



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

MINUTES AND VERBATIM REPORT

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Speaker



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**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY
2007**

Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky, Chair
Prince Albert Carlton

Hon. Glenn Hagel
Moose Jaw North

Ms. Donna Harpauer
Humboldt

Ms. Judy Junor
Saskatoon Eastview

Hon. Warren McCall
Regina Elphinstone-Centre

Mr. Don McMorris
Indian Head-Milestone

Mr. Kevin Yates
Regina Dewdney

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

Room 8 Legislative Building
Monday, April 16, 2007

Present: Members of the Board of Internal Economy

Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky, Speaker, Chair
Hon. Glenn Hagel
Ms. Donna Harpauer
Ms. Judy Junor
Hon. Warren McCall
Mr. Don McMorris
Mr. Kevin Yates

Staff to the Board

Ms. Marilyn Borowski, Director, Finance and Member Payments
Ms. Linda Kaminski, Director, Human Resource and Payroll Services
Mr. Gregory Putz, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Ms. Margaret Tulloch, Secretary to the Board

Officials in Attendance**Office of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

Mr. Darcy Hislop, Chief Technology Officer
Ms. Pat Kolesar, Assistant Legislative Librarian
Ms. Melissa Bennett, Legislative Librarian
Mr. Kenneth Ring, Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel
Mr. Pat Shaw, Sergeant-at-Arms

AGENDA Moved by Ms. Junor, seconded by Ms. Harpauer, that the proposed agenda be adopted. Agreed.

MINUTES Moved by Mr. Yates, seconded by Mr. McMorris:

That in accordance with Item 2 Addendum in the minutes for Meeting #1/07, an additional amount of \$125,000 (Statutory) for capital acquisitions be approved for the Office of the Chief Electoral Office for a total 2007-2008 Estimates amount of \$1,299,000.

The question being put, it was agreed to.

Minute # 1676

Moved by Mr. Yates, seconded by Mr. McMorris that the minutes of Meeting #1/07 be approved. Agreed.

ITEM 1 Decision Item: Directive #6.1 - Constituency Assistant Benefits Amendment

The item was presented by Ms. Linda Kaminski.

Moved by Ms. Harpauer, seconded by Mr. McCall:

That the amended Directive #6.1 – Constituency Assistant Benefits, as attached, be approved.

Adopted by the Board of Internal Economy February 10, 2005, effective April 1, 2005
Amended April 16, 2007, effective April 1, 2006

DIRECTIVE #6.1
(s.49(3)(d) - c.L-11.3)

CONSTITUENCY ASSISTANT BENEFITS

General

- (1) Constituency assistants are eligible for vacation benefits and statutory holiday benefits in a manner similar to SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees Union) employees.
- (2) Constituency assistants are entitled to receive the same number of sick leave entitlements that are available to SGEU employees of the Public Service. The administration of constituency assistant sick leave provisions shall be in accordance with the Legislative Assembly Constituency Assistant Sick Leave Policy.
- (3) Constituency assistants who meet the eligibility criteria must be enrolled in the following benefit plans: Group Life Insurance Plan, Disability Plan, Dental Plan, Extended Health Care Plan and where the constituency assistant chooses, Public Employees Pension Plan. Constituency assistants may participate in the Legislative Assembly Employee and Family Assistance Program.
- (4) In the event of the Member's death, the Speaker may authorize payments to constituency assistants pursuant to this directive.
- (5) Constituency assistants shall not receive any payments in excess of the amounts specified in this directive for any of the benefits that are authorized by this directive.
- (6) The cost of the provisions outlined in this directive, except for the benefits specified in clause (1), shall be paid by the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Member, but shall not reduce the amount of funds that are available to the Member under Directive #4.1 – *Constituency Service Expenses* or Directive #6 – *Constituency Assistant Expenses*.

Workers' Compensation Benefits

- (7) A constituency assistant is eligible to receive Workers' Compensation benefits if he or she is injured in the performance of his or her duties and the injury is compensable under the provisions of *The Workers' Compensation Act*. The administration of Workers' Compensation benefits will be in a manner similar to that used for SGEU employees.

Maternity/Adoption/Paternity Leave Supplement to EI Benefit (SUB) Program

- (8) A constituency assistant who takes a leave of absence for maternity, adoption, or paternity reasons, is eligible for benefits under a maternity/adoption/paternity leave supplement to EI benefit (SUB) Program. The provisions and the administration of the program will be in a manner similar to that provided to Legislative Assembly Service employees.

Notice of Lay-Off

- (9) A constituency assistant shall receive proper written notice of lay-off. The amount of notice shall be according to *The Labour Standards Act*. If the Member is unable to provide proper written notice, the constituency assistant shall receive pay in lieu of notice provided that the Legislative Assembly receives the appropriate documentation signed by the Member requesting that the pay in lieu of notice payment be made.

Notice Upon Termination of Employment

- (10) A constituency assistant whose employment is terminated without just cause, or due to the defeat, resignation or death of a Member, shall receive pay in lieu of notice according to *The Labour Standards Act* provided that:
 - (a) the Member provides formal written notification of termination, as the case may be, to the constituency assistant; and

- (b) a copy of the notification is received by the Legislative Assembly.
- (11) The maximum notice period that will be paid under this provision is four weeks.

Constituency Office Clean-Up and Closure

- (12) Upon the defeat, resignation or death of the Member, any constituency assistant who is assigned responsibility for constituency office clean-up and closure may receive a maximum of seven consecutive days pay for performing this duty provided that the Legislative Assembly receives the appropriate documentation signed by the Member authorizing the assignment of this responsibility.
- (13) Payment for constituency office clean-up and closure duties shall be counted as part of the notice provisions outlined in clauses (10) and (11) above.

Severance Upon Termination of Employment

- (14) A constituency assistant whose employment is terminated without just cause, or due to the defeat, resignation or death of a Member, shall receive severance paid by the Legislative Assembly on the Member's behalf on receipt of the appropriate documentation signed by the Member authorizing the severance payment.
- (15) The amount of severance provided will be based upon the constituency assistant's years of service as follows:
- (a) a minimum of one year of service is required;
 - (b) one week severance pay per year of service with the Member to a maximum of eight weeks severance for eight or more years of service with the Member.
- (16) For the purposes of clause (15)(b), one year of service equals any twelve consecutive months of service.
- (17) For the purposes of clause (15)(b), payment will be calculated according to the rules governing Saskatchewan Public Service employees.

The question being put and a debate arising, it was agreed to unanimously.

Minute # 1677

ITEM 4 Table Item: Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office, Operational Plan, 2006-2007, Final Report (Summary)

The Chair tabled the report.

The Board met in camera.

The Board resumed public meeting at 6:37 p.m.

ITEM 3 Decision Item: Refurbishment and Asset Replacement Fund: Board of Internal Economy Funding Priorities for 2007-2008 Fiscal Year

In consideration of the decision item, members of the Board identified the following funding priorities in fiscal year 2007-2008: replacement of the chairs in the Chamber (as proposed in the decision item); work toward improvement of Chamber lighting (as proposed in the decision item); demolition of the 4th Floor in order to continue work towards a second committee room (as proposed in the decision item); purchase (and store if necessary), as far as practical, equipment and furnishings for the 4th floor committee room.

The Board deliberately did not pass a motion, leaving the detail of costing and final prioritizing to the Legislative Assembly Service.

ITEM 2 and 2(a) Decision Item: Review and Approval of *The Dissolution Guidelines for MLA Expenses, Benefits, and Services, 2007*

Moved by Ms. Junor, seconded by Mr. McMorris:

That *The Dissolution Guidelines for MLA Expenses, Benefits, and Services, 2007* be approved as presented in Item 2, with changes as presented in the amended Item 2(a).

The question being put and a debate arising, it was agreed to.

Minute # 1678

The Board adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

[The board met at 17:30.]

The Chair: — Well good evening, everyone. The meeting will come to order. I want to welcome all the board members back to the table for this meeting. And I want to welcome all the managers from the LAS [Legislative Assembly Service] who are with us here today.

You have before you an agenda which comprises of minutes and four items. The proposal is that we go through the minutes and item 1 and then we recess . . . pardon me, and item 1 and item 4. We then go into camera for items 2, 2(a), and item 3 and then reconvene if necessary for any decisions to follow.

So with that, is there a motion to approve that agenda as proposed? Ms. Junor moved, seconded by Ms. Harpauer. Those who favour the motion? Any opposed? The motion is carried.

The minutes and verbatim report have been distributed to all members. They are in the blue-coloured booklet, like so, and tabbed as well.

The first thing that I would like to do is ratify the correction of an error that was made in our last meeting. And when I go to page 6, there's an item 2 addendum which describes the error that was made. The figure that we approved in the meeting was that the amount of 1.174 million be approved for the estimates of the Chief Electoral Officer. It should have been 1.299 million. And this figure was the one that all members had been contacted about and had approved on an individual basis. That means that another \$125,000 were added to his estimates. But I think what we should do here is at this meeting ratify that particular decision which was made to make that correction.

So I have a proposed motion here:

That in accordance with item 2, addendum in the minutes for meeting no. 1/07: an additional amount of \$125,000 statutory for capital acquisitions be approved for the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, for a total 2007-2008 estimates amount of \$1,299,000.

Is there somebody that would be willing to move the motion? Mr. Yates. Seconder? Mr. McMorris. Those in favour of the motion, please indicate. Any opposed? Motion is carried unanimously.

That being done then, we can take a look at the minutes as corrected, and are there any questions or comments? A motion to adopt and approve the minutes? Mr. Yates moves:

That the minutes be approved as amended and corrected.

Seconder? Mr. McMorris. Those in favour of the motion? Any opposed? No. Motion is carried unanimously.

Item 1, this is an item with respect to constituency assistant benefits adjustment. Linda Kaminski is with us today. She has been working on this, and I would ask her for a report on item 1.

Ms. Kaminski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Item 1, as Mr.

Speaker, has mentioned is regarding directive 6.1, constituency assistant benefits, an amendment to this particular directive. And in the background, members can see that the purpose of the directive is to authorize the maternity, adoption, paternity leave supplement to EI [employment insurance] benefit subprogram that members have previously agreed to. So this particular decision item makes that amendment.

Further it was also recognized that a previous oversight had occurred in which we did not previously have in directive 6.1 layoff provisions for constituency assistants. So even though we were providing those benefits to constituency assistants, we technically didn't have the authority in the directive. And where that comes from is that we have been doing that for some time prior to directive 6.1 being created. So then at the time that I was looking at this directive, I realized that that was an oversight and an error, and therefore it should be corrected.

So that has been done, and then in the amended directive then members will see section 8 has the new section, "Maternity, Adoption, Paternity Leave Supplement to EI Benefit" subprogram, new section 8, and new section 9 has notice of layoff. And then the remaining sections have simply been renumbered, and there haven't been any other changes made to directive 6.1. So we are amending a previous decision, and we're putting into place previous provisions that we've had for constituency assistants.

So having said that, I'm not sure if there is any questions, but there is a recommendation that the amended directive 6.1 as attached be approved. Questions?

The Chair: — Thank you very much. Is there any follow-up that's necessary, or anybody have a question or a comment?

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — The only change is sections 8 and 9?

Ms. Kaminski: — New section 8 and section 9, so we have new section 8 on the subprogram. New section 9 is the layoff provisions, and everything else has just simply been renumbered thereafter.

Any other questions? No. The motion then that I think is being handed around and the motion has been drafted: "That the amended directive 6.1, constituency assistant benefits as attached be approved."

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Just on the . . . following The Labour Standards Act for the notice of layoff, is that assuming that for a constituency assistant who's been there for more than one term that it's coming back to work after — and whose member is re-elected — that coming back to work after the election is a continuation of service, or it's a new employment period?

Ms. Kaminski: — There are two different calculations. One that's used for layoff . . . and in terms of layoff, the way labour standards work is each time there are layoff provisions provided, there is an interruption in the service calculations so therefore the maximum amount of service time would be four, four and a half, five years. And then you start the clock ticking all over again because you've issued a layoff notice at that time. So therefore the next time you issue a layoff notice, you go

from the point in time following the first layoff notice. So the maximum amount of time that your constituency assistant would ever receive for layoff provisions would be four weeks assuming that that constituency assistant has been there for four years to five years.

The service calculations for severance are different. Service calculations for severance include all of the time. There's no interruption in the time. So we simply are following exactly how labour standards works on the layoff provisions and calculations.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Thanks.

The Chair: — I have a motion before me moved by Ms. Harpauer:

That the amendment directive 6.1, constituency assistant benefits as attached be approved.

Do I have a seconder for the motion? Mr. McCall. Those in favour of the motion? Anybody opposed? The motion is carried unanimously.

At this time, I want to distribute a report that has been submitted by the Children's Advocate office in response to a query at our last meeting. And this is simply an item that I'm tabling with all of the members. There aren't any decisions that I have or suggestions that I have at this time with it. It's for future use.

We will then be going into camera for items 2, 2(a), and item 3. We will need a motion to go in camera.

Mr. Yates: — So moved.

The Chair: — And moved by Mr. Yates that we go in camera. Secunder?

Ms. Junor: — Second.

The Chair: — Ms. Junor. All in favour? Those who favour the motion? Any opposed? Motion is carried.

So I think what we'll do is we'll start by going into camera with just MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] first, and then we may be calling on some of the staff to come back in.

[The board continued in camera.]

The Chair: — Members, we'll reconvene our meeting. We have two items to deal with, item 2 and 2(a) and then item 3. I'm waiting for some material to come back with respect to item 2 and 2(a), and so we can go to item 3.

Item 3 is requesting guidelines from the board members with respect to refurbishment and asset replacement. We're looking for trying to set our priorities within the Legislative Assembly previously approved budget. And members have received some possible directions that we may go to, and I open the floor at this time for discussion on them and perhaps members have some general directions they would like us to take. Mr. Hagel.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Yes, let me just express the view, Mr. Speaker, that I would prefer to see the direction of this fund to be thinking in terms of two things: first and foremost, the preparation of the readiness and eventual operation of a new committee room on the fourth floor, that's our first priority; and secondly then, those matters that have to do with the operation of the Chamber as it exists today.

So in that context what I would really, from the options that are brought here, would like to recommend is in terms of ergonomics and long-term, I think, usefulness of chairs, we need to replace the chairs in the Chamber, but at the same time when we're doing that to be thinking beyond just immediate use in the Chamber now, but looking down the road at what we'll be needing when we're fully functional with the committee rooms that we anticipate having.

Secondly, I would support the Chamber lighting to bring that up to standard. There's been some improvement.

And thirdly — maybe even firstly, but third on the list anyhow — the fourth floor demolition to . . . Again this is readiness of the area to accommodate the introduction of a committee room. And then if for some reason, we can't get Property Management to brighten up the room 119 corridor, then as a last resort . . . But I'm not sure why there should be funds coming from Legislative Assembly to be dealing with issues that — I don't know — appear on the surface to really be essentially safety issues in terms of the 119.

So those would be the only things on the list that I would find myself supporting then, Mr. Speaker. And it would be my preference to see — as we're considering options down the road — that we always look at the very first option as to what can accommodate the needs of a new committee room on the fourth floor. And that may mean that it can be sensible to be doing some other kinds of prep or other kinds of purchase of furnishings or equipment that can be used in other ways until then or can be stored for a period of time, that that would make some practical sense in terms of using this budget as it was intended to serve the needs of the Assembly.

The Chair: — Ms. Junor.

Ms. Junor: — I agree with Mr. Hagel. I just wanted ask one thing if we've . . . because we didn't talk about this. When we're replacing the Chamber chairs, have we considered selling the old ones, offering them for sale to the MLAs? The current ones and the older, and people who have been in the Chamber . . . I've heard people say they would like to see some option to purchase a chair. So if you, say, offered them out for \$100 which is a fairly nominal fee for chairs of that . . . I won't say quality anymore, but maybe heritage value. You'll still get \$58,000 back, which would go a long way.

An Hon. Member: — \$5,800.

Ms. Junor: — Oh 5,800, sorry. Your math is bad; mine's worse. Okay 5,800, at least you'd have something. You might be able to light some other hallway.

The Chair: — Thanks for the suggestion on that. I think what we would do is come up with a policy on it and bring back a

policy recommendation.

Anybody else with comments on suggestions with respect to the refurbishment and replacement fund? We don't need a definite motion on this. I think we have a sort of a general feeling about this. And we convey it to our Clerk, and he can work with the managers in terms of implementation on it, having heard these priorities. If that's the case, then let's proceed. Are we agreed then?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed. Then we proceed to item 2 and 2(a), and we have a proposed motion. The members have had an opportunity then to take a look at the guidelines, dissolution guidelines as per the green-covered book, and added to that item 2(a), which members have at their desks, and I have a couple of amendments to item 2(a).

First of all on page 1, the numbering which has a 1.1 numbering of the item, payment details, should be item 5.2.

Then the items that are in red here, the only sentence that should . . . the last sentence should be deleted, which has the numbers in it, and the sentence that should remain on page 1 in red is, "The indemnity rate that will be used for calculation of the transitional allowance will be the rate that is in effect when dissolution occurs."

On page 5 there's also a change, and we would drop all of the items that are written in red starting with the words "these items would include" and concluding with the words "for use by the incoming member." That would be dropped, and the rest of the paper, item 2(a) as is.

And the motion that we would need would be:

That the dissolution guidelines for MLA expenses, benefits, and services 2007 be approved as presented in item 2, with changes as presented in the amended item 2(a).

Mover? Ms. Junor. Seconder, Mr. McMorris. Any further discussion? Those who favour the motion please indicate. Any opposed? None. Motion is carried unanimously.

Anything for the good and welfare? I thank all the members for their attendance. The meeting is adjourned.

[The board adjourned at 18:44.]