



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

MINUTES AND VERBATIM REPORT

Published under the authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



No. 2 — March 25, 2009

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

Hon. Don Toth, Chair
Moosomin

Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Cannington

Ms. Doreen Eagles
Estevan

Mr. Glen Hart
Last Mountain-Touchwood

Mr. Len Taylor
The Battlefords

Hon. Christine Tell
Regina Wascana Plains

Mr. Kevin Yates
Regina Dewdney

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

Room 8 Legislative Building
5:09 p.m., March 25, 2009

Present: Members of the Board of Internal Economy

Hon. Don Toth, Speaker, Chair
Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Ms. Doreen Eagles
Mr. Glen Hart
Mr. Len Taylor
Hon. Christine Tell
Mr. Kevin Yates

Staff to the Board

Mr. Greg Putz, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Mr. Ken Ring, Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel
Ms. Margaret Tulloch, Secretary to the Board

ITEM 2 Table Item: The Recount: Report of the Review of the Operational Environment and Accountabilities of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer for Saskatchewan

The Chair tabled the report for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

ITEM 1 Decision Item: Reappointment of Information and Privacy Commissioner

Moved by Mr. D'Autremont, seconded by Mr. Yates:

That the Board recommend to the Legislative Assembly that Mr. R. Gary Dickson, Q.C., be reappointed to a second five-year term as the Information and Privacy Commissioner in accordance with Section 38(3) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

A debate arising and the question being put, it was agreed.

Minute # 1722

ITEM 3 Decision Item: Travel Expense Clarification

Moved by Ms. Eagles, seconded by Mr. Taylor:

That Directive #3.1 be amended by adding the following clause after clause (3)(d):

“(e) reimbursement of all travel expenses by private aircraft shall be based exclusively on direct road distance in accordance with clause 3(a)”.

A debate arising and the question being put, it was agreed.

Minute # 1723

ITEM 4 Other Business

The Chair committed to bring forward recommendations related to the disposal of items to charities at a future meeting.

The Board adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

[The board met at 17:09.]

The Chair: — First of all, I'll call this meeting to order. The real reason we're here is we've got a couple issues we need to deal with. We're getting to the end of the fiscal year. One of the issues is the reappointment of Mr. Gary Dickson as the Privacy Commissioner. And we need to have a motion from this Assembly giving the Speaker, I believe, the responsibility of writing the Premier to make sure the order in council gets through immediately.

And secondly, we had a request come in from a member in regards to travel expense, a member who actually has access to a private plane and just wants to have clarity because he wants to make sure that when he submits his travel expense that it's recorded appropriately. We'll have a motion in that regard.

And then I'm going to table the account — and we'll do that right now — we'll table the report of Mr. Hamilton, his review of the Chief Electoral Officer.

So those are the three items for discussion. First of all, I need a motion for the reappointment of the acting Chief Electoral office. I'm not sure if we've got all the motions passed out. So if I could have a mover to reappoint the Chief Electoral office.

That's the Privacy Commissioner — right, pardon me — Privacy Commissioner, my apologies. I got on two tangents here, Privacy Commissioner.

Hon. Mr. D'Autremont: — I so move.

The Chair: — Do we have a seconder to that motion? Mr. Yates. Question?

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Item no. 1 on the agenda talks about reappointment of the acting . . . Is that an error?

The Chair: — Yes.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Okay, all right.

The Chair: — Okay. Sorry, Margaret, I wasn't paying attention to that. I was on my own. Duly noted.

Okay, so we have a motion by the member from Cannington, seconded by the member from Regina Dewdney:

That the board recommend to the Legislative Assembly that Mr. R. Gary Dickson, Q.C. [Queen's Counsel], be reappointed to a second five-year term as the Information and Privacy Commissioner in accordance with section 38(3) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Do we have any questions? Seeing none, is the board in agreement with the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed. Carried.

Now we have another need for a motion to just clarify travel expenses so that members, if they're using private aircraft, know exactly how they can claim that expense through their travel expense. And we have a recommendation:

That directive #3 be amended by adding the following clause after clause 3(d):

Reimbursement of all travel expenses by private aircraft shall be based exclusively on direct road distance in accordance with clause 3(a).

So that clarifies it and it makes it a lot simpler. And for the query that came in, now they know exactly how to apply for . . . And they feel a lot more comfortable knowing that there's a clarification and identification of private aircraft. Do I have a mover for this motion?

Ms. Eagles: — Mr. Speaker, can I have one question first?

The Chair: — Yes.

Ms. Eagles: — So this means that he or she can be reimbursed at the same rate as we do for travelling by our car and the same distance in mileage. Right?

The Chair: — Correct.

Ms. Eagles: — Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: — I need a mover for this motion. Okay, Ms. Eagles. Do I have a seconder for the motion? Mr. Taylor, member from The Battlefords. So it has been moved by Ms. Eagles, the member from Estevan, seconded by Mr. Taylor, the member from The Battlefords:

That directive 3(1) be amended by adding the following clause after clause 3(d):

Reimbursement of all travel expenses by private aircraft shall be based exclusively on direct road distance in accordance with clause 3(a).

Any questions in regards to the motion? Seeing none, is the committee agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed. Carried. Thank you.

Now we have passed out the report of Mr. Hamilton's in regards to review of the Chief Electoral office. And because most of you have just received it, I'd like you to take some time and review it, and we should have a meeting very early next week.

What we have had, Mr. Hamilton came here and I believe roughly his expenses . . . so far he's expensed the Chief Electoral office roughly 8,000. Am I correct? I think it's roughly 8,000. We had moved a motion that no more than \$40,000 . . . well he's well underneath that. But he'd also be prepared to answer any questions we may have.

Seeing the fact that, outside of these steering committee members, the rest of you haven't seen the report, very difficult to ask questions but if you feel there are some things you'd like to ask of Mr. Hamilton, what I would suggest we . . . Well we had contacted him about potential dates. He gave us a number this week, but they're basically pretty well passed, and very difficult to organize anything this week. And I'm thinking maybe either Monday or Tuesday, either through conference call or if I had sufficient time that we could touch base with Mr. Hamilton before the weekend, he might be able to come personally.

But I just want a sense of where the committee's at if a conference call . . . even, say, over the supper hour, we could have dinner in on Monday night or Tuesday night. Take a look at your calendars and let me know. That might be the best time for us to have a conference call. And seeing as we sit in the evenings, I'm sure we could work something out for the board to meet over the supper hour, have a meal together, and discuss the report.

So if I don't hear anything differently, Greg, would it be possible to check and see if Mr. Hamilton would be available for a conference call on? Right now I'm going to say Monday between 5 and 7, unless we hear something differently or some time on Tuesday, but I would suggest Monday between 5 and 7. So I'll turn it over to Greg for a comment.

Mr. Putz: — I will try to be in touch with Mr. Hamilton, see if he's available at that time. I suspect he will be available. He did say that . . . Well of course his contract to do this work expires at the end of the month, so that I think is part of the reason for this short time frame. His report was due on the 16th, which he turned over to Mr. Speaker. And as Mr. Speaker outlined, the steering committee members had an opportunity to look at this, so they're in a better position of course to know what kind of questions they want to ask Mr. Hamilton.

So you might want to be in touch with your members of the steering committee to see whether it would be sufficient for them, if you want to channel your questions through Mr. D'Autremont or Mr. Yates if you cannot be in attendance. But the reason I say that is that, unfortunately, given the contract and the fact that the funding and Mr. Hamilton's contract with us ends at the end of March, we need to do this sooner rather than later unfortunately. But I will contact Mr. Hamilton. I suspect he'll be available certainly to talk to us by conference call.

The Chair: — Do you have any further comments from members in regards to a conference call and doing a quick review of the report with Mr. Hamilton Monday evening between 5 and 7?

Mr. Putz: — I have to check my agenda.

The Chair: — Okay. Well tentatively, unless we hear something differently, we'll schedule it for Monday between 5 and 7. We'll order in dinner. And so over the next 2, 3 days, 4 days, if you have a chance to go through the report and jot down any questions you may have — I know there'll be a few — and some of the recommendations, and I want you to take a moment to look at it.

Having said that, there'll be some other business that we want to look at. And number one is ensuring we've got . . . actually, reviewing exactly how we go about reappointing or the appointment of independent members, and Mr. Ring is currently working on some information in that regard. And we'll discuss that at a full board meeting at a later date.

Is there any other business that needs to be addressed at this particular time? Yes, Greg?

Mr. Putz: — Mr. Speaker, there's also one other outstanding matter that you had raised, and that was the disposal of assets from your constituency office perhaps to charitable organizations. We're still researching that, and perhaps by the time of the next meeting, we can bring that forward as well, either to the board or to the steering committee — whatever your choice is in that regard.

The Chair: — Okay, we will look into that at a later date. Well thank you so much for your time and attention, and this meeting stands adjourned until the call of the Chair.

[The board adjourned at 17:20.]