

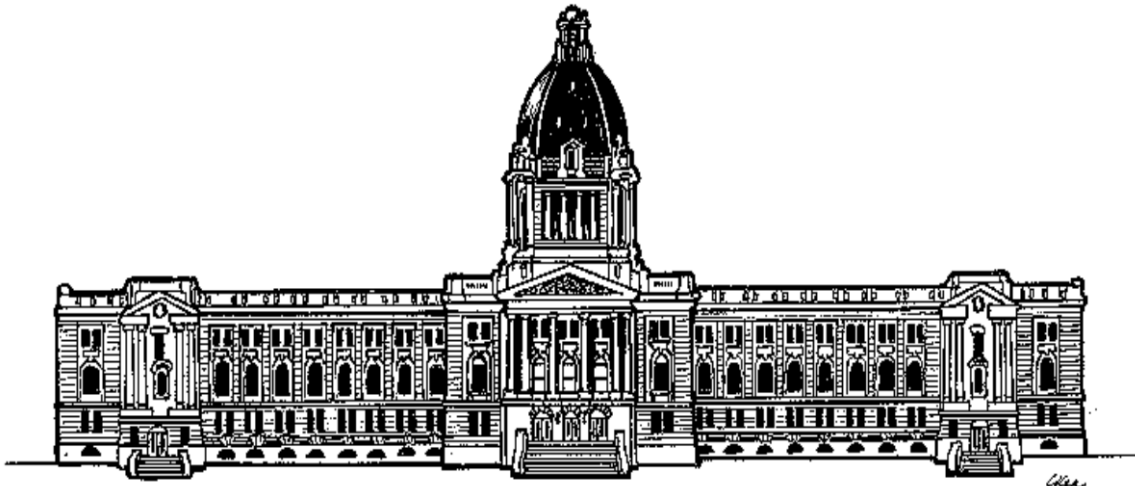


Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

MINUTES AND VERBATIM REPORT

**Published under the authority of
The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker**



No. 1 — February 21, 2002

**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY
2002**

Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky, Chair
Prince Albert Carlton

Bob Bjornerud
Saltcoats

Dan D'Autremont
Cannington

Doreen Hamilton
Regina Wascana Plains

Hon. Glenn Hagel
Moose Jaw North

Carolyn Jones
Saskatoon Meewasin

Hon. Ron Osika
Melville

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

Room 10 Legislative Building

Tuesday, February 21, 2002

Present:

Members of the Board of Internal Economy

Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky, Chair
Mr. Bob Bjornerud
Mr. Dan D'Autremont
Ms. Doreen Hamilton
Hon. Glenn Hage
Ms. Carolyn Jones
Hon. Ron Osika

Staff to the Board

Marilyn Borowski, Director, Financial Services
Gwenn Ronyk, Clerk
Margaret Kleisinger, Secretary

Officials in Attendance

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

Jan Baker, Chief Electoral Officer
Jean Ouellet, Manager of Election Finances

Office of the Provincial Ombudsman

Barbara Tomkins, Provincial Ombudsman
Murray Knoll, Assistant Ombudsman
Lynne Fraser, Human Resources and Financial Administrator

Office of the Children's Advocate

Deborah Parker-Loewen, Children's Advocate
Bernie Rodier, Human Resources and Financial Administrator

Office of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

Guy Barnabe, Director of Information Services
Lorraine deMontigny, Director of Visitor Services
Linda Kaminski, Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services
Pat Kolesar, Assistant Legislative Librarian
Viktor Kaczkowski, Clerk Assistant (Committees)
Marian Powell, Legislative Librarian
Gregory Putz, Deputy Clerk
Ken Ring, Legislative Counsel and Law Clerk
Pat Shaw, Sergeant-at-Arms
Kerry Bond, Broadcast Services Technician
Margaret Woods, Clerk Assistant

AGENDA

Moved by Mr. D'Autremont, seconded by Ms. Hamilton, that the proposed agenda be adopted. Agreed.

MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Osika, ordered, seconded by Ms. Jones, ordered, that the Minutes of Meeting #2/01 be adopted. Agreed.

ITEM 1

Table Item: Members Accountability and Disclosure Reports for the Fiscal Year ended March 31, 2001

The Chair tabled the reports.

ITEM 2

Table Item: Audited Financial Statements and Schedule of Assets of the Government, Opposition and Liberal Caucuses for the Fiscal Year ended March 31, 2001

The Chair tabled the statements and schedules of assets.

ITEM 3

Table Item: Legislative Assembly Year-End and Quarterly Financial Forecast Reports

The Chair tabled the reports for the year ended March 31, 2001 and the first, second and third quarterly financial forecast reports.

ITEM 4 **Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Chief Electoral Officer**

The Estimates, in the amount of \$895,000, were presented by Ms. Jan Baker, Chief Electoral Officer.

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

The Board recessed for a short time.

ITEM 5(i) **Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Offices of the Provincial Ombudsman and Children's Advocate**

The Estimates, in the amount of \$1,605,300, were presented by Ms. Barbara Tomkins, Provincial Ombudsman.

The Estimates, in the amount of \$1,158,000, were presented by Ms. Deborah Parker-Loewen, Children's Advocate

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

ITEM 5(ii) **Special Warrant Requests**

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

That a Special Warrant in the amount of \$11,000 be approved for the Provincial Ombudsman for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

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

Minute #1539

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That a Special Warrant in the amount of \$44,000 be approved for the Children's Advocate for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

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

Minute #1540

ITEM 6 **Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner**

The Estimates, in the amount of \$122,000, were presented by Mr. Gerald Gerrand, Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

A debate arising, the item were deferred until later in the day.

ITEM 7 **Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner**

The Estimates, in the amount of \$105,000, were presented by Mr. Gerald Gerrand, Information and Privacy Commissioner.

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

Mr. Gerrand suggested that the role of the office should be expanded under a new Information and Privacy Commissioner.

The Board recessed for a short time.

ITEM 8 **Decision Item: Correction to Directives Setting Independent Officer Salaries**

Moved by Ms. Hamilton, seconded by Mr. D'Autremont:

That Directive #20 – Conflict of Interest Commissioner's Salary and Expenses, Directive #26 – Chief

Electoral Officer's Salary and Expenses, Directive #27 – Ombudsman's Salary and Expenses, and Directive #28 – Children's Advocate Salary and Expenses be amended as attached.

DIRECTIVE #20

CONFLICT OF INTEREST COMMISSIONER'S SALARY AND EXPENSES

(1) Section 22 of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act* provides that:

22 The commissioner is entitled to be paid:

- (a) a salary to be fixed by the Board of Internal Economy; and
- (b) an allowance for travelling and other expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of the commissioner at a rate approved by the Board of Internal Economy.

(2) The Conflict of Interest Commissioner shall be paid an annual salary of:

- (a) effective April 1, 2001, \$60,456;
- (b) effective July 1, 2001, \$63,624;
- (c) on and from July 1, 2002, the existing base salary plus the economic adjustments that are provided to deputy ministers.

(3) The Conflict of Interest Commissioner is eligible to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties in accordance with the tariff of travel and sustenance expenses provided under *The Public Service Act* for out of scope employees in the Public Service.

DIRECTIVE #26

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER'S SALARY AND EXPENSES

(1) Section 4.4 of *The Election Amendment Act, 1998* provides as follows:

4.4 The Chief Electoral Officer is entitled to be paid:

- (a) a salary to be fixed by the Board of Internal Economy following consultations with the Chairperson of the Public Service Commission; and
- (b) an allowance for traveling and other expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of the Chief Electoral Officer at a rate approved by the Board of Internal Economy.

(2) On and from April 1, 2000, the Chief Electoral Officer shall be paid an annual salary in an amount equal to the maximum of the Senior Executive 2 range or equivalent and would also receive any privileges of office and economic adjustments that are provided to deputy ministers.

(3) Employee benefits applicable to the public servants of Saskatchewan and Legislative Assembly employees shall apply to the position of Chief Electoral Officer.

(4) The Chief Electoral Officer is eligible to be re-imbursed for travel and other expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties in accordance with the provisions for travel and other expenses approved under *The Public Service Act* for out of scope employees in the Public Service.

DIRECTIVE #27

OMBUDSMAN'S SALARY AND EXPENSES

(1) Section 6 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act* provides that:

6 The Ombudsman is entitled to be paid:

- (a) a salary to be fixed by the Board of Internal Economy; and
- (b) an allowance for traveling and other expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of the Ombudsman at a rate approved by the Board of Internal Economy.

(2) Section 15 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Amendment Act, 2000* provided that:

15(1) Subject to subsection (2), this Act comes into force on assent.

- (2) Sections 5, 9 and 14 are retroactive and are deemed to have been in force on and from March 31, 2000.
- (3) On and from April 1, 2000, the Ombudsman shall be paid an annual salary in an amount equal to the salary paid to the Provincial Auditor and would also receive any privileges of office and economic adjustments that are provided to deputy ministers.
- (4) The Ombudsman is eligible to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties in accordance with the tariff of travel and sustenance expenses provided under *The Public Service Act* for out of scope employees in the Public Service.

DIRECTIVE #28

CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE SALARY AND EXPENSES

- (1) Section 12.3 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act* provides that:
- 12.3** The Children's Advocate is entitled to be paid:
- (a) a salary to be fixed by the Board of Internal Economy; and
- (b) an allowance for traveling and other expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of the Children's Advocate at a rate approved by the Board of Internal Economy.
- (2) Section 15 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Amendment Act*, 2000 provided that:
- 15(1)** Subject to subsection (2), this Act comes into force on assent.
- (2) Sections 5, 9 and 14 are retroactive and are deemed to have been in force on and from March 31, 2000.
- (3) On and from April 1, 2000, the Children's Advocate shall be paid an annual salary in an amount equal to the salary paid to the Provincial Auditor and would also receive any privileges of office and economic adjustments that are provided to deputy ministers.
- (4) The Children's Advocate is eligible to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties in accordance with the tariff of travel and sustenance expenses provided under *The Public Service Act* for out of scope employees in the Public Service.

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

Minute #1541

ITEM 9

Decision Item: Make Public the Task Team Report on Independent Officers' Remuneration

Moved by Mr. D'Autremont, seconded by Ms. Hamilton:

That the June 1, 2001 *Report on Independent Officers' Remuneration* be released for public access on request.

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

Minute #1542

ITEM 10

Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Legislative Assembly

ITEM 10(a)

Review Budget Document

The Board reviewed the Estimates for the Legislative Assembly submitted as follows:

Budgetary:	\$ 6,151,000
Statutory:	\$11,744,000
Total:	\$17,895,000

ITEM 10(b)(iii)

Decision Item: Response to the Report on the Cost Impact of House and Committee Reforms Proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures

The report of the *Cost Impact of House and Committee Reforms* proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures was presented by Greg Putz, Deputy Clerk and Clerk to the Special Committee. .

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

ITEM 10(b)(iv) Decision Item: New Committee Room Proposal

The new committee room proposal was presented by Gwenn Ronyk, Clerk; and Robert Wells, PSW Architecture & Interior Design Ltd.; and Allan Hansen, Building Manager, Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

ITEM 10(b)(i) Decision Item: B Budget: Project Training Request

The project training request was presented by Linda Kaminski, Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services.

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

ITEM 10(b)(ii) Decision Item: B Budget: Reference Librarian Position

The librarian position request was presented by Marian Powell, Legislative Librarian.

A debate arising, the item was deferred until later in the day.

The Board met "in camera" at 6:15 p.m.

The Board resumed public meetings at 9:00 p.m.

ITEM 4(con't) Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Chief Electoral Officer

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

That the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, in the amount of \$811,000 (Statutory) be transmitted to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

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

Minute #1543

ITEM 5(i)(con't) Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Offices of the Provincial Ombudsman and Children's Advocate

Moved by Ms. Hamilton, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Provincial Ombudsman be approved in the amount of \$1,533,000.

And that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

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

Minute #1544

Moved by Ms. Hamilton, seconded by Mr. D'Autremont:

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Children's Advocate be approved in the amount of \$1,118,000.

And that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

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

Minute #1545

ITEM 6 (con't) Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be approved, as submitted, in the amount of \$122,000.

And that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

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

Minute #1546

ITEM 7(con't)

Decision Item: Review of the 2002-2003 Estimates for the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Information and Privacy Commissioner be approved, as submitted, in the amount of \$105,000.

And that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

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

Minute #1547

ITEM 10(b)(i)

Decision Item: B Budget: Project Training Request

A debate arising, no motion was moved and the item did not proceed.

ITEM 10(b)(ii)

Decision Item: B Budget: Reference Librarian Position

A debate arising, no motion was moved and the item did not proceed.

ITEM 10(b)(iii)
and (iv)

Decision Items: Response to the Report on the Cost Impact of House and Committee Reforms Proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures and New Committee Room Proposal

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That the reports on the *Cost Impact of House and Committee Reforms* proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures and the new committee room proposal be received and filed for future consideration and forwarded to the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures.

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

Minute #1548

ITEM 10(c)

Decision Item: Motion to approve Budgetary and Statutory Expenditure Estimates of the 2002-2003 Budget for the Legislative Assembly

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

That the 2002-2003 Estimates of the Legislative Assembly be approved as follows:

Budgetary:	\$ 5,977,000
Statutory:	\$11,744,000
For a total of	\$17,721,000

And that such Estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

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

Minute #1549

ITEM 10(d)

Decision Item: Motion to approve Revenue Estimates

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That Revenue Estimates for the Legislative Assembly in the amount of \$8,000 be approved for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

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

Minute #1550

ITEM 11 Decision Item: Technical Support for Constituency Offices

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Ms. Hamilton:

That Directive #24 – *Constituency Office and Furniture Provision* be amended to permit the payment of expenses for technical computer support under the directive; and

That Directive 24 – *Constituency Office and Furniture Provision* be amended as attached.

DIRECTIVE #24
(s.50(4), c.L-11.1)

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE PROVISION

- (1) APPLICATION - This directive governs the provision of equipment and furniture, and technical computer support on behalf of an MLA for his or her constituency offices by the Legislative Assembly Office.
- (2) DEFINITIONS - In this directive:
 - “equipment and furniture” means equipment and furniture, including computer hardware and software and a photocopier, required to furnish and operate a constituency office;
 - “MLA” means a Member of the Assembly;
 - “S.P.M.C.” means the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation continued by *The Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation Act*;
 - “technical computer support” means remedial technical support that includes on site assistance, software and hardware troubleshooting and installation and removal of software and hardware, but excludes database design and software development;
 - “term” means the period commencing on polling day for a general election and ending on the day immediately preceding polling day for the next general election.
- (3) PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE, AND TECHNICAL COMPUTER SUPPORT - The Legislative Assembly shall provide each MLA with equipment and furniture, and technical computer support for his or her constituency office. The Legislative Assembly Office shall acquire the equipment and furniture through S.P.M.C. in accordance with current government policies.
- (4) MAXIMUM AMOUNT - The maximum amount of equipment and furniture, and technical computer support that the Legislative Assembly Office shall provide each term to an MLA is:
 - (a) for photocopier rental, to a maximum monthly rental amount of \$200;
 - (b) at the direction of the MLA, the purchase of a computer system or systems, an upgrade of an existing computer system or systems, or technical computer support to a maximum of \$6,000; and
 - (c) \$1,000 for other equipment and furniture, and technical computer support.
- (5) BUDGET - The Legislative Assembly Office shall budget and pay for the costs of acquiring the equipment and furniture, and technical computer support authorized by the directive.
- (6) CROWN PROPERTY - All equipment and furniture provided to an MLA pursuant to this directive is the property of the Crown in right of Saskatchewan. An MLA may utilize that equipment and furniture in the manner the MLA considers appropriate to best exercise the MLA’s duties. When an MLA ceases to be an MLA, the equipment and furniture may be dealt with by the Legislative Assembly Office in any manner that the Legislative Assembly Office considers appropriate.

The Legislative Assembly Office shall maintain an inventory of all equipment and furniture covered by this directive.
- (7) REVIEW OF DIRECTIVE - The Board of Internal Economy shall review this directive at its first meeting after the next general election held pursuant to *The Election Act* following the date this directive is adopted.

A debate arising, the Speaker noted that Members also have the option to continue to use *Directive #4.1 – Constituency Services Expenses* to pay for technical computer support.

The question being put, it was agreed to.

Minute #1551

ITEM 12

Information Item – Secondary Accommodation Expenses: A Report from KPMG (Re: Directive #3.1 – MLA Travel and Living Expenses)

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. D’Autremont:

To receive and file the secondary accommodation report by KPMG.

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

Minute #1552

ITEM 13

Decision Item: Amendments to Directive #23 – Caucus Accountability and Disclosure and Directive #7.2 – Caucus Resources

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That *Directive #7.2 – Caucus Resources* be amended by deleting the words “regarding legislative business” in the 7th line of section (1).

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

Minute #1553

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. D’Autremont:

That, in order to address the concerns raised in the Provincial Auditor’s Memorandum of Audit Observations for the year ended March 31, 2001, the amendments to *Directive #23 – Caucus Accountability and Disclosure*, as attached, be approved; and

That the amendments be first applied to the audit for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003.

DIRECTIVE #23
(s.67.1(4), c.L-11.1)

CAUCUS ACCOUNTABILITY AND DISCLOSURE

- (1) Each caucus shall cause to be undertaken annually by an independent auditor an audit of all monies received and disbursed from grants made pursuant to Directives #7.2, #11, and #15 during the previous fiscal year, and a schedule of fixed assets purchased with caucus grants.
- (2) Each caucus shall prepare the financial statements and schedule of fixed assets in a standard format approved by the Board of Internal Economy.
- (3) The independent auditor must form an opinion on, and report his or her findings regarding:
 - (a) the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with generally acceptable accounting principles;
 - (b) the adequacy of the caucus office’s rules and procedures to safeguard and control public money; and
 - (c) whether the caucus office used the money given to it in compliance with the directives of the Board of Internal Economy.
- (4) The auditor’s report and the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets shall be submitted on or before September 30 in each year to the Speaker, who shall:
 - (a) immediately transmit the auditor’s report, the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets to the Board of Internal Economy;
 - (b) promptly thereafter make the auditor’s report, the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets available for examination by the public during normal business hours at the Clerk’s Office and the respective caucus offices; and
 - (c) cause the auditor’s report, the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets related to each caucus to be tabled in the next following session of the Legislative Assembly.

- (5) Upon the dissolution of each Legislature, no caucus shall make, or commit to the making of, any new expenditures above and beyond its ordinary operating costs between the day of dissolution of that Legislature and the polling day for the election of Members to the next following Legislature, and each caucus shall, within 6 months following the polling date subsequent to the dissolution of each Legislature, provide the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly with:
- (a) audited financial statements covering the term of the Legislature, in a standard format approved by the Board of Internal Economy, showing its financial assets and listing the outstanding accounts (including employee benefits and existing lease payments) as at the polling day subsequent to such dissolution that should be paid from those assets, thereby determining the surplus funds of that caucus for the purposes of clauses (6) and (7);
 - (b) a schedule of fixed assets that have been purchased with caucus grants; and
 - (c) a report from an independent auditor on his or her opinions regarding:
 - (i) the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with generally acceptable accounting principles;
 - (ii) the adequacy of the caucus office's rules and procedures to safeguard and control public money; and
 - (iii) whether the caucus office used the money given to it in compliance with the directives of the Board of Internal Economy.

whereupon the Speaker shall:

- (d) immediately transmit the auditor's report, the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets to the Board of Internal Economy;
 - (e) promptly thereafter make the auditor's report, the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets available for examination by the public during normal business hours at the Clerk's Office and the respective caucus offices; and
 - (f) cause the auditor's report, the audited financial statements and schedule of fixed assets related to each caucus to be tabled in the next following session of the Legislative Assembly.
- (6) Within 6 months following the polling date subsequent to the dissolution of each Legislature, all surplus funds determined pursuant to clause (5)(a) shall revert to the Crown.
- (7) Where a caucus ceases to exist, within 6 months following:
- (a) the polling date subsequent to the dissolution of a Legislature, and that caucus ceases to exist as a result of that dissolution and subsequent election; or
 - (b) the date on which, for any reason other than as a result of a dissolution and a subsequent election, a caucus ceases to exist;
- all surplus funds
- (c) determined pursuant to subclause (5)(a), where that caucus ceases to exist as a result of a dissolution and a subsequent election; or
 - (d) where a caucus ceases to exist for any reason other than as a result of a dissolution and a subsequent election, determined by an audited financial statement covering the time from the March 31st immediately preceding the cessation of the caucus until the date of such cessation, in a standard format approved by the Board of Internal Economy, showing its financial assets and listing the outstanding accounts (including employee benefits and existing lease payments) as at the date of cessation that should be paid from those assets and an audited schedule of fixed assets that have been purchased with caucus grants;

shall revert to the Crown, and all fixed assets that have been purchased with caucus grants, as determined by an audited schedule, shall be returned to the Crown.

A debate arising, the Board requested that each caucus office as well as the Office of the Provincial Auditor be advised that these amendments are based on the general understanding of the Board that partisan activity is a normal and healthy part of our traditions in the practice of parliamentary democracy. The Board agreed that political debate and the role of caucus in such debate is an important part of the legislative process that should be encouraged and funded. These amendments are not to be interpreted in such a manner as to disallow

expenditures that are related to partisan activity; however, those restrictions outlined in Directive #7.2 – Caucus Resources still apply.

The question being put, it was agreed to.

Minute #1554

ITEM 14

Decision Item: Response to the Provincial Auditor

The Board considered the draft response to the Provincial Auditor, and requested that the amendments to *Directive #7.2 – Caucus Resources* and *Directive #23 – Caucus Accountability and Disclosure* be included.

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

The board met at 09:12.

The Chair: — Well good morning once again, members of the Board of Internal Economy. We are scheduled to meet pretty well all day today and as far into tomorrow as we need to be able to do all of the budget estimates and to deal with the agenda that has been distributed to you.

What I would like to do is welcome everybody first of all and a special welcome, of course, to the one new member of the committee, MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) Doreen Hamilton. I notice that Doreen had with her also one of the interns, Timothy Baker, who I guess will be coming in and out. And a special welcome to Timothy. First time I think, certainly for me if not for everybody, that we have an intern with us during this process.

You have before you an agenda that's been distributed. The agenda has on it 14 items. I'll give the members of the committee a moment to review the agenda and then at that stage I would ask for a motion of approval of the proposed agenda unless somebody has an item they may wish to add.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I'll move that we accept the agenda.

The Chair: — Motion by Mr. D'Autremont that we accept the agenda . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not usually. A process then we've clarified. We only need movers; we will not be requiring seconders for . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Okay. Just for this one. Well I'm not quite sure why that is so. So let's use a . . . so I got a seconder, Ms. Hamilton. And those in favour of the motion? Motion is carried.

So the first item on the agenda is the approval of the minutes from the meeting — last meeting — and the minutes are attached. And once again if there's any comments or omissions or questions? If not, could I have a mover to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — I'll so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Osika and Ms. Jones. Those in favour? And it's been adopted. Carried.

Now item no. 1. What I would like to do at this time is table members' accountability and disclosure reports for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001. These have been distributed. It's not a decision item; it's simply an item of information. We'll pause here for a minute.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Do we need a motion to receive it?

The Chair: — I don't believe we do. No. Simply . . .

Then item 2. Tabling of an item audited the . . . the audited financial statements of the government, opposition, and Liberal caucuses for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2001. So the item is tabled. Okay.

Now if everything went that quickly, we'd be done before coffee. However.

We proceed to item no. 4. And this is the decision item that we are here to . . . Oh, I'm sorry. I missed item 3. Tabling another item, the legislative . . . item 3, the Legislative Assembly year-end report and the quarterly financial and fiscal forecasts are hereby tabled as well. And that's been distributed. There's a summary and a . . . summary of each of the four quarters.

Which takes us then to item 4, the review of the budget for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. And at this time what I would like to do is welcome Chief Electoral Officer Jan Baker and Jean Ouellet, the manager of election finances, to the table. And I believe there's a document in your folders, which is labelled Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, 2002 to 2003, and I will then ask Ms. Baker to proceed with her request.

Ms. Baker: — Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members. I'm pleased to be here today to have this opportunity to provide the background as to the office's 2002-2003 expenditure estimates, present you with a brief overview of Elections Saskatchewan, its mandate, and allow board members the opportunity to obtain further clarification regarding the related expenditure figures before you today.

As you know, the responsibilities of Elections Saskatchewan are regulated through various statutory enactments. Specifically, the office is charged with administering provincial elections, by-elections, the conduct of enumerations other than during elections, and provincial elections finances under The Election Act.

The office periodically conducts referendum and plebiscites under The Referendum and Plebiscite Act, and time votes under The Time Act. The office is also entrusted with administering the province's political contributions tax credit disclosure regime under The Political Contributions Tax Credit Act.

The principal mandate of the office is to provide political stakeholders with the opportunity to exercise their democratic right and ensure their constitutional entitlement as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The objective of the office's mandate is to ensure members of the Saskatchewan electorate maintain confidence in the integrity of the electoral process.

The office is responsible for maintaining a state of election readiness at all times throughout the government of the day's mandate. In this regard the office prepares electoral guidelines and conducts workshops throughout the province with election officials to ensure effective execution of electoral events in compliance under the Act. Assistance is given to political parties, candidates, and chief official agents and business managers to aid in complying with the Act, both in relation to electoral conduct as well as financial reporting.

In the latter context, the office has developed and disseminated financial reporting guidelines which demand of both political parties and candidates, annual and electoral-specific heightened financial reporting disclosure.

The Chief Electoral Officer is also responsible for determining what constitutes an offence under the Act. While the Act is regulatory rather than criminal, the role of the Chief Electoral

Officer is to investigate where potential contravention of the Act is suspected. The office carefully considers individual cases to determine whether special facts abrogate the purpose, policy rationale, and intent of the province's statutory electoral regime.

Last, the office is responsible for reporting of all election activities. Such statutory reporting outlines the conduct of each electoral event and provides a reporting of the election related expenditures of Elections Saskatchewan for consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

As with previous budget submissions, the expenditure estimates are presented in accordance with the office's function in base year and non-base year format. Specifically, the base year estimates comprise expenditure forecasts associated with the office's annual operational activities and include maintenance of the political contributions tax credit system and three proposed new office initiatives.

The non-base year estimates include potential annual electoral activities specific to a general election, constituency by-election, non-writ period enumeration, referendum or plebiscite and time vote. If in fact the province were to experience one or more of the non-base year election activities, their associated expenditures would have to be included with the office's base year estimates.

In addition to the office's 2002-03 budgetary estimates, the office provides the board with detailed estimate and actual figures for fiscal year 2000-2001. Specific itemization includes operational, general election, and three constituency by-election expenditures.

Specific to the office's 2002-03 expenditure estimates, and in addition to the office's normal operational costs, our estimates associated with provincial boundaries realignment and hosting of the Conference of Canadian Election Officials. In anticipation of an electoral boundary redistribution, cost estimates of \$100,000 dollars are identified in regards to production of office electoral mapping requirements and preparation of written legal descriptions of approximately 3,000 polling subdivisions contained within the potential constituencies.

In addition, election officials from across the country meet annually to discuss issues and exchange electoral information of common concern. The conferences are hosted on a rotating basis such that each jurisdiction is expected to sponsor the conference once every 13 years. Last year's conference was hosted by Elections Prince Edward Island and held in Charlottetown. The Canadian election official's conference in the year 2002 will be held in Regina.

The office has provided a budget outlining the projected costs of \$15,489 for this conference. Of this projected cost, \$6,554 involves securing simultaneous interpreters, their accommodation, sustenance, and living allowance. As such, the office has sought the assistance of Elections Canada to defer some, if not all, of the cost of such translation services, resulting in a reduced overall budgeted conference expenditure of \$8,935.

The individual amounts contributing to the overall conference

expenditure have been based on cost quotes from various conference locations in Regina and previous conference budgets that have been made available to us.

As you are all familiar, funding for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is based on statutory provision.

I would be pleased to answer any specific questions you may have regarding the office's budget submission. Thank you.

The Chair: — Well thank you very much for your presentation and thank you very much for keeping it brief and allowing all kinds of time for questions or comments.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you. I wonder if you would mind just . . . I was flipping back and forth in pages and you outlined one figure of \$100,000. Would you just mind running through that for me again? Under what category did that fall?

Ms. Baker: — It's under base year estimates, operational expenses, page 5 . . . or page — excuse me — page 4. It's under code 290, general contractual services. I'm showing a figure of \$100,000.

Ms. Jones: — Okay. And would you explain to me again what that figure is for?

Ms. Baker: — It's preparation of electoral maps, preparation of a provincial constituency map, composite maps, individual constituency maps, polling subdivision maps, preparation of poll keys, written descriptions of each polling division for purposes of preparing a proclamation during an electoral event.

Ms. Jones: — And that would be an operational base year as opposed to a non-base year?

Ms. Baker: — Yes. Redistributions are ongoing. They are not affected by an electoral call.

Ms. Jones: — So this is based on the fact that a redistribution is somewhat impending just due to the census coming soon and . . .

Ms. Baker: — Right. I believe under the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act redistributions are to occur every 10 years.

Ms. Jones: — All right. Well that explains that rather large figure then.

There was a . . . in the last . . . In your last year's budget under category — just give me one second to find it here — something about large numbers makes me go looking.

Ms. Baker: — Yes I believe in my previous budget there was a large figure identified for purpose of printed form.

Ms. Jones: — Right, that's it.

Ms. Baker: — And that was putting inventory into our warehouse for purpose of forthcoming election.

Ms. Jones: — So what types of forms would that include?

Ms. Baker: — The office has 198 forms, booklets, and guides. They're working documentation, which we provide to our 58 constituency returning officers who in turn distribute to their 10,000 subordinate election officials for purposes of the conduct of the vote on polling day.

Ms. Jones: — And so you have a stock now and that explains the lower estimate for this year.

Ms. Baker: — Yes. It's stocked, it's boxed, it's sitting on flats.

Ms. Jones: — All right, thank you very much.

Ms. Baker: — Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if you could just give me a broad explanation. When I look at the actual expenditure for 2001, which includes the 250,000 for forms that you just spoke about, you experienced a base operational and actual expenditure in total of 711,000, as you summarized on page 3.

Can you explain to me then the difference, given that the 250,000 was a one-time huge expenditure offset in this fiscal year by the proposal for the 100,000 related to redistribution, there's still a net \$150,000 less expenditure being proposed but the amount that you're requesting is 184,000 more than the actual in 2001. So when I put that all together, 184 and 150, that's \$334,000. Can you explain to me what is different in your proposal for the base for 02-03 from your actual in 2001 that would account for that significant increase in expenditures?

Ms. Baker: — Certainly in the operational estimates this year, the staff complement of five, the office has staffed up, the salaries are identified. Previously the staff on the base year identified for 2000-2001, many of the individuals hadn't been with the office a full year. Certainly our rental of space has gone up substantively. The office also in this particular operational budget has made provision for a temporary staff member and personal services contracts should we require to bring in provisional people for purposes of an election. I don't believe, other than a 2 per cent increase on other normal operating expenses, that we have exhausted or . . . what am I over? Excuse me for just a moment. In addition, on the operational expenses, we've added a hundred thousand dollars for boundary realignment and \$15,000 for the conference, which I believe would accommodate . . . account for the . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — When I asked the question, if I'm understanding your statement correctly here, taking into account the two fifty . . . 250,000 for printed forms and the hundred thousand for redistribution, that still left a gap of some 330,000 between actual 2001 and estimated 2002-03. Are you saying that the . . . If my approximate numbers are incorrect, then please tell me. Are you saying that 300,000 plus is all explained by staffing up and accommodations?

Ms. Baker: — I believe that the major increases are the full staff complement with full salary, performance increases, and COLA (cost-of-living allowance) increases. Other than having opportunity to do a comparison side by side, as I said, I believe that a majority of the increase is in personnel services, there has been an increase of \$5,000 in addition to the 100,000 and the

15,000 which we've already identified. In one of the new initiatives for Web page development, we're hoping to move forward in that area this year. But unfortunately, I'm not able to identify others.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I mean, these are very rough. I have to admit I haven't applied a calculator to the numbers. But when I look on page 4 at the personal services and run down the list of assistant chief electoral officer down to temporary salaries, I think that's approximately 360, \$365,000 in total. Then can you point me to the . . . what's the accommodations? The accommodations?

Ms. Baker: — Two twenty.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — 120,000. And okay, that's 120,000. And what was the . . . 220 in . . .

Ms. Baker: — Okay, you're referencing page 4 and page 12.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Right.

Ms. Baker: — Okay.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes, because that's moved from 118,000 to 120,000 it looks like to me.

Ms. Baker: — From 113,000 to 120,000.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Two twenty on page — what I call 11(b), I guess it is.

Ms. Baker: — Oh, I see. You're looking at estimates and not actuals.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. That's your page 11(b), is that your '02-03 estimate figures?

Ms. Baker: — The actuals are on the right-hand side of the page. The estimates are on the left-hand side of the page.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay, 113. Okay.

Ms. Baker: — Okay.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — You've gone from 113 actual to an estimated 120, approximately, okay.

Ms. Baker: — Right.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Now, did I hear you say as well that in your staffing that for your base operation that that included some staffing that would potentially be filled if an election was called?

Ms. Baker: — Yes. In order to handle the inventory in the warehouse for distribution, retrieval, etc., we generally hire one provisional personnel depending on time available to us. It could be two on a part-time basis to distribute to our 58 constituency returning officers and retrieve the information and clean up, because we retain all election materials for a two-year period.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Is that in the base estimate or in the elections estimate?

Ms. Baker: — It's in the base estimate.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — But if there were not an election, would you need to fill that position then?

Ms. Baker: — No. No.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And what's the estimated cost of that position. Can you . . .

Ms. Baker: — It could be slotted into two locations. One is 141, temporary salaries . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Right.

Ms. Baker: — . . . for fourteen ought thirty-one.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I think that's all I have for now, Mr. Chair. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Hagel.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you very much. You mentioned that the possible cost for preparing redistribution would be \$100,000. Perhaps we could just simply take a look at it and say we like it the way it is and save \$100,000 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, it could still be a review. We'd suggest that we'd have to change the Act. No, you do the review and you say you like it the way it is and just leave it there, save 100,000.

Looking over your present . . . looking at your report, I find it difficult to follow because there are no comparisons in there. And it would make it a lot simpler, I believe, if you were saying here's your actual from 2001, here's your estimate for 2002, and here's your request for 2002-2003. Flipping back and forth between pages you're never sure if you're looking at the same apples and it makes it difficult to follow.

So I would like to ask that in the future that you come in with your reports in more of a comparison form. And you, yourself, just mentioned the words it would be easier if it was a side-by-side comparison. And it would certainly be easier for us on the board if that was the way it was done.

Ms. Baker: — Okay. My pleasure.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. D'Autremont. Are there any other comments or questions of anybody?

Ms. Hamilton: — In the new initiatives that you had outlined for us, you talked about the Web page development and there's a communications program as well. Is that connected with the Web page or is that separate?

Ms. Baker: — That's separate.

Ms. Hamilton: — And what does that entail?

Ms. Baker: — That would be preparation of a voters guide, distribution of informational material, any kind of educational

exercises that need be undertaken by the office to communicate to the electorate or potential electors information pertaining to the electoral process.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you.

Ms. Baker: — Our communications program would also contain the statutory advertising requirements in the Act, specific to the timing of the event.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Ms. Hamilton.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you. I have one more question . . . always reluctant to let people know what I don't know. But could you explain to me what a time vote is?

Ms. Baker: — I can.

Ms. Jones: — It certainly isn't mountain standard versus daylight saving, I hope.

Ms. Baker: — Previous to 1966, the question of time was the responsibilities of municipalities. Bylaws could be passed at any time under the cities Act or the towns Act. The Time Act received royal assent March 30, 1966 and it was proclaimed effective April 15, 1966.

Central standard time is used throughout the year in northern and eastern Saskatchewan. Western Saskatchewan is divided into time zones, known as time option areas. Central standard time is observed during the summer period, from the first Sunday in April. Mountain standard time is observed through the winter period, the last Sunday in April, unless a majority of the voters in a time option area vote in favour of observing Central Standard Time in the winter period as well.

Daylight savings time is a time system one hour in advance of standard time, legislated and observed throughout most of Canada.

Voters are . . . votes are initiated by petitions signed by 25 per cent of the total number of persons who are 18 years of age and residents of the time option area, or school divisions initiated by resolution of the board of school divisions within the time option area. They can be initiated every three years.

Are you more confused?

Ms. Jones: — I asked you not to tell me that. Why then would it not be included in the category of referenda and plebiscites?

Ms. Baker: — They're separate pieces of legislation and they have just been identified . . . they would be a stand-alone vote, not voted on as a plebiscite question or referendum question.

Ms. Jones: — I see, well, thank you for that explanation.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Jones. Back to Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you Mr. Speaker.

And then, first of all, on the new initiatives, page 6, the federal/provincial data-sharing initiatives, what are you

anticipating being able to learn from that activity that'll contribute to either effectiveness or . . . cost-effectiveness or operational effectiveness?

Ms. Baker: — I've identified that as a new initiative because under The Election Act — particular to enumeration — there is provision in the Act to gather the information electronically and share that information with other jurisdictions or our federal counterparts. That particular area may require communications where we meet to share data. At this point, because we're still doing enumerations, we haven't identified any initiatives that we might undertake with respect to sharing data. However, we have been requested by Elections Canada to provide our data to our previous . . . our post-election 1999 for purposes of maintenance or updating the national registry.

We are currently invited to share on an advisory . . . or participate on an advisory committee specific to onward maintenance, particular to the national registry. The office hasn't decided whether they would give consideration to participating because we are not in a position, at this point, where we are establishing a permanent database with the notion of establishing a permanent registry.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Now Mr. Speaker, this question may be more to you than the Chief Electoral Officer. The item before us, I assume — given that there has not been an election called and given that there has not been a referendum vote that has been formally called in any way — I'm assuming it's the base budget that is the item that's before us. Is that correct, first of all?

The Chair: — That is my interpretation as well, Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. Then we have additional budget items before us here then related however to the operations if an election is called, a by-election is called and enumeration is required, a referendum is called, or a time vote. And is . . . what is the standard procedure then for the determining of budgets in any of those circumstances? Is it assumed that the Chief Electoral Officer has carte blanche and these are merely informational estimates that we have here or would the board be required to deal with a specific budget if that circumstance should arise? Can you clarify that for me?

The Chair: — Thank you. I'll attempt to clarify it best I can and then perhaps ask Ms. Baker to put in an additional comment.

The budget of the Chief Electoral Officer is all really provided for in statute and that includes the base budget and all of the other budgets. So there is provision for the Chief Electoral Officer to go ahead with the spending necessary and it's all provided. She has the legal basis, or he has the legal basis under which to do it.

But the only mechanism that there is for reviewing the budget is the Board of Internal Economy — that is on behalf of the public, external to the office itself. So therefore what happens at this meeting is that the board either makes a motion to either transmit the request as presented, or has the option of making suggestions to the Chief Electoral Officer about the budget and transmit some other than as requested, or not transmit the

request until there is a revision. That is my interpretation of it.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — When you made that comment, you're making that comment about the base budget or about all of the other options or both?

The Chair: — I would suggest the entire package. This is the only forum . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — To review the budget.

The Chair: — . . . to review the budget.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Of any of these.

The Chair: — That's right.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So that if there were an election call or by-election, etc., then this would be approved by special warrant, I presume, would be the . . .

The Chair: — No. There is no special warrant necessary at all.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Because it's statutory.

The Chair: — That's right.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And when the Chief Electoral Officer then brings forward, for example, an election budget of \$8,449,850 to the Board of Internal Economy, then is it therefore assumed that the statutory approval, should an election be called, would be for a budget in that amount or in that amount as a guideline? What is the financial accountability that the Chief Electoral Officer is bound in the statutory approval then of expenditures, in say an election call?

The Chair: — It would be my interpretation that the statutes provide for the spending of money in the event of an election. And the only way that that can be changed or limited would be a change in the legislation itself. That there is . . . the accountability comes here, and I'm going to ask for verification on that, but I don't believe there is any way of limiting the expenditures other than through legislation, that is any other means. Now I'll ask Ms. Baker if she would clarify that.

Ms. Baker: — That would be correct. That's also my understanding.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So if I'm hearing you correctly then what you're saying is that these are information items which are approximations but are not required to be budgets within which the Chief Electoral Officer is bound to conduct those operations. Am I interpreting that correctly?

Ms. Baker: — Right.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. So if we were to ask questions in any of those areas, we're into interesting but not necessary, I assume then.

Ms. Baker: — Well I could certainly respond to those. Those are over and above operational costs.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Right.

Ms. Baker: — Those would be additional costs that would be incurred by the office and we could speak to those expenses, but unfortunately I don't have the statement of votes. Volume 1 for the . . . or volume 2 for the 1999 provincial election identifies the costs of the provincial election. Each by-election report that is tabled in the Legislative Assembly identifies the costs of Elections Saskatchewan.

The previous budget provided the cost of the 1999 provincial election. And you are correct; it is difficult having an election in 1999, looking at a budget, and two years later seeing an actual.

The office certainly will accommodate your request and pull back the estimates that are two years previous to give you an actual which will give you a much more comfortable feeling of the estimates that are put before you, specific to each electoral event.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. Well I don't know that specific scrutiny then really comes into play given that the Chief Electoral Officer has complete discretion in expenditure and we trust in her commitment to cost effectiveness obviously.

Having said that, then I would appreciate to comment just in one particular area and that having to do with enumeration. I think it would be the view of many who were involved in the electoral process in the 1999 general election and I think subsequent by-elections perhaps even more so, that the enumeration process, to put it kindly, was not strong. That either there was a large number of people in constituencies all across Saskatchewan — and my understanding that this wasn't a characteristic that was limited to certain regional areas, but that was province-wide — either there were a large number of people refusing to be enumerated or there were a significant number of people who just were not captured in the enumeration lists. And I wonder, first of all, whether you agree with that assessment.

I believe the enumeration numbers for constituencies across the province were down in all ridings, a large majority, if in fact, not all. So is that an accurate assessment and if so what is the intention of the Chief Electoral office then to significantly increase the effectiveness of enumeration to ensure that Saskatchewan people who are eligible to vote are on the voters lists prior to election day, in elections and by-elections?

Ms. Baker: — Well specific to the legislation, the province does conduct an enumeration prior to each electoral event.

As you're well aware, writ period is 34 to 28 days. The first 10 days of a writ of election is enumeration. The electoral office doesn't activate until a writ of election is issued. Normally, the first two days, the function of the returning officer is to train enumerators and get them on the street to ensure preparation of the voters list in the 10-day period.

Certainly the office did recognize that the number of electors enumerated was down and certainly had a concern with respect of that. We intend to put more emphasis on our training with our constituency returning officers and hopefully when they're training their subordinate election officials, we will get a more

effective and a larger number of electors caught on the voters list.

The comfortable level that I guess, or the comfort that I have with respect of an individual not being on a voters list, is that in the province of Saskatchewan you are not required to be on a voters list to be eligible to vote. You can go to your polling location on polling day, complete a declaration, and without forwarding pieces of identification — and you will be given a ballot and you will be entitled to vote.

At the 1999 election, or following the 1999 election, we did not identify how many electors actually voted by declaration. So I really don't have any further comment particular to whether we had a poor enumeration, we had . . . (inaudible) . . . population, etc.

We had a very difficult time in 1999 having a summer election, having enumeration end following the Labour Day weekend. Labour Day constitutes 45,000-plus students relocating for purposes of study. Enumeration had taken place; most of those students had been enumerated in their home ridings and were not located in the home ridings for purposes of polling. So we had some . . . logistically we had some problems.

But I can assure we are in no way disenfranchising electors. We also intend in our communications program to make electors more aware that if they are not on a voters list, that they are eligible to vote by declaration.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Although I do agree that Saskatchewan legislation permits those who aren't enumerated to vote, the fact of the matter is that for political parties engaged in the election campaign, it is more difficult to communicate with people who are not enumerated.

And secondly, for those members . . . those citizens who seek election and are successful and become members of the Legislative Assembly, the resources that they receive in order to serve their constituents, all of their constituents whether they were enumerated or not, is directly related to the number of people who were enumerated.

And so to have an inefficient enumeration means that it is limiting the resources that elected members have in order to serve the people that they were elected to serve. And I would suggest that that is a matter of concern to all the members of the Legislative Assembly, and I suspect all members of the Board of Internal Economy.

What I hear you saying then is that the intention . . . If I can also just add would be my observation, that subsequent by-elections, and I think there have been four since the general election, that . . . and they have been in . . . they have been in three — two in Saskatoon, one in Regina, one in Wood River. All had — none of which were held on Labour Day weekend — all had enumerations which in fact were weaker than the general election enumeration of 1999 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I think the enumerations were done in all of them.

I don't, I simply don't accept that Labour Day was the explanation for the weak enumeration. And I hear you saying then that it is improved training of the returning officers. Can

you — I just, I don't want to belabour the point, Mr. Speaker, but this is a matter of significant concern I think to elected members — can you be a bit more specific as to how . . . what that training will be that will improve the efficiency of or the effectiveness of capturing on the voters list all of the electors who are eligible to vote?

Ms. Baker: — We have provided to our constituency returning officers individual polling division maps — written descriptions for them to forward to their enumerators to more identify or identify the polling subdivision more clearly. We provide all of the aides very thorough instructions, very thorough instructions for preparation of the preliminary list.

I don't know what other that we can do. We have to rely on human resources that receive two to four hours training and then have very tight timelines to cover their polling divisions.

Saskatchewan's proud of the fact that we maintain polling subdivisions that are less than 300 people. We try to keep our polls a relatively decent size so that we do afford our enumerators the opportunity within the time period to get door-to-door because we are still requesting that our enumerators do a door-to-door enumeration. And a door-to-door enumeration in a rural riding is very, very difficult during that time frame.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I'll conclude my comments, Mr. Speaker, by urging the Chief Electoral Officer make this a high priority when the next enumeration occurs and to look very carefully at what has been done in the past and what you think may need to be done. You have — as I've had explained to me here — the freedom to increase expenditure if that's necessary; if two to four hours of training is not quite enough, then to look at that.

But I would certainly urge that we would consider in the next general election or if there are by-elections before that to consider it to be an unacceptable level of enumeration that has occurred in 1999 and since. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Thank you. The Chair recognizes Ms. Jones, followed by Mr. Osika, and then Ms. Hamilton.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you. I'm wondering if you could explain to me how the two enumerations of the permanent voters list that has been initiated through income tax and the door-to-door enumeration that occurs prior to each election, whether it be general or by, and if people are not caught in the door-to-door enumeration, are they assumed to be on the voters list by the electronic or the permanent voters list? Or do we just ignore the permanent voters list and only capture people door to door?

Ms. Baker: — I'm sorry, I can't speak to the national registry or the method of gathering that data or the maintenance of that data. I'm not involved in the federal electoral process at all, so I can't speak to that.

How that information, particular to the information in a provincial election, an enumeration commences immediately on issue of writ. The first 10 days, the data is collected and the preliminary list is prepared. Within four days, that information is entered electronically and generated as a secondary list, and then revisions are able to be made through the enumerator

constituency returning officer up until the time of close of a revision prior to polling — the fourth day before polling day.

Ms. Jones: — So we don't utilize the federal permanent voters list at all in provincial elections.

Ms. Baker: — No.

Ms. Jones: — That's unfortunate.

Ms. Baker: — The legislation . . .

Ms. Jones: — I also would wonder if there was an explanation for why a by-election enumeration, based on our most recent experience, would tend to be less complete than a general election enumeration. Because that seems to be the experience of the last four or more by-elections, that the by-election enumeration is of lesser completeness. Is there an explanation, anything that . . .

Ms. Baker: — Particular to the Saskatoon Riversdale, Regina Elphinstone, and Saskatoon Idylwyld by-election, we had electors refuse to be put . . . have their names put on the voters lists and slammed doors in our enumerator's face and not be interested in participating in the process at all and voiced that during the exercise of enumeration. I am not using that as an identifier for a poor enumeration, but our election officials had a very difficult time encouraging people to participate in those particular by-elections.

Ms. Jones: — Okay, Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Thank you very much.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question or inquiry was along the same lines as Ms. Jones. With respect to the co-operation now and all the electronic data that various government agencies have, I just wondered if we were moving towards sharing some of that information that's crucial to both either federal or provincial elections? And being able to share that information, in my humble opinion, would be probably frugal to our provincial department as well as the feds if we could exchange that kind of information that should be there.

Ms. Baker: — That might want to be addressed in the Legislative Assembly, specific to the legislation currently, and we had total electoral reform January 1, 1997, the Act prescribes that we do a door-to-door enumeration prior to each electoral event. The Act makes provision for enumerations to be conducted outside of writ periods, and it makes provision for gathering voter information electronically and sharing that information.

But specific to enumeration, the Act is very clear. It is prescribed. It is a door-to-door enumeration prior to each electoral event. So we are just regulating the statutory provision.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you for that, and I know that you can't — you can't force people to vote or not to vote, but it should . . . and I'm not sure how you take into consideration the fact that six months prior you had an excessively greater number than you would the day that you're going into a

by-election.

Again, going back to what Mr. Hagel had said with respect to how it affects elected members as a result of the lower numbers, there's some disparity there and I'm not sure you address it. That's why I wondered if once there was a list of voters, unless they had moved and/or otherwise relocated, would they not be maintained on an electronic voting list by some way, shape or form and verify whether or not they'd left the area, or were still there or . . .

Ms. Baker: — Not under the current statute.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you for that. And just as a final comment, I too would echo what Mr. D'Autremont had said, that the presentation of the budget was somewhat confusing in having to go backwards and forwards. It would be appreciated if there be somewhat more of a simpler format for simpler people like myself to be able to follow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Thank you. Ms. Hamilton.

Ms. Hamilton: — Yes. I'll start where Mr. Osika left off because you were mentioning as well, Ms. Baker, that . . . and I might not be clear on. It's our responsibility to look at not only your base year estimates but how the election process unfolds. And this is our opportunity to have those eyes to it, although all of those come under statutory requirement.

But it would be good then if we're looking at those and have a responsibility to do so to have the last election process and what was actually budgeted and then what you're expecting will happen this year. It makes it easier to compare those, and you'd mentioned it yourself. So I think that talks to what Mr. D'Autremont was saying. But in the election year, when it's a non-base budget year, there really is nothing to compare it to unless we go back to the last election experience. So that would be good to have it side by side.

That being said, I'm really interested in the comments about enumeration. And you have a responsibility through your office but then I think we also have something here that translates into, I think, a disservice to members who, for whatever reasons . . . But I do remember in Elphinstone by-election and it was very cold and people with less interest in opening their door and talking to anybody when it's minus 48 outside. So there are reasons for that.

We should maybe be looking at how we come up with a system that doesn't penalize members who have a by-election during those situations. I guess that's the point of what my colleagues are saying.

But to the other side of the coin. I think there are some areas that — it might be mine or Ms. Jones — if we had a by-election now there would be an increase in the number of voters and to not take in the recent enumeration would do a disservice to those members. So there must be a way that we can come up with, that assists a member in how their communication budget would be allocated, based on either the last budget numbers or a combination of something; that we get a more realistic look at

how we give those members a chance to communicate to all the electorate, perhaps then to stir up some interest and not have the kinds of situations that Ms. Baker's outlined.

So I think that's where that enumeration discussion is heading. That we wouldn't penalize someone who's become part of an election process during a very difficult enumeration time.

I don't . . . that doesn't come within Ms. Baker's purview, I think that's within our purview to talk about, maybe, at another time. And where would be our opportunity to do that?

The Chair: — That's correct.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much then.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you very much. I want to go back to the budget, but I want also to participate in the discussion that's taking place.

You said that you share the enumeration information with our federal gross jurisdiction and other jurisdictions, potentially. Why would it be shared with any other jurisdiction other than federal?

Ms. Baker: — We haven't been requested to do so. If a reason were identified to us, we would review it at that point and give consideration to that.

But primarily it's our federal counterpart. And sharing the electoral information or electoral data that . . . our most recent electoral data, it's solely for maintenance purposes for Elections Canada's national registry and was used as such just prior the federal election.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I can certainly understand why the federal government would want access for comparisons to their own. I don't know why any other jurisdiction would either want access to our enumeration or why would we give it to them.

Ms. Baker: — Right. My error.

Mr. D'Autremont: — You know, unless we're voting to join Alberta, I'm not sure why they would . . . (inaudible) . . . to get our enumeration list.

A voter who comes in and declares, on election day, would their name be added after the fact to the enumeration list?

Ms. Baker: — No, it is not.

Mr. D'Autremont: — How many . . . do you have an estimate of the number of people who may have declared in the last general election?

Ms. Baker: — No, that effort has never been undertaken by the electoral office. It is our intent, in going forward, that we do tally that number of declarations, number of individuals that decline to vote, etc.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Or voters who decline to be enumerated

but then subsequently vote?

Ms. Baker: — Right.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I think it might be worthwhile if a third revision of the enumeration was done after the election, actually, to add those declarations to that list. Therefore everybody would know, even if it was a supplementary enumeration, that 10 people in this poll declared and are therefore . . . I know that the parties individually likely have access to that from their scrutineers sitting there, but that doesn't put it onto an official form for enumeration purposes. And perhaps if it . . . And maybe this takes legislative change, I don't know, for those declarations to be added to the enumeration after election day.

Ms. Baker: — Well certainly the office has undertaken electronic data entry application for purposes of use by our constituency returning officers to provide voter information in an electronic form to the campaigns during an election.

That said, what you would be taking receipt of is the preliminary voters list. Revisions which close the fourth day prior to polling day are distributed to the constituency . . . or information is provided to the constituency returning officer and distributed to deputy returning officers for purposes of polling on polling day.

So revised voters is not provided at the campaign level other than the scrutineers who are in the poll on polling day.

The office has given consideration to, once retrieval has been undertaken, that once we take receipt of the revised voters list, that we add the revisions onto the database; and that we also give consideration to adding all of those names of individuals that voted by declaration. If the office were to undertake that effort, that information wouldn't be available for approximately 12 months after an election and it would only be available to the political parties.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So would it be available then to the legislature? Or just to the political parties?

Ms. Baker: — I believe section 177 of the Act is, voter dated . . . voter data is to be provided for electoral purposes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Only.

Ms. Baker: — So it's electoral purposes only.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So that would need, to transmit that then to the legislature for purposes that Mr. Hagel was talking about, would need a change to the Act then if those declarations were to be added to the enumerations.

Ms. Baker: — Yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. Would there be any value, in your opinion, to having a permanent voters list, as the federal government has? And I guess, supplementary to that, when did that federal government list come into effect: was it prior to or subsequent to the 1997 revisions to our own electoral Act?

Ms. Baker: — I'm sorry. Jean spent 22 years with Elections Canada so he's just assisting me here. Apparently the last enumeration federally was conducted in 1997, which established — April of 1997 — which established the base for the national registry of voters.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So that would have come in then subsequent to our own legislation because of the process involved in it.

In your opinion, would a permanent enumeration list, voters list, be of value to Saskatchewan electoral process?

Ms. Baker: — Must I answer that? I'm not an advocate of a permanent voter registry. I believe that enumerations are the number one way of generating information to the electorate in this province. It also generates a fair amount of revenue at the constituency level. I first would like to look at making improvements to the office's administrative procedures that we currently have in place.

I certainly am an advocate of providing data in an electronic form for use during and following electoral events. But I am very much in favour of reaching out to the electorate at the time of each electoral event.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I wouldn't see the two of them being mutually exclusive. I could see utilizing the door-to-door enumerators and a permanent voters list in combination, although that certainly adds to the cost of it.

I think one of the things perhaps that is a problem here — and that's not your problem but it's our problem as legislators — is to give people more reason to participate in the process; to give them a belief that their vote is valuable, that their vote can make a difference and can make a change. And that can only be done by the legislators, not by the Chief Electoral office. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. D'Autremont. I see no further requests . . . members' questions, so I would ask at this time an indication of intent on the part of the board with respect to the transmission of these estimates.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that we'll bring forward motions in the latter part of the meeting agenda after having reviewed the series of budgets and providing for ourselves an in camera . . . opportunity for in camera discussion before concluding with the motion to bring . . . to provide the intent of the board.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Mr. Hagel. I therefore want to thank all members for all of the questions and comments that they've put on the record. And thank you, Ms. Baker, Mr. Ouellet, for coming to this. And I would suggest that we recess for just a couple of minutes to allow a switch of chairs and maybe people would like to help themselves to some coffee.

The board recessed for a period of time.

The Chair: — Members, I'd like to proceed with the agenda, so I thank you very much for your co-operation on this. We welcome now to the table the Ombudsman and the Children's

Advocate office. This is to deal with item 5, the decision items or a review of the 2002-2003 budget for the offices of the Provincial Ombudsman and the Children's Advocate, followed by special warrant requests.

Welcome to the table, Barb Tomkins, who is accompanied today by Lynne Fraser and Murray Knoll; Lynne being the financial administrator and the human resource person, and Murray Knoll being the deputy ombudsman. And I think we'll ask you to proceed first of all and then later we'll bring Ms. Parker-Loewen to the table because there are only four mikes there, so we need six people.

Okay. I'll turn it over to you then, Ms. Tomkins.

Ms. Tomkins: — Good morning, I'm pleased to be here and see many faces I've seen many times before and some new ones. I'm just going to briefly summarize our budget proposal. I think . . . I hope that it is clear and straightforward. We have made some changes in the way our proposal is put for you in the last year or two, trying to accord to suggestions that have been made at previous times that we've appeared before this board. And I hope that we've succeeded and if not, we'll be pleased to take further suggestions.

The preface of our report is not different than it has been in previous years, and it's simply for the benefit of those who may have forgotten or those who are new to the board to explain the somewhat unique structure and relationship between the Ombudsman's office and the Children's Advocate office and the reason that our proposal comes jointly while we operate separate offices. And I won't review that but I'll be pleased to answer questions about it.

The Ombudsman, by The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act, is charged fundamentally to promote fairness in the provision of services by the provincial government. We do that primarily through four initiatives. The first and most obvious and the one that involves the greatest amount of our resources and our work is the receipt, review, and investigation of complaints from members of the public.

We also investigate complaints on the Ombudsman's own motion. This might happen if there were a matter of public interest raised through the media. More commonly, it happens when we receive recurring or repeated complaints about a program, practice, or policy within government. And most commonly but not always, O-motion investigations will be major investigations or systemic investigations.

We're engaged fairly heavily, and more so as the years go by, in alternative case resolution regarding many of our complaints. And that process is still relatively new and I think not well understood or at least not well known, but it is substantially different than the traditional receipt and investigation of a complaint.

And the last major piece of our work is public education and communications to members of the general public about the work of the office, what we do and how we do it and why we do it; but also, more and more as years go by, to employees of government about who we are and what we do and why we do it. And I'll throw a little editorial comment in here. We would

like to do more with members of the legislature about who we are and what we do and why we do it.

That, in a very small nutshell, is the way the Ombudsman does its work and achieves its mandate.

Included in the budget proposal document is a organizational chart showing the staffing and structure of the staffing in the office.

I'll now talk to you about our budget. On page 5 of this submission, there's a summary of our budget proposal, budget request for this year. Our approved budget for the current fiscal year, 2001-2002, was \$1.533 million. We're requesting a total increase of \$72,000. Of that, \$60,000 — I think these numbers are correct — relates to operating expenses for the office, being salaries . . . about 85 per cent of it or 90 per cent of it is salaries and a smaller amount for accommodation and operating expenditures.

The \$72,000 number includes an additional salary increase relating to myself at the request and direction of this board. And the reason we show, in effect, two summaries on page 5, the top summary is what we've classified as budgetary expenditures and doesn't include the Ombudsman's salary increase. The bottom one includes all increases and which we consider to be, if not a statutory expenditure, something in the very close nature to a statutory expenditure. And we've showed . . . All of the numbers are there but they are separated out differently for that reason. That's if you look at the bottom when the total 2002-2003 budget requests for the office is \$1.605 million, an increase of \$72,000 over last year's budget allocation.

As I suggested, the requested increase relates primarily to personnel costs. The staff of our office, out of scope, which is virtually all of our staff . . . There are 19 people working in our office counting myself. Of those, three are in scope. So there are 16 out-of-scope staff people. Then you remove me because I'm not part of the out-of-scope. So we have 15 out-of-scope staff who were given a salary increase, effective July 1, 2002, of 2.5 per cent.

The unionized employees received, effective October 1, 2002, a 2.5 per cent increase in salary, as did . . . That 2.5 per cent in October also applied to out-of-scope staff. We have one staff person who remains in scope and is one of the three that I referred to who we have clear indication will be moved out of scope as a part of the scope review process. That will involve an adjustment of that person's classification and an adjustment of their salary.

Finally we're projecting in-range increments for all out-of-scope staff effective July 1 . . . Oh, I'm sorry. This is 2002, yes. I should get one of those time votes you were referring to. Yes, we're projecting another increase effective July 1, 2002.

The total impact of all of those salary increases, none of which are within the discretion of myself or my office, is \$49,300.

We've included in our proposal, noted an increase in accommodation costs. We've been advised by SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) that we can

anticipate approximately \$3,000 increase in that regard.

And lastly, costs have increased for our CVA (Central Vehicle Agency) vehicles and for computer hardware. With respect to the former it is an increased rate that the Central Vehicle Agency has indicated. In respect to the latter we have for an office of 19 people only \$3,000 allocated. We manage by being cautious with other expenditures — and we are managing — but the \$3,000 is simply low and we're requesting an increase in that regard of \$5,000.

On page 7, there's a discussion of the amendments to my salary which . . . Boy, when the board made that directive, it's much more complicated than I anticipated. But in any event if we require an explanation where these numbers come from, I will defer to Mr. Knoll and to Ms. Fraser, or even Ms. Ronyk who is on the board that made recommendations to this board.

But I will say that I understand that the impact of the board's directive regarding the Ombudsman's salary was \$4,492 effective April 1, 2001 and a further increment applied July 1, 2001, and another increment is anticipated April 1, 2002. The net impact of all of that is \$11,700 annualized. It's my understanding that because this increase is effectively determined by reference to statute — it's in the nature of statutory money — and that convention would suggest that it would be funded rather than absorbed. And it's for that reason that it's shown as a separate expenditure, statutory rather than budgetary.

In terms of the office, generally our complaints numbers have slowed down but continue to rise. As we noted in the . . . on page 8 we had a 4.5 per cent increase in complaints over the last calendar year. But if you look back over a number of years, we've had a 25 per cent increase over the last 5 years and a 50 per cent increase over the last 10 years. We have managed and will continue to manage those increases without requesting additional money.

The caution — and it's the same caution I gave last year — is that I am convinced that we are not providing service to northern residents in a way that is workable for northern residents. I am convinced that our office is not known as well as it ought to be to residents of northern communities and I intend over the next two years, especially before my term expires, to dedicate substantial effort to improving that situation.

In recent months, myself, the Children's Advocate, and the Chief Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission — or over the last year — have visited a number of northern communities. We, in each of those communities, engaged in public meetings where we talked to residents about who we are and what we do, but more importantly, what we could do or how we could do things differently that they might find valuable or more valuable.

From those discussions I am convinced, as I said, that we're not reaching northern communities in the way I would like. I am convinced that we can provide valuable service to northern communities. The challenge is to figure out how that can be done, how that can be done efficiently, and how that can be done economically.

What I hope to do over the course of the next year is engage in some research as to models for service delivery in large geographical areas with small, geographically separate communities. I anticipate there'll be some costs associated with that work — certainly travel costs associated with that work — and as I think you all know, travel in northern communities can be very expensive. I also believe that the work that we've already done in northern communities is generating work for the office, and that work is more costly than the work we have ordinarily done.

At this time, I'm satisfied that I can absorb those increased costs within our existing allocation. The caution is that if we're successful, and if we develop a means of serving northern residents that's workable and economical, there still may be, and almost certainly would be, additional costs associated with that. And I caution you that one day I'm going to be asking you for . . . to consider expenditures for that purpose. But I'm not asking for any at this time.

I've commented in the submission that our major O-motion investigation that's underway and very nearly complete is the corrections review. I anticipate that we will be able to continue doing O-motion investigations of substantial subject matter without increasing our allocation.

I'm satisfied we can continue our alternative case resolution work without additional allocation, despite the fact that we intend to expand that work to include broad-based training for government employees. We're embarking on a new initiative fairly shortly in that regard. The internal work is being done at this time, and if that interests you I'll be pleased to answer questions about it.

Our public education and communications work continues, and can be adequately funded from our existing budget. And our office administration, as suggested, was introduced here earlier. Lynne Fraser, who sits to my right, holds the position of human resource and financial administrator of my office. This is a relatively new position and one that those who've been on the board will recall I have spoken about, I think, every time I've appeared before this board. And I'm absolutely delighted to have Lynne at the office, and in the relatively short time she's been with us has made substantial impact on our ability to manage our work. And I appreciate the board's approval last year of funding to enable us to create a position of that nature. It's not simply a convenience for me. It has, and will more so in the future, enable us to do more work and do it better.

That in a nutshell is what's in the written proposal that we put before you. I would like to say before I complete this presentation that I am well aware of recent reports about difficult financial circumstances the province is facing. I would like to draw to your attention, however, that ours is a relatively small office with a disproportionate amount of our allotment . . . of our allocation allotted to salary and accommodation. The sum of \$72,000 increase that we are requesting is over half of the money we have left after paying salaries and accommodation out of our existing budget. I suspect that is not true for very many agencies of government but it is a fact for us. Absorbing that money would have a substantial impact on the operations of the office.

The Chair: — Thank you very much.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you. I appreciate the last comment that you made and I'm going to start where you started as well.

I'm relatively . . . well I am new; this is my first meeting ever here. And I did find the last document very difficult to go through because of the way it was written. This one, because of the codes and expenditure areas, is much easier. But it would be good I think to on page 12 be able to see you've had approved what was requested in 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and what the request would be for this year.

But there's no actuals there to really do the comparison and that would be good to have a column that says the actuals and then to look at the projection for this year and probably have that closer in the document to the summary statement and then there would be less kind of trying to flip over and see those. It would make it a lot easier to deliberate on them. So I thank you for asking us that. That would make it easier for me, and I'm sure other members of the board.

To the actuals then, I guess the highlights of what you're saying really would be in the essence of the additional request. Because you're an office that's basically people working in areas and accommodation, that's predominantly where your expenditures would be. Outside of that, are there any other new requests in the summary you've provided for new initiatives or others that haven't been outlined here?

Ms. Tomkins: — No. I anticipate certain initiatives during the coming year and we have tried, despite the requests for our additional monies this year, to be prudent, to not in effect halt the office in order to achieve that. I think we still can undertake certain initiatives. But what we have anticipated is that with additional funding for the expenses that are indicated on the summary page for the salaries and accommodation fundamentally, we can undertake other initiatives without requesting additional funds.

For example in the coming year the Chief Electoral Officer indicated that she's hosting a meeting of the chief electoral officers from across Canada. I in April am hosting all of the Canadian ombudsmen in Regina. I have requested no additional funds to manage that. We're going to manage it, we think, out of our existing resources for travel, for accommodation, for those kinds of expenses. But we will absorb that.

We, as I suggested, intend to undertake some research regarding service to the North and I think we have the means to manage that within our existing resources by deferring the use of our position dedicated to major investigations. We can use that position to do that research and defer the next major investigation. It's in that way that I'm speaking . . . that I'm thinking that we can absorb new initiatives.

We're looking at and in fact have approved an initiative regarding the alternative case resolution process in our office and are shortly going to, I think, be meeting with focus groups of government employees to talk to them a little about what that ACR (alternative case resolution) work is and to learn from them how it might be valuable to them and how best . . . what they need to know about it and what we could teach them that

would be helpful to them about ACR and conflict resolution. And from that we intend to develop a program or process for training education for government employees. We anticipate absorbing the costs of that initiative within our existing allocation.

We have a Web site through the Legislative Assembly Web site, but if any of you have looked at it it's very basic; it's not particularly attractive. And that's no disrespect to the Legislative Assembly staff — it's our obligation to maintain it and we don't very well. We update it from time to time. We have talked for a long time about creating a dedicated Web site for our office. We hope to do that during the coming year and to absorb the costs of doing that.

Those are the kinds of things when you speak of new initiatives. I don't see the office being at a standstill. I see new initiatives coming and being absorbed. If we are required to absorb the salary increases, obviously some of these new initiatives will be under reconsideration.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you. The next question I have is something that you highlighted. I was interested in the area on page 8 where it said, public complaints. And not quite the same number, but a lot of the time we view that complaints come in there against government or something that's gone wrong and people are complaining against that.

In the area of not against government, is that people requesting just information or other areas outside of government and you do work beyond the government agencies and departments?

Ms. Tomkins: — It's the latter. We get calls from people who have complaints about federal government programs, private industry, consumer matters, court matters — things that our office doesn't have jurisdiction over. When we speak in here of against government, really we're talking about is within our legislated jurisdiction. Municipal government, we get complaints against municipal governments.

We have tried, long before I came to the office and I didn't change that, to not, if we can help it, ever say to somebody, we don't do that and nothing more. So we will say, this isn't a matter within our jurisdiction, however, and we hope to be able to give them a specific name or position title of an . . . in an agency that they could contact about their problem. In some cases we'll do some work to find out who they can call and who might be able to help them.

In extreme cases where we have somebody who is not perhaps as sophisticated or assertive as some, we might go further and even though it's a matter that's not within our jurisdiction, actually contact another organization or agency and arrange a meeting or arrange contact for them.

So no, we won't investigate the complaint in the way that we would if it was within our jurisdiction. But the work on those complaints matters to us and involves our time. And it's for that reason that we report them. When you have last year over 2,000 contacts regarding non-jurisdictional complaints and you have provided at minimum a referral on all of them, it does amount to a substantial amount of work.

Ms. Hamilton: — I think that's an area where it shows that public really does need the education and communications information that you impart because our offices, I think, find the same thing. They believe we can handle anything from immigration to the latest water main break for the city. And although you try to direct those, again you can't really assist them in the same way you would if you were at proper jurisdiction level.

The last question I have is on the alternate case resolution because I think that's also important. If we are working together through the government departments and your agency to have people who are better able to handle complaints, I'd imagine that that could assist you in dropping your caseload as well.

I'm interested in that area because I think of our constituency assistants too, who . . . Some of them are really good at handling case management that comes in and others might not be as efficient or just haven't been trained to handle someone who is really in an irate state. And I think the next step is, you get them complaining about something or other. So I'd be interested if you'd just outline a little bit of that program area for us.

Ms. Tomkins: — About what alternative case resolution does generally or about where I mentioned here, the training initiative that we're . . .

Ms. Hamilton: — The training initiative and how you would be working with government agencies.

Ms. Tomkins: — It's fundamentally what you alluded to. We think that . . . I'm going to go backwards.

We haven't . . . we have two offices, one in Regina and one in Saskatoon. And in each office we have one person whose official title is ombudsman assistant ACR. ACR stands for alternative case resolution. Each of them are women and they are well trained and well experienced in alternative dispute resolution work, coaching, facilitate communication, mediation, that kind of thing.

We, within our day-to-day work, refer to them complaints where . . . there's actually a myriad of kinds of things but I'm going to try and do it simply.

Sometimes it's a situation where there is no general issue. It's a unique set of facts. It's never going to happen again. It isn't so much a matter of administration, or an allegation of an administrative problems overall, so much as some error or miscommunication in this particular case.

In those cases we might refer the matter to our ACR, which will usually involve the parties, the complainant and a government agency representative, and our ACR person sitting down together and sorting the matter out, discussing it, listening to each other — which in a lot of these cases is 90 per cent of the battle — and coming to a resolution that works for both of them and that they're comfortable with.

Or it might be done by way of a shell negotiation. But in some manner, direct or indirect, it involves the parties discussing the matter and finding a resolution they're comfortable with, which

is quite different from what we do when we investigate.

The women who do this work in our offices are, as I say, very skilled. And one thing we see is what you alluded to — people who with all good intentions are not trained in handling conflict, are not aware of the options that they have, and who may be reacting in manners that aggravate problems, that cause people to entrench — may simply not be comfortable looking at the possibility of saying, gee it looks like we made a mistake here. And there are people who have a lot of trouble saying that.

And so what we're looking at is developing a training package where we would do a half day or a daylong seminar with government employees to talk to them. Oh we'll throw in a bit about we're the Ombudsman and what we do, but the focus would always be on handling conflict, handling complaints. And that's the initiative we were talking about.

It's in its early stages now, we just approved it a month or two ago. And what we're doing now is choosing focus groups of government employees to help us to develop the content for that training, to tell us what would be helpful for us to show them or talk to them about. But we hope it will be quite broad based within a relatively short period of time. And we have reason to believe there's interest.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, what Ms. Hamilton had inquired about — against government and not against government. You answered that, but to what extent? You were being . . . Your office is being imposed on certain responsibilities that should be directed elsewhere. So what amount of time is consumed with that?

And I just want to follow that up by, when you're talking about the alternate case resolution as well — and I agree there needs to be some mediation services at some point or another for dispute resolution; we have those kind of services — I'm wondering how much duplication is going on within government agencies in this respect.

And you know human nature being what it is, people will continue to go from one place to another until they get the answers they want. And sometimes I'm concerned that when a department or agency takes a position that's within the legislative responsibilities, within statutory responsibilities and gives an individual an answer, then that should . . . At some point in time where else do you go other than beyond if it's serious enough, an individual feels they need to go to mediation services or to have the courts resolve the resolution. Not that we'd want to prolong it to that extent, but that's the concern that I have.

And it seems to me, or I was always under the impression that each government agency and department had their HR (human resources) people, their customer service people and were promoting customer service to those folks, the front line workers that were dealing with individuals to avoid confrontational situations. And I don't know . . . So my concern is that your office is being burdened, perhaps overburdened with the not against government situations that might be handled more quickly or with less attention, but what you've

indicated, the extent that you have gone to. And if you are working on behalf of some federal government agencies as well to try and assist them, then maybe we should be sending them a bill for some of your services.

Ms. Tomkins: — There's a thought. I've not considered us overburdened by this. I think it's just the nature of the work. You're an office that deals with complaints; people call.

Determining what's within and not within the jurisdiction of my office is actually a very complicated thing in many cases. Sure, some things are straightforward but some are very complicated. And in fact when I speak about the office to members of the public, I talk always about what is within our jurisdiction and what isn't. But I will always say, look, don't try and figure it out. Call us. If it's not in our jurisdiction, we'll tell you. Because it's too much to expect members of the public to have sufficient knowledge of our office and the technicalities of our legislation to make that decision on their own, especially when it's somewhere you would only call, for most people, never or once in your lifetime. Simply to make that decision accurately yourself is more information than most people are carrying.

So in one sense, I suppose, I never thought of it that way but, by saying that, in a way I encourage that. But I encourage it because I want them to phone in case it is in our jurisdiction. And it's not straightforward always.

When I say it takes substantial time to deal with non-jurisdictional complaints, it does, in the sense that you have roughly 2,000 a year non-jurisdictional complaints. And even if it's only one phone call, which most of them are, it's still a few minutes or 10 minutes of our time and you add those times up and it is time.

I consider it a valuable service that we provide. I don't consider it a burden. In many cases we have nowhere to send people, which indicates to me that there is a hole there that, as you suggest, somebody should fill. And maybe it isn't logically us. And we're not filling it because we're not dealing with the complaints. What we're trying to do is find people somewhere they can take their complaints.

On the other side, I don't believe that our ACR is duplicating anything I'm aware of the government agencies are doing. Our ACR, in its usual day-to-day sense, should not be, because one of the first tests of whether we will consider your complaint within our office is whether you have other recourse, other resources available. So if you come to my office with a complaint that relates to something for which you could, for example, go to mediation services, we will say, by statute, we must require you to do that.

Depends what the alternate remedy is. In some cases, we have to say, go to the alternate remedy first and then if you're not satisfied you can come back. In some cases, we say, go to the alternate remedy instead. And it depends what the remedy is.

I'm not aware of duplication. Certainly yes, the whole concept of alternative dispute resolution and conflict resolution has grown and been embraced in recent years, and I would hope that all government offices — I would hope that all offices — are embracing it. I think what we're doing and what they're

doing are different things, or at least being done for different purposes.

In agencies that have a complaint forum, you know, a complaint office — you can open your phone book and see where you want to take complaints — I think there's more focus on that kind of thing. I don't know that it's . . . I'm not saying it's not happening in other agencies, but we have reason to believe from comments that have been made to us and discussions we've had that there is an interest among people in government who deal with conflict situations to learn more about how best to do that. And we think we have people who have very specialized knowledge in that area. And if people in government handle conflict better, it has a positive impact on that agency, on the people they serve, and indirectly on my office. And that's why we see that as part of our role and appropriate for us.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — I thank you very much for that. My concern was that you were taking on a little more than what your mandate with respect to the Ombudsman's responsibilities in addressing concerns that the public had specifically in dealing with the government agencies and/or departments, as opposed to becoming involved in the conflict resolution . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — Our legislation specifically speaks to that. We have, the one section — and I actually have it in my briefcase — but I'll paraphrase the one section that speaks to that we receive, review, and investigate complaints. And then the following section says we can use mediation negotiation and other alternate dispute resolution techniques or mechanisms, I forget the exact word, to deal with complaints. So it's actually set out in the statute as almost an alternative process that we are expected to use.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Okay, I thank you for clarifying that for me. My experience has always been that the Ombudsman was involved in the investigation, and then the appropriate department was told that they were either supported or should resolve the complaint with the . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — Still what we do in the vast majority of cases is receive, review and investigate. That's still what we do the vast majority of the time; the ACR is a piece of what we do. But if you look at the total number of files, how many go through traditional investigation, how many are dealt with through ACR . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . 5 or 10 per cent, we think, are ACR.

And Murray's just mentioned something which I think is important, and I think I alluded to it in passing when I spoke of people hearing each other. So many of the issues that — and complaints — that we deal with through alternative case resolution, and so many of the problems we see in conflict handling, are communications issues, they're people not listening to each other. They're people not telling each other everything they need to know, so people operating with incomplete information. And they're situations that lend themselves ideally to some form of alternative case resolution. And also it's a much more efficient and economical way to deal with them.

An investigation is a very intense and time-consuming process to spend a great deal of time investigating something to say in

the end, well, they've got a letter that you've never seen. And sometimes that's all it is, and then the agency says oh, gee, now that I know that, it makes all the difference and the problem is resolved. It's actually very effective.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — The Chair recognizes Mr. D'Autremont.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you very much. It looks to me from your summary of your budgets that the increases you're asking for are pretty well mandated by forces outside of your own office, that it's salaries that have been established or changed either through outside contract or through government decision. Same with accommodations, that is SPMC making a decision to charge you more rent, etc. So I don't see that there is a lot of bones of contention there on the increases. Now certainly people might be able to argue about your initial base budget, and whether that's being spent properly. But the additions I don't see it really as having . . . that you have a lot of requests in there that are not mandated up from by outside sources.

On the comment that you were just making to Mr. Osika . . . or that Mr. Osika made that the department is contacted and asked to resolve the issue. What does that mean? Does it mean that the department simply says well, okay, we've taken another look at it, our first decision was the right one, so it's settled? Or does it mean that the department looks at it and says okay, maybe there is a different result that could be achieved here? So when you ask a department to resolve an issue, what do you really mean by that?

Ms. Tomkins: — We're not talking about our alternative case resolution process here, we're talking about the investigation process?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes.

Ms. Tomkins: — Okay, then we go much further than asking the department to resolve it in the sense of saying there's a problem, would you fix it. When we receive a complaint and investigate that complaint, we have very broad powers of investigation. We have the ability to require anyone in the province to talk to us. This surprises people, but it's true. So that we . . . and we also can require anyone in the province to give us documentation that relates to that complaint. That includes not just the person who came to us and the government agency, but if we think . . . We do have quite commonly, let's say for example for expertise, we have a complaint about WCB (Workers' Compensation Board) or SaskPower or something. And there's a question involving expertise, we can ask the . . . some doctor of neurology to look at some medical reports and give us an opinion or we can call an electrician and say, would you explain to us how this works and whether what we're understanding makes sense.

So I think it's important to understand, first of all, that we have that broad of powers and we're able to gather that much information. If once . . .

Mr. D'Autremont: — If I could interrupt there?

Ms. Tomkins: — Sure.

Mr. D'Autremont: — What is that power based on? Is that in your legislation?

Ms. Tomkins: — It's in the legislation.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So is that the power of parliaments to call for persons and papers?

Ms. Tomkins: — It's the power of subpoena. We have a power . . .

Mr. D'Autremont: — As a court would have.

Ms. Tomkins: — Yes. I think technically it's . . . I should know this but I don't off the top of my head. I think it's worded as a commissioner would have or a board of inquiry would have but it's the same net effect. It says we have the power to subpoena people and documents within the province.

If you want, I have a copy of the Act and could . . . Here it is.

Subject to section 23, the Ombudsman may require any person who in his opinion is able to give any information relating to any matter being investigated by him:

(a) to furnish any information to him . . .

(b) to produce any document, (paper) or thing that, in his opinion, relates to the matter being investigated and that may be in the possession or under the control of that person;

whether or not the person is an officer, employee or member of the department or agency of the government and whether or not the document, paper or thing is in the custody or under control of a department or agency of the government.

Then in a later section, the Ombudsman may summon and examine under oath any person, any complainant, and any government employee. So it's pretty broad.

Mr. D'Autremont: — But what powers do you have to enforce it?

Ms. Tomkins: — Power of subpoena. And I presume if you didn't abide by the subpoena then Criminal Code provisions would come into play, failing to abide . . . appear pursuant to a lawfully issued subpoena.

In fact, we don't know. We've only ever issued a subpoena once and it wasn't during my term of office and the person appeared. So I can't answer the practical answer to that.

It's the power . . . it's the fact that you have the lawful ability to compel that in effect people comply. Because they say, why should I talk to you? And you say, if you don't, I'll subpoena you. And they say, okay. And they do. And so we never or virtually never have to use the subpoena power. But we can.

Now I'm going to go back and answer the rest of your question.

So we have the ability to gather all this information, and we do. At the end of an investigation if it's properly done, we will have or should have all of the information or all the information that we have indication is out there. And that's very rare. A court has the information the lawyers give it; an arbitrator has the information that the parties give it. We have information that quite commonly people say to us, I don't want you to see this; and no, because we're not acting for them or for government, we're acting objectively, and we will gather it all.

Having that information we then reach conclusions measured against statutory criteria again. We use the word, fair — was it fair? — which actually isn't in the statute. But what we mean when we say that is our statute says, look at the information and make a decision whether what government did in this case was reasonable, was discriminatory, was oppressive. There's a list like that. If we conclude that what government did was unfair, we also conclude what we think ought to be done to fix it.

So it isn't just a matter of us saying to government, here's a problem; fix it. We say, we think this decision was unfair; we think this person was entitled, whatever, to benefits, or to . . . you know, you've miscalculated their power bill, or you acted oppressively in demanding payment in this manner, whatever, and we think in order to fix it you should do X. And we will usually be very specific.

If it involves money, we don't . . . We do deal with money amounts. Although it's not our most common recommendation, it's the easiest way to explain it. And so we might say, we recommend you, you know, refund this person \$57.12. And then government gets what is called a tentative recommendation which is where we go to the head of the government agency, the deputy minister, or the CEO (chief executive officer) and say, we've reviewed this; this is the facts we found; these are the conclusions we reached. We've concluded that your actions were unfair, unreasonable in this case. We think appropriate resolution is this and we recommend you — using my other example — pay the guy \$59. We tentatively recommend that.

That agency then has a chance to consider that and to talk to us — and they do — and to say to me, hey you misunderstood the whole thing, or you didn't take this into account. And sometimes they're right. And then I say, gosh, now that I take that into account, I change my view.

But assuming . . . They have their opportunity to try to convince me that I've misapprehended or made a mistake or that I should reconsider. Or they can say, yes, what you're saying makes sense and we'll implement your recommendation.

If they decline to implement the recommendation and I have not been convinced that it's an improper recommendation, I then make the formal recommendation which is made to a minister. And those are recommendations that you see in public reports because I think the office always has, but I have always reported any complaint that ended up in a recommendation to a minister.

And at the ministerial level, the same thing. The minister can say no, yes, talk about it, and can still decline. We recommend; we don't bind. But that's what then puts it into an accountability forum and that's where other members of the

House, for example, can call government to account and say, why didn't you?

You know, you've got an independent watchdog that you've created that you're apparently committed to account for your decision not to abide by the recommendations of that watchdog. So it throws it into the accountability forum. That's why we recommend rather than bind or else accountability would be lost. It's a long answer; I'm sorry.

Mr. D'Autremont: — No, no, but it was appreciated. The reason I was asking it was I'm sure all members got a book across their desk, the powers of legislatures to summon people and papers, so I was just wondering where your authority came from on that.

Ms. Tomkins: — You want to see if we have as much or more than you.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Oh no, I don't think so. It's amazing what . . . and fact is, the legislatures have the power to retain people.

Ms. Tomkins: — Yes, you have more than me, I think, but I have enough.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes. On page 7 of your report dealing with your own salary, it looks like you're projecting an increase for April 1, 2002.

Ms. Tomkins: — Yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Is that the normal date for deputy ministers to receive a salary adjustment or is it July 1?

Ms. Tomkins: — We were told April 1. This is a new process for us. We haven't been involved before. We're not certain. I don't want to misappropriate here, but we think it's members . . . staff from the Legislative Assembly Office that suggested that date.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Perhaps we can get a clarification from . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — And it may have been PSC (Public Service Commission), but our recollection is it was Legislative Assembly.

Ms. Ronyk: — Yes, I can explain that. The annual economic adjustment for deputy ministers is provided on July 1, the same as it is for all out of scope. But it's the legislation to which the House officers' salary is linked — and that's to the Provincial Auditor's process for determining salary — and that is that it's the average of deputy ministers as of April 1 of each year that is the base for the Provincial Auditor's salary. And the recommendations that the board approved in June also suggested that the Ombudsman and the Children's Advocate should be . . . their salaries should be linked to the average of deputy ministers on April 1, the same as the Provincial Auditor.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. So any salary adjustments would then take place on April 1 of any year?

Ms. Ronyk: — Okay. That's true for the House officers.

Mr. D'Autremont: — For the House officers, yes. Okay, that won't clarify that. Okay.

On page no. 8 you have the list of . . . that everybody else was talking about, against government or against not government. I just wanted it to be known that not against government didn't mean the complaints were against the Official Opposition. I do note though however on those, that the complaints over the five-year period you have listed here continue to grow against government while until last year they had dropped against non-government entities — and then they got . . . non-government entities have started to rise again — and that over that entire period complaints in general have increased.

Is this in relationship to the fact that more people are aware of your office, therefore that . . . the problems have been existing, but now that people are aware there's an avenue to try and deal with them they're utilizing those avenues, therefore you're receiving more complaints in general?

Ms. Tomkins: — I think so but I can't say that as a fact. I certainly believe that there are more people come into the office who have heard about us through some of our public ed initiatives. The reason I hesitate is because I have consciously chosen not to be a daily public figure. Some ombudsmen are and I have chosen not to do that. So we're not the loudest little office around or the most often in the news, which would certainly account almost automatically for an increase in complaints. We know any time I'm . . . speak publicly or in the media, complaints do rise in numbers.

On the other hand we've put particular focus on public ed and in . . . over the years and I think that's a factor. I think another factor is that members of the public are simply more willing now to bring complaints. I think, you know, 20 years ago or 30 years ago or 50 years ago I remember growing up with the, you can't fight city hall expression. And people ran their lives that way. Things would happen and they'd say, well there's no point. Now people not only think there's a point; they think they're entitled. And I think people now search out ways to pursue things.

I will say this and I don't mean this in a partisan way. I don't see in general that, you know, things are falling apart in government that in that sense would account for the increase. The nature of the complaints aren't substantially different. So it's not that, it's something else. And it may just be natural growth.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The not against government category — you may not have the numbers, but perhaps you could give an estimate — how many would be related to federal issues?

Ms. Tomkins: — I do have those numbers for last year, not for 2001. I could get them for 2001, but my last year's annual report is here, right at the back, I think. Last year, federal government complaints were 15.8 per cent of the not against government complaints.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So a significant portion, but not a huge portion.

Ms. Tomkins: — It is significant, yes. The largest portion that's identified — we have an other category and that's the largest. The largest proportion that's identified is consumer complaints.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. I encourage your avenues into . . . efforts into northern Saskatchewan, although I think there you may run into an increase in federal government complaints because a lot of the northern residents are involved a lot more with federal government as well as provincial, perhaps, than as percentage-wise as southern residents are.

Ms. Tomkins: — True and not true, if I can interject. We tried in choosing the communities we went to, we focused on communities that were not . . . for example some communities as you're aware, basically federal reserve land, those were not the communities we generally went to. But even those there are housing issues and various issues that were raised to us that are generic.

But yes, you're correct. There certainly are people who have greater federal government involvement than provincial. And it's part of the reason that in those numbers we just alluded to I'm . . . have been for a few years president of the Canadian Ombudsman Association, and one of the things that we as an association have spoken publicly about — actually even before we were an association the ombudsmen have spoke publicly — but we've spoken publicly about is the creation of a federal Ombudsman. And if anybody at this table would like to get involved, give me a call and we'll see what we can do. I don't know if we're making any progress, but we're certainly interested.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes. I just wondered if you had an expedited procedure for items that were of a federal nature so that you could easily transmit them on.

Ms. Tomkins: — Yes. I think for many of them we do in the sense that you get a lot of calls — I'll just pull something out of the air — say about UIC (Unemployment Insurance Commission). And over the years, the people who take those calls know, you know, if it's a UIC problem there's an appeal process. This is where it is and this is the number. And it's not that time consuming or complicated. There are some federal programs for which there is no identifiable appeal or recourse, and in those cases we'll try and find at least the part of the agency where you might try calling this branch or division, whatever.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay, thank you. And I do appreciate that on page 12, you do have a comparison of your budgets for three years so that it's easy to follow and you know what's growing and what isn't. And I appreciate that. Thank you.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up on Mr. D'Autremont's comments on page 12, I appreciate that too but I would still like to see the actual in there as I believe that would be very helpful for us.

Following . . . going back to page 8 again, which has created a great deal of interest and discussion, and I would just like to be clear on how you define complaint. For instance, is an inquiry to your office a complaint or is it not a complaint until you

decide it has need of investigation?

Ms. Tomkins: — It's a complaint for our purposes — fundamentally because it's always been done that way for 30 years next year — it is a complaint for our office when somebody phones and says, I have a complaint against the department of whatever. It is recorded as a complaint. It may . . . and it may . . . So that when we speak of complaints not against government that would be someone saying, I have a complaint about my UIC. And they may not use that exact word, obviously, but that's what they're saying. That's a complaint, yes. So basically if we're contacted by somebody who has a complaint against government or not against government, it is recorded statistically within the office as a complaint.

Ms. Jones: — So a simple phone call can bump your numbers up quite an amount.

Ms. Tomkins: — A phone call will be recorded as a complaint. I don't think a simple phone call . . .

Ms. Jones: — Complaining about something.

Ms. Tomkins: — . . . we have enough numbers of . . . I don't think we have enough numbers of simple phone calls to say that it's bumping up our numbers in significant amounts.

Ms. Jones: — But it could.

Ms. Tomkins: — It could, yes, sure.

Ms. Jones: — Can you give me some idea of the numbers of complaints versus the numbers of inquiries that you conduct into their complaint.

Ms. Tomkins: — Off the top of my head — and I would caution that's very much so — I would say at most I would guess around 80 per cent there is an inquiry process takes place. It may be that the inquiry involves a phone call to somebody in the Department of Municipal Affairs and a phone call back and the faxing of a document and the whole thing is rectified, which . . . why would we go and spend another three months looking at it if we can do that?

But an investigation process begins in terms of gathering information and trying to work it out. It may get resolved at this stage, this stage, this stage, or this stage of that process. If we look at the investigation process as a continuum, I would guess 80 per cent or more are . . . commence the investigation continuum.

Ms. Jones: — And okay, so . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — The others are . . .

Ms. Jones: — . . . there is something happens in 80 per cent of the calls that you get.

Ms. Tomkins: — Yes.

Ms. Jones: — Some sort of investigation or inquiry occurs, some of which are settled . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — Very early.

Ms. Jones: — . . . very quickly. How many, what percentage would take significant time to conduct the proper inquiry and reach resolution?

Ms. Tomkins: — 25 to 35 would take the very extensive, very formal inquiry process — 25 to 35 per cent of the ones in that 80 per cent I estimated.

Ms. Jones: — 25 to 35 of the 80?

Ms. Tomkins: — I think so. I'm pulling these out of my gut not out of any statistics I'm looking at.

Ms. Jones: — Okay. And then I'm interested in . . . You made a comment that the recommendations that you make, and I assume those are in the more extensive ones that you do, that the recommendations that you make are published.

Ms. Tomkins: — No.

Ms. Jones: — Made public? You used a word that made it sound like somebody knew about this.

Ms. Tomkins: — When we make a formal recommendation to a minister, that is always public. They're included in the annual report. Where in our annual report we do case summaries, we include case summaries, we will always report a summary of cases that were referred to ministers.

Last year we did a separate report. In June of 2000 we tabled a special report that was simply comprised of nine cases where we hadn't made recommendations to ministers.

So yes, if there's a recommendation to a minister, it, at least in my tenure, will always be reported. And I think that's been every ombudsman's viewpoint.

But throughout the year we may make what are technically tentative recommendations to department heads. Hundreds of times those will not all be reported; a selection of them will in our annual report, to give a sense of our work. But there's no . . . All of those recommendations are not . . . those tentative recommendations are not reported.

Ms. Jones: — Okay. So how would the government or indeed the . . . any member of the legislature or the public know which departments are the . . . create the bulk of your work? For instance, you know, are the complaints against Workers' Compensation, Social Services, Municipal Affairs? How would anybody look at the work that you do and say, it's obvious that there needs to be some improvement in process in this area?

Ms. Tomkins: — I'm going to give a two-part answer to that. The basic numbers are included in our annual report. I'll just show you this one. This is by way of a pie chart and then they're broken down by numbers, in addition. So in terms of finding out in numbers where the majority of our complaints come from, that's in our annual report.

However, we get the majority of our complaints from Department of Justice and Department of Social Services —

always have, always will. Every ombudsman in Canada gets the majority of their complaints from the departments of Justice and Department of Social Services. It makes perfect sense. I don't think it's likely to change because those agencies have contact with large numbers of people about things that affect their day-to-day lives.

Whereas you get your driver's licence renewed once a year or you go on workers' comp once in a lifetime and may have some problems there, people who are on social assistance, people who have had their children apprehended, people who are in jail have government agencies making decisions that affect them multiple times every day in some cases. And so it's logical those people have more decisions made that affect them. They therefore likely have more complaints. And therefore, the larger number of complaints from those agencies doesn't necessarily indicate that these are agencies where we need to improve the process. It's possibly and probably just a function of numbers of decisions and idiosyncrasies of the people in making them and the people receiving them.

In terms of where you go to find out, here is something that really needs straightening out, I think I have an obligation to raise those things when I find them. I can do that by way of an Ombudsman inquiry. I can do that . . .

Ms. Jones: — By way of?

Ms. Tomkins: — An Ombudsman inquiry. I can do it by way of a public statement. I can do it by comment in my annual report and I have. Over the years, you'll find things in them where I've said, here's something I think that should be looked at, where we see recurring problems; or here's a process that needs looking at and whatever. But I think, fundamentally, that falls to me.

Ms. Jones: — Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you. I wonder if at this time we might not proceed to a brief explanation of your special warrant request so that way we can avoid some musical chairs.

Ms. Tomkins: — Okay.

The Chair: — And save a little time. For members of the board, this is information under tab 5, a one-page item titled, special warrant request, Ombudsman of Saskatchewan, for \$11,000.

Ms. Tomkins: — I'm going to give you for this a little history that some of you know because you're involved in it, and I'll save Dr. Parker-Loewen from having to do it, although she may want to expand it.

Until June of 2000, the Ombudsman's salary was determined in accordance with the formula that was set out in The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act. Before June of 2000, it was determined that the statutory formula was no longer appropriate, and the legislation in June was amended to provide instead that the Ombudsman's salary would be in an amount determined by the Board of Internal Economy.

The Board of Internal Economy created a committee; that

similar process was put in place for other legislative officers. The board created a committee to review the matter and provide recommendations to it regarding appropriate compensation for the legislative officers. That committee made a report to the board and in June of 2001, the board directed an increase to the Ombudsman's salary and others, but I'm only speaking of mine. And the board also directed that the Ombudsman's salary would henceforward be calculated in accordance with this average of the deputies formula.

That directive resulted in an — obviously — in an adjustment to my salary and an increase in our budgetary expenditure for my salary. There was also, since that directive was made but in accordance with that directive, another adjustment to the salary effective July 1, 2001. The total payment as a result of the salary adjustment, the salary increase, and the retroactive application of that increase was \$11,000.

At the time that our budget submission was made before this board in January of 2001 and in January of 2000, we were aware that — or I was aware that — my salary was undetermined. And in both of those submissions therefore, I said my salary . . . we have budgeted my salary at its then current rate. The actual amount is up in the air. There may or may not be an increase. I don't know the amount of the increase. I've budgeted nothing for the increase, and I therefore said, if there is an increase, I will be seeking a special warrant to cover it because there's nothing allocated to cover it.

The board directive in June that determined the matter, in June of 2001, didn't suggest that the amount should be absorbed or not. I took that to mean, rightly or wrongly, that our previous discussion about it not being included in the budget and that we would be seeking a . . . would probably be required to seek a special warrant to cover that increase — I took it to be that that had been accepted although it wasn't stated. And in any event, it goes back to what's suggested in our budget proposal that this is in effect . . . if it isn't statutory money, it's something fairly much akin to statutory money, and we understood that, in principle if not in law, it would be separately funded. And for that reason we're requesting a special warrant for \$11,000, which is only . . . comprised only of the increases to the Ombudsman's salary, retroactive and ongoing.

The Chair: — And did you say you wanted to deal with the Children's Advocate one now too, or . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — No, I just said the comment . . . this history applies equally to Children's Advocate. I think Deb would probably like to speak to her own.

The Chair: — Now are . . . the members wish to deal with the special warrant at this time, the request for \$11,000 from the Ombudsman's office, or if they're . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chair, I think if there are no more questions to the Ombudsman regarding the budget proposal, which I would suggest be deferred until later in our meeting, but I wouldn't . . . would suggest we do deal with the special warrant right now in relation to the special warrant.

The Chair: — The proposed motion for the special warrant is as follows:

That the special warrant for the Provincial Ombudsman in the amount of \$11,000 be approved for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

Do I have a mover? Mr. Hagel. Seconder? Mr. D'Autremont. Those in favour of the motion? Those opposed? The motion is carried.

Thank you very much then, Ms. Tomkins.

Ms. Tomkins: — Thank you.

The Chair: — And I thank you for your patience and for . . .

Ms. Tomkins: — Thank you, all.

The Chair: — . . . your answers to all of the questions that have been put. And I welcome to the table Ms. Deborah Parker-Loewen, the Children's Advocate who is accompanied today by Bernie Rodier, human resource and financial administrator. Welcome, Bernie. And we would ask at this time that you take us through the part 2 of the document we've been working on, and we probably will have some comments or questions after that as well. So, Ms. Parker-Loewen.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Thank you. Good morning. A pleasure to see all of you again. Ms. Hamilton, nice to see you here too.

You've received our budget request, and I'm not going to go through it in great detail. As you can see, we've prepared what is essentially a status quo budget. We've requested funds that will allow us to maintain our existing services. As you know, the Children's Advocate operates under the authority of The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act.

We have included as an appendix to this submission a summary of our strategic plan that we have to take us to the end of my term, which is three years from now, and that's outlined in the appendix. We've set ourselves three goals: to continue to advocate for respect for the rights and dignity of children; to advocate for systemic change to improve the interest and well-being of children; and to deliver quality service from our office.

Our proposal outlines factors that affect our program delivery. And in those factors, you can see that we did not request any additional funds for programs or operations this year although we have had another 12 per cent increase to our general intake. It was 8 per cent the previous year; in 2001, it was another 12 per cent increase. And we have also continued to have pressure on us with regards to the review of child deaths. We have 97 deaths sitting in our office right now that we're . . . in various stages of review.

We've also had significant pressure on our technology and information management. When the Children's Advocate office was created seven years ago, we utilized an adaptation of the Ombudsman's information tracking system to track data for our office, and we continue to have problems with that in terms of retrieval of data because the Ombudsman's information tracking system doesn't include some elements of information such as the age of the child that we would also like to be tracking. So we're still struggling with a quite antiquated and

inadequate information tracking system in our office.

And we also have the challenge of growing northern services and the provincial challenge, I would say, of the numbers of children in northern Saskatchewan. I'm sure you know that 40 per cent of the population of the North are children and that number seems to be growing.

So we've not requested an increase to any of those areas in terms of our operations this year, nor have we requested an increase to our administrative or operating budget. But the pressures are still there and we are planning to manage within the request that I've put forward.

Just to go to the detail of the budget. On page 21 we have requested a total of \$40,000 budgetary expenditures, twenty-nine five of which are personnel costs similar to the Ombudsman, These are in- and out-of-scope salary adjustments according to the existing agreements. And we have an increase to our accommodation of \$10,500 for a total overall increase from our approved budget of last year of \$40,000.

In addition, we also have the expenditure for the salary of the Children's Advocate which the board had agreed to, and that expenditure for the year 2002-2003 would be \$28,000. So the total summary, in summary, on page 27, the total amount that the Children's Advocate is requesting, as an increase overall from our last year's approved budget, is \$68,000 or a 6.1 per cent increase overall.

We did do the funding request summary on page 23. I would just note that the difference between the approved expenditure and the actual expenditure is virtually none, that our actuals are well within the approved expenditures with some possible exceptions to code 6 where we may have diverted some funds to capital assets at the end of a year. But there is virtually no difference for us between our actuals and approved, and would be pleased to provide those to you.

I'm going to keep it short, so that's my remarks for this morning. And I'll welcome your questions and comments.

The Chair: — Certainly do appreciate the brevity of your remarks and the directness of your request.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for clarification purposes and out of curiosity more than anything, you share the office space with the Ombudsman.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — In the Saskatoon office only.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — I see. Okay. So the overall increases, \$3,000 versus \$10,500 is shared between the two separate facilities?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Right.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Two cities.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — We have a process that we use between the Ombudsman's office and the Children's Advocate office based on usage and numbers of personnel in each office.

And the increase to the accommodation is to the Saskatoon office only.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Oh, I see. Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you. It would be good . . . Your last comment speaks to the comment I made earlier about the actuals. But it would be good to see beside that how those fare up against the projections that you're asking for. And you've mentioned they're virtually the same. Any of the wresting out you're trying to do is to put into capital, I'd assume, so you can address some of the database . . .

Ms. Parker Loewen: — Yes.

Ms. Hamilton: — . . . things that you have been talking about. So you're putting . . .

Ms. Parker Loewen: — Has been mostly computer technology.

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay.

Ms. Parker Loewen: — But thank you for the observation and we'll certainly include that in our next year's submission. If you wish that information, we could provide it to you now; not today, but we could get it to you if that's something you'd like us to provide to you.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Hamilton. The Chair recognizes Mr. Bjornerud.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Did I understand you right? You said you're investigating . . . your office is investigating 97 deaths at this time?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Yes, we are. I have outlined the . . . the actual numbers are on page — sorry — page 16. These are the deaths that in . . . last spring we reported on the deaths that we had investigated and concluded up to the end of December 1998. And we are continuing to review the deaths of children from January 1, 1999 through to the current date.

And the 97 deaths that we have currently in our office in various stages of investigation are from January 1, 1999 to December 2001. And that is 34 in '99, 30 in 2000, and 33 in 2001. And these are deaths that we are notified of by the Department of Social Services in accordance with the protocol that we have established with them, all of which is outlined in the report that I released last spring to the members.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Are these cases under the jurisdiction of Social Services that you are dealing with . . .

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — All of the — sorry — all of those children were either, at the time of their death or in the 12 months prior to their death, receiving certain services from the department of services, specifically under The Child and Family Services Act, the young offenders' Act, or The Child Care Act, which is essentially the Act that governs daycares.

We actually haven't had a death in a daycare, but if there was one, we would have . . . Those would be notified. We would be notified of that death as well. It's broadly defined how . . . how the protocol of the Department of Social Services is defined is very broad. So those services those children were receiving could have been and, for the most part were, in their own homes — some kind of prevention service or could have been a child who had a medical . . . who was medically fragile and was receiving some family or other support to that child.

So it's a broad range of children. It's a form of accountability that, to be frank, the department has opened up. And this is one of the broadest death reviews that occurs in Canada. They've opened themselves up to a fair level of scrutiny, actually, with regards to the services they provide.

Very few of these children are in direct care of government but they're receiving a broad range of services from the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Bjornerud: — So your office . . . would you investigate anything outside of Social Services, completely outside of Social Services?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — We would and can if the child was receiving services from a provincial government department or agency. Our jurisdiction wouldn't, our authority wouldn't . . . We wouldn't have authority to investigate a death where the child was not receiving some other provincial government service.

From time to time, we've had inquiries. However we haven't actually investigated deaths where there wasn't Department of Social Services involvement, either directly or indirectly through an Indian child and family services agency.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Anyone receiving the child tax credit then, would they fall under that category then?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — No. We wouldn't . . .

Mr. Bjornerud: — Not necessarily.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — As I described, the agreement we have with the department is where they're receiving services under The Child and Family Services Act, young offenders' Act, or The Child Care Act. So if they're only receiving some form of financial assistance such as through social assistance, we don't treat them any differently than any other citizen.

The concern I believe here from our office and I think from the Department of Social Services office is to look at where government has intruded in some way into the lives of families. We want to ensure that those services are provided in a respectful and appropriate manner.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you. SPMC, they have projected that they will need an increase of \$10,500. What justification did they give you for that? Seems to be a fairly substantial increase.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Utilities and the cost of parking cars.

Mr. Bjornerud: — What would the total cost of

accommodations be then before this and now what will that do to your . . .

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Excuse me, I'll just get that one. Excuse me. The total cost for our portion of the accommodations in Saskatoon for 2001-2002 was 68,600; and for 2002-2003, it's 79,100. So the differential is \$10,468 actually.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you. You'd mentioned parking spots in your reply. Has there been changes made to those parking lots or . . .

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Well as our staff increase, we also increase our parking demand. And so that's part of the challenge for us is to find adequate parking and to find a way to fund that appropriately. And so . . .

Mr. Bjornerud: — I guess why I'm asking is that seems like a dramatic increase from one year to the next.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Yes, we think so too. Sorry, there was also a . . . there was also an increase to the square footage cost because they had miscalculated the square footage and had charged us rent based on a lower square footage cost. And now they have said they've corrected it and we are now being charged rent at a different square footage cost, as well. So there's been some confusion about the amount of space we have with SPMC.

Mr. Bjornerud: — How many extra parking spots would this include? Like, I'm trying to understand how . . . it still seems like a dramatic increase even if the footage numbers were different than what they had before.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — We're just guessing, but we think it's an additional five or six parking spots from last year to this year.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Do you have that many more staff than you had the year before?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — We didn't have . . . we've increased the parking allocation. We don't . . . we haven't increased the staff by that much.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Okay, thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Now I wonder if we could also at the same time get . . . Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry and I even have it written down here. The Chair recognizes Mr. D'Autremont.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you. I have a question dealing with the child deaths as well. Have you been able to track that statistically in comparison to the general public, not involved with government agencies? Is it higher? Is it lower? Is there some difference?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Well that actually is a very good question and one that we're struggling with. The provincial epidemiologist, the . . . and Dr. Butler-Jones from the Department of Health, senior representatives from Social

Services, the coroner's office, and my office have been trying — and vital statistics — have been trying to get a better answer to that question.

It's difficult to make a good comparison because the numbers of children who receive services from the Department of Social Services, that number in itself is difficult to ascertain because the children come in and out of service and so we can get numbers at a point in time but it's difficult to get an accumulated number and to make a comparative analysis. It's very difficult.

And in addition to that, in our province, deaths are classified differently by the coroner and by vital statistics so the Department of Health keeps a different kind of statistics than the coroner does. It's very complex, it's very confusing.

The coroners and the children's advocates across Canada have established what we've called, with Health Canada, a federal/provincial/territorial working group on child death reviews. And it's a . . . in fact we're meeting in Victoria next week. And one of the goals is to work on a consistent database that would allow us to do that kind of comparison, and to do that kind of comparison interprovincially as well. It's . . . there's a lot of inconsistency with how deaths — not just child deaths but deaths generally — are classified and with how they're compared.

And so I can't answer your question. I wish I could. But we're working on trying to get a better base for that kind of an answer. It's a very good question. And my belief is — and this is from reviewing the data fairly extensively — that the Department of Social Services in its care and provides services to children who are more vulnerable and more fragile than the general population, and in particular the children who are medically fragile and that come into the care of the department or are receiving some other kind of support services.

For the most part that's part of the public support to families with children with medical difficulties. And so there may be a higher percentage but there may well be a good explanation for it as well. And our observation is that those children actually receive excellent care and that their lives are extended by virtue of the kind of service that they get in general from government.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes, that's why I was asking. Like, 97 seems like a huge number.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — It does.

Mr. D'Autremont: — But you're looking at that number over three years as well. And unless you know that there's something abnormal about those numbers then you can't judge whether those are . . . at some point in time we're all going to become one of these statistics. So is it . . . is 34 an abnormal number in any one year?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Yes, and the problem . . .

Mr. D'Autremont: — It's hard to judge that.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — It is. And the problem is that this becomes an emotional issue for all of us. And the numbers

don't represent . . . we don't know what the numbers represent. And so it's very difficult to make comment on it. So when you say 97 it sounds big, but we don't believe it is particularly. The numbers haven't changed from one year to another significantly. You know, between 34 and 30, maybe 29. We're not looking at large changes over time. We're not seeing any big differences one way or the other. The difficulty as I see it is it's quite an emotional topic for all of us.

The other challenge for us, which I have pointed out here . . . And we have now taken from our operating budget as much money as I feel I can appropriately take and put it into trying to work on concluding these investigations in a more timely manner. I am not satisfied that we are right now still working on 1999 files in my office. And up until this last year, we've had one investigator concluding those deaths. And it's very complicated, as you can imagine, difficult work. We now have 1.8 investigators working on those, and I don't see us getting ahead of it. We're into discussions now with the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health to look at how we might be more efficient in this. On the other hand, we think that it's important, at least with this set of deaths, to be fairly comprehensive.

So it's a huge challenge for us. And I have chosen not to come forward with additional budget requests on this matter. I'm going to see how we can manage with reallocating our existing resources for this year. And I don't know what we're going to be able to get ahead of in this fiscal year.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The Indian Child and Family Services agency, is that a federal government agency?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — No, those are agencies established in Saskatchewan through agreement with the Minister of Social Services under The Child and Family Services Act. However, the funding comes from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, so it's an agreement . . . a funding agreement with the federal government and a service agreement with the province.

Mr. D'Autremont: — From the information you've been able to gather on your review of the child death, does Social Services maintain an annual list of the children that are being supplied with services by Social Services?

I can see a case where a child is on Social Services in January, August is off again, back on again in November and December let's say, now would Social Services have a track of that? Would that then be counted as two children or, because it's the same child, would it be counted as one again?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Well, how we receive the statistics is at a point in time. So in March 31 of each year, the Department reports on the numbers of children receiving various services. It's at that point in time. So the numbers of children that had been in the service over the course of the year, as far as I understand it, aren't included in the final statistics. But I may actually . . .

Mr. D'Autremont: — But deaths are though . . .

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — . . . because it's not deaths of on March 31?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — No, that's true.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So you're measuring apples and oranges?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Yes, so that becomes the complication of your previous question.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So that's why I wondered if Social Services, from your knowledge — and we can ask Social Services that when we get to their department — but from your information, do they have a comprehensive list of children that are under Social Services so they don't get duplicates of the person in January and the person in November being the same person, but being off in between?

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — I don't think, in honesty, I can answer that question. I have some thoughts about it but I do think it's better that you pose that to the department themselves.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The minister is warned. Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you. I wonder if at this time if you would, members, turn to the request that's for a special warrant from the Children's Advocate office — their request to a total of \$44,000 and I'd ask Ms Loewen just to give us another brief explanation on this.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Well, I want to thank Ms. Tomkins for providing you with the background and history. I won't repeat that. As she stated, I also do not have a budget allocation for this salary increase. We were advised by the board in — sorry — I advised the board in January 2001 that a special warrant would probably be requested once we understood what the salary adjustment would look like following the recommendation of the committee.

In the absence of any direction in June from the board, I will say that I didn't include the salary increase in our 2001-2002 planning. And as a result of the directive from the Board of Internal Economy, the salary adjustment for the Children's Advocate's salary is — as outlined in the special warrant requests — it's a significant amount, it's \$44,000.

Previously, the Children's Advocate's salary was designated at 85 per cent of the Provincial Ombudsman's salary, and this decision that the board made to have the salaries of the legislative officers — the auditor, the Children's Advocate, and the Ombudsman — be equivalent had a significant impact on the salary of the Children's Advocate. So there you have it. The request is for this \$44,000.

The Chair: — If the members are ready for the motion, the proposed motion is:

That a special warrant for the Children's Advocate in the amount of \$44,000 be approved for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

Do I have a mover? Mr. Hagel. Seconder? Mr. Bjornerud. Those in favour of the motion? Those opposed? Motion is carried.

Well with that I want to thank you, Ms. Parker-Loewen, and also Ms. Tomkins for your patience in waiting to be paid for all the work that you've put in, in the last year and a half in total. And I think you can go back with the assurance now that you've got legal authority to pay yourselves — to pay your chief officers the way they should be. So thank you very much for your attendance.

Ms. Parker-Loewen: — Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Members of the board, we have one other item here that I anticipate — although I can't promise — would probably take 10 minutes. And I would suggest that we proceed with that at this time. And that being the case, I would welcome Mr. Gerrand to the table.

We'd proceed to item 6, which is a decision item, review of the 2002-2003 budget for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Tab 6 in your folders. I welcome to the table Mr. Gerrand and I ask you, Mr. Gerrand, at this time to provide remarks.

Mr. Gerrand: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the committee.

The first item is the Office of Conflict of Interest Commissioner. You have the figures that have been proposed. I think they're essentially the same as last year — a budget of 122,000. Last year I spent about 90,000 — ninety and a half thousand.

Everything is going to be the same this year with one small exception. I have agreed to host and chair the meeting of the Conflict of Interest Commissioners of Canada — a gathering of the ethics and conflict of interest commissioners from the provinces and the federal government. This has been arranged for mid-September 2002.

The expenditure for that conference is quite minimal — two or three meals and some limited libations. I don't expect the cost would exceed more than 3 or \$4,000 for this. The Speaker has kindly agreed to host a luncheon on the Saturday afternoon of the meeting. And I'm not asking for any special increase to cover the cost of this. I think it can be covered by the item, travel and business which has been underexpended by 4 or \$5,000 each year.

Other than that, matters will go forward in a manner similar to the previous two years that I have been the commissioner.

There will be some recommendations for amendments to The Members' Conflict of Interest Act that come from a report that I will ultimately file with you, Mr. Speaker, regarding a matter presently under consideration by me. The recommendations will relate to section 8 of the Act that deal with the restrictions on members of Executive Council in dealing with arms of government for a period of one year following their ceasing to be members of Executive Council.

I have it on fairly good authority that there will likely be some recommendations for amendments to the Act regarding the members' private disclosure statement that is filed with me, which will include a provision for filing with me a declaration that there is no significant changes from the previous year which will permit members not to complete the eight-page statement that they presently complete.

Mr. D'Autremont, the statement will have to be completed for this year and this amendment will apply in subsequent years . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I expect that those amendments will be introduced at the session of the House that will be nextly called.

Other than that, that's the situation regarding expenditures in that office.

The Chair: — Thank you. Are there any questions with respect to item 6?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well I'm very glad to hear that you'll be coming forward with some recommendations. My comment I had written down here is, make form simpler. So if you're going to do that, I'm prepared to vote for your budget.

Mr. Gerrand: — The amendments, Mr. D'Autremont, will not be included in the report that I will be filing in the matter I'm presently considering. They will be proposed through the officers of the Department of Justice.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. On your report, and obviously it hasn't been brought forward yet, on the conflict of interest . . . or the . . . of executive, people from Executive Council then dealing with government agencies, one of the items that was reported was that the current legislation does not lack any teeth in it. I don't know if you're at liberty yet to say, but would that be a part of the recommendations?

Mr. Gerrand: — The simple answer is yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Your discussions with the other commissioners I think potentially has some value in that it's probably good if we could have more or less uniform conflict of interest across the country so that everyone is dealing from sort of the same page. And that meeting with them gives you the opportunity to see what they're doing, for them to know and understand what you're doing, so that we're all pointing from the same field more or less.

Mr. Gerrand: — I think that's the object of this one-day meeting that we have each year. I've had the privilege of attending two of these meetings and it is not a large group of individuals that perform these functions across Canada. And we do have very useful discussions of matters that are of general interest to each of us. And I think there is an underlying objective to find the best in each system and move towards it.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you very much.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chairman, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any questions. I don't know that we do on this side of the table. I just would like to thank the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the good work that he does and to acknowledge that this is

an important element in the process of providing confidence to the public about the public trust in their elected officials.

The Chair: — Thank you. That being the case then, perhaps we could proceed then to item 7 where we're . . . and that's under tab 7 as well on your documents. Information and Privacy Commissioner expenditure estimates.

Mr. Gerrand: — The proposed budget is almost identical to the previous year, if not identical. I'm not suggesting any increases or alterations but there's a rather important asterisk to what I've just said.

I've performed this function for two years now. I've acquired some knowledge and experience. And one of the things I've done is to look very carefully at how this role is performed across Canada, generally, and specifically, in our neighbouring provinces. As you may or may not know, I carry on this function as a . . . in a corner of an office in the law office that I've been associated with for many, many years. And that has the distinct advantage of saving a considerable amount of money in my view. I have access to the facilities of the law office which I need in carrying out this role including access to a law library, means of communication, telephone, fax machines, e-mail.

There has been some public criticism by one specific individual about the way this is done by me and the number of hats I wear. I do not think the criticism is valid. I feel that I am able to display the sufficient degree of independence to carry out these functions in a satisfactory manner.

I have noted, however, in looking at other jurisdictions that they have many more bodies involved in the information and privacy role. In the province of Manitoba where the Act is essentially the same, and the function is carried out under the umbrella of the Ombudsman's office, they have a minimum of eight people carrying out the role that I perform solely.

I have visited their office. I have, through the suggestion of officers of the Department of Justice who are responsible for making recommendations in this area, I have visited that office. I have seen precisely what they do. I have obtained information from Alberta where they have the power to make orders as opposed to my power to make recommendations solely. And in that operation they have 26 individuals including four full-time lawyers.

I hinted last year when I appeared before you that the day may come when recommendations are made to alter this and to spend a great deal more money than is presently being spent on this function. I have made my views known to those individuals that think about these things and make decisions about them. And I have told them that, although what is happening now is satisfactory, it really should be improved upon. And there should be a greater organization performing what I'm doing. And I've told them that I do not wish to be the head of that organization or play a role in it; that it should be somebody new. And I think those things are being considered now and something's going to develop. So that, very likely, this is the last time I appear before you presenting a budget as Information and Privacy Commissioner.

I do wish to continue my role as Conflict of Interest Commissioner, but I think it would be appropriate and in the best interest of the province, generally, that this be looked at seriously to restructuring this role.

So I give you a little advance warning that this may be . . . something may be developing in this area.

The Chair: — Thank you very much for your introduction to the topic. Are there any questions or comments at this time by members of the committee?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I'd just like to thank the privacy commissioner, Information and Privacy Commissioner for his comments and heads-up, and also to say thank you, once again, for the good work in this capacity.

Mr. Gerrand: — Thank you.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I'd just like to second Mr. Hagel's comments. As far as the official opposition is concerned, you have been doing a good job in relationship to your duties and to any of the requests that we have had to your office. And, if this is the last time you come before us — I'm not sure that it will be, but the last time in this capacity, well then, thank you very much for your service.

Mr. Gerrand: — Thank you. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you. Mr. Gerrand, the committee has earlier made a sort of a precedent that we're not voting any of the motions at this time until I have a chance to further peruse them, so I thank you very much for coming, and you will be notified in due time.

Mr. Gerrand: — Right. Thank you.

The Chair: — Members of the committee, I suggest we would break for lunch now. We have lunch provided; it'll be wheeled in here immediately. I know some of you may want to mix, but I want to get an idea of a time of reconvening. I would suggest 1 o'clock. Is that, is that . . . you want a little more time than that or . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I going to be away from about 1:10 until 3 o'clock, so I . . . That's not helpful to anyone except that I suppose if we start later I'll miss less but . . . (inaudible) . . . Let me shorten the exercise . . . (inaudible) . . . instead.

But I'm not requesting that we stop because of that.

The Chair: — Is 1 o'clock . . . 1 o'clock's okay. Okay, we adjourn till 1 o'clock.

The board recessed for a period of time.

The Chair: — Members of the board, I think I'd like to continue with our meeting. We've covered quite a few items and we are now at item 8 on our agenda which is a decision item, the correction to directives setting independent officers' salary. To speak to this issue and appraise us of what the issue really is, we've got Gwenn Ronyk and Ken Ring and Linda Kaminski to give us the background on it and then to make the

recommendation. So I turn it over to Ms. Ronyk.

Ms. Ronyk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue before us deals with the directives that the board passed last June accepting the recommendations of the task team on independent officer remuneration. At that time, the board agreed that those independent officers should be linked to an appropriate classification in the public service. And the directives as drafted were supposed to do that and as we became . . . were in the position of actually implementing them and making the payments, we discovered that the wording that we used did not let us treat them the same as the positions to which they were linked.

And in this case, the Ombudsman, and the Children's Advocate are linked to the Provincial Auditor, which is in turn linked to the average of deputy ministers in the government. The Chief Electoral Officer, and the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's salaries were linked . . . are linked to the senior executive 2 level within government.

The issue, as the background item explains, is that the way we had them worded, we weren't able to apply the economic adjustment on July 1 where it is done so for the Provincial Auditor and for deputy ministers. Instead these officers were required to wait nine months before they could apply the economic adjustment, which is just a small measure of unfairness there. And so these corrections are to ensure that they're paid at the same consistent way and receive the same economic adjustments at the same time as the positions to which they're linked.

The Chair: — Thank you. So you have the directives in your tab 8, in black print. You have the exact wording of directive 20; the change in the . . . to that directive, also on the flip, which is items 2(b) and (c). And directive 26 changes item 2, referring to the Electoral Officer; and directive 27, Ombudsman's salary, that's part 3; and Children's Advocate is directive 28, that's part 3 as well. The recommended motion would read as follows:

That directive 20, Conflict of Interest Commissioner's salary and expenses, directive #26, Chief Electoral Officer salary and expenses, directive #27, Ombudsman salary and expenses, and directive #28, Children's Advocate salary and expenses be amended as attached.

The attachments being those things that I have just referred to. Any comments or questions?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you. I guess my question would relate to all of the independent officers in general. Under this change, would all officers then have the same salary adjustment date or would they be staggered still?

Ms. Kaminski: — Sorry, I missed your last phrase. You said would they be the same or what?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Would they all have the same adjustment date so that it would be July 1? Or would some be adjusted at some other period in time?

Ms. Kaminski: — To answer the question, there's a

combination of things. In terms of the economic adjustments, there is a standard date for those within government that these positions are linked to and that's July 1. And therefore by making this correction it means that we can actually apply those cost-of-living adjustments on July 1.

In terms of April 1, there's also adjustments that occur on April 1 for the Ombudsman and Children's Advocate. They're linked to the average of deputy ministers' salaries and there will be changes calculated each April 1. And so for those positions, it would be relevant that those two positions be revisited each April 1 as per their link.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So in those categories there would be two adjustments made, April 1 and July 1?

Ms. Kaminski: — Yes. July 1, if in fact there is a July 1 economic adjustment that is approved for all of government. So it's not necessarily is there always an economic adjustment July 1 each year, but typically there are adjustments on July 1 each year.

Mr. D'Autremont: — As long as it's consistent across the board for all of the independent officers, then I think it should be dealt with that way. But if some are on one date and some are on another date, then we need to make the adjustment so that they're all on the same date.

Ms. Kaminski: — Yes, in essence they are. I guess what I said where there is a difference, it's for the Ombudsman and Children's Advocate. What it says is that they shall receive the average of deputy ministers' salaries. Each April 1 deputy ministers' salaries are . . . the average is recalculated because you have deputy ministers coming and going throughout the year. In addition to that, deputy ministers are entitled potentially to a performance adjustment to move along in their range on April 1 of each year. So it's important then that those two positions continue to get treated as per the requirement that they maintain their link to the average of deputy ministers.

Whereas the other two positions, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and the Chief Electoral Officer, they are at the maximum of their rate, so the only thing that can change to their rate is when there are cost-of-living adjustments applied. And then those adjustments are applied then on July 1 as per, again, the rest of government.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Hamilton: — Earlier we did the special warrants for the Child Advocate and the ombudsperson, so what we're doing now would be consistent with those warrants that we had passed? Nothing changes?

Ms. Ronyk: — The special warrants were for this current fiscal year, the rest of it coming to March 31. Now these changes may have some small impact on this current fiscal year. But they won't be implemented until the new fiscal year. So it'll be a decision that they make in the new fiscal year how they handle it — whether it's absorbed, whether it's part of a potential special warrant. Those options are available in the new fiscal year.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does that mean that some of this is retroactive? I don't understand here. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner has asked for 2002-2003 salary of 61 and I see here that effective July 1, 2001 it goes up to 63,624. I don't quite understand how it works.

Ms. Ronyk: — Yes. On the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's salary, the last directive that you approved in June, all it set out was the (a) part — effective April 1, 2001, 60,456. And it did not make any provision for increases. It was thought at the time that there was potential for that position to change . . .

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Oh, okay.

Ms. Ronyk: — . . . and the task team sort of recommended that if it did change, the whole thing should be . . . salary-wise should be reviewed again. And so nothing further was put into the directive.

But at this point that hasn't happened and we don't know when or whether it will. And so the 2 per cent July cost of living is applied here, effective July 1, 2001. That's the 2 per cent that was provided across government. And then we did add the provision in (c) so that that would continue to occur in the future if . . . until the position changes. If it doesn't change, if it stays the same, then the Conflict of Interest Commissioner will get the July 1 economic adjustment on the same basis as all the other House officers do.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — And what budget will that come out of?

Ms. Ronyk: — That is out of his budget. And what we do know that the government approved economic adjustments for July 1, 2002 is another 2.5 per cent. And that will . . . His budget that we just looked at has what number for . . . 61, it has 61,000 for the salary. But he does have room in his budget, because as you see last year he spent 90 out of 122,000. So I don't think it'll any impact in terms of coming back to the board for any additional funding.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — And it won't confuse the auditor?

Ms. Ronyk: — Well I can't guarantee that. Linda would like to comment, clarify something.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you.

Ms. Kaminski: — I just wanted to add further comment to the cost-of-living adjustments. What happens within government is they look to SGEU (Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union) collective agreement. And whenever that collective agreement is settled, in the agreement it's determined what the cost-of-living adjustments will be for SGEU employees during the term of the agreement.

The SGEU collective agreement was signed and ratified late September — is what I'm remembering off the top of my head. Therefore there was retroactive adjustments applied. What happens then is once SGEU is determined, then the cost-of-living adjustments for the out-of-scope employees are

determined.

And so it wasn't till late October, beginning of November that we received information from the government to advise us as to what the salary adjustments would be for the out-of-scope employees. So at the time that the task force went before the board last July, the July 1, 2001 adjustment was not known. And that's typical that it is not necessarily known on the actual date that it's to be implemented. Therefore these are retroactive adjustments that are applied once they are determined to be applicable within government.

So it was not until late October, early November that we were advised of what the July 1, 2001 adjustment amount should be. And that it should be applied back to July 1, 2001 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Pardon me?

Hon. Mr. Osika: — We're not compelled to do that.

Ms. Ronyk: — We feel that it is important to make one more explanation as to the amount here. Because if you did the calculation, you could see that three thousand thirty-two hundred dollars is not 3 per cent. And that is because, as you're aware, the Conflict Commissioner and the Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioner are held by the same person.

And the task team recommended that those two positions together should merit the salary of this senior executive 2, which is a hundred and five thousand and a few dollars.

Now the freedom of information commissioner's salary is set by cabinet, by order in council. And rather than trying to divide up which portion of the cost of living would be paid by an order in council and which would come out of the directive under the Conflict Commissioner's, the whole 3 per cent has been applied to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's salary and that's why it's . . . It's actually 3 per cent of 105,000.

The Chair: — There being no further comments or questions . . . There is.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I understand it, you said that we currently have . . . Point no. 2(a) is all that the directive says and that the bolded (b) and (c) is the request for change to the directive.

Ms. Ronyk: — That's correct.

Ms. Jones: — Therefore I'd like to express my concern that we continue to build in automatic increases that give the Board of Internal Economy absolutely no discretion as to the wages paid to officers of the Assembly. And so by putting this in, you're really quite powerless to control costs. And particularly at a time when we're looking at having to control costs, I would have to express my reluctance to approving a new . . . an amendment to the directive.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. D'Autremont: — On that particular point, I guess the avenue for accountability and cost control could be then done at the deputy minister level. If the deputy ministers' salaries do

not increase, then these salaries conversely do not increase.

Do have a question on that though. If deputy ministers' salaries were reduced, the average was reduced, would these salaries therefore be reduced?

Ms. Ronyk: — No. The answer is no. The Provincial Auditor Act on which these are based, it clearly states that if the . . . the auditor's salary shall not go down if the average does, as long as it's the same auditor. A new person coming in might start at a lower level — whatever the average is.

The Chair: — Are there further questions or comments? I recognize Ms. Jones.

Ms. Jones: — One further comment previously raised by Mr. Osika is that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has budgeted for a salary of \$61,000. My assumption would be that that would meet his expectations and therefore I again question why we're building in automatic increases into a directive that exceed the expectations of the person fulfilling the position.

Ms. Ronyk: — I can't speak to Mr. Gerrand's expectations, although he is not . . . has had no role in suggesting this or requesting it, or he's probably not even aware of it.

I guess the only point I would add is that this was the only officer that didn't have that provision in. The other House officers have the provision to adopt any economic adjustments if they're approved in government and so it was a matter of trying to make them all parallel.

I do have the previous versions that the board approved of the directives here if you would like a set of those that you can compare.

Ms. Jones: — But yet a further comment along the same topic, Mr. Chairman, is that we heard from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, that he may be bringing forward a proposal for changes to the role. And I would then say, in response to that, that this may well be premature in passing an amendment to the directive until we've received that report and what a new, expanded version of that position might entail.

So I'm opposing this one on two counts: one being that I think it's being premature, and the other being that it exceeds the expectation of the officer.

The Chair: — I just would like maybe a . . . get a clarification here. Ms. Jones had asked the question with respect to being out of the hands of the board once this directive is passed. And my understanding is that the board can at any time meet and pass a new directive. So it really remains with the board — it doesn't give the authority to anybody else. I'll just repeat that.

Ms. Jones: — I'm sorry.

The Chair: — The one comment that was made was that by passing a directive of this type that it goes out of the hands of the board. And I just wanted to clarify that the board can come back at any time and make a directive, any directive it feels.

So the authority for these items do remain with the board. It's

not that the board is abdicating or giving up its responsibility to somebody else; it could come back and increase it again tomorrow or the next day, or change it. It's just it . . . I hope that clarifies it because I don't think you're giving . . . the board is actually abdicating its responsibility to somebody else. The board is setting up methodology of dealing with increases with this.

Ms. Jones: — In response, Mr. Chairman, it was more . . . my comment was . . . had to do with the fact that when things become statutory that they are then required to be passed. And without quite a demonstration of change in direction, it's out of our hands. I mean, as long as . . . if we continue and do not change a method, then you just statutorily must pass the amounts required to fulfil the directives. That was what I meant by it's out of the board's hands.

Of course, I understand that directives can be changed at any time. But that was what I meant by my comments.

The Chair: — Thank you. Ms. Ronyk, your comment?

Ms. Ronyk: — The issue may become moot in a while. If you recall in June when the board received the task team report, it adopted the principles of there being a linkage between officers and appropriate positions in the public service. And it also recommended to cabinet that that linkage be put back into statute, into the individual House officer's Acts. And if and when amendments to their Acts come forward, it indeed will be taken out of the board's hands to set their salaries, and it'll be put back into their Acts the way it was prior to April of 2000. That's all I needed to say, thanks.

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay. As a new member, you have now totally confused me. So just as a quick recap and then tell me where I got off the process. The handout that just happened, is this correct 2002 or 2001?

Ms. Ronyk: — 2001 . . . (inaudible) . . . June yet.

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay, that will put me back on a clearer path.

Ms. Ronyk: — Sorry.

Ms. Hamilton: — And so my understanding is that there was a task team to look at independent officer remuneration. There was the guidelines that were put forward and June 2001 this board directed that they be implemented. To implement them properly it was found that you could not do that as the board had directed without the changes to these directives. And so therefore to complete the commitment to this board, you've brought forward the changes to the directives, is that . . .

Ms. Ronyk: — That's our view.

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay. Then I'm having trouble following my colleague. Although I think her point is that the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's salary and expenses, were they included in the original review or were they added to say, to be fair across the board, that this office should also be included as it's now constituted unless there's a change?

Ms. Ronyk: — I'm not sure I understand. This position was, the Conflict Commissioner was included in the task team's review. And the task team recommended that it be linked to the senior executive 2 level. There was some . . . the task team hesitated to put numbers to that because there's a division of that salary that's determined elsewhere between OC (order in council), by cabinet, and the board. And the task team nor the board has any control over what cabinet does with the other part of the salary. And at that point we just put in the one year that we knew, but the principle was there that it should be linked to the SE (senior executive) 2 position. And now we're really just expressing that to be an ongoing thing rather than waiting for some other changes that might occur.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you. All clear now.

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Any further comments or questions on this item 8? If not, we're prepared to move to a decision on it. The recommendation is before you, on the page before you, which is, I'll read again:

That the directive #20 Conflict of Interest Commissioner's salary and expenses, directive #26 Chief Electoral Officer's salary and expenses, directive #27 Ombudsman's salary and expenses, and directive #28 Children's Advocate salary and expenses be amended as attached.

Is there a mover? Moved by Ms. Hamilton. Is there a seconder? Mr. D'Autremont.

Those in favour of the motion? Those opposed to the motion? The motion is carried.

Thank you. Now we proceed to item no. 9. This is a decision item as well, and that is to make public the task team report on the independent officers' remuneration.

And to provide a little background information on that, you also have a, in your information package, a single sheet with a recommended motion that the June 1, 2001 report on the independent officers' remuneration be released for public access on request.

And once again, if you would give us just a little background on that, and I ask Ms. Ronyk to lead on this.

Ms. Ronyk: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. The task team reported both to cabinet and to the board, and in neither case were cabinet or the board asked to make . . . to decide whether the report should be made public. Since that time, the report has not been made public; even the House officers themselves have not seen a copy of it. And we have had requests from the House officers and from some other jurisdictions who are doing similar salary reviews of independent officers.

And what we're asking is that it be made . . . the board allow it to be treated differently from its usual background papers and be released on request.

We have asked cabinet the same question, and the answer that I received back from the Clerk of the Executive Council was that they would have no objection. It was basically the board that had made all of the decisions in following the adoption of the

report. That's all I need to say.

The Chair: — Thank you. Any comments or questions?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Call the question.

The Chair: — All right, we'll call the question. Could I get a mover for the motion?

That the June 1, 2001 *Report on Independent Officer's Remuneration* be released for public access on request.

Mr. D'Autremont. Seconder, Ms. Hamilton. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Ms. Ronyk: — Thank you very much.

The Chair: — And thank you. Next item on the agenda is agenda item 10. For this item I would refer you now to the blue . . . the book that you have in the bound edition, which is the review of the 2002-2003 budget for the Office of the Legislative Assembly.

And the way I hope to proceed with this is to, first of all, do some introductions to the people who are here from the Legislative Assembly office, then I'll go through . . . lead you through some of the highlights of this booklet. And when I'm done, I think then what we'll do is we'll have opportunity for the members of the committee to ask questions — more detailed questions, for which I will then turn the responsibility for the responses to the respective heads of the departments.

The first thing I want to do is welcome everybody here and just go around the table for the purposes of record and also just to refresh memories on names. But the Legislative Assembly office, of course, is under the jurisdiction of the Clerk, Gwenn Ronyk, who's been seated beside me all morning. Her Deputy Clerk, Greg Putz, is here as well, and so is Viktor Kaczowski, who is the Clerk Assistant of committees, and so is Margaret — better known as Meta, to some of us — Woods, also a Clerk Assistant.

In addition to that we have, first of all, seated beside Gwenn, the director of financial services, Marilyn Borowski. And we also over starting on the left is Linda Kaminski, director of administrative services and human resources. Marilyn and Linda have to work very closely together in their work. Beside Linda, we have Kerry Bond from . . . is a broadcasting technician from broadcasting services. Then Lorraine DeMontigny from visitor services, director of visitor services.

Pat Kolesar is seated beside Marian Powell. Marian is the Legislative Librarian and Pat is our assistant legislative librarian. Then we have Guy Barnabe who is the director of information services.

And right in the corner is our Sergeant-at-Arms who keeps us secure in this place, Pat Shaw. And seated beside him is Ken Ring, whom you've already seen as well, Legislative Counsel and Law Clerk's office.

And I have one other person that I want to introduce at this time as well, and that's the assistant to the Speaker, Margaret

Kleisinger, who has been dutifully serving us all morning actually.

Now I will proceed to going through some of the highlights in this, referring to a few pages.

The table of contents . . . This whole booklet I should say, the production of this booklet involved a team approach, it wasn't . . . and so you see the result of a lot of collaboration in the booklet. And collaboration on the part of the Legislative Assembly Office, the library, the Law Clerk, even people . . . clerks involved with the committees, and it deals with everything that is run by the departments here. But in addition to that also the constituency offices and the caucus offices.

On page 1 there is a bit of an explanation of . . . to particularly to somebody who might not have the experience that our members have, but the idea that the annual estimates document of the General Revenue Fund really has two parts in it.

The executive branch, which is dealt with in the Legislative Assembly. And then there is this Legislative branch, which we are dealing with here today. And it is the branch that is not dealt with in the Assembly; it is simply referred to the Assembly from this board.

The Legislative Assembly is made up of all the elected members and the offices and the staff that support the members, the House, and . . . Pardon me. And the branch deals with the Legislative Assembly which deals with elected members and the offices and staff and support for the members of the House and legislative committees and the caucuses.

In addition to that of course are those items that we dealt with earlier that deals with the Chief Electoral Officer, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Privacy Commissioner, Ombudsman, and Children's Advocate, and the Provincial Auditor, which is dealt with by the Public Accounts Committee.

Now the reason this comes here and why it is important that it be dealt with, not by the executive part of government, but with the legislative branch of government is because it is the job of the legislature to hold the government responsible for their decisions. And therefore the legislature itself has a separate authority that is for that responsibility and therefore it is up to this board to fund the works of the Legislative Assembly.

I turn to page 3 to refer you to a couple of items on it and that is the whole legislative service is designed to assist members to carry out their work. And we look at members' work in sort of four categories — the members' work in the Chamber during the sessions, the members' work on legislative committees, the members' work in their caucuses and their responsibilities, and also the members' work in their constituency.

In addition to that I think all members share a commitment to preserve and enhance parliamentary democracy. So the purpose of the legislative service is to assist members in carrying out their work and on this page there are several bullets there which speak to the dedication of the legislative service to assure that the MLAs are able to achieve their success in their functions.

Page 5 gives you the administrative structure of how the

legislature is . . . the Legislative Assembly Office is organized. And then we can look at page 7. At the same time that while you're looking at page 7, you might want to refer to page 9 because page 9 shows you the breakdown of the votes that we will be discussing here. About 34 per cent of the votes are what we call budgetary — decisions that can be made easily and are made exclusively by this board.

There's 66 per cent of the budget that we're dealing with as well are statutory and any changes to them can be made, but can not be made by this board alone — would require a change in law, although there are some things that could be changed on the stat part as well by recommendations of the board.

This document that you have before you has three parts. There's the estimate highlights, which is part 1. There's an analysis of estimates by subvote, which is part 2, and then there is part 3, which describes the operations of each branch.

Page 11 gives an introduction to the estimates, and it will state here that the budget requests for 2002-2003 reflects a year where the efforts will be to focus on implementing and consolidating strategic initiatives begun in the current year. And when you look at those six bullets: the legislative internship program, the caucus network project, the multimedia streaming of assembly proceedings, expansion of television broadcasting, development of capacity for e-service, and continuation of the Legislative Assembly's strategic plan performance management and accountability, you notice that four of those items deal with electronic technology. And the first item deals with . . . is what I call sort of a direct personal contact with the public, the internship program. And the last item is one that is sort of geared to accountability.

If I can just get you a little philosophical here for a minute, but the way I see this whole Legislative Assembly office working, the purpose is to help MLAs do their work and also to interface with the public. And one thing that we've noticed over the last few years, that the population that uses print exclusively is decreasing.

Therefore, it has been the job of the MLAs to reach the public, this new audience, which is not exclusively print oriented, the people who are young professionals; and by young here, I mean anybody that's under 60, who are involving themselves more and more in the use of the electronic technology. So it stands to reason that our emphasis should be switching in that direction.

Now, before I go into the highlights which start on page — I maybe should have said 62 or 63 there and I apologize to anybody who's in that — before I go into the highlights and estimates, I thought I might just refer you for a moment to the appendix because it takes a while to get an understanding of how the budget works. But it's even more confusing if you don't have it sort of aligned with who's doing what in the Assembly.

So with your permission, at this stage, I would ask you to kind of flip through starting on page 65. And I am going to just give you a brief outline now of what is done in some of the departments. I won't talk about everything that's done, because that's impossible. I don't want to keep you here all afternoon, but I do want to spend a few moments on this.

So starting with the office of the Speaker, the Speaker is the head of the legislative arm of the government. And the position of the Speaker is very similar to that of a minister of a government department. The Speaker presides over debates; enforces rules of the house; chairs the Board of Internal Economy; handles requests for pre-approval with respect to communication items and registration fees; represents the House on ceremonial and formal occasions, including the Crown and other parliaments and legislature and hosts foreign dignitaries upon occasion; is also the president of the Saskatchewan branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; and also has a leading role . . . responsibility with respect to the emerging relationship with Midwest-Canada Relations Committee and the Midwestern Legislative Conference in the US (United States).

The Speaker's office has involved itself in the last few years with parliamentary outreach initiatives, specifically the internship program; the Social Sciences Teachers Institute; the educational outreach program; and the educational outreach program on parliamentary democracy to the schools.

The human resource and administrative services which is headed up by Linda Kaminski, under the direction of the Clerk's office, is responsible for human resource services provided to the Legislative Assembly offices, the caucus offices, the constituency offices, and the legislative officers. The branch handles public inquiries and manages the acquisition of office equipment, furniture, and supplies. And there are a series of bullets there detailing their areas of responsibility.

Then I proceed to page 70. To give you an idea of the work done by our financial services folks, in order that we can get our cheques and get them on time, they have two main functions. The branch is responsible for the financial administration of the Legislative Assembly, and that includes processing all payments and payroll for members, for constituency assistants, the Legislative Assembly and offices, the Legislative Assembly . . . the Offices of the Ombudsman, the Children's Advocate, the Information Privacy Commissioner, and the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

They play the lead role in the estimates preparation and prepare reports requested by the board, advise other branch members, Ombudsman and Advocate with respect to financial procedures and they take care of the accountability aspect of it, of this operation.

I will move now to information systems. That's headed by Guy Barnabe — Guy Barnabe, if you want to be bilingual. And there are two full-time permanent staff and one non-permanent here and they actually . . . that's the unit that supports the hardware and software for all branches of the Assembly which totals approximately 100 users.

And they maintain our Web site, which I note that the access has increased by 85 per cent over last year, and designs and . . . They design and implement and support the Assembly's information technology infrastructure. This includes servers, local networks, external connections, and other related technology. There's a lot for most of us that are around that sixtyish age to learn about that stuff. And is . . . they're

responsible for the for the security of the information technology service. And they will be the ones that would be evaluating and deploying the new stuff — sort of the Windows XP and Office XP — to all users.

Members of the Assembly, I have a request here for a short recess and with your permission . . . now how much time do you need . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Would it be okay if I proceeded with this portion so I could finish my discussion on that and then we'll wait for you if you're not back? Or is that okay by members, because I, you know, I want to put some of this on record but I know that it's not urgent. So we'll proceed? Thank you.

On page 74 there's the work of the officer of the . . . Office of the Clerk is delineated. The main function of course is to ensure the proper and efficient functioning of the Legislative Assembly and it's very much a management position. Of course we know that the Clerk is there to provide expert advice on . . . and on procedural matters particularly containing . . . concerning privileges, rules, and other practices and proceedings of the Assembly, and carrying out the management responsibilities relating to planning for the Legislative Assembly Office.

The Clerk is responsible for the consideration and the . . . coordinating the implementation of the board . . . recommendations to the board for decisions and directives that apply to the appropriate Assembly branches.

Now in order to save time I'm just trying to pick out the highlights. I know there's a lot more that the Clerk does but the Clerk's work becomes more evident as you get to look at each independent . . . each individual branch and apply the supervision required for it.

On page 76 refers to the Journals. The director for Journals is Marilyn Kotylak. This unit is under the supervision of the Clerk as well and they're the ones that prepare the permanent official record of proceedings for the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. That is . . . and the things that you see in a daily basis in the Assembly — that is the *Votes and Proceedings* and the order paper which is known as the blues. And it is this department that produced the coloured seating plan that was distributed last year to all members and throughout the building.

Page 78 outlines a work of the . . . of *Hansard* headed up by Judy Brennan. That's to provide an accurate verbatim record and on both in print . . . they become available in print and also in electronic form for the Legislative Assembly's Web site. And they are doing work on back years of *Hansard* to put them into a machine-readable form.

Gary Ward is responsible for broadcast services to provide live, gavel-to-gavel television coverage of the proceedings of the Assembly. And also they're responsible for maintaining all audio and video equipment for the Legislative Assembly Office.

Visitor services has been . . . are interfaced with the public under the leadership of Lorraine DeMontigny: meet and greet all visitors, conduct tours, coordinate the MLA visits, and coordinate several special events which are listed. They are also the branch that is responsible for all school photography and booking of wedding photography in the building.

The Sergeant-at-Arms, Pat Shaw, has two duties — a ceremonial duty and of course also the very much more difficult duty of being in charge of the overall security of the Legislative Building, including the cabinet and all staff while they are in the building. And is also responsible for any investigations of criminal acts which may occur in the building and maintaining liaison with external police forces.

The Legislative Law Clerk, Ken Ring, independent, non-partisan legal advice; prints Bills, correcting of all Bills, reviews all Bills that come to the House prior to third reading; prepares the separate chapters and volumes of statutes; and also provides legal advice to the Speaker, the Clerk, the Legislative Assembly Office, and independent officers. The Legislative Counsel also works as the chief counsel to the legislative Regulations Committee.

And the Legislative Library, which is on page 86, is run . . . the director is Marian Powell. They have a staff of 17.54 persons, providing all the confidential and impartial information to members, delivery services to the members, and all the references that are done. This library maintains the third largest research library collection in Saskatchewan.

Then on page 89, the very last item. This refers to the work of the committees of the Legislative Assembly. There are three types of committees that the Legislative Assembly has used over the years and they are standing committees, select committees, and special committees.

Now the estimates for these committees are based usually on the past level of committee activity because it is very difficult to forecast exactly what the activity is going to be, but the level of that activity is determined . . . because it's determined directly by the Assembly and by the members assigned to those committees.

But all cost related to members' expenses are on statutory authority pursuant to directives of the Board of Internal Economy. And the Legislative Assembly Office service and support costs are classified as budgetary expenses, although not all costs are charged to the committee support budget. So there is an area where the work of the committee, work of any special committee is funded through two sources, the budgetary and the statutory part.

Well it may have taken a few minutes to do that, but I think that sort of gives you a little bit of an idea of the complexity of the Legislative Assembly Office and various things that are done there. And all that I'm going to do is go back to the estimate highlights.

So I lead back to page 13. The budget requested for this year is \$17,895,000, which is comprised of two parts: the budgeting part being 6.151 million, and the statutory part, which is 11.744 million.

Last year the approved estimates were 17.571 million, which the request then is for a 1.84 per cent increase.

The basis for this request. First of all, there's an assumption that there will be 76 sitting days in the legislature. The estimate also includes a two and a half per cent economic adjustment for both

in-scope and out-of-scope positions and that includes a 3.1 per cent cost-of-living adjustment which will be applied to members' salaries and allowances.

The proposed estimates show an increase of \$324,000 from last year and, of this amount, \$174,000 is attributable to budgetary subvotes with \$150,000, attributed to the statutory subvotes.

On page 14 we have an indication of what the budgetary expenditures are — highlighted — and each one of these has a reference page with more detail on it. So for example, if we were to start with the first one, which is personnel policy factors, \$190,500, if you are looking for more detail on it, you would refer to page 17 which gives us more detail on what that request is.

It's kind of interesting to note although that if we didn't even have this meeting — I guess that has been brought up earlier — that the personnel would take up more in increases next year without — that is \$190,000 — than is the total increase in budgetary this year. So in order to keep costs down, what is done every year is priorities are looked at and priorities are changed accordingly and there are adjustments made.

So while I'm referring now to page 17, at the same time, I would like to point out that the basis of the \$190,000 is because the positions have been linked to equivalent positions within the public service for purposes of classification, pay, benefits, and other personnel policies. And the managers are linked to the Public Service Commission's management and professional classification plan, whereas the non-management legislative positions are linked to the classification plan used for SGEU.

Now I'm going to be following page 14 item by item and doing a cross-reference to the more detailed page for each case. The additional full-time requests starting on page 18 which total 37,000; 6,500 from the Office of the Speaker, 9,000 for the legislative page program, 7,700 for *Hansard*, visitor services, \$800, Legislative Library, \$4,700, and Legislative Council and Law Clerk, \$8,300.

The legislative intern program, go to page 22, is a more detailed explanation there, but that's the \$41,000 increase. The program costs \$80,000 in total. Last year, we put in 41,000 because we were just . . . that was to pay for the program from beginning till the end of the fiscal year. This new amount would bring it up to a total of 80,000 spending on the internship program on an annualized basis.

Supply and services, also on page 22, \$33,500 increase partly for telephone services; \$7,600 due to a new SaskTel billing policy, and part of it is photocopier expenses at \$10,600 due to costs that have increased partly as a result of directive 24 and also just the upgrading of photocopier equipment.

There's 6,300 for IT (information technology) supplies. Golden Jubilee Video, \$5,000 and the school photo service, \$4,000. Last year, this part was not in the budget, but that is for the photos. But the board did pass a directive midway through the year that it be taken out of this particular budget because of the change in process.

Next item, visitors services request of \$15,000 is to host the

convention, the conference of the . . . the visitors services conference, I think, coming for the first time to Saskatchewan . . . is that correct, second or third time?

Ms. deMontigny: — We had it ten years ago.

The Chair: — Oh, ten years ago, okay. Well the first time in 10 years and it'll be hosted in September, 2002, a sort of a one-time request.

The next item would be the \$15,000 item, payment to SPMC, page 25 for the detail. And this is the projected cost of rental increasing for the Legislative Library and the Walter Scott Building by \$8,000. And then the cost of cable service which is also a payment to SPMC . . . pardon me, it was paid by SPMC, but now they'll be charging the Legislative Assembly for that amount, \$7,000.

Now there's . . . the next five areas are areas where we propose that the budget be decreased. The part on fixed asset expenditures — refer to page 25 — recommending a decrease in the information technology budget of \$46,000 and the broadcast services of \$15,000. And I'm going to, in a couple of minutes, ask Greg to give us a little bit of an outline on that; a little more specifically on what we were doing in IT and some of our directions and how that came about.

Then the committees of the Legislative Assembly, a decrease of \$56,000. Now this is on page 26 in more detail. There aren't any . . . we do not anticipate, pardon me . . . we anticipate that they will not be the same pressure on the committee budget that they were within the last year.

The interparliamentary grants, a proposed decrease of \$29,000, detailed on page 27. That refers to the grant to the CPA (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association). We're just proposing that the CPA absorb a little more of the cost from internal or other sources. And this is the part that goes to the CPA to provide for MLA visitations throughout the Commonwealth and also with the Midwest Legislative Conference and also more recently with l'APF, the Francophone Parliamentary Association.

The next proposal for decrease is a \$12,000 decrease in the Legislative Library operating grants. This is detailed also on page 27.

So we have out of that, if you add all the proposed increases and the proposed decreases, once again I repeat that that amounts to a budgetary expense of a \$174,000 increase that the board is being requested.

There are two B items which I will . . . we will deal with later. But I think at this time what I'd like to do is just take a moment before we go any further, I think, and go back to what I talked about earlier and ask Greg Putz if he wouldn't mind coming to the table. I wanted specifically to ask Greg to refer to the decrease or use that as a takeoff point — the decrease to the IT budget — because this is under Greg's purview.

Mr. Putz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we're going to talk about right here is a little bit about our information services budget because that was one of the things you mentioned in

your introduction that is so important nowadays is the Assembly's interface with the public. And those are the . . . we've got a couple of areas here we want to key on with respect to the information services budget.

Now the basis of the information services branch responsibility I think you could put into three main categories. And those would be as you described, Mr. Speaker, a very important one is the central services support to the overall Assembly.

Secondly is the support of electronic information services to the public. And we have two ways that we're doing that right now. And that's through our Web site which, as you indicated, Mr. Speaker, has an 85 per cent increase in utilization over the previous fiscal year, and also video streaming. And I'll come back to these in a moment, give you a little . . . give you a few statistics on how these things are being received by the public.

The third area of responsibility, services to members and caucuses. This is something that we're proceeding forward with. At one time, as you'll recall when we came to the Board of Internal Economy meetings, basically what this branch did — well it wasn't even a branch in those days — what this unit did was provide the central services to the Assembly.

As time goes by there's more demand for electronic services by the members and caucuses themselves. And two of the initiatives that the branch is pursuing currently is that the networking of the . . . building the infrastructure for the caucus networks. That's proceeding as we speak. That was something that the board approved as a B budget item last year. And secondly, members' e-services.

You'll be aware that in the Government of Saskatchewan they have a government on-line program. We're trying to move in parallel with that and be in a position to be able to offer members more electronic services for their interactions between their constituency offices and our financial services branch, the personnel branch. But as well, tailor a whole host of other services that provide or could be provided by the Assembly to suit the individual member's preferences and tastes.

The costs as you indicated, Mr. Speaker, actually the IS (information technology services) budget is down \$33,000 from last year. And mainly that's because we're finding that in the plan that we've in . . . in more detail in the past years have explained for replacement of equipment and obsolescence, we're finding that our equipment is lasting longer, that we're getting more life out of some of our servers, etc., etc.

In fiscal year 2001-2002, our budget was \$544,000 for this branch. This year the budget is \$511,000. And if you have questions about that obsolescence policy, Guy would be glad to address that.

Now about some of the achievements of the branch and some of the things that are on the horizon. Just let me speak very briefly to our legislative Web site.

As indicated, our stats have increased by 85 per cent over last year and this is a trend since we launched the Web site, 1996. Every year more and more people are accessing the Web site. In fact as you'll recall, that's one of the reasons why the Board of

Internal Economy realized some savings out of our print budgets; we've gotten away completely from printing most of our documentation, because the public . . . the demand was in the electronic format.

So just to give you a flavour of how well our Web site is utilized, last year we had 1,365,296 pages visited and that was accounted for by 221,749 visits to our Web site. So we're very proud of the utilization of that Web site.

The second way that we're trying to reach the public — again, it was a B budget item that the board approved last year — was the video streaming of our legislative broadcasts. The IS branch worked in conjunction with the broadcast services and we had what was a pilot project last spring during the session. It began in the middle of May and proceeded to the very end of session. And video streaming, we can say that in the two and a half months of its operation in this pilot project, we had 854 hits which accounted for about three hundred and sixty-two and a half hours of proceedings that were viewed by the public.

Now most of this was during question time — that seemed to be the most popular time for viewing our video streamed proceedings. And in this current . . . for the budget for the next fiscal year, we've included sums to maintain that service. So if you approve that budget, you'll see video streaming again on the Legislative Assembly Web site . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Sure.

Mr. D'Autremont: — On that video streaming, was there any means by which you could track where those requests were coming from? What I'm wondering is it people who don't have access to cable?

Mr. Putz: — Guy does have some statistics; he has some tools to kind of track these things. Some of it is just, from what members are saying, for instance, the member for Lloydminster said that he doesn't really have cable access and he's had some favourable comments in his constituency about people being able to receive the signal on the Internet. Maybe I'll let Guy address that as to maybe . . . as far as we know, who is tuning into the media streaming, or the video streaming.

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes, one thing we wanted to make sure we collected was some statistics to know where the base of users and viewers were coming from and we were able to achieve that. We have quite a broad brush, from a lot of folks in the province and some from Washington, DC — maybe some Canadians that happen to have business to be down there or whatever.

In terms of the granularity, it's hard to tell where exactly in the province they're coming from. A lot of them are from the Sympatico service and, because of that, it's really hard to identify exactly where in the province they're coming from. But definitely, the bulk is from a SaskTel customer point of view, whether it's through what they call SASK#net or Sympatico. So we just have broad numbers in that area, nothing down to . . .

Mr. D'Autremont: — Was it possible to track whether they were using dial-up or DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) connection? That would give you some indication more of their location.

Mr. Barnabe: — No, afraid not.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay.

Mr. Putz: — The last couple of points I want to touch on for the IS budget is the services to members and caucuses. In the spring of 2001, as I mentioned, the board approved a decision item to transfer the responsibility for the caucus networking infrastructure from the individual caucuses to the Legislative Assembly and there were four reasons for this.

The goal was to provide three separate and secure switch network infrastructures; to reduce infrastructure costs for the caucuses; flexibility to accommodate changes in caucus locations; and finally a foundation for extending the caucus networks into the Chamber when that happy day comes. That project is nearly complete. I think it'll be completed in the first or second week of March. And if there are any questions about that, Guy would be happy to answer them at this point.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I did talk to Guy earlier on this particular issue and perhaps he can give me a little further answers on this. One of the things . . . And you said, for service in the House when that happy day arrives. My discussion with Guy earlier, what was the opportunities to have wireless connection in the House. And this would mean that you wouldn't have to run cabling to the desks. It'll be significantly cheaper.

Mind you, people would still like to have electricity there, to be able to plug in. But even without that, you could utilize access through your batteries with a wireless system. I wonder if you have any information on that availability as of . . . once your project is completed.

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes. The infrastructure we've put in essentially, like Greg was saying, we've tried to bring the caucus networks back to a central location which will make it very easy for us to, as originally planned, cable the Chamber with copper, essentially cabling to every pedestal once that renovation is approved.

Having everything down to a central location also makes it easier in the short term to bring some cabling up to the . . . a proper area in order to provide some wireless cabling. That can be done fairly quickly, quite definitely.

Mr. Putz: — One of the issues as you mentioned when this was first discussed I think as kind of a sidebar to a Standing Committee on Communications discussion on some of the information technology advances that may or may not come to the Assembly, electricity would be nice. I think there's three or four plug-ins in that whole room now and members who are choosing to use their laptops are stringing all sorts of cords and everything around the Chamber or just operating on batteries. Definitely one of the things that we'd like to see is bringing power to each of the desks and also build an infrastructure for the different configuration of seats in the House as the ebb and flow of government opposition take place after every general election.

It is our understanding that SPMC does have a plan, which Gwenn will address in a little bit more detail, a master plan for

this building. And they are planning I think to do something with the carpet in not this coming fiscal year but the next fiscal year. So that may be an opportune time, whether it's wireless or for putting in electricity anyways, it would not be much more to put in the computer cabling as well. So you'd have some redundancy there to go forward with that and maybe also with some of the other technology issues such as bringing digital sound to the House so that we have microphones like this. And Kerry could speak volumes to that right now. We have problems with our sound system. You bring the whole system up or down; you can't individually adjust the sound in the Chamber to suit the particular member's voice or for just people trying to listen to what's being said.

So maybe that's something the board and other legislative committees, communication committees or rules committees will want to consider in the very near future in anticipation of a plan going ahead for some renovation in the Chamber in any event.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I have a question on wireless and the cabling that would be currently able to be connected to it. Would it be able to handle 10 or 15 people on a wireless system through that cable with relative reliability and speed?

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes. The current technology in the wireless, you basically have a transmitter and those transmitters do have a capacity of X amount of laptops, and depending on the amount of traffic, you just have to put a second transmitter in. You just add as many transmitters as necessary to handle the volume.

Mr. D'Autremont: — But would there be enough wiring and would the wiring itself be capable of handling the . . .

Mr. Barnabe: — Oh yes, absolutely.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay.

The Chair: — Proceed please, Greg.

Mr. Putz: — The last thing that I wanted to mention with respect to the IS budget was the plan to . . . last year, in any event, to investigate providing some e-services to members. The equipment has been bought, and this coming year we're going to start a pilot project and likely extend an offer to a certain number of members on a trial basis to test out offering some electronic services to members so they can interact with the Assembly.

Now, the shape of that . . . we haven't developed a project plan yet, but that is something that is on the horizon that we'll be asking for the participation of some members in. There is some security concerns here. We'll need to investigate those and make sure it's foolproof. And I don't know if, Guy, you have anything more you want to say to that at this moment?

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes, we're calling it maybe a prototype for this coming year where we'll talk to some of the various branches and find out what each branch will want to offer in a private secured area for each member. And initially, it will be fairly safe material. It's something we don't want to put on our public Web server for everybody to see, and so it will be a

project in combination with all the branches.

I know the library would like to put, for instance, some material, financial services, admin branch, everybody has . . . well, everybody has a lot of stuff they could put on there if it was . . . has a secure channel for each member or their constituency office or personnel to access. So we're looking forward to that exciting project this year.

Mr. Putz: — A last thing that I'd like to mention . . . Gary Ward, who is ill today, he can't be here with us, wanted me to mention — and it works in conjunction with some of the things the IS branch is doing with our video streaming and the Internet — the broadcast services branch is beginning a project where they'd like to . . . or they will be recording hopefully in a digital format and burning their signal to a DVD (digital video disc) so that we'd have a more permanent method of storage of our proceedings.

And this opens up a whole range of services that hopefully we'll be able to provide to members as well in the future. If it's in a digital format rather than analog on the videotape, members may wish to — if we can get the rules changed or guidelines changed — be able to have their speeches on their own Web sites. They can have stills from those videos, DVDs, of their speeches in the House, etc., etc.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Not sure we'd want people seeing that.

Mr. Putz: — Well that's a choice the members can make. The option would be there for them to make that. So with that, that is all I want to say at the moment unless there are some questions about any of what Guy and I have said.

The Chair: — Well thank you very much, Greg and Guy, and we . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Do you have a question here? Sorry. I didn't notice it.

Ms. Hamilton: — I guess first the question on how we're going to deal with each other, Myron. Is this our opportunity to ask information services the questions, then we should do that now? And are you going to call up each area in specific? Because they came forward to speak to decreases but there are also some things in their goals and objectives that I wanted to ask about. Or are we going to do that at a different time?

The Chair: — No. I think if you have a question with respect to what he just talked about, if you'd ask that question now. Otherwise what I propose is that we go through part 2 page by page, vote by vote, and then these specific questions that you might have for each of those, that is starting on page 33 and then going right through all of part 2 and give an opportunity for questions to be asked specifically of every department . . . or any part of the budget. If at that time you haven't been able to ask it, we'll just open it up and bring them back again. So would that be fine?

Ms. Hamilton: — Well since they're here now and it's just following up on what other members have already asked, on page 73 and you were speaking to that, I guess the capability of the on-demand playback and archiving and that kind of thing or something you were talking about on the CD (compact disc) system, how far along are you on a legislative channel over the

Internet? Is that something that's been broadcast or you're looking into the costs of it being broadcast over the Internet? Or are there some features now that are being put on the Internet?

Mr. Putz: — No. As I was mentioning, we did begin that in the middle of May last session. We had two and a half months experience with that. I gave you some statistics about what public uptake there has been in that. What we plan to do, and there are some funds included in this coming fiscal year, is to continue that and make it a permanent part of what Guy's branch does, of course in conjunction with broadcast services because they're the ones who produce the programming, and then it's converted digitally and sent out over the Internet. So yes, that project's well underway. We have two and a half months experience with it.

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay. And then the development and first stages of the Assembly's e-services project. You did talk a little bit . . . I'd kind of like to understand that more.

Mr. Putz: — What that'll entail is providing a secure area on a Web site where members can go and information tailored to their needs and requirements will be available. And a large part of that would be the interactions, transactions they have with their constituency offices and the Assembly. The two branches that handle those types of things are financial services branch and personnel branch.

And what the idea here is also to provide other services that other branches of the Assembly provide. The library, for instance, if they do a regular search for . . . of the periodicals or newspapers for you, perhaps one day that's something that will be on there as well, and you'll just have to dial in through your portals — is one of the terms that is used today for that type of service, so that you can access that type of information.

So each portal will be distinct for particular member tastes and needs and what we're hoping to do with some of the equipment we bought is to investigate this, starting slowly with some information, test the security aspects of it, and maybe Guy can add more to it.

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes we definitely — as we discussed the beginnings of this project over the last year — we want to be extremely cautious that however we do that that we can ensure to the members that there is going to be some security in place, as opposed to our public Web site which is open to anyone who can gather it.

So we during this exercise will investigate what is the — I won't say the maximum — but what is . . . how much security devices or software can we deploy to make sure that confidentiality is ensured.

Ms. Hamilton: — So you have the equipment that you could do that now?

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes, we . . .

Ms. Hamilton: — You're looking at software packages that would deploy it. Is that what you . . .

Mr. Barnabe: — Correct. This current budget we bought the

hardware because we've upgraded one of our servers to be able to handle the capacity to do this. And then this coming year, we'll start a project planned with the branches to investigate what information can we put there initially, and have a small collection of members starting to access this, and get some feedback.

Ms. Hamilton: — On that one, I'm not as concerned about security of information. I can see the benefit of . . . I've had my interview with Maria and she produces a lot of information for me, and I really appreciate that material. So I wouldn't care who read that. It's tailored to my specific interests and areas that I want to have more information, and she's very good at understanding that. So I could see the benefit of being able to put that onto a system like that.

I'm a little bit more concerned about how we secure information on what are my constituency expenses or budgets or whatever. From time to time we request that information. I'm not so certain every one of us wants to have that information broadcast, except for ourselves to understand where we are in our allowances and budgets and things like that.

So that's, I guess, a much more touchy area. And you're saying you're going to investigate that and do some more experimenting. From time to time it's valuable because if you're considering a publication or a newsletter and you're getting materials developed, to know where that allowance stands. But I'm not certain how important it is to have a system . . . I'd be very leery in those areas, I guess.

The other one is the implementation of your strategic plan. And I'm understanding that you have a plan; it's been developed and you're going to be implementing it.

Was that presented to committee? I'm the new member so I don't know if that was . . .

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes what that statement was meant to address is that we've been working with the overall team, the Assembly team, on a strategic plan and a concrete one on paper is not there yet.

Ms. Hamilton: — The 30 per cent of the Assembly's desktop workstations, is that basically what we have available to us on our desks presently and you're refurbishing that?

Mr. Barnabe: — That refers to the Assembly staff. I'm not sure if you're referring to constituency or . . .

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay, members . . .

Mr. Barnabe: — This is strictly staff like library, admin, and finance — those systems you see there.

Ms. Hamilton: — All right, thank you. I understand that now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — I'm just curious, Mr. Speaker; perhaps you know the answer to this. What are unique visitors to our Web site? Are they aliens? What would you classify as unique visitors?

The Chair: — I take it that's a question directed to the Speaker, but somebody else should answer.

Mr. Barnabe: — One time, meaning myself, for instance how many . . . I'm considered one person who may have visited several times. But that's meant to show how many . . .

Mr. Putz: — . . . individuals who have visited the Web site as opposed to, we could build up our statistics by having Dan visit our Web site 3,000 times a day. So that's there so we know it's that many individuals who are accessing the Web site.

Now, how Guy sorts that out, I don't know if he has some kind of software tools to do that.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Whether on purpose or by accident. Okay, thank you. And I believe Ms. Hamilton asked a question on the strategic plan and the costs of the implementing some of these, some of these goals and objectives for the coming year. I would take it then and according to this, the money is already been built in somewhere to address these costs?

Mr. Putz: — For instance, part of the IS branch strategic plan, it'll be all incorporated into the overall Assembly plan, but part of our obsolescence, the replacing of equipment and software kind of on a schedule . . . in a scheduled way, something that we've discussed with the board in the past, that would be part of the strategic plan for that branch.

And one of the references in this document is that about a third of the machines — 30 per cent — need to be replaced every year. By no means do we replace people's desktops with the latest and greatest, but it just means to keep up with technology and the software to run the systems that some of the commercial vendors use, for instance Microsoft, some of their licensing agreements and all the rest of it, we have to stay fairly current with the software. And then of course you need the horsepower.

So you get caught in the spiral sometimes and that's just to accommodate that. By no means is it a rich plan. It's basically trying to keep up to . . . within the ballpark of the present day standards.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Yes and I know how quickly technology is moving ahead. But what would that mean in terms of changing equipment within the context of computers, monitors, those . . . How often would those be changed?

And we see in elected members, it's \$6,000 over a four-year period. Does that apply as well to the rest . . .

Mr. Putz: — It's roughly equivalent because a desktop is what — about 1,500, \$2,000? And so in every six years a person would get a new desktop.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Okay. I think that's about all the questions I have in that particular area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Ronyk: — Mr. Speaker, if I could just add to that. I think what Mr. Osika was asking was, can we actually do all these goals and objectives that we've got listed under the IT branch and in the other branches for the budget that we're requesting? And the answer is yes.

These are doable within the budget dollars that we're requesting and with . . . and that's because we can only do so much a year. Like we can't just totally implement e-services for members in one year. It is by nature of our small office and operation, has to be spread out. And we have the resources we need for what we can do in this year. And in fact, we're doing it in the information services branch for \$46,000 less than last year.

Over the years, members have kept saying, well every year you come back for more IT money. When will we see this either slow down or stop? This year, yes, you can see a cut, you can see a reduction. So we're very pleased to be able to say that and yet we are able to do the progress and improvements that we want to do and are able to keep those up. Thank you.

The Chair: — Yes, Greg.

Mr. Putz: — I just wanted to add that it isn't just this year you're seeing savings. Last year we gave the board some savings as well, just to remind you of that.

Ms. Ronyk: — Those were B budget items . . .

Mr. Putz: — Those were things the members had to decide if they were services that they wanted and that's why they were separated as B budget.

The Chair: — Mr. D'Autremont.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I like the idea of developing a program or a system that would allow members to access their legislative accounts and to do their legislative business, accounts business over the Internet.

I can just think of offhand, our travel allowances would be so much easier to deal with over the Internet or electronically than they would in paper form.

And it's not that there is a requirement to have all the credit card slips for all the gas you've bought supplied. And so in that manner that's one of the areas it would be extremely easy, I would think, to deal with. So I would certainly want to encourage some movement down that direction.

Under your goals and objectives here, you have listed, develop a formal disaster recovery and business continuity plan. Well in light of what we saw happen last September, a number of companies, perhaps even government agencies, for all I know, certainly lost a lot of their records, some of which are not recoverable at all.

Is there a plan in place today to safeguard the paper and electronic records of the legislature and what changes do you envision with this plan that you're trying to develop?

Mr. Barnabe: — Today we do backups of our servers. And our servers, you have to understand, have everything from the library to financial services to admin. It's fairly . . . a lot of information there. We do those backups every day and once a week we do a full backup of the entire server and we take those tapes and we put them in a fireproof box inside a vault that is very unlikely to see fire because of the cement and the place where it's located.

Mr. D'Autremont: — . . . the towers in New York, too.

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes well, how far is the airport?

So we want to get to the fire . . . the disaster recovery plan. The first stop we'd like to make is a threat-risk analysis. And what is the possibility, what is the possibility of a plane just missing the airport and hitting the building? And you cover all those types of scenarios and then decide the . . . what is the possibility, what is the percentage risk of that. And then we take action based on the weight of those.

We plan on doing that with the help of the Sergeant at Arms and his staff because it's not just . . . You know suppose somebody can actually break into our room and grab our server and run out with it, although it's a pretty heavy box. But you know you have to include things like physical security and someone breaking in through a window and maybe we should have some motion sensors and all that kind of thing.

So we want to do what we call a threat-risk analysis and part of that will . . . one of the outcomes of that will be a proper disaster recovery plan to say should such an event happen, how long can we be without systems? How long can financial services be without systems? Admin, library, etc. That will dictate the size of the effort to get us back on-line.

And so we may have a hot standby site somewhere if necessary. We may, you know, maybe we'll just have procurement plans to say well in three days we could replace all our hardware. It is all PC-based gear for the most part. It's not totally specialized like in the old days so there is a little more flexibility there. But we will plan for that.

Mr. D'Autremont: — One of the things though that people seem to learn from the incident on September 11 was that you should be storing your information off-site, as well as having your backups that you're normally using. So that while your server may be lost you're not going to lose your backups as well because those backups are stored in another location, which may be actually at the other end of the country in the case of, you know, large corporations.

So is there any thought being given though to having off-site storage?

Mr. Barnabe: — Yes. Yes, absolutely. That will probably come out of that plan or we may even find that the other side of the building is as safe as maybe elsewhere. Or maybe we'll have two copies or whatever. But that definitely will come out of the plan.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you. Well those questions being answered then — thanks very much, Greg and Guy.

And what I propose to do at this stage is to provide opportunity for a lot more questions to be asked with respect to the budgets. And to do that I thought we'd look at the part 2 of the blue booklet starting on page 29 and then go through each one of these one by one, pausing with time to give time to ask the question. And then after we're done, there may be questions

that people haven't asked that they, you know, that come to them after. And we'll provide time to do that as well.

On page 29, I think the important, significant part of that is the colour-coding that shows the budgetary parts and the non-budget — in blue on the budget; statutory parts in pink. And the coding that's used there, the (LG01) through to (LG06), is parallel to the budget booklet that actually comes out in the Legislative Assembly.

The first one then, (LG01), that . . . Well first you have a summary of each one of these departments on page 30 to 31, the estimates. But taking them by category by category, the first one is the office of the Speaker and the cost of operating the Board of Internal Economy. There are several changes there with an increase from 254,000 to 312,000.

And the analysis is stated down below and shows you where these changes come from. The bulk of the change is the inclusion of 41,000 additional dollars for the internship; and then the payments to staff, increases in the normal increments and cost-of-living adjustments of 8,500; additional Clerks, Clerk support is 6,500; and travel expenses 2,100.

I might point out that every one of these departments that we're going to be looking at from now on do have in them the three columns: the actual for 2000-2001 that have already been confirmed, and then the estimates for 2001-2002, along with the coming year's estimates.

So first of all with respect to that, are there any questions on that one?

Ms. Hamilton: — Well, I think just to be consistent in our requests of others who've been before us earlier today, in the estimate summary we have the estimates of 2001-02 and of 2002-2003, but there's no actuals in that summary to be able to do the comparison.

And then in the pages that we'll be looking at, we have actuals of '01, 2000, 2001, the estimates for last year. And it's very hard, I guess, at this point to be able to do the actuals because we haven't come through the full year.

The Chair: — Right.

Ms. Hamilton: — So I guess it would be good to look back and be able to see what the actuals were. So I guess this is the best comparison we can do for now.

The Chair: — That's true. The total actuals simply aren't in and won't be in until the end of March and not known probably until mid or end of April.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The actuals for the book are in here for each individual one though for 2000-2001.

The Chair: — For the year that's accurate.

Ms. Hamilton: — For the year behind, yes. Thank you.

The Chair: — Now proceeding to page 35, administration, general administration. And these would be questions that

would be directed to either Gwenn or Marilyn or Linda. And the increase here stated in very much the same way. That overall, \$45,000 increase; cost of living, 69,000; but there's a decrease in an IT; and directive 24, an increase to SaskTel; photocopier, \$7,000; supplies, \$9,000; a decrease in travel; consultant services, 2,000; and net miscellaneous, \$600. No questions there?

Ms. Hamilton: — In reference to page 36, which I guess is the detail for that, isn't it?

The Chair: — Yes.

Ms. Hamilton: — The Assembly administration includes the staffing and operations. Have there been any recent additions personnel-wise and what would they be for?

Ms. Ronyk: — Assembly admin here in this subvote includes financial services and it includes human resources and administration. And in our current . . . in this request, we're not requesting any increases in this fiscal year. No change at all in the personnel complement there.

Ms. Hamilton: — So recently there hasn't been any additions or changes?

Ms. Ronyk: — There was last year and the year before. Human resources and admin finished a reorganization and a strategic plan and there were a number of changes, a number of additional staff in that area. That has been implemented and is in place and is meeting the needs at this point. And no change is projected for the immediate future.

Ms. Hamilton: — In caucus administration, I noted that in reference back to page 22, that it seems members are taking up now on photocopier and fax expenses. Do you have a breakdown per caucus as what these expenses are? Is it listed anywhere?

Ms. Ronyk: — Now the caucus photocopiers are paid for by the Legislative Assembly out of this admin subvote. And at this point maybe Linda will have the breakdown between caucuses. We know that there are two photocopiers in the government caucus, two in the opposition caucus, and two small ones for independent members. That's what's in the budget.

The total dollars are \$24,000 for those caucus photocopiers, and usage. Did you wish the breakdown?

Ms. Hamilton: — Fax side, the faxes?

Ms. Ronyk: — Right now the fax machines are owned, I think, so it's basically maintenance for those. Is that correct, Linda?

Ms. Kaminski: — Yes.

Ms. Ronyk: — Yes, the fax machines are owned, so it's maintenance and supplies, and that we budget for at about \$1,500.

Ms. Kaminski: — Did you want the breakdown of the fax machines in the caucus offices?

Ms. Hamilton: — Sure.

Ms. Kaminski: — According to the knowledge that I have here, and I'll confirm it, we have two machines in the opposition caucus office, and we have one in the government caucus office. And we don't supply fax machines to the independent members.

Ms. Hamilton: — So there aren't fax machines for every individual MLA. It's for the caucus office business?

Ms. Kaminski: — That's correct. That's correct. In terms of what the Legislative Assembly is providing to the caucus office, the caucuses themselves could certainly choose to purchase their own equipment through the grant money that the Assembly provides to the caucus offices, and that would be completely up to them. And I have no knowledge of, you know, what they have purchased for any kinds of equipment.

Ms. Hamilton: — Okay. Thank you. Those are my questions.

The Chair: — Thank you. Any other questions that were related sort of directly to the information on pages 35, 36, and 37?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well this doesn't speak directly just to those pages, but rather to, I suppose, all of the different branches because it deals with salaries. Looking at this — you know, you look at it here under (LGO1), personal services, almost a 13 per cent increase. You look under the next page, it's 6.87 per cent. I wonder if we could have a breakdown as to what generates these salary increases. Obviously some of it is collective agreements with SGEU, which I believe is about two and one-half per cent. Where does the rest of it come from?

Ms. Kaminski: — It's a combination — you're right — of cost-of-living adjustments; a combination of out-of-scope employee adjustments, as well as in-scope employee adjustments. In addition to that, employees are appointed to a salary range, and so, dependent upon where you commence in the salary range, you'd be moving along annually in the salary range until you reach salary range maximum. Once you reach . . . yes, go ahead.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Can I interrupt there?

Ms. Kaminski: — Yes, go ahead.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Based on what reason do you move up the scale?

Ms. Kaminski: — The system that government uses is annually you'll move in the scale on the basis of a 4 per cent salary adjustment unless there are issues related to your performance. So we follow government's processes that they will say a 4 per cent salary adjustment annually for movement within your salary range for both in scopes and for out of scope.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So this takes place providing you're meeting the minimum requirements without any negotiations whatsoever. It's just automatic.

Ms. Kaminski: — Correct — as is within government. Correct.

A Member: — Pretty lucrative.

The Chair: — Could you just outline . . . Does that happen into perpetuity or is there a cap on that?

Ms. Kaminski: — No, the 4 per cent is what is applied within government. Particularly for the SGEU employees it's a standard 4 per cent. Everybody receives the same, regardless of what position and who you are. Within the out-of-scope plan within government there's a little more flexibility but there's a cap on it. It isn't an unlimited amount that you could be moving within your range per year. And basically the average within government for out-of-scope employees is also 3 to 4 per cent.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So when you're talking a range, what kind of range are you looking at, say for a mid-level secretarial position? Like are you talking . . . is it a 10 per cent range from the bottom to the top? Is it 20 per cent?

Ms. Kaminski: — Approximately four to six steps that you'd be . . . If you were starting at the beginning of a salary range for an administrative clerical employee, you'd be moving approximately four to six steps before you would reach salary range maximum.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So roughly 16 to 24 per cent. How often is that range then adjusted?

Ms. Kaminski: — The range is adjusted based upon these cost-of-living adjustments. When the cost-of-living adjustments are applied, they affect the range so then the whole range moves up by the appropriate salary adjustment — the appropriate COLA of two and a half to three per cent or whatever is provided for that particular year as outlined in the budget document.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. Wouldn't the person though have received that COLA increase themselves?

Ms. Kaminski: — You see it on your current rate of pay but the whole range has now been inflated to a higher level by two and a half or by three per cent, depending upon the amount of the agreed to COLA adjustment — agreed to that year.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So a person who has reached their maximum range comes to a point where they have a COLA adjustment in a particular year, so they get the two and a half per cent individually. Then they get . . . their range has now been increased by two and half per cent as well because of the COLA adjustment to the range. So then in actual fact they receive an increase then of 5 per cent per year.

Ms. Kaminski: — For those employees who are already at salary range max, the only time their salary is going to change is if and when there are cost-of-living adjustments applied. So they're already at the max of . . .

Mr. D'Autremont: — Right.

Ms. Kaminski: — . . . that agreed to salary rate, so then their whole range has been inflated by the two and one-half or by three per cent they receive at that one time; the two and one-half or three per cent.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So they don't get the COLA clause and the cap increase.

Ms. Kaminski: — No, absolutely not. It's only for those employees who are not already at salary range maximum. They will have an annual performance adjustment in addition to whatever COLA adjustments need to be applied to the range. For those employees already at salary range max, the only time their salary can change is only if cost-of-living adjustments are applied.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Okay. So for them, when they get the two and one-half per cent COLA, they get two and one-half per cent and that's it.

Ms. Kaminski: — That's it.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Even though their range has gone up, so they're still at max.

Ms. Kaminski: — That's right.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The person who is lower than max would get four per cent plus the COLA increase, so they potentially are getting six and one-half.

Ms. Kaminski: — Potentially. Correct.

Mr. D'Autremont: — And all they have to do is maintain the minimum standards.

Ms. Kaminski: — They have to maintain minimum standards. Correct.

Mr. D'Autremont: — It's still pretty generous.

The Chair: — Again, a call for any comments or questions on (LG01), general administration, item requesting \$1.84 million. If none, or seeing none, maybe we can proceed to the next one.

I think what I'm going to do from here on in is ask Gwenn just to give a very brief introduction to each and bring to your attention the analysis portion of it and then open it up for questions. So let's start with . . . I should have started with the last one on this, but let's go ahead with starting on page 39, accommodation and central services.

Ms. Ronyk: — The Assembly basically doesn't have to pay rent, except for the space in Walter Scott Building where we do have staff in both *Hansard* and the Legislative Library. There, we do have to pay rent.

And this subvote includes the rental costs and it includes the fees that we pay for storage of materials off-site in the government warehouses and for cable services within the Legislative Building. The increases this year are in utility rate increases that are being passed on to us for accommodation in Walter Scott and for us to take over our costs for cable services in the building that SPMC used to pay for and now is being paid for by the Legislative Assembly. So that's a total of 15,000 increase this year.

The Chair: — Okay. No questions on that item at this time.

Proceed to page 41 (LG03), Legislative Assembly Office.

Ms. Ronyk: — The Legislative Assembly Office subvote includes five organizations: the Office of the Clerk, *Hansard*, broadcast services, visitor's services, office of the Sergeant-at-Arms. And the Legislative Counsel and Law Clerk, and the Legislative Library as well as separate organizations. The main changes here are a decrease in CPA grants, as the Speaker mentioned earlier. Primarily that's because we're not hosting a large conference this year and we were last year. So we've been able to reduce that.

The personnel services increases here are again the normal increments, reclasses, and cost-of-living adjustments that are applied to the existing staff. No additional staff requests are shown in these numbers. Oh yes, there is. There is the small, the FTEs (full-time equivalents) in pages, visitor services, and *Hansard* — those the Speaker outlined in the highlights in the front of your book where it shows the additional hours that we're requesting over six different offices.

We have a decrease in broadcast services because of a one-time expenditure last year. Visitor's services is hosting a national conference as you heard earlier. We're now including the MLA photographs in the visitor services budget this year and we'll be . . . have agreed to be partner again with other government agencies in the production of another video. And we have some increased costs for security and monitoring equipment. And a decrease in travel because there's only one conference instead of two this year in the Clerk's area.

The next page, page 42, does give you the breakdown per those offices so that you can see the proportions that are *Hansard*, Clerk's office, visitor services, etc.

The next sections, there are the Legislative Law Clerk, and the Legislative Library, the next pages.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can you tell me, Gwenn, on the various offices here, are there any employees who work in more than one of those offices, that they're shared between offices?

Ms. Ronyk: — We have some non-permanent hours in a number of offices; and sometimes the same person will be providing backup in more than one office. For example Legislative Law Clerk and Speaker's office and Clerk's office have all had hours from the same person over the last year or two. It really helps when we can do that because they are already knowledgeable and for the few extra hours we're asking for, it doesn't make it worthwhile to bring in somebody new or different. And we can provide one person then with more hours but still at a minimal cost to each branch.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So it's only in the replacement . . .

Ms. Ronyk: — It's only that one position that we're aware of at the moment.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Have you looked at the time demands in the offices because not all offices will have the same highs and lows of course. Have you looked at whether there is any potential to have some sharing of personnel between offices that

would be applied to the permanent staff?

Ms. Ronyk: — That's two issues, I think, that come up in that regard. And many of our branches do such different things that it is not really easy just to transfer skills from one area to another.

But many of our major initiatives and projects are cross-branch projects and that's where we can utilize a position or an office that has a downtime during part of the year, we utilize them to play a broader role in a cross-branch team. Like for example, the preparation of this budget document, where Marilyn's office doesn't have the time to necessarily spend a solid block of time doing the publishing and design of this. Journals branch at the moment, with outside of session, has the time to make it a priority and concentrate on it.

So I think we're able to use more cross-branch projects and work to even out the workload and make sure that when a branch can offer help to another during a busy time, we do that. And we do share around jobs. If the Clerk's office doesn't, you know, have time to do something at a particular time of year, often the Speaker's office will take up the slack or the Law Clerk's office will take it on. And we've done a lot of redistribution of individual projects and tasks in order to even out the workloads.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay, thank you.

The Chair: — Are there any other questions then with respect to (LG03) on the page 41; and also on page 44, Legislative Counsel and Law Clerk? You might just want to take us through the analysis there of the Law Clerk. Or you've already done that on page 44.

Ms. Ronyk: — The Law Clerk is here, so if you do have questions; but at this point, the Law Clerk is asking for some increase in personal service hours in order to get assistance for proofreading and editors. The Law Clerk has been using some of our *Hansard*, experienced *Hansard* proofreaders to assist in the proofing of the Bills and the statutes. And it has enabled him to do his required duty under the rules, but still leaving him time to do the other work of the office.

And he's proposing an increase there to ensure that the Bills, as introduced, are also reviewed in time. And you have to realize there's a very tight time frame under which that can be done before . . . when they're printed and they go into the House.

There's a reduction in the actual cost of printing of Bills that is reflected in his budget. This is based on our history over the last number of years and he's feeling that we can reduce that estimate somewhat.

And that's really the significant changes.

And the Legislative Library, I would certainly want Marian to speak to.

The Chair: — And your documentation on this starts on page 46 and carries through to page 47.

Ms. Powell: — There is, as you will have noted in the overall

figures, in terms of operating expenses, this budget request represents a reduction in operating expenses to partially cover the increase in the personnel costs. Now this reflects basically a tiny, tiny requested increase in personnel for a point three person-year for records retention. But other than that, no additional personnel. There is a B budget item which we'll talk to later.

The budget itself does also not include any provision for increases in the cost of magazines and newspapers, which current estimates run at about 9.2 per cent for this past year. So there will have to be reductions there.

And we have restored the book budget to \$53,000, which is a substantial reduction from last year where many of the board will remember we asked for and gratefully received a one-time special allocation to purchase a significant reference work.

So it's a pretty much stand-pat, hold-the-line budget as much as we are able to do.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I was just wondering, Marian, how are those shelves holding out?

Ms. Powell: — Those shelves are doing real well.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Still good for a good number of years?

Ms. Powell: — Well we're having a pressure on that because one of our . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Say it ain't so.

Ms. Powell: — Yes. One of the things we did last year, which is an achievement, is we received two magnificent important collections of books, and together they're about 10,000 volumes. So I'm afraid that's eating up some of the shelves faster than we'd anticipated. But they're still holding fine. We still have space for a while yet.

Ms. Hamilton: — Could you just tell us what those collections are, now that you've piqued our curiosity.

Ms. Powell: — Certainly. The first one was a very large and important legal collection from Dr. Morris Shumiatcher. We acquired, as a gift, his entire legal office collection and, due to his importance as a figure in western Canada legal circles, this is a very important collection for us.

Also, at the same time, the Provincial Library really reduced their book collection and we were able to acquire very important works that we did not already have. One significant asset was the complete run of *The Leader-Post* on microfilm which we did not hold before and which, as you can imagine, is called upon frequently by members and their staffs.

So we were very fortunate last year, but there's lots of work to do.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. And finally here, on the Voyager catalogue software, could you just explain, Marian, what this is about and how this is better than not doing it.

Ms. Powell: — Well we actually don't have a choice. What's happened is that up until this budget year, the university has been absorbing the US dollar exchange on the Voyager software and they're now passing it along to us. We've been very lucky for a number of years and thankful to them for that. But that's almost entirely the increase that we're facing here in the software.

The Chair: — Any further questions of the (LG03) Legislative Library subvote? Thank you very much, Marian, thanks. Let's proceed to (LG04), page 49 in your book, committee support. Any comments here, Ms. Ronyk?

Ms. Ronyk: — The committees area is showing a significant decrease largely because the last year we had to budget for the hosting of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees conference which we do not have to have in our budget this year.

As you're aware that conference was cancelled at the last moment because it was on the weekend following September 11. And that of course enabled us to absorb other expenditures in this fiscal year because we had reduced costs because of that.

Also this year we are not aware of any special committees. There is none that exist at this moment other than the Rules Committee and our budget has been able to be reduced for that.

There are cost increases. The Public Accounts Committee has been given additional duties, the operation of a special audit advisory committee, and of course travel to the CCPAC (Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees) conferences had to be reinstated now that we're not hosting this year. And otherwise they're minimal increases in support to the committees.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — On this one, if there was a special committee created, then is it required that before that committee can begin its operations that the board would approve a specific budget for it?

Ms. Ronyk: — Yes, it is the practice that special committees, when they first meet, will get organized and plan their work and then come to the board with the budget request.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks.

The Chair: — Then we can proceed to page 53, which deals . . . we're into the statutory parts now. But there may be questions with respect to (LG04), (LG05), or (LG06), committee members' expenses, payments and allowances to individual members and caucus operations.

Ms. Ronyk: — I might just draw to the attention of the board, that the highlights from the statutory side are summarized on page 15 for your information.

The Chair: — I think it's important for committee members to recognize that in the Estimates booklet here, what has been done is that the MLA — the very last bullet on page 15 refers to this — that the travel and living expenses for MLAs, the estimate has been reduced by \$236,000. That's based on historic evidence that members have not fully spent the total

amount in their travel provisions over the years so that the estimates have been reduced. Even though it's a statutory item, the estimates have been reduced to more accurately reflect our expectations by 10 per cent for members' travel and 30 per cent respectively.

That doesn't mean that members who use the full amounts wouldn't get the full amounts. It simply reflects usage and more closely approximates what actually happens, even though it's beyond our control, where it is in our control to estimate.

And that total, the expenses, and there's one other page left and that's the revenues. And besides the revenues that are generated by this committee, there's a total of \$8,000 expected which is detailed on page 61, which if you could add a zero or two to it, would really help, but forms part of this budget.

Now, are there any questions that you might want to backtrack on or refer to parts that we've gone through?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, you're saying that the sale of legislative publications is just as hot as ever.

Ms. Ronyk: — If I might respond to that. Of course our revenue estimates have gone down substantially over the years, because we're now putting it up on the Internet for free. We're not selling subscriptions to *Hansard* and chapters and so on. Those are now available far more broadly and at no cost. The only things we still do subscriptions for are the Bills as introduced, and even those I think it's just our own use there. And *Journals*, the actual *Journals* volume is still subscription issue.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Are you saying we're charging ourselves, or we're actually getting some revenues from interested parties who are purchasing these Bills?

Ms. Ronyk: — No. We still have people subscribe to the Bills as introduced, law firms and so on. So our budget covers the ones we use internally, and it's not shown as revenue, of course.

The Chair: — Our member . . . Yes, Mr. Osika.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — I was just going to say I think the contribution from the Liberal caucus should in fact be recognized, Mr. Speaker. A savings of \$95,000 is quite significant. Thank you.

The Chair: — Some excellent planning there, I would say.

Mr. Bjornerud: — What's the next step?

The Chair: — Is the committee prepared at this time then to proceed with the B budget items?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I can suggest that we consider them, but make our decisions after the period that we go in camera. Is that what you're recommending?

The Chair: — Yes. What I'm really saying is, are we finished with this part?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes.

The Chair: — Then thank you for that suggestion. Now we do have an alternative here and that is to go first to items B 3 and B 4 first of all. Because we do have some guests from outside of the legislature who have been waiting.

Item 3 is a response to the report on the cost impact of the House and committee reforms proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures. There was a reference to this committee, that this committee be advised of the direction that the Committee on Rules and Procedures is moving, and then an update on the possibilities for a committee room proposal, and then we could go back to the budget items a little later on. With your approval, I would do that. I have both sides? Thank you.

Then we'll just skip the two B budget items temporarily and proceed to item 10(b)iii, response to the report on the cost impact of House and committee reforms proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures. And it's Greg Putz is invited to the table. Is there anybody else that's working with you on this, Greg? Or are you pretty well . . . Greg serves as the Clerk to the Committee on Rules and Procedures.

The committee has been looking at various reforms to our rules and to our procedures in the Legislative Assembly and at the stage that they're at, they've agreed in principle to certain reforms but have asked that the cost impact be referred to this committee and this committee be requested to respond in some manner to provide direction for the Rules Committee.

And I'd like to ask Greg to sort of outline this in more detail.

Mr. Putz: — Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Mr. Speaker indicated, I was asked by the Rules Committee to prepare a cost-impact analysis that you all received in the package of materials that Margaret sent out some time ago.

I'll take a few minutes to point out some of the highlights of the report. As you might appreciate, the reforms proposed last July by the Rules Committee will have a profound impact on the many structures of the House. I think when implemented, the reforms to the House and committees will cause the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to experience its most profound procedural and operational transformation since the beginning of this province in 1905. Maybe it's fitting that we're approaching the 100th anniversary of the province on that count.

Of course reforms always present a challenge and the reforms that you have that the Rules Committee's presented to the House is actually a plan for a major overhaul of a good deal of the House procedures. And it's a complete overhaul of the committee system.

Part of the challenge for sure will be the financial costs of that overhaul. That is why the Rules Committee thought that it was important that the board understand the cost impact of the reforms and take into consideration some different options for the implementation of the reforms.

The options range from a fully operational system as envisaged in the second report of the Rules Committee to the Assembly to a pilot project based on the operation of a single policy field

committee during an upcoming session. The scenarios in between range . . . in this range include options to postpone committee television or limiting the operational scope of the committees. So the board has before it a range of options with different cost implications.

Now without detailing all the factors that contribute to those cost projections I'll briefly summarize the various options. In the document that you have there are seven scenarios. And the first scenario is a fully operational policy field committee system as envisaged in the Rules Committee report with television broadcasting, but with the assumption that there'd be two public hearing programs per year for these four policy field committees.

The scenario includes committee and broadcast staffing, all the costs associated with hearing programs, including travel to 12 or 16 Saskatchewan centres. The hearings are modelled on the Driving Safety Committee and the Tobacco Control committees of recent years gone by. We're . . . history tells us or the actual costs of those programs, including travel, is estimated to be between 115 and \$120,000. Staffing in this scenario is based on two researchers, a committee Clerk, and one support position, as well as contract broadcast operators.

Other noteworthy components factored into the costs are membership substitutions for all the committees. That's changed. The Rules Committee report recommends that the current system of substitutions that are now applied to the Public Accounts Committee, the Crown Corporation Committee would be applied to all of the committees. The absorption of the Regulation Committee's duties and responsibilities, because that committee would disappear, and an increase in sessional sitting hours which the model for that is in table 3 of your report. And the increases to . . . included are the new increases for the statutory responsibilities of the Public Accounts Committee.

The cost of such a system would be about \$710,000 per year, which is about \$463,000 over five-year average costs for committees as they now exist.

The second scenario uses the same factors as the scenario one, but each of the four policy field committees would be limited to one public hearing program per term of the legislature. Staffing in the scenario is reduced. There'd only be one researcher on the assumption that no more than one hearing program would be conducted in any given year.

The cost of this scenario is about \$580,000 a year, which is 330,000 more than the five-year average for the committees as they presently exist.

The third scenario is the fully operational policy field committee system, again as outlined in scenario one, but without the committee television. The implication is that the Assembly would not purchase any of the equipment for either room 10, this room, or a new committee room but otherwise the committees would be fully functional as envisaged in the second report. The cost for this scenario is estimated to be 671,000 per year, which would be an increase of 424,000 over the five-year average for the committees.

The fourth scenario is based on just a sessional function for the policy field committees only, with no inquiry feature and hence little or no intersessional activity. Broadcasting costs are included as well as broadcasting staff in this scenario. And the cost is estimated to be \$478,000 per year, which is 231,500 more than the five-year average.

The fifth scenario is the same as scenario four but with no television broadcasting or staffing of any kind. The cost estimate is 274,000, which is only 27,000 more than the five-year average for committees. The reason there aren't . . . there are any increases at all in this scenario is because of the increase in sessional meetings, that I mentioned, which are outlined in more detail in the report and the absorption of the work of the Regulations Committee which would be absorbed by the four policy field committees. In this scenario if there were to be public hearings on a Bill or regulations, the Assembly would have to likely contract for extra help in that regard.

Scenario six and seven are based on a trial operation of one policy field committee only. Now this pilot project would not affect the continued existence of the current system of committees, although the cost assumes in the scenarios that there would be a host services committee because that committee is the mechanism in the recommendations of the second report which would kind of supervise what work goes before each of the policy field committees.

Scenario six costs are based on the single committee performing a public hearing program intersessionally and the costs there are modelled on the experience with select and special committees in the past.

Scenario seven is basically the same but restricts the pilot project to sessional work only.

All of the factors that contribute to the cost estimates are, as I mentioned, outlined in the report. And I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have about any of these scenarios.

But before closing, I'd like to underscore a few things, especially the potential cost offsets in House hours and support a fully operational policy field committee might provide.

As members are aware, it's the length of a sessional day and the number of days in a session that determine many of the costs budgeted for each year by this board. The bulk of time in any given session is spent in consideration of estimates and Bills. Since the new committees will assume the bulk of responsibility for these two functions, to some degree the increase in committee costs would be offset by savings in operational costs of running the House itself.

In total, the House averages about 185 hours in consideration of the details of budgetary estimates and legislation in any given year. And all of the scenarios except the single-committee pilot project scenario are based on the premise that the House would adjourn at 3, leaving the committees with two working hours four days a week, those being the government days. Over a 15-week session, 240 hours would be available for committee work, which would more than offset the 185 hours now needed for Committee of Finance and Committee of the Whole.

The ability of the policy field committees to conduct that amount of work over the course of a 15-week session would negate, in theory anyways, the need for night sittings. The elimination of night sittings would allow the Assembly to take another \$55,000 off its annual operating budget. Moreover, our human resource branch has calculated that overtime and time in lieu liabilities associated with night sittings to be about \$28,000 per session in dollar terms.

So the point that I'm making here is that there are potential cost savings that would come off the Assembly's bottom line which have not been calculated into any of the cost projections in the scenarios that have been presented to you.

And with that, that concludes the formal part of the presentation and if you have any questions, I'd be glad to answer them for you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Greg. Thanks for the work that you've put in on this.

We have time for some questions on it. At some stage, it would be the duty of this board to provide a response to the Rules Committee. I think you might want some time to think about things, but I'm not sure. Let's go with the questions.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you. I am, so the board knows, also a member of the Rules Committee, so a lot of this is quite familiar to me as far as the concepts are concerned. But the committee had asked that the Board of Internal Economy provide us with some advice as far as numbers are concerned and so the numbers have just come to me as a member of the Board of Internal Economy.

Under page no. 3, Greg, where you list comparisons of costs, looking particularly at difference S 7 you list the five-year average as . . . this would be an increase of \$1,600 would it, if the committee was to accept suggestion 7 as the alternative or that would be a decrease of \$49,000 over the highest actual? Am I understanding it properly?

Mr. Putz: — Yes, exactly.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Some of the cost projections I wonder if you could perhaps explain to me. Under page 7, committee staffing 5.7, you list the need for a junior committee Clerk as one of the costs, which would mean an increase of . . . or a need for \$165,000 a year to cover all of the staffing costs. I wonder if you could explain to me why the need for an additional Clerk as opposed to the use of the four Clerks that we presently have.

Mr. Putz: — Sure. One of the reasons that we have a Clerk Assistant of committees is to free up a lot of my time to tend to my administrative responsibilities and that was on the basis that the board . . . part of the rationale for the board approving that extra position.

If we are to go to a system where we had four committees meeting during the same time of the House, which is in addition to the Public Accounts Committee still in operation which is currently Meta Woods responsibility, it would just be impractical to be able to cover all of the bases all of the time for these committees. So what is being proposed here is that a

junior committee Clerk could be added to that.

Right now, by the way, I'm not doing any committees other than the Rules Committee. And that's because as you can see in some of the administrative charts, the various areas of responsibility that I have management roles and responsibilities for. So that's the main reason for adding that position there.

As well right now the Clerk only is responsible for one committee, the Private Members' Bills Committee. That committee of course would still exist under this scenario. As you're aware, that's one of the so-called House committees that would still continue to exist.

So just by adding these committees and the level of activity — 240 hours which is substantially more than the level of activity of committees as they presently exist — it's just impractical and probably impossible for the four of us to cover all of the bases, especially for committees if they're to meet simultaneously, which is the premise of some of the rationale in these budget scenarios.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well, I think what the Rules Committee had foresaw was that two committees would meet at the same time, providing accommodations were available to accomplish that. So two of the Clerks would be tied up in committee work. But at the same time, the House would not be in session at that time. So you would utilize two of the four Clerks that are potentially available.

Under library staffing, I notice you also have \$77,000 listed there for additional staff being under library staff. Part of the duties, though, that will be foreseen, at least foresaw by the Rules Committee was that any research staff that was hired by the committees for committee work would be carrying out that kind of research. So would there be a need for further staffing in the library?

Mr. Putz: — When we did an impact analysis of this we asked each of the branches, given a briefing on what these committees reforms were, the content of the second report to the House, to come forward with what that impact of these extra hours, extra committees, the public hearing programs in particular, would have on each of the branches. And this is the response of the Legislative Library.

What I can say here though, and I don't know if Marian is still here, maybe she can address this in more detail. If her B budget item is approved, that would remove some of this cost out of there. But I'll let Marian explain in more detail on how she came up with this number.

Ms. Powell: — Sure. Thanks, Greg. Basically the premise with the policy committees are we anticipate a great deal more use of the library in a very high-end way. And that's based on our experience with the Tobacco Committee and the other recent special committees where we experienced a 51 per cent increase per researcher in the kind of research work the library was asked to do for the researcher.

First of all, we anticipate that would occur with however many policy committees might be activated. There is more committee activity, there is quite likely to be more information required.

Secondly, right now our member services librarian has made a concerted effort to attend and become familiar with many of the existing committees. But her time does not permit any direct service to the committees. So if the committees found that they needed a librarian prepared to work with the researcher on a concerted basis, we need additional time for that.

So the two items that I believe Greg has in his proposal for the whole committee group would include the full-time reference librarian that we're looking for now, and a full-time member services librarian if all four committees were to be instituted, and a halftime member services librarian if it was less than that.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I think there's a difference here though between the policy field committees and the special committees or the select committees that are in place. The policy field committees will be dealing with legislation that is currently dealt with before the Committee of the Whole, so I don't see that there would be a huge change there in the necessity of more information coming from library services than what there would already be in place. Because if members are asking for information from the library today dealing with legislation, they would be doing the same thing. It's highly unlikely that simply by going to the committee that would generate more requests to the library.

The same thing with estimates. If members are asking today about information from the library dealing with estimates, that would continue. But I don't see it generating more activity because it would be before a policy field committee rather than going before the committee of estimates — or the Committee of Finance, excuse me.

Where a change could take place though is certainly if the committees — and it's envisioned that they could do this — were to establish an initiative of their own to do research and an inquiry into a particular area. That obviously would fall under a similar condition to a standing . . . not a standing, a select committee or a special committee. So in that area, yes, there would be some additional work. But the main work of the committees, the policy field committees, I don't see really as generating any additional work in the library field over and above what's already there.

Ms. Powell: — If I could just comment. Excuse me, my voice is going. If I could just comment on that very briefly. Part of the anticipated demand that we see actually relates to some of the other rules that are proposing changes.

We know, because we have a mandate to serve the public, that if the Bills process changes, we anticipate more public demand on that. And so we've put that together with this because we anticipate that these rules will eventually go ahead and perhaps the Bills might even go sooner. Quite frankly, we only had the basis of the special committees on which to judge, but we do know from other jurisdictions that as soon as this kind of committee meets more frequently and covers broader issues, the demand does go up with the library. And as soon as there's a research staff member, the same thing happens.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes. Certainly where the public is involved and the public having access to the committees and to the legislation, it could generate from the public demand rather

than the members demand an increase of activity.

Mr. Putz: — If I could add to that as well, just a slight correction to what you said. The estimates and Bill process, the estimates process will remain the same, but an added component recommended by the Rules Committee is that these committees would be permitted to have public hearings on legislation during the sessional period. So there's two of you in here that have been involved in public hearing processes. You know the logistical problems that — three of you, sorry; four of you, sorry; all of you, probably — you know the logistical requirements and the support that's required in any hearing program and if we're doing that in the midst of session.

And secondly, added on to that is a new component for regulations. The Rules report recommends that there be public hearings on regulations and professional association bylaws, which again is something totally new and again another reason for needing more support. Because these things, if they're going to happen, they could happen in a very short period of time.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Greg, I appreciate the work that you've done to pull this together and give us a chance to wrestle with the pragmatic realities here.

I just wanted to check and see if I'm understanding this correctly. It looks to me as though the cheapest scenario that's televised — I guess which would be policy field committee but no hearings, I guess, that would be the cheapest way — and that would be scenario four. Is that your, is that your cheapest televised scenario?

Mr. Putz: — Yes. As I indicated — and it's fleshed out a little bit more in the document — the hearings we anticipate to be anywhere between 115,000 to \$120,000 for a hearing program. And I put a little table in there comparing some of the costs of recent hearing programs including some . . . one that you chaired, one that Dan was on. It's just our experience with these things that that's what hearing programs cost and that's the bulk of the intercessional cost there that would be eliminated without the hearings.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. Now if I look at, if I can just look at scenario four then, which would be the least expensive option that included the proceedings being televised — which in my mind is the least publicly acceptable — if we're looking to enhance . . . One of the objectives here is to enhance public, you know, participation, awareness of the goings on of the Legislative Assembly. Can you explain to me here then . . . So let's just look at that one so we don't . . . so we can compare apples to apples here. On page 2, on table 1 then, you forecast a \$478,000 expenditure. That's an annual expenditure?

Mr. Putz: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes? And then . . . Now what's the difference between that and the . . . then when I flip to table 2, the five-year average . . . (inaudible) . . . a 231,000 . . . yes, 231,000 . . .

Mr. Putz: — So what that means . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — . . . higher than current. Is that . . .

Mr. Putz: — So what I'm saying there is that that amount, \$478,000, is \$231,599 more than the five-year average.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And more than your offsetting savings that . . .

Mr. Putz: — Right, because you have to remember in this table here, this is all of the committee activity built in. It doesn't take into account what we're spending now for committees, and that's why I put the second table there. And if we're concluding a hearing program, I thought it only fair to include over the last five years where we have had quite a good number of years where we had experience with special and select committees, just to show what, on average, in the last five years we have been spending on committees.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Now in these numbers then that takes into account a personnel, as well as — support personnel as well as . . . Then when you say statutory what are you thinking? What's in, what falls into the statutory? Would this be . . .

Mr. Putz: — Statutory costs are those members' entitlements for committee expenses.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Outside of times when the House is in session. Okay.

Mr. Putz: — Right. As you know, the directives of the board stipulate members can receive . . . they get a per diem, plus their expenses.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. But there is not in these forecasts . . . In these projections, there is nothing here that includes then the facilities costs that are a different . . . that we will hear about shortly. Or is that captured within here?

Mr. Putz: — For television, these costs include what our director of broadcasting's estimated he'd need in extra help to run the two programs at once. So contract operators. So that's the television cost.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — There's no renovation implication here. That's above and beyond this.

Mr. Putz: — No, those capital costs, I outlined them in this document, and they'll be fleshed out more when we talk about the next board decision item.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. If the board is then looking at the cost of implementation, what we really have to do is take both of these reports and . . .

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Add them together.

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — The one is not captured, the other within.

Mr. Putz: — Right.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay.

Mr. Putz: — These are the ongoing operating costs that the committees, what we're projecting the committees will have beyond those first initial costs for establishing the television equipment.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Right.

Now on the other report, I'm not asking you to get in . . . I don't want to go there ahead of time but just so I can keep my context clear here. The other report will provide us with information about the cost of renovations or alterations that are one-time costs.

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. But this captures all of the broadcasting, the ones that do have broadcasting. They capture all of the . . .

Mr. Putz: — Yes, they do. Yes.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Broadcasting operational costs.

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. And if I look at scenario four then again, which is the cheapest televised version, I guess, that we can contemplate, can you explain to me the 180,000-plus highest actual? I wasn't sure . . . I'm not sure what highest actual, what that line means?

Mr. Putz: — That was the year in which we had the highest cost for committees and that was fiscal year '98-99 and that's when we had Tobacco Control and the Child Abuse Committee running.

So that number is there to show you how much more money this new committee system would be above and beyond a year when we had more than one of the kind of inquiry type committees in operation.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. So that's a 180 over 298. Is that right? Is that how . . .

Mr. Putz: — That's right.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. Seven four seventy-eight.

Mr. Putz: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Four seventy-eight.

Mr. Putz: — So that number . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. I got you. All right. Yes.

Mr. Putz: — Yes. That's \$180,000 more per year to operate the full committees . . . Well, your scenario there.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Right.

Mr. Putz: — Over and above what we've paid. The most . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. That's your four seventy-eight on table 1 minus the two ninety-eight highest then.

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. All right. So that's information that's interesting information just to give us a context, but the one that we'd be looking at on an ongoing basis really we'd need to focus in on the two thirty-one . . .

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. In your estimate . . . in your calculations.

Mr. Putz: — Correct.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. That's it for now, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Thank you very much.

Mr. D'Autremont: — On that last question, the real cost there then, because there would be no hearings would be the cost of broadcasting, would be the significant, plus the cost of the research staff.

Mr. Putz: — Yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The only problem with that one is, is it . . . Well, it is the least expensive of the broadcast system. It also doesn't allow for the general public access, because there's no hearings involved at all, either in the legislature during . . . for Bills and estimates or outside as well for special committees.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — But on this one then, I guess if I can talk with the Rules Committee guy here for a moment, then in essence what we'd be doing is duplicating . . . not duplicating but replacing the Finance Committee in the Assembly with, now with one?

Mr. Putz: — No, that would be all four.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — This would be with all four. Okay.

Mr. Putz: — Now only two could meet at a time, as Dan said. But I've had a . . . there is also a table and there's a breakdown where we think the work will be. And over the course of the week all four of those committees would likely be active.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. And now I'm . . . You're on, so I'll come back. Sorry.

Mr. D'Autremont: — No problem. Just another thought. Since there is no hearings involved in these, no public participation, then there wouldn't be any costs for the library staff research involvement because there would be no public access to it. So you would have no increase in that area. You would have the . . . you would maintain the status quo from the current system for utilization of library staff. So have you included the costs in there of library staff?

Mr. Putz: — No. Library staff aren't in there. The staff that are

included are those . . . the ones we just discussed: direct committee support, the broadcasting, and staffing for *Hansard*. Because the way we budget now for the board is those costs directly attributable to committees are not charged to the *Hansard* budget but to the committee budget. So that's reflected in these numbers.

The Chair: — Just a comment here from Gwenn for a moment.

Ms. Ronyk: — I think the experience of the Rules Committee and their travelling was that the success of a more intensive committee system for the health of members was that they were going to need more support, more research support.

You can't just do more intensive work, especially during session, without sufficient research and support to enable that to happen on a little more intensive basis than in the past. And that's why we think research assistance is going to be essential, even in a limited, non-hearing type committee system. And the minute you have researchers it drives up the demand in the library.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then if I can come to scenario one, which is the full-meal deal, and this is the scenario that the Rules Committee is contemplating as recommending, I presume.

Mr. Putz: — Well I've modified that a bit where there would only be two hearing programs per year, because given the number of members available for these type of things and what's reasonable as far as support and staffing, didn't think it was any more realistic — it wasn't realistic to expect that the House would have more than two a year. If you want to have more than two a year, then we'll have to talk.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Just sort of the full-meal deal on sale then.

Mr. D'Autremont: — If I can interject. In Australia, other jurisdictions did this. They didn't allow every committee to hold unlimited hearings every year. In a lot of cases that they were staggered, so committees A and C could hold hearings in a year and the next year committees B and D could hold, or even less frequently than that. It wasn't . . . it was up to the House to make that determination themselves how they wanted to operate.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So then the modified full-meal deal here is 462,000 above and beyond current expenditure, current estimate. Okay.

I think now I really am done, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Maybe there are other people that have a comment or a question. Those were good questions and good comments. Mr. D'Autremont.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well as an advocate for the Rules Committee, the Rules Committee saw this whole exercise and project as a means to provide the people of Saskatchewan with more participation in democracy. And part of our questions that we asked earlier today dealing with enumeration was people not wanting to be involved in the system. If you give people a greater opportunity to participate, a greater opportunity to

influence the decision-making process, they're more apt to participate. And the rule changes that have been proposed by the Rules Committee, we believe, give that opportunity for people to be a part of it.

I have had the opportunity to visit North Dakota when their House has been in session, and there the public can come in and express their opinions on all of the Bills before the House, before the committees. And people certainly do take the opportunity to do that. While they may be limited in the amount of time that each individual member . . . or each individual citizen has to express their time, even if it is only five minutes, they come in. And I've seen them fill their galleries in North Dakota to come in and express their opinions on Bills, both pro and con.

And so people that way get an opportunity to take an active participatory part in their democracy. And it does encourage people to participate. And I think that at the end of the day, since the House is moving in that direction already with acceptance of at least the second report of the committee, that the question is, is when we go to this, not whether in my opinion, whether or not we should go to it. The question is when we go to it.

And obviously the costs are a part of it. And yes, not all members are in full agreement on this, but we're hoping to convince them.

What I would like to see on these recommendations that have come forward is that while we may not be able to give full approval to all the monetary things that are being asked for, but that at least we give consideration of approvals in principle for the implementation at some future date.

The Chair: — And I should like to mention to the committee members of the committee that the Rules Committee will be presenting a report to the Legislative Assembly in the upcoming session and part of that report should have in it some type of a response from this committee to the request.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, then I'm assuming that you're concluding that the question and discussion has wrapped up now?

The Chair: — Well yes, except I think the impact on part of this, we should hear from the next item before we make any progress.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — That's what I was going to suggest — we hear from that and then we can deal with them simultaneously or . . .

The Chair: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — One after the other or side by each or . . .

The Chair: — All right. So I take it from that that we're ready to proceed to the next item. Thank you very much, Greg.

The next item being item 10(b)iv, new committee room proposal. And I call to the table there to join Greg, our Clerk of the Legislature, Gwenn Ronyk, and also to bring two guests to

the table.

So members of the Assembly, at this time I'd like . . . or of the Committee, I would like to . . . It's my pleasure to welcome our two guests. And first of all, I'd like to introduce Alan Hansen, who is the building manager for accommodation services from the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. And also Robert Wells, who is the interior design partner with PSW Architecture & Interior Design Ltd.

Welcome gentlemen, and I turn this over now to Ms. Ronyk.

Ms. Ronyk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to thank Mr. Hansen and Mr. Wells for being patient and waiting but I thought if might have been helpful for them to hear the committee reform discussion as well because there is a link, of course, to a proposal for a new committee room.

And Greg is here because he knows more of the detail of how the committee reform would demand more facilities and different facilities and we'll be able to answer your questions on the linkage there.

What we have here for your consideration today is a proposal to develop a second committee room in this building. And it would be needed to accommodate and televise more public hearings — or public hearings at all, in fact, except for in the Chamber. It would . . . a new committee room would support current and future levels of committee work. And in addition it would provide a multi-use facility in the building that could be used by many of the tenants for many different purposes and would be a great enhancement to the building itself.

The proposal that we're asking you to consider is to redevelop currently wasted space in the fourth floor of the Legislative Building. We think that after 95 years, it's time to finish the building, and that's indeed what this proposal would do. It would take the space that currently is not able to be used for code reasons and would make it into a real enhancement to the building and to the functionality of committees and other work in the building. And we're proposing that this be a joint project by the Legislative Assembly Office and Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation.

And before I call on Al, I would like to just identify some of the key issues that you would need to consider, were you to be inclined to go in the direction we're suggesting here.

Of course the proposal for a new committee room fits in significantly in the legislative and committee reform proposals. It would be part of a key element in the efforts of the Rules Committee to renew public confidence in parliamentary institutions by providing a means for meaningful public involvement in decision-making and legislative processes.

The improved committee facilities are essential to achieving the recommendations of the Rules Committee, and that includes both the enhancing the role of private members and creating more effective ways of dealing with public policy, which is basically through committees.

But — the big but — is even if we don't proceed with

committee reform in the near future, or at all, we still need a new committee room in this building. It could be very well used. Right now we have only one room — this room — for committees, and even at our current level of committee activities, there's great demand for this space.

We can't . . . We have to fight — it's a power thing between the Chair and the Clerk of the respective committees as to whose committee gets the room, especially during session. And it is difficult sometimes to get all the committee work done in the time that we have to do it during session.

And also this room does not allow for the television . . . televising of committee work and hearings without a great additional expense, as happened during Channel Lake when quite a large expense was incurred to do a very brief amount of televising.

And this room also is not conducive to hearings of any size. When the Sask Wheat Pool Bill was here and we had it full of irate individuals from across the province, I think we all would have been happy to have a little more space.

The other aspect to consider is the building itself and heritage component of the recommendation, that this room . . . And Mr. Wells has some wonderful pictures to show you, before-and-after type; I'm sure you'll be enthralled and really keen on this proposal once you see those.

We think it would be a wonderful thing to actually finish this building in time for the hundredth birthday of the province in 2005. And these proposals would be really relevant as a focal point for public celebration of our representative institutions at that time. And we know the Legislative Building will be a focus of attention in 2005, and in 2008 when we celebrate the actual 100 years of the building.

This project also fits within the broad rehabilitation plan that is already underway for the building. And you're aware of the first phases — the underpinning, and the life safety, and accessibility phases that have been completed.

Space pressures in the building are always there. And gosh, it's 15 years ago I was on a committee that recommended the development of the fourth floor to relieve space pressures in the building. Those pressures have only gotten worse, and in fact we have had to move significant parts of our staff out of the building to Walter Scott and to . . . both the library and *Hansard* staff over there, and it does make us less efficient. And we are faced with the potential of having to move more staff areas out of there. And the more we move, the more difficult it gets.

And of course, the major issue that the board would need to consider is expenditure during a time of restraint. I guess the argument to be made there is that the costs here are primarily for the benefit of the public. They are not for members, or ministers, or staff. They are here to give the public better access to the legislative process and to the building. Also you will see what we're proposing in terms of the phases over the years, and where those funds would come from; and we can get into that a little more later.

But I would now like to call on Al Hansen to talk to us about

how a joint proposal works, what SPMC has been doing in the building and the cost-sharing basis of such a joint proposal.

Mr. Hansen: — As Gwenn has said, we have worked very closely with Legislative Assembly to determine the requirements they would need for the new proposed committee room. I'd like to say at this time that the estimates that have been provided by Robert Wells are preliminary, and they will be verified during the final design of the project, if it proceeds.

As with any joint venture project, SPMC's responsibility in developing the options will be to provide the base building components, which will include all the architectural, mechanical, and electrical components to a predetermined standard. Such items as lighting for TV, air conditioning systems for the control booth, furniture, or upgraded wall and ceiling finishes would be the responsibility of the tenant, which would be the Legislative Assembly.

The fourth floor space has been used for various functions over the years. As we remember probably that Page Credit Union was up there for a number of years. It has been used for summer student locations who were working within the Legislative Building. And the final one was the staging area for the press, when we redid the press section at the back of the Chamber.

The fourth floor now has three major code violations that have to be addressed before anything can be completed up there. The major one is through the Fire Commissioner, concerning the egress from the area. The code requires that there be two exits from any occupied area. This space only has one exit right now.

Another concern is accessibility to the area, as the elevator now stops on the third floor and does not proceed to the fourth floor.

And the third one is that there is a light box located in the floor of the fourth floor which houses the lighting system that you see as you walk up the main staircase to the rotunda. That has to be fire separation provided between the two areas.

These three items come to a cost of \$255,000, it's been estimated, to deal with the major code items.

As Gwenn talked about, a phased approach would suit our capital budget requirements to the best way for ours. But I think I'll turn it over to Robert now and let him explain the three options.

Mr. Wells: — Just a bit of background relative to my involvement in the work to date. Our office has been involved in the project from the beginning of the structural upgrade as well as the life safety, sprinklers, fire alarm, exiting systems that we did put in in the past few years, also the new barrier-free entry and the Cumberland Gallery. Those are ones that we have worked on to date within the building.

The three options. Starting with option A, room 119 — I think you have floor plans of this already and you have seen them. The room itself was originally designed for office allocation. There are two structural columns within the space. The drawing that you see has the committee table running east-west.

I've done layouts — a number of different layouts — to try and

make that work but no matter where you are in the room, sight lines are not good because if you put a small gallery on the north side there, people in that gallery cannot see everybody at the table. Top of the page is north in that instance. We're limited in physical size to the broadcast booth location. It would have to be remote.

The second option, which is in an existing storage area underneath the main chambers, it has a lower ceiling and it has very limited height as it exists now. The column in the centre can't be taken out so it's utilizing either the left side or the right side as an open area which gives you less even, as far as extra space for sitting in the viewing gallery.

The third option, as Al had mentioned, is the fourth floor. The building is based on symmetry. And if you look at the floor plate of that fourth floor, you can see that it's developed symmetrically left to right — north being at the top of the page.

We have to provide two means of egress out of this one. And what I'd like to do . . . It shows at the bottom of the page you have, arrows to new exit. What I'd like to do is pass this down the table. And this gives you an idea of how the exiting . . . how you get out of that space. And it goes through a wall at the top rotunda level into the two existing stairways.

The code says we have to exit out of the building. And in the last code upgrade, we provided doorways at the bottom of those stairwells to physically get out of the building. So you're exiting from the fourth floor space one way or another way. You're provided two exits.

Mr. Hansen: — Actually the stairwell will egress above the roofline as you're walking around the third floor rotunda area, so you won't even see it until you get into the actual stairwell.

Mr. Wells: — It's all hidden.

So continuing on from there, Al was talking earlier about this light box. If you look in the centre at the bottom of the page, you see two offices. That square area is where a light box was put in; and there was at one time when the building was built, a skylight which went right to the roof. So light penetrated right from the roof right down through this fourth floor space to above the main stairwell. That's where it was wide open; we have to provide fire rating between the two areas.

The two elevator shafts which exist now are shown there, they're identified. What this room would look for, I'll also pass down — what it would look like, sorry — I'll also pass down the . . . This is a computer-generated rendering based on that floor plan of what the room would look like. The base point here is to create a room that is in keeping with what exists in the building without huge costs. The focal point would be to the back of the room as you enter. So here, we're looking at the room right from one of the doorways that you enter from the elevator lobby.

All the architectural details in here are based on details that exist now in the building. So there is nothing really new that we're bringing into the building as far as a design goes. The columns are replicas of the existing marble columns, even though they're made from plaster. Everything in this room, as

far as the finishes, would be plaster or drywall. You'd end up with a same type of effect that we've done in the handicapped entry — or sorry, the barrier-free entry — with architectural details or drywall that have been based on what exists in the building now.

I'd like to add to that, that in the rendering . . . this rendering is an AutoCAD rendering based on the floor plan which I showed you earlier. I would like to . . . It needs to be refined. I would use a more traditional style of chair, that sort of thing, just to take away the modernness of the look. That's the chair I had modelled, so that's the chair I used, so. Okay?

Mr. Hansen: — Just on option A again, there is quite a substantial negative effect for Legislative Assembly as, if we used that area which is now office space, we would have to relocate them to the Walter Scott Building, which would incur additional rent costs from SPMC, plus the construction, the fibre optics, everything like that has to be all taken into account on that one. So that it makes their operation a lot less efficient.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Which option is that?

Mr. Hansen: — Option A.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Under room 19, hasn't that just been all remodelled here in the last year?

Mr. Hansen: — About two years ago. We redid it when we started the underpinning project. That was part of what had to be done.

Ms. Ronyk: — You're right that the base building is there, so it means all the costs would be ours, would be tenant costs in that case because it is up to occupation grade as far as SPMC is concerned. We would have to remove some of the walls that are currently there and design it for broadcast and committee furnishings and broadcast equipment and so on. So it ends up . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, and, you know, lighting and so on.

Mr. D'Autremont: — What kind of square footage or square metrage if you want to be less traditional?

Mr. Wells: — Yes. This room as it sits there overall would be just slightly more than twice the size of this room.

Mr. D'Autremont: — And how would that compare to room 19?

Mr. Hansen: — Okay. We're looking at about, I believe, 300 square metres at . . . for the fourth floor. Room 119 is 140 square metres and the storage area I believe is 155 square metres.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Considerably more space up on the fourth floor.

Mr. Hansen: — Absolutely. And a lot better space because even in the converted storage area your ceilings are only about 8 or 9 feet, and above that is the Chamber floor.

Ms. Ronyk: — As you can see, this has real high ceilings to

replicate the rest of the building and public spaces.

Mr. Wells: — We have a 14-foot ceiling in this one compared to an 11-foot ceiling in this one. So that gives you a spatial relationship to work with.

Mr. Hansen: — And the wall features are the same as what are in the Prince of Wales entrance so you can compare it to that one. Not the marble and everything but the wall finishes . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . It's right across the hallway from room 119. It's a storage area, vault. Yes, just across there.

Mr. Wells: — What's not shown . . . what's not shown on the rendering at this point . . . Sorry. What's not shown on the drawings, or on this rendering at this point would be lighting that would be necessary for broadcast. We just haven't got that far yet at this point.

The option B, the converted storage area, because of the low ceiling would be very difficult to light for broadcast.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Well I like the design. I do have one problem with it, with the audience or the public being on both sides. Have you looked at some manner of placing the committee itself at one end of the room and the public at the other?

Mr. Wells: — It could be done quite easily by rotating the table set-up by 90 degrees, yes, yes. Certainly could be done, yes. Then you would be entering the room from the side of the room as opposed to the end. Yes. Possible option, yes.

Mr. Hansen: — These are very preliminary designs.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes, it certainly gives us a feel for what would be available on the whole floor, not just in the committee rooms.

Ms. Ronyk: — The idea would be to have the furniture moveable. The computer wiring connections would be able to be unhooked and a plate put over them on the floor so that we could move the tables, we could move the chairs, we could set it up for a seminar, we could set it up in a different format for a ceremony or a reception, and it would be quite functional.

Mr. Hansen: — You'll notice that there's two doors on the wall that has the coat of arms on it and there is storage area behind that to accommodate all the furnishings.

Mr. D'Autremont: — That's one thing with this particular design. And the floor here also increasing the office space available in the legislature and that's always . . . seems to be a critical condition.

Mr. Hansen: — Yes, and the accessibility to the room will be quite good because as you come in the Prince of Wales entrance your elevator is right there. You go directly up to the fourth floor — you're right there.

Mr. D'Autremont: — I have some questions on the funding proposal on this from SPMC's point of view. The SPMC budget is a significant portion of the fourth floor plan. Where does that money come from? Do you already have that monies available

in budgets that have been allocated to you or are these requests that you're going to have to go to government with?

Mr. Hansen: — No, this money will come from our Capital Maintenance Fund budget, so there won't have to be a request to government for additional funding. Our capital budget prioritizes throughout all the buildings in the province, and we would just prioritize this one higher up on the list to deal with it. And that's why the phase approach would help our capital budget out quite a bit because for the fourth floor \$700,000 is a fair amount of money to ask for that.

Ms. Ronyk: — Perhaps we could look at the recommendation. It's on . . . the final page are on page 2. The recommendations are there and it includes the dollars and the years in which they would be incurred. The recommendation, of course, that the proposers here would like to make, is option C, the fourth floor, for the reasons that it meets all of the needs. It provides a committee room of sufficient size, with proper appointments to carry out the work that used to be done in the Assembly. So I think it needs to at least be able to give the same sort of status and importance to that work as it did when it was on the floor of the House.

It's the only option that provides adequate facilities to involve the public in the way the Rules Committee envisage. It enhances the Legislative Building by turning wasted space into a prime facility to advance citizen involvement in the process. And it's the only option that provides a waiting breakout area outside the committee room where we can process witnesses, serve as a breakout space — they can wait, they can have coffee, whatever — which will be helpful.

And it provides the facilities for televising of two committees that meet at the same time, if we are either working the Chamber or televising another committee room. And it is the only option that provides some additional support space for offices to support the committee work or to do other . . . house other staff that are in other parts of the building.

The recommendation 1 then would be that to approve a second fully functional modern committee room in the Legislative Building, cost shared and completed in phases as follows:

In this upcoming fiscal year of 2002-03, SPMC would fund the base building and code-related upgrades for the total of \$255,000 as AI outlined. In this recommendation there is no cost to the Assembly in this year.

The following year, in 2003-04, SPMC would then complete the mechanical, electrical, and base construction costs for 488,000. And the Legislative Assembly would have to fund the tenant improvements, the finishing in the room, furniture, equipment that would include the *Hansard* audio and the cabling costs for 221,855. And then the broadcasting could be done that year or it could be done at a later year in 2004-05, for 181,000. The numbers are there.

Recommendation 2 is basically to respond to the other recommendation of the Rules Committee that there be two television-equipped rooms. And recommendation 2 is suggesting that room 10, this room, be fitted for television cameras but that it would be operated from the Chamber control

room, therefore enabling it to be done at a lower cost.

The only point to be made there is that if you put in that sort of a system in this room then you can't televise the House or a committee meeting in the Chamber at the same time as there's a committee meeting here because we're operating out of the same production facility. And the alternate recommendation at the bottom, during a time when we know that funding is an issue and restraint is the mode, there's a recommendation that approval in principle be given to the development for the fourth floor committee room as proposed in option C as a joint project and to be undertaken as funds become available. But it would indicate the interest.

The Chair: — Well thank you very much for that very clear explanation of . . . and the diagrams. And I think very helpful for the committee. Are there any further comments or questions of our guests? Yes Glen . . . Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Recommendation 2, the 100,000 to put television capacity in this room, is that in the Legislative Assembly budget that we just considered? I assume not.

Ms. Ronyk: — No, it isn't.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Then secondly, if there is not a go ahead at this point for option C, would SPMC be intending at any rate to proceed with the base building and code-related upgrades on the fourth floor, on the assumption that at some point in time that will be money that's not wasted anyhow as part of the development of the building for future use?

Mr. Hansen: — I believe that we would probably reallocate the money until we got a . . . we receive a commitment so that we go ahead and do it. So because we do have other buildings with deficiencies that we could use the 250,000 too.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering under option C when you're anticipating two committees working simultaneously, and perhaps I should best address it to Dan . . . to Mr. D'Autremont. Would the Assembly be one of the rooms and the fourth floor a second committee room?

Mr. D'Autremont: — What we envisioned as the ideal was that the fourth floor would be one of the committee rooms and this would be the second one. So that the . . . you could utilize both those committee rooms at the same time. The Assembly, while it can be used as a committee room — we've used it now for the Agricultural Committee, we've used it for the Health Committee — but it's not really designed for participation by the public, because the public is up in the galleries and not on the floor of the Assembly. So it really doesn't work well as a public venue for the committee work. It can be utilized, but it's not an ideal by any circumstances.

Ms. Jones: — So in following that through, Mr. Chairman, that then means that we actually need recommendation if we were to proceed in this way, that we would actually need recommendation one and two. Because if we need to equip this room with television cameras, then we have to do that as well. If one is to be fourth floor and one is to be here, there's still work that has to be done here in order to televise. So we're

actually looking at both recommendations.

Mr. D'Autremont: — That's the ideal. An alternative could be utilization of the fourth floor and the Assembly, and then you make a judgment call as to which committee hearings the public is likely most interested in attending. And you would have that then on the fourth floor where you actually have easy public access and participation, and the second committee could sit in the Assembly floor and hold their public hearings, as has already happened.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Ronyk: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Another little point that we did forget to mention was that in order for committees to be able to use these new facilities, there is a fair bit of lead time required, about an 18-month construction time before the fourth floor could be ready to be used even without television in it. So that even if committee reform isn't expected to go ahead for a year or two years or whatever, we do need to have some lead time to get the facilities ready for that event.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The other problem with utilizing the floor of the Assembly is the time that it takes to set up the floor for committee use — set up the committee tables for the witnesses to come forward and that all. While it doesn't seem like a large thing, it does take a significant time to set it up, put the *Hansard* material in place, and then take it down again to go back into session.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Although we do have one of the finest and fastest Sergeant-at-Arms in all of Canada here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. D'Autremont: — And he can pack that table all by himself.

Ms. Hamilton: — Well that begs the question of security costs for either of the ways that we're looking at it, the additional security for fourth floor. Is that included somewhere in the costing here?

Ms. Ronyk: — We haven't made any attempt to include that, nor have I had a chance to sit down and talk to Pat Shaw about it. But we don't, at first glance, expect any great cost at all because our security is basically conducted at the perimeter and the access to the building, and that will be controlled in the same way that it is now. We have security at the public entrances and we don't think that there would necessarily need to be any further security other than, I don't know, maybe a camera or something, but it won't be a big ticket item anyway.

The Chair: — With respect to security and commissioners, I assume we would just use the same commissioners who'll be relieved of their duties at the Chamber and would simply proceed to their respective committee doors.

Ms. Ronyk: — Yes. Potentially we might need some help with handling the public and, you know, keeping their access to committee rooms orderly. But we would be able to use the existing security staff . . . or Chamber attendant staff for that as you suggest.

The other thing that I should also indicate, it is in the document,

is that in option C there will be an annual . . . an increased annual cost to having another 300 square meters. I'm not sure if that's the committee room or the whole area . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's the whole area on the 4th floor.

Of course there'll have to be maintenance, cleaning, regular maintenance of the space by the building staff. And we would be charged . . . There would be an extra \$50,000 a year for those services that would be absorbed either in the current way that our occupation of building is funded or by the Assembly.

The Chair: — Well thank you very much. I really do appreciate the members' attention to these last two items which is sort of breaking a frontier here, in a sense, in terms of changes to the Legislative Assembly and the way the Legislative Assembly operates.

I notice that in one of the documents, Greg puts mention that if we go ahead with this change it'll probably be the biggest single change in the way the legislature operates since its inception here. So it requires some pondering and the thoughtful type of questions that we've heard here today and passing on the message as well to our colleagues, other colleagues in the legislature as we go through this.

So I thank the members for their participation in this.

I assume that what we'll do is come back on the decision items after we reconvene and leave something on the record on that.

Thank you, then, to our guests, Mr. Hansen and Mr. Wells. Also Greg Putz and our Clerk, Gwenn Ronyk, for the work that they have done on an ongoing basis, really over the last two or three years on this which has culminated to this set of plans. So thank you very much.

And what we have left before us here, is really to get two reports before we go in camera. And we could probably get those reports done before we break for supper. If you want to stand up and stretch, that's fine too. And think I see members have been availing themselves of that, so please feel free to do the same as we go on ahead with this.

But what I would do now is ask us to go to item 10(b) sub (i), B budget: project training request, which is page 14, project training.

Ms. Kaminski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, page 14 has the B budget item total additional expense of \$6,000 and you do have a decision item to that effect. And I'm just going to highlight a few matters from that particular decision item.

We are requesting, then, additional \$6,000 as a request. In terms of the background, the Government of Saskatchewan has recently implemented the accountability framework to be used by all government departments. And one component of that accountability framework is strategic planning. The Legislative Assembly plans to utilize the same framework.

Over the course of the past year, the Legislative Assembly has been researching and developing the first steps required in initiating a strategic plan for this organization. And we have already determined, in our plans thus far, that many of the

proposed projects for the strategic plan will be multi-branch related. And the success ultimately then, of the Assembly's strategic plan, will hinge on the successful implementation of each individual project within the strategic plan.

We already have experienced more inter-branch dependence in order to carry out new initiatives. Previously branches could carry out most new initiatives very independently, but this isn't the case any longer. The way we do business has changed. In addition, our work has become increasingly more complex and convoluted, particularly since computerization.

I think a couple of examples that were raised with the board today give us a good example of that case. We have had the video streaming project that has required the co-operation and joint work of both the information systems branch and the broadcasting branch. We've also recently implemented the digital audio project, which has involved three branches — *Hansard*, information systems, and broadcasting — in addition to the third-party supplier to carry out that project.

So to ensure that everyone is planning and managing all aspects of the project in the same way — in other words, everyone's operating from the very same playbook — and in order to ensure that information and communication is well managed throughout all steps of the project, appropriate training is required for our managers.

Currently the Legislative Assembly doesn't have a corporate training and development budget. Each separate branch within the Assembly budgets separately for the few training dollars that they require. Approximately less than \$10,000 per year is spent across the entire organization on general training and computer courses for the entire staff of our organization.

Because we don't have a corporate training and development budget to absorb the global costs of this initiative, that's why we have come forward to the board with this B budget item request of approximately \$6,000 to train our branch managers in project training. And therefore today we recommend that the board approve this particular B budget item in an approximate value of \$6,000.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you. You said that the various departments within this budget had training allocations of less than \$10,000. Now that you'll have an allocation of \$6,000 globally, what is happening then with the less than \$10,000 that was in each group's training program?

Ms. Kaminski: — It would still remain there. Part of it is computer training and other miscellaneous course registrations and conference registration fees across the organization. So there would be approximately \$16,000 for this year only. It's a special time request to handle the entire training costs for the organization. So the \$10,000 that's already there in addition to the 6,000 that we're requesting as a one-time this year.

Mr. D'Autremont: — So this training program then would not be ongoing in a global sense.

Ms. Kaminski: — No, absolutely not. It's just going to give us the initial skill set that we need to carry forward. So it's a one-time training initiative for this particular topic.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is to clarify then — this is to train current managers?

Ms. Kaminski: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — To do what? To manage?

Ms. Kaminski: — It's project training. So you can understand when you're involving many branches in trying to carry out a new initiative, it's to see the various steps and actions that you have to put into place, and your contingency plans, so that everybody can follow the appropriate plan from beginning to end. It's trying to ensure that you're building in a success throughout the planning.

And the Legislative Assembly, this is new for the Assembly because we've been very much used to managing our day-to-day activities, our day-to-day administration, which is very different than embarking on new initiatives such as committee reform and what it's going to require to implement changes required to new ways of conducting business.

And, as I said, as a result of having different branches having to become involved in carrying out a plan, it, as we have seen in the past, is difficult if we're not all coming to the plan with the same playbook and the same understanding of how we're going to get from A to Z in a sequence and we all agree on the process that we're going to follow.

So it's going . . . is going to assist us with process management — how do we process something to ensure that at the end of the day we have ultimate success for all the players involved.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Then isn't this part and parcel of the strategic planning, that management gets together and sits down and works together instead of having to train these people. I mean the people that are in management positions should have the skills at that level to be able to sit down around the table and plan . . . put together a strategic plan to achieve a goal, okay, for the entire operation.

Ms. Kaminski: — Agreed. That's what we're trying to achieve. I think what has to be understood is because the Legislative Assembly has not had a global training and development budget, we have done very little training with our managers and with our employees as a whole.

In fact, when I talk about the \$10,000 across the entire organization, we don't have a plan in place at this point where we have done any management development with our existing managers. They have come to their jobs with the education that they have prior to their appointments and they have worked through their positions, basically, with very little additional outside training. They've gone to conferences in other jurisdictions, but we have not carried out any detailed training and development plans for any of our employees within our organization.

And that's why I guess we're saying this is a one-time cost, and because we don't have an existing global budget that we have built where we would have built in more formalized training and development plans that most government departments and corporations and organizations have, we've never had a formal

training and development plan.

Hon. Mr. Osika: — Okay. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Linda, how do you contemplate this training being provided? Is this a essentially a consultant fee?

Ms. Kaminski: — It would be a per person, a per participant of approximately \$400, and indeed, it would be a consultant who specializes in project management. It's a local facilitator.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. What is the access of the Legislative Assembly to the public service professional training?

Ms. Kaminski: — Presently the Public Service Commission does not have a general training programs for government employees. Years ago they used to provide training programs. Right now, training is left entirely up to each individual government department. And within larger departments — for example, Department of Justice — they will have their own training and development coordinators that will deliver some of the general ongoing courses that are required. They will also obviously have very formalized training and development plans for each of their employees.

So we can't access a program that's already in place. Certainly we look to . . . even SPMC has developed quite an extensive training and development program that they certainly allow government employees, others like ourselves, to attend.

So we certainly have looked to what's already available. And certainly with what we are planning here, we are not looking to develop an internal . . . I guess I'll rephrase that. What we're trying to do is train our managers, who in turn then can ensure that they are managing their programs and use those new skills themselves as well as disseminate the information, the skills to those underneath them.

And at this point we're certainly not anticipating a project management training, you know, for anybody other than those managers who would be involved in implementing and carrying through projects.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I think what I hear you saying is that you, that what you're wanting to do is to establish a culture of approach to strategic management, and that what you're proposing is that this seminar — is it a seminar? Is that . . . yes — for 16 managers would achieve that as a single project.

What would be the cost of someone, presumably yourself, as a human resources . . . resource person to the Legislative Assembly acquiring the knowledge and approach and conducting your own internal workshop for managers?

Ms. Kaminski: — For this particular topic? I would anticipate that we would look at training two or three individuals to deliver it and therefore I would anticipate a requirement approximately \$2,000 for a few of us to obtain some training which we then could potentially deliver. We haven't at this point . . . I'm not a training and development expert myself. Certainly at this point that isn't something that the Assembly has done in the past — not to say it can't do it in the future.

But certainly the bottom line is that we need to get some key people trained in this methodology so that we can go forward and utilize this process to ensure that we do have success with project delivery and ultimately, as I said, with new initiatives within a strategic plan.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair: — Thank you. There being no further questions, thank you then very much, Ms. Kaminski, for outlining the details with respect to the decision item 10(b)i, a project training request.

And now what we'll do is proceed on to item 10(b)ii, the B budget with respect to the reference librarian position. And welcome back to the table again, Marian and Pat. Ms. Powell.

Ms. Powell: — Thank you very much. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on this board item.

I'd like to say off the top that we realize that we're in a difficult fiscal situation. But equally that's exactly the time that cost-effective and timely information is most critical to legislators and decision makers.

Information today is a strategic resource. Our request is to address a significant need in staffing for those people who deliver the value to the individual member. You have before you a B budget item asking to fund — partially fund — a full-time position. This is not the first time returning members of the board will have basically seen this request. Last year, the library brought forward a request for a non-permanent full-time position. At that time, the board asked the library to look at and redeploy existing staff resources and we've done both of those things.

The basis for our planning and our consideration and the actions we've taken is always the primary importance of the information service to the individual MLA. Just for a bit of background, library services to individual members are delivered in two ways.

One, the weekly profiled current awareness services distributed to many, in fact, most members, providing alerts of Saskatchewan newspaper stories, current magazine articles, and new publications of importance to their particular interest. By profiled, I mean we endeavour to do some legwork for you so that you don't get 10 inches of information when what you really want is one inch.

The second way is on demand library research at the point of need, at the reference desk. So when members or their staff are preparing for question period, legislative committees, etc., they come to the reference desk for research. This also includes services to member's constituency office and constituents.

We looked at the redeployment and we considered several options which you have before you and I won't repeat what's on the paper. It's a very dense board item and I do apologize for that, but it is a complex issue. The redeployment options we considered were three.

First, try and cover some of the reference desk hours with

non-professional staff. Secondly, ask non-reference librarians on staff — of which there are very few, almost all our librarians perform reference duty — to commit more time to the reference service. And secondly, to reduce the reference service hours per week, i.e., no noon hour coverage while the duty librarian has lunch and no coffee coverage while the duty librarian has a break.

We've implemented the last two. The decision was made that the issues that we receive and the work that we have to do is simply too complex for people without professional training and solid reference experience.

You have a table before you that shows the basic situation in terms of our opening hours per week. The standard of our service has been twofold. First of all, there is a reference librarian on the desk every hour that the library is open. Secondly, that we have available a backup librarian or, during session, a second librarian to deal with simultaneous urgent requests from different caucuses or individual members. Right now, neither of those things are possible.

I'm certain I'll have some questions about the chart. But basically, because we work those unsocial hours, i.e., lunch and coffee breaks, when other people take a break — public can come in, members can come in. We require actually more than our opening hours which, according to the chart, are 40 hours per week; when the House is not in session, we're open from nine to five. Many of our clients come in all those hours.

To cover the hours, we need a librarian available all that time but, of course, as we know, people have holidays. Our two librarians that actually staff the desk most of their time have EDO's (earned day off), so every second Friday they're off, and they also have vacations, and occasionally they're ill. So in order to cover those hours, we need a larger commitment than you would think. During intersessional periods, it's 61.5 hours per week in order to cover the 40 hours we're open, taking into consideration that time.

If you look at the chart in the second box, during the intersessional period, we only have 28 hours available. So we've got a great big shortfall here. We've tried to address that by making these reductions since our last board appearance.

You might want to know what the two reference librarians are doing when they're not on the reference desk. They're doing member services work, by and large. You've heard a lot about us being a small organization in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly, and we are. And one of the ways the library has been able to provide quite good quality, timely services with a very small staff is to share the work.

Much of the member services work, although led by the member services librarian — she can't be in two or three places at once and can only do one thing at a time — is actually done by the reference librarians when they're off the desk.

So it isn't really a case of saying these individuals could work all their work hours on the reference desk. They could, but it would mean there would be very few members current awareness services that could be delivered.

I feel a bit like Solomon and the baby — which half of the baby does the mother want to give away . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . But together, hopefully. Or neither.

A Member: — Are you going to answer the question?

Ms. Powell: — I'm going to answer the question, I'm not going to give it away.

Now you may have another question here. If we've had the shortfall, how have we managed in the meantime? And the way we've managed is that we've actually had an additional librarian which we funded out of a combination of money released by permanent staff on variable work hours, who work in other areas of the library, and by money released over the course of a fiscal year while we're recruiting for new positions and while we carry vacancies.

Because we filled all our vacancies now, we only have the variable hours money left. And we're proposing that we spend that money on this position, which is why, at the bottom, you'll find we're only asking for partial funding but asking for a full position.

Our redeployment experience has been very interesting to us and we've learned quite a lot, actually, but it's not been positive for our service.

First of all, we've discovered that members are receiving out-of-date information — and this from our current awareness service, which is our most heavily subscribed service in the library. There simply isn't enough time to do the legwork to get it done. Part of this is because of the reference load, because of so much commitment of the reference staff to the member services work.

As well, because we're not covering the lunches and the coffee breaks, members, ministers' staff have to stand and wait for someone to come back to deal with an urgent request. That's not up to our standard of service either.

And we've just recently made the allocation of our new director of support services that she will be spending some of her professional time on the reference desk, which means that original cataloguing of new works will not happen. It's hard enough to find that time now; backlogs are building.

And most importantly, although last in the list, is the reference staff burnout. It's a tough job. I have to say it's gotten harder. We're heard from several people the impact of technology and the electronic resources. Well it's in spades at the reference desk.

We have to have an individual at that desk who's a specialist perhaps in one or two areas, has to deal with questions on everything coming across the desk — has to cope with print resources; has to know how to access electronic ones; and has to be a real whiz at finding hidden information in the Web.

And then what's often the hardest is getting it out of the Web and getting it on paper for the client, because often it's a very difficult task to print out tables and charts and graphs so that the individuals can have it in paper, which we know members

always want.

Our particular library has the longest reference shifts already of comparable legislatures in Canada. So we have to be very careful that we don't cause our staff unnecessary burnout.

In addition to all of this . . . We've made these changes, we've saved a few hours by not covering these things. Various things have happened since the last time we had a new position in 1997.

We've had additional high-end clients added to our load, the Chief Electoral Officer, the new, recently arrived procedural Clerk, who uses us very heavily. We've also had increased use by existing officers. Certain of the independent officers have greatly increased their use of our services, so we've had a big increase there.

We have the demand documented on your item of this 62.5 per cent increase in the proportion of research questions that comes to the desk. That's a big increase. These questions can take anything from two to sixteen hours to handle and you're looking at a desk with one person on it for not quite eight hours a day. Immediately you get a member in with a question that takes eight hours, the next member in the door has to wait till tomorrow.

We've also experienced a huge increase — and actually I have to apologize; there's a typing error on your item — huge increase in the number of hours to produce the conference background kits. And that's actually 46 per cent and not 26 per cent. And the typing error is mine and I do apologize. It's a big, big increase. We're supporting more conferences for more members with more information.

And as well the e-services we're hearing all about, well it's hitting the library, too. The electronic resources librarian — when she was hired, the expectation was her work would be 50 per cent on the reference desk and 50 per cent on e-services. And she's hardly able to spend 10 per cent because of the time on the desk. We have a big role to play in electronic library services but our staff member can't get off the desk.

Now finally the implications of not funding this position. Basically I think information won't be there when you need it. We've looked at a plan that we could adopt hours used in some other agencies of having the reference desk staffed from 10 to 4 with no lunch coverage. And that would give us enough time to recoup some of these important elements for people to actually prepare the work that you need.

Another important loss is innovation. There's no time to do exactly the kind of planning Linda is talking about, to co-operate on inter-branch projects, to plan so that we can work smarter for the members and be even more cost-effective. We have some very interesting potential services that we can offer — things that will reduce costs — but it takes time and it takes those same people away from the reference desk.

And lastly again, but not least, the library has come to you in the past because we have significant problems filling a less than full-time reference librarian position. They're just not out there. Librarians are very, very short . . . in short supply in

Saskatchewan. Every competition at virtually every library in the province for a librarian at any level has had to be conducted two and three times before they actually were able to make an appointment. People will not come for a half-time job or a temporary job.

And just to close my remarks I'd just like to say these people are the ones that give you the delivery of the value. And members will fail to receive the full benefit of the very substantial investment in people and collections that they need for their work. Late information is no information at all.

So I'm hoping that you will consider our request. I point out again that we're asking for funding for only \$22,000 of a full-time librarian's \$41,000 salary. We have these variable hours available to us for the next fiscal year. It's my expectation that that will continue on the part of those staff for more than the next fiscal year. The need is now, the need is full-time, and we're hoping that we'll be able to build our case sufficiently that you will receive it.

And I'm happy to answer any questions, I realize it's a complex document.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Marian, thank you for the detailed explanation. It would appear that the hon. members are getting curiouser and curiouser and that this is a source of the pressure.

I first of all want to commend the library and the good work that it does, and quite correctly, I think you do point out that the effectiveness of the library over the years has been at a high standard.

Now let me ask in terms of the proposal that you make here. As I look at your reference to it not being possible to meet the need by using your currently available \$19,000 for a less than full-time position, can you answer for me the practicality of making the use of the need for funds and also enthusiasm and knowledge of a library sciences student, which may not necessarily be directly applicable here — I don't know about that, it may or may not — but if you'll comment on this?

But whether that can provide a source of something less than full-time that might enable someone else who's permanent to become free, I don't know that it's necessarily required that this be a single body that you are requesting additional funds to provide; but with your currently available funds, is it possible to make use of something other than a full-time new person?

Ms. Powell: — Yes, it probably would be except for a couple of things. A library school student would not be available during the academic year and most of, most of the programs go later than Regina. So for example, the library school courses would go well into May, many of them.

You can't just bring somebody into this job and put them on the desk. We anticipate with an experienced librarian it takes up to six months for the experience to pay off. We have very complex collections. They're not quite as disordered as they used to be, but it's still a real learning curve for people to come and learn this work.

A library school student could come and assist in a way, but I don't think it's the most effective way to spend the dollars.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — If it's not the most effective way, could it though, in fact, provide some relief?

Ms. Powell: — I don't think so because we would have to have that person on the desk with an existing reference librarian. You simply couldn't turn a student loose at the reference desk and put that pressure . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — No.

Ms. Powell: — . . . on them. I'm sure many of them would delight in the experience, but I think it would be very hard and it wouldn't have the effect of releasing the reference . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. But I'm not thinking necessary that that student being on the reference desk, but freeing someone else to be on the reference desk. Is that a possibility?

Ms. Powell: — It might be a possibility for some actions. I think the difficulty is the timing and, again, the training. There is a big training issue even if they're not directly on the desk.

One of the things that does happen under desirable circumstances is that if there's a very difficult question with a really high time deadline on it, we pull together the team and everybody works on it as much as they can . . . drop what they're doing. But again, you're really relying on the experience and the knowledge.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you very much. I'm wondering if you have tracked when your requests come in to the reference desk as per time of day.

What I'm wondering in relationship to is whether or not the reference librarians, the library needs to be open all evening when we're sitting in the evenings. And I'm just wondering if, you know, you get many requests at 10 o'clock at night.

Ms. Powell: — Yes. Actually the first answer to your first question is yes, we do track it. We have a database that we're running with it and it gives us some very interesting information and it's usually the basis for any change. For example, we did make a change in our opening hours when the House is not in session because the bulk of our questions didn't come in till after 9. And so at this time of the year, we open at 9.

We also do track the evening questions and there are not very many but they do come from *Hansard*, for example, because of course they're working on the verbatim; and as well, members do come in and use the collection and they send pages with reference questions while they're in the House.

But no, the evening sessions are not our heaviest load. And I have not actually taken that in consideration in this request, because it's handled as overtime for existing staff.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes. I was just looking at it that if there

is a need for better utilization of the times of the librarians, perhaps one avenue would be to diminish the time in the evenings when we're sitting, if the members aren't using it. And I don't know whether they are or not in that sense, so that was up to, you know, your statistics to be able to supply that.

The other area that I see an area that may have some possible reductions would be in the actual services to members attending parliamentary conferences. I know in talking to a number of members that some utilize the information they receive, others are perhaps less diligent in doing so. And I'm not sure that maybe the volume of information that is provided to members would be necessary. And maybe it's up to the individual member to go to the library and make a reference, a request, for information related to the conference rather than just in general, providing it to members. That might be a more efficient use of that service.

Ms. Powell: — That's a very good point, and in fact we have been looking at that. We know that some delegates to conferences really value the information that we provide to them. We would naturally like to be able to make it smaller and shorter, but that takes even more time. Less is more in terms of the time needed to prepare it. We have in fact looked at the possibility and what the impact would be if we went to an on-request basis for a conference.

But keeping that in mind, if one person wants it, it's the same amount of work except for the photocopying and the packaging. And to the degree that it is . . . we are receiving very useful comments from many of the delegates — not all, I must say, but from many. And most of them say, we really like it but we would like it shorter. And so we know we really need more time and not less for that. But yes, we are considering it.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Because one of the things that might happen in that particular case is an individual attending a conference may be interested in two of the subjects at the conference and want information, but not be interested, say, in the other two. And therefore, it would cut down the workload by 50 per cent if nobody else came and asked, you know. So I think it would be something to consider.

Ms. Powell: — It certainly is, and we entirely agree.

Mr. D'Autremont: — The service to members where they request an ongoing information on what's in the papers, etc., etc., the clippings, where are you at on that service? I know that our research staff has raised this issue that the service is not up to date, let's say.

Ms. Powell: — It's a very thorny problem, I have to say. And it's one of those working smarter things that we need the time to pull it together. We are considering a number of options right now to provide it via an electronic source rather than the manual paper. But again it takes planning and we're going to roll out a project with a number of members from all caucuses to see if it will be acceptable to them.

Many of you will have received electronic newspaper clippings. Not everyone is prepared to deal with those even in paper because there's no graphics and that's quite important to members. Members have told us they want to know what it

looked like in the paper.

Secondly, a lot of members are not ready to receive it electronically. We would be in a position to provide quite a lot of these services electronically and save a lot of manual paper time but I think we have to allow the time for the members to have a chance to try it and get a number of them accepting of it.

And again, as long as some want it we still have to do the other work. So we're certainly targeting that area and we know that the paper service is very much behind and that's where the electronic will speed it up.

If we can devote our services to the electronic, we can even look at doing it every day. I mean, it would be quite possible. Instead of something that's two weeks old, once a week. It's very much our focus.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes. I recognize that not all members are electronically aware. We still suffer from a few electronic troglodytes but they are getting up to speed slowly and that is an improvement. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. D'Autremont. Any further questions?

Ms. Hamilton: — Yes. In the analysis that you use there's an increase of about 62.5 per cent of the proportion of questions coming to the reference desk which are getting more complex in nature and require lengthy research. And I'm wondering at the number of FTEs you're using for that. And the increase of 46 per cent of the hours needed to produce kits of background documents. I guess, following what Mr. D'Autremont was saying, that is there a possibility of saving any FTEs in either of those categories? But first could you give me the number of FTEs involved in both of those?

Ms. Powell: — Well it's the same people that are doing it. We have two FTEs, the two operational librarians, supplemented by the three managers that are listed, each with a shift — the manager of reference services, the director of support services, and the members services librarian who's also on the desk for one shift. She finds that valuable because it gives her the other perspective on what members are asking for to help her develop services for them.

So really we've got about 50 per cent of two FTEs, so one FTE of the two operational librarians. And very tiny amounts on the other two.

Ms. Hamilton: — So there wouldn't really be any freeing up of a lot of FTEs if you were saying not to do the background kits, for example, if you just didn't do those. You're still not saving enough up to really do any substantial support on reference desk.

Ms. Powell: — No, no. No, we're using right now, we're using about 500 hours a year for the kits. But it's, it's spread over periods . . . We're working on our first one of the season now and it will go until November. So it's spread over many months dependent on the schedule of conferences.

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much then. I see no further questions; then with that item we're ready to proceed into the sort of decision-making mode of these items. Thank you very much, Ms. Powell, and Ms. Kolesar, for your attendance to this.

Members, I'm in your hands here now as to how we proceed at this stage. We have a little snack available and I would suggest . . . I propose we do something like this: that we take about a half an hour and invite the people who are here, the managers that are here to join us for a snack and then reconvene in camera, on an in camera basis, say, about 10 to 6.

And I don't think we'll need everybody available on call. But we should probably have the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk, people from administration and finance on call. And I think the rest we don't need to hang on to, give them a little freedom. Does that sound workable to the members of the committee?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I wonder if . . . Mr. Osika had to leave to a commitment and he expects to be back at 6:30. I think he would like to be here for the in camera discussion.

Mr. D'Autremont: — If we were to start the in camera discussions but not make any decisions, would that be acceptable?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes, I think if we . . . Well I think if we . . .

The Chair: — We could rearrange the order which would . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. If we can maybe start the in camera discussion . . . I know I've got a couple of phone calls I've got to go make as well. Maybe about 10 or quarter after 6?

The Chair: — Quarter after 6? Fair enough, just extend it . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And we'll start . . .

The Chair: — We're going to give ourselves almost an entire hour for a snack. And I did say snack; this is not a supper. I don't want you to get the impression that we're really . . .

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Well we're noticing, Mr. Speaker, that you're into the frugal mode here.

The Chair: — Well I've been tightening my belt too much from the inside. It's time to tighten up the outside.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — You made it very clear, the point that there is no free lunch.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Can I quote that?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — You got it.

The Chair: — Well that being the case then, let us recess to reconvene in camera at approximately an hour from now, as soon . . .

A Member: — Let's say 6:15.

The Chair: — Say 6:15. And then we will need *Hansard* on

call. Do you anticipate we'll come back into session . . . or out of camera today? Or are we going into tomorrow?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Oh I think we'll be able to . . . I suspect we'll probably be in camera less than an hour.

The Chair: — So we want to finish things off tonight?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — And we'll finish the agenda.

The Chair: — The objective will be to finish tonight.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — I suspect it's realistic to possibly be done by 8 o'clock or so tonight.

The Chair: — Okay. Then let's anticipate that *Hansard* will be called back at approximately 7 — 7 to 7:15 — some place in there.

Thank you very much then, members. We stand recessed.

The board recessed for a period of time.

The board continued in camera.

The Chair: — Would the committee come back to order then, please. We have several decision items we want to go to.

I'll bring to members' attention the decision item number . . . from item 4 with respect to the Chief Electoral Officer. The request from the Chief Electoral office was for a . . . to transmit to the Minister of Finance a request for \$895,000. The previous year's total expenditure transmitted to the Finance Chair was 710,000 . . . 709 . . . 720 . . . \$709,729.

What is . . . I recognize Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chairman, do you have the proper wording in here?

The Chair: — On the motion?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes.

The Chair: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chairman, as you pointed out, the estimates for the current fiscal year were \$710,000. The Chief Electoral Officer referenced us to 100,000 related to having to deal with the constituency boundary renewal, and \$500 related to managing the political contributions tax credit that's passed by the Legislative Assembly.

And therefore I will move that the . . . achieving the objective, that it would be increased from last year, last year's estimate by \$100,500 rounded up to 101,000. And therefore I move:

That the 2002-2003 estimates for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer in the amount of \$811,000 statutory be transmitted to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The Chair: — Is there a seconder for the motion? Mr. D'Autremont. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed?

The motion is carried.

Item 5, the decision item with respect to the budget as presented first of all by the Provincial Ombudsperson, Ombudsman.

The request from page 5 of the Ombudsman's budget proposal is 1.605 million.

Ms. Hamilton: — I would move:

That the 2002-2003 estimates of the Provincial Ombudsman be approved in the amount of \$1.533 million, which is the amount indicated for last year, and that such estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The Chair: — Is there a seconder for the motion? Mr. Bjornerud. Those in favour of the motion? Those opposed? Motion is carried.

The special warrant for the Provincial Ombudsman has been . . . oh pardon me, has been done, dealt with. So we go to the Children's Advocate.

Ms. Hamilton: — I would move:

That the 2002-2003 estimates of the Children's Advocate be approved in the amount of \$1.118 million and that such estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The Chair: — Is there a seconder for that motion? Mr. D'Autremont. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? The motion is carried.

And the special warrant has been done for the Children's Advocate as well. Moves us to item 6, decision item with respect to the budget for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and the request is tab . . . Sorry, just got to get this straight here, item 6. I just want to read the request into the record. The request in the record is for \$122,000.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chair, I move:

That the 2002-03 estimates of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be approved as submitted in the amount of \$122,000 and that such estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The Chair: — Is there a seconder? Mr. Bjornerud. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Item 7, a decision item with respect to the approval of the budget for the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, tab 7. The request is for \$105,000.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chair, I will move:

That the 2002-03 estimates of the Information and Privacy Commissioner be approved as submitted in the amount of \$105,000 and that such estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The Chair: — Is there a seconder for the motion? Mr. Bjornerud. Those in favour of the motion? Those opposed? Motion is carried.

Now we move to item 10, 10(b)i, B budget item. The recommendation of the Chair is that the Board of Internal Economy approve the B budget item to fund project training costs for the Legislative Assembly managers in the amount of \$6,000. The recommended motion would be:

That the Board of Internal Economy approve the B budget item to fund project training costs for the Legislative Assembly managers in the amount of \$6,000.

Is there a mover for the motion? There being no mover, the motion is denied. The request is denied.

Decision item 10(b) ii, a B budget item for a reference librarian position. The recommendation received from the librarian is that effective April 1, 2002, that a full-time permanent position of reference and research librarian be created, and an additional funding for the year 2002-2003 be approved at \$22,000. And the suggested motion is:

That effective April 1, 2002 a full-time permanent position of reference and research librarian be created, and that additional funding for the year 2002-2003 be approved at \$22,000, and that the Speaker, in consultation with the board, be responsible for approving the classification level of the position following an appropriate classification review process.

Is there a mover for the motion? There being no mover, the request is denied.

Next would be item 10(b) iii, the response on the part of the board to the cost . . . to the report on the cost impact of the House and committee reforms proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures. And you may want to deal at the same time with the item (b) iv, the new committee, your proposal.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chairman, perhaps I can move a motion that deals with both of these items together. It would be our view that the Rules Committee has done good work and that it should ought not to be interpreted that the Board of Internal Economy opposes or objects to their recommendations. However, given the fiscal environment and the restraint that we feel is necessary to exercise at this point in time, I would like to move a motion which would achieve the objective that we would receive the report, we would file it for future consideration, and that we would also then advise the Rules Committee of that and also provide to them the financial analysis that was given in these two recommendations.

So therefore I would move:

That (the response to the report on the . . . excuse me) the report on the cost impact on House and committee reforms proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures and the new committee room proposal be received and filed for future consideration and also forwarded to the Rules Committee.

The Chair: — I have a motion and I'm looking for a seconder, first of all. Mr. Bjornerud. And we would open that to discussion while we're just getting the motion written up in the proper form on the paper. Is there any other discussion on this? Moved by Mr. Hagel and seconded by Mr. Bjornerud:

That the reports on the cost impact of House and committee reforms proposed by the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures and the new committee room proposal be received and filed for future consideration and forwarded to the Rules Committee.

Are the members ready for the question? Those in favour please raise your hands. Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Item 10(c). A decision item. Motion to approve budgetary and statutory expenditure item . . . estimate with respect to the Legislative Assembly Office. Their request is for a budgetary estimate of \$6.151 million and a statutory estimate of \$11.744 million for a total of \$17.571 million. Pardon me, I misstated that. The total is not \$17.571 million; the total is \$17.895 million, for the record. I just read it from the wrong column here.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Okay. Mr. Chairman, I will move:

That the 2002-03 estimates of the Legislative Assembly be approved as follows: budgetary, \$5.977 million and statutory, \$11.744 million for a total of \$17.721 million; and that such estimates be forwarded to the Minister of Finance by the Chair.

The Chair: — Motion by Mr. Hagel. Is there seconder for the motion? Mr. D'Autremont. Any comments? Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Next is item 10 (d), a decision item to . . . a motion to approve the revenue estimates, the recommendation that we estimate the revenues to be at \$8,000.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chair. I move that the revenue estimates in the amount of \$8,000 be approved for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

The Chair: — A motion for the amount \$8,000 to be approved for the revenue estimate be approved for 2002-2003 fiscal year.

Is there a seconder to the motion? Mr. Bjornerud. All those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Decision item 11, technical support for constituency offices. Refer to item 11. Recommendation for item 11 is that the directive # 24, constituency offices and furniture provision be amended to permit the payment expenses for technical computer support under the directive and the amendment. The motion would read as follows:

That directive #24 constituency office and furniture provisions be amended to permit the payment of expenses for technical computer support under the directive;

and:

That directive #24 constituency office and furniture provision be amended as attached.

and the attachment is in the enclosure under the tab 11.

Just one question before I ask for a mover on this motion. It's the understanding of the committee, or it would be my interpretation that by passing this directive it does not in any way change the option of a member to continue to . . . members to continue to use directive 4.1 to pay for technical computer support.

A Member: — That's correct.

The Chair: — That would be correct. Is there a mover for the motion? Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chairman, I move that, and clearly under the full understanding that the option to use both directives is available.

The Chair: — Is there a seconder? Ms. Hamilton. Members ready for the question? Those in favour? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Item 12. This is an information item which I would like to table at this time. It's a report on the secondary accommodation expenses, a report received from KPMG.

Well it would perhaps be better to receive it.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Chair, I will move to receive and file the secondary accommodation expenses report from KPMG.

The Chair: — We have a motion to receive and file the secondary accommodation expenses report from KPMG by Mr. Hagel. Is there a seconder for the motion? Mr. D'Autremont. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Moves us to item 13, a decision item with respect to directive 23, caucus accountability and disclosure. We could deal with item 14 at the same time. This is under tab 13. Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Did you want to do the amendment to directive 7.2 before dealing with this item?

The Chair: — Yes. I think perhaps we would deal with that first.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes.

The Chair: — The recommendation from the Chair is that directive 7.2 be amended by deleting the words, in quote "regarding legislative business" in the seventh line of section 1.

Mr. Hagel has moved.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — So moved.

The Chair: — And a seconder? Mr. Bjornerud. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

The recommendation with respect to decision item 13 is that in order to address the concerns raised in the Provincial Auditor's memorandum of audit observations for the year ended March 31, 2001, the amendments to directive 23, caucus accountability and disclosure, as attached, be approved.

Do we have a motion here?

Therefore the motion would read:

That, in order to address the concerns raised in the Provincial Auditor's memorandum of audit observations for the year ended March 31, 2001, the amendments to directive #23, caucus accountability and disclosure, as attached, be approved.

And the attachments are those referred to under tab 13.

I'll just reread the motion, suggested:

That in order to address the concerns raised in the Provincial Auditor's memorandum of audit observations for the year ended March 31, 2001, the amendments to directive #23, caucus accountability and disclosure, as attached, be approved, and that the amendments be first applied to the audit for the fiscal year commencing April 1, 2002.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Could you read that last part again?

The Chair: — “And that the amendments be first applied to the audit for the fiscal year commencing April 1, 2002” . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . first applied to the audit for the fiscal year ending 2003.

One more time, the last part would read:

And the amendments be first applied to the audit for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003.

Clear? Now, do I have a mover? Mr. Hagel. And a seconder, Mr. D'Autremont. Those in favour of the motion?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, just speaking to the motion, can I also request that you advise the caucus Chairs in writing of this directive and that when you do that, that you make it clear in your letter that a partisan activity is a normal and healthy part of the . . . our traditions in the practice of parliamentary democracy. And that in no way shall this directive imply that expenditures related to partisan activity are not permissible.

I say that, Mr. Chair, because I think it is clear . . . it is important that when . . . as the Provincial Auditor has suggested, that the caucus auditors express their statement, that they be given clear guidelines, and recognizing that often times it may be possible that caucus auditors are not familiar with the traditions and the practice of parliamentary democracy, and that it must be clearly understood that in the carrying out of their caucus responsibilities in our system of parliamentary democracy, partisan activity is not only permitted, it is also welcomed and encouraged. And it is in our tradition part of what supports the electors ultimately being able to make clear

choices.

And therefore when caucuses engage in partisan activity, then that is not only normal but is a healthy part of our system, and that expenditures related to partisan activity should ought not to ever be interpreted as disallowed by this directive.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Yes, I would like to agree with Mr. Hagel on this issue. Clearly our form of democracy allows for government and opposition; contemplates the idea that there will be healthy debate on issues. And the idea of the official opposition is to hold the government accountable. That means that there are disagreements at times and clearly the caucus funding needs to allow for that and to encourage that to take place.

Therefore there needs to be a recognition that political action on behalf of both government and opposition and third party caucuses are indeed clearly a part of our legislative process, and that it's welcomed, encouraged, and indeed funded.

The Chair: — Thank you.

Ms. Ronyk: — May I ask for some clarification? By partisan, do you see any distinction between partisan and party?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — The answer is yes, clearly we do. And the directive — refer me to the right . . . 7.2. That item 7.2 of directive #7.2 . . . Sorry, item 7 of directive 7.2 — yes — outlines the kinds of activities that are strictly forbidden through the expenditure of caucus funds and in no way does this amendment of this directive make any alteration of the intent of item no. 7, which just for the . . . for clarity I would read into the record:

That caucus funding should not be used for items, services, or activities that are for any of the following or similar purposes:

- (1) announcement of or attendance at party or party constituency association meetings and events;
- (2) solicitation for party membership;
- (3) solicitation of contributions, monetary or otherwise, for a political party;
- (4) request for re-election support including election campaign material;
- (5) the promotion and/or conduct of election nominations or party leadership campaigns; or
- (6) the conduct or commissioning of surveys about voting intentions.

And we stand firm in our support of that item in the directive.

The Chair: — Are the members ready for the question? Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Members, taking from the previous discussion, I believe that we do have directions then about a response to the Provincial

Auditor indicated. And so I think the letter that you have in your packet there may need to be looked at in greater detail and I would not ask you to pass it out at this time. I can simply . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, you did rewrite it?

Ms. Ronyk: — If you want to look at.

The Chair: — Then perhaps we can just take a look at it.

Ms. Ronyk: — The board has not addressed the third paragraph there about the accountability framework. So you may, you know, not want that in there at this point.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes. Perhaps, Gwenn, you can just make comment about the accountability framework. I suspect that we're supportive, but we just haven't had any report regarding that.

I would also want the letter to make clear that the amendments to the directive, and I think it's worth saying in this letter, that the amendments to the directive will be first applied to the 2002-03 fiscal year of the caucuses.

And I would also want it in this letter, I think, to state that as you will, take the wording from your letters to the — your letter to the caucus Chair — that a part . . . the board also acknowledges that partisan political activity is not only acceptable, it is a healthy expression of our practice of parliamentary democracy. And I believe that should also be a part of the official documentation in the response to the Provincial Auditor or the Acting Provincial Auditor.

The Chair: — Got agreement on that? All right, then we will redraft the letter and I will . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . would you like to comment on this paragraph?

Ms. Ronyk: — As you are aware, of course, the government — executive government — has been working in the last couple of years in developing an accountability framework that includes planning, performance review, and reporting process in order to achieve results that can be measured and so that there can be a little more accountability, and the ability for the public to assess what the government intended to do and then what it did indeed accomplish.

The auditor has been saying the same thing in his audit reports, repeatedly, that the Legislative Assembly ought to be reporting on an annual basis and ought to have plans that are reported to the board, and performance indicators that the board can assess whether the performance is adequate.

And we have been working within the legislative administration on this for — into our second year. And the progress is slow because we do it when we get some time. But we have an initial cut at a broad plan and we're planning to do a little more work on that.

And we would like to propose that we come back to the board for a short meeting during the session, some morning when we can get an hour of your time, and make a presentation to you on the idea of planning and reporting and to get your feedback on our broad corporate vision, goals, and objectives that where we're at at this time.

We think we . . . we agree that there's some difficulties, as there is in government, I guess, in trying to adopt the way we worked to this, when so much is unknown and not controllable. But we also agree with the auditor that there's certainly some value to planning and to reporting on your performance. And we're prepared to work with the board to achieve that.

The Chair: — On the basis of that report are you willing to live with paragraph 3, I guess, okay, and have that included in there?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Our office goal is quite simple. It's to move to the government side of the House . . .

A Member: — You can help.

The Chair: — Well, thank you with the direction on item 14. Are there any other items that members of the board would like to deal with? Yes, Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, but I'd like to say particularly to the officials from the Legislative Assembly Office, on behalf, I think, of the Board of Internal Economy . . . Other members may want to express as well, but I'd just like to simply say thank you for the excellent work that you have done, and continue to do, and will do, on behalf of the members of the Legislative Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan who we're elected to serve.

I quite understand . . . First of all, I appreciate in bringing forth your budget proposals, there was a sensitivity to the restraint that . . . financial restraint which we feel is necessary in order to be responsible to those who fund the exercise of public service through the operations of government and the Legislative Assembly. And I do understand and appreciate that there's some disappointment that the requests that you made were not approved.

We wish that we felt that we could comfortably have approved them, because we consider your proposals to be anything but frivolous, and to be brought forth with the good professional intentions of wanting to serve well the members of the legislature and to meet your mandates.

And so I want to say you — to simply to acknowledge that, and to say thank you, and to acknowledge your disappointment as well, and hope that in the context of the fiscal restraint that has been expressed in a whole number of ways during the course of this meeting, that you'll accept that.

And I have no doubt through the Clerk and all of the officials of the Legislative Assembly that you will continue your job with excellence. I think the Legislative Assembly Office here in Saskatchewan compares very, very well with Legislative Assembly operations across the country. It's one about we're very proud and I want to thank you for your service.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you. I would like to also echo those words that we understand the disappointments that take place when this kind of an exercise is done. You put heart and soul into preparing the budgets and your goals for the year and it's difficult to see someone else judge them and make recommendations that maybe you feel are not necessarily taking

into account all the situations involved. However, decisions have to be made, and we are the ones that are mandated by constituents to make those decisions.

And I know that you do an excellent job and will continue to do an excellent job and it's up to us to make sure that in the future maybe those disappointments aren't there. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I'd also simply like to say thank you to you personally for the leadership that you provided in the meeting here and, not only with the Legislative Assembly officials, but on behalf of the Board of Internal Economy, coordinating and assisting in the presentations by other officers of the Assembly. And I want to acknowledge your good work and say thank you to you as well.

The Chair: — And with that I want to accept the kind remarks on behalf of the entire staff and on behalf of myself from both sides of the table here today. And we respect the difficult decisions that you have to make and we'll do the best that we can with them and I want to thank all the board members in the way that you conducted the meeting.

You've actually sat here right around the clock and then some and did two days work in one. And I certainly do appreciate the manner in which you handled all of the requests and dealt with this.

So with that I would adjourn the meeting and bid you all a good rest and have a good weekend as well, starting tomorrow if possible.

The board adjourned at 21:49.

