's a very good point. So we could go 25, 25, 10, 10, and 10. Okay . . . (inaudible) . . . this works. This is being recorded which seems a bit ridiculous, but — as we're trying to get the numbers — but what you could do is 5 minutes at the front, 25 opposition, 25 government, 10 Jack, 10 opposition, 10 government, 5 wrap.

Ms. Harpauer: — So it's 35 minutes, 70 minutes for the committee.

Ms. Atkinson: — What I've got is, what I've got is it is 90 minutes.

The Chair: — Ninety minutes in total.

Ms. Atkinson: — In total. Five minutes in the front, 25, 25, three 10s — one of the 10s would be for Jack — and 5 for a wrap. That's 90 minutes.

Ms. Harpauer: — Do we need 5 beginning and end?

The Chair: — Well that gives us a couple of minutes of flexibility. I guarantee you we're not going to be exactly on, all this stuff, because what's going to happen is answers is going to run over the limit . . . (inaudible) . . . the answer off, you know.

Ms. Jones: — My suggestion is that we quit recording all of this and go, either go in camera, or have the steering committee make some decisions on this issue.

But I would like to state once more for the record that I believe that the committee has been charged with the responsibility and ought to have the appropriate time. If you're divvying it up opposition, government, third party, there is no guarantee that committee members will get to ask any questions. And I think that that's an improper way.

We have a responsibility. I think we should take it. And that's the end of my comment on that issue.

The Chair: — Okay.

Mr. Elhard: — Frankly, I didn't read the allotment of time in that way; you know, dividing it between government and opposition members.

I still think that the primary responsibility lies with the committee members. It's just a way of making sure that each side kind of gets the proportionate amount of time, and I don't think that we will see people standing up on our side of the House trying to horn in on that 20 minutes of time that's been allotted to us. I don't anticipate that at all. That isn't my vision of the purpose, or that isn't my understanding of what will happen just by dividing up the time allotment. So that doesn't worry me, frankly.

The Chair: — Okay. Okay. Do we have any further suggestions or discussions? Is somebody prepared to . . .

Ms. Harpauer: — . . . with what Pat suggested.

The Chair: — Is somebody prepared to present a motion to the committee?

Ms. Atkinson: — I would move:

That we allot the 90-minute time for questions in the following way: five minutes for opening, 25 minutes for each side of the House, then three 10-minute allotments, including making room for the independent member, and then a 5 minute close; for a total of 90 minutes.

The Chair: — And has everybody heard the motion? Take it as read? Do we all agree? Carried.

Now at the same time, one would have to make an assumption, based on your motion, that we're allotting ACRE two hours for their presentation. I believe that we should have a motion to that effect . . . or is that agreed? Okay.

Ms. Harpauer: — Very quickly, just because I was supposed to report back on the ambiguity of the original motion, and Clay and I discussed it because it says that we are just to pass the report through, or/and it also says that we're supposed to make a report. In order to comply with both of those, we decided the committee would make a report but that report basically would be thanking the committee for all their time, effort, whatever. It wouldn't be passing judgment on anything in the report.

The Chair: — No recommendations or comments on it. We would just be thanking them for their efforts.

Ms. Harpauer: — Yes, it will just be a thank you report from the committee.

The Chair: — . . . already typed up. Okay.

Ms. Atkinson: — Now I have a question. Given that this was sort of an organizational meeting, this no doubt will be on the record. And it isn't going to read very well.

So how do we handle these kinds of things? Are usually the kind of the organizational, how you deal with the time, is that usually in *Hansard*, those kinds of discussions?

The Chair: — I see no reason why not. I see no reason why any discussion in this committee in regards to procedures should not be recorded.

Ms. Atkinson: — I'm not talking about . . . Procedures are fine. But I'm talking about sort of the . . .

The Chair: — That's what we were discussing, was the procedures, the time allotted for the procedure.

I mean ask the committee, if we want to go in camera, we can.

Ms. Jones: — Little late now.

The Chair: — I think anybody who read this . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — This is going to be difficult to read. Anybody that reads this is going to . . .

The Chair: — Anybody who reads this will certainly, will certainly I hope glean from it that the . . . all members had the opportunity to discuss the issue and that we were able to arrive

at an agreement by all members. I think that's important too.

And who's going to read it anyway?

Is that agreed? Adjournment?

And the next meeting will be at the call of the Chair, I guess . . .

A Member: — Or Monday night.

The Chair: — Or Monday night. Yes, it'll be Monday night, but hopefully we don't have to have one between now and Monday.

The committee adjourned at 10:43.