



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HANSARD VERBATIM REPORT



No. 7 — June 23, 2014

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

Hon. Dan D'Autremont, Chair
Cannington

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Saskatoon Silver Springs

Ms. Doreen Eagles
Estevan

Mr. David Forbes
Saskatoon Centre

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Meadow Lake

Hon. Nancy Heppner
Martensville

Mr. Warren McCall
Regina Elphinstone-Centre

[The board met at 10:02.]

The Chair: — If we're all ready, I'd like to call this meeting of the Board of Internal Economy to order on June 23rd at 10:02 a.m. With us today we have the Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff, the Hon. Jeremy Harrison, MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Doreen Eagles, and the Hon. Nancy Heppner. On the opposition side we have MLA Warren McCall and MLA David Forbes. And I'd like to thank everyone for coming in intersessionally for this meeting.

You see before you the agenda for meeting 7/14. We have one change in the agenda as presented, and that would be item no. 7 will not be other business but will be a discussion and decision item on the letter, the correspondence by Chief Electoral Officer Michael Boda and the discussion on his facilities. So would someone move that we adopt the proposed agenda with the changes? Mr. Harrison. Second? Mr. McCall. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. First item of business is the minutes for approval from previous meetings, meeting no. 3/14, 4/14, 5/14, and 6/14. Any discussion on those minutes? If not, would someone move those minutes be adopted? Mr. Forbes. Second? Mr. Harrison. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Okay. Item no. 1 is tabling and decision item, approval of the Legislative Assembly Service's fourth quarter financial report for the fiscal year 2013-2014. Are there any questions related to that item? If not, would someone move that we adopt the report? Mr. Cheveldayoff. Mr. McCall. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Item no. 2, tabling and decision item, approval of the Legislative Assembly Service 2013-2014 year-end report on progress, actions. Any questions related to item no. 2? If not, would someone move that the report be accepted? Ms. Eagles. Mr. McCall seconds. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

Lobbyist Registrar

The Chair: — Okay. Item no. 3, discussion and decision item, lobbyist registrar. I would like to invite Mr. Barclay and support staff to come forward. Mr. Barclay has a presentation for us. And so, Mr. Barclay, if you would care to proceed.

Mr. Barclay: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Before I make my submission, I wish to thank the following members of the Legislative Assembly for services, for their very valuable contribution in preparing my budget proposal. They are Greg Putz, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; Lynn Jacobson, the executive director; Dawn Court, who's to my left, the director of financial services. And in addition I would be amiss if I did

not acknowledge the contribution of Greg Sykes who's beside me to my right. He's counsel for the Ombudsman, and with his legal and IT [information technology] knowledge, his assistance is deeply appreciated.

My initial budget proposal was presented in January, and I must apologize for not being there, but I was recovering from surgery which fortunately was successful. The board approved the Conflict of Interest budget in the amount of \$150,135. And I've always been rather proud of my budget; for over the last four years we've never gone over 150,000, and this includes my salary. It was also significant that my budget was even lower than my predecessor, Mr. Gerry Gerrand, Q.C. [Queen's Counsel].

My heritage is Scottish, and as a result I've always been very frugal when it involves the expenditure of public funds. The initial budget that was proposed was presented last January and was tabled until the lobbyist legislation was passed in the House and, as you know, the bill was given third reading in early April of this year.

In hindsight, I was very pleased that the budget was tabled. From the initial request was for the sum of \$486,750. Our present expenditure request is for \$246,987, which is a saving for this year of \$239,767.

Now most of you are aware at the present I don't have any employees at all. I am seulesment [Translation: only] . . . But I do have a great deal of assistance from the Legislative Assembly Service and the Ombudsman: managing records associated with members' annual disclosure statements, provided by the LAS [Legislative Assembly Service]; executive secretarial service, I use the Ombudsman's secretary; preparing budgets, processing invoices, and making payments, that's all done by the LAS; IT services, the LAS; and some legal research by Mr. Sykes and the Ombudsman's office.

Now we're getting really to the heart of my proposal. And before the lobbyist legislation is operational, the following tasks must be completed. We have to hire two new staff members. That would be a deputy registrar and an executive secretary, and that position is characterized by Lynn Jacobson as a program and administrative coordinator.

We have to engage an IT expert and developer and consultant to help me determine the most suitable lobbyist registry system. We have to design an office website, develop it, and have it placed online.

And also the key public office holders, stakeholders groups, potential lobbyists have been explained the implication of the Act, and that's a very important duty that will come up in the next few months.

Therefore for the next budget year, to establish the lobbyist registry, we need temporary office space, furniture, equipment, and supplies. And these expenditures are set out on page 4 of the submission which you have in front of you. And I'm just going to quote briefly from the submission.

And I may say before I start, I've had a great deal of assistance

from Government Services and particularly with the deputy. And the problem right now is the Ombudsman's Regina office, where my office is now situated, is full. In fact there's several offices where employees are doubled up, and that's why the Ombudsman's office, the Privacy Commissioner, and my office are looking at space. But I think it's important that we wouldn't be moving to this new shared space until later in 2015. So I need space now that will accommodate my new staff. And I received a great deal of co-operation with the deputy. I've met him twice. And they have now located in downtown Regina, relatively close to my present office, about 1,075 square feet. And it's in the Victoria building, which is on Victoria and very close to Broad Street.

There is a tremendous amount of space available right now in Regina, which sort of surprised me, but when we met with the deputy on Friday . . . And I have a close friend, Gavin Koyle, who in the private sector is a leading commercial real estate agent. They think pretty quickly there'll be about 35 per cent of downtown Regina will be empty. So we're finally in the driver's seat now to get some space.

And what I propose, there are two offices, a very small boardroom, and storage area. The cost would be about 36,800 a year or a little over \$3,000 a month. In addition, Central Services estimates it will cost 25,000 to renovate available space to suit my needs. And we're going to have to incur these costs around about early October so we can start with the offices on the 1st of November.

[10:15]

Now the next item in my budget is salaries. We intend to employ a deputy registrar starting on the 1st of December, and this is a critical position for the lobbyist registry and would manage the day-to-day operations of the office. And we estimate his salary to be around between 93,000 and 120,000. And we've worked with Lynn Jacobson, and she's prepared a description of the duties of this person. And, Mr. Speaker, you'll be very pleased that we have decided that we don't need a lawyer in that position. In each province — with assistance of Greg Sykes — in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario the deputy registrar is not a lawyer, and everything is working very well.

We'll also need an executive secretary, and that person Lynn has characterized as a program and administrative coordinator. The salary's between 53,400 and 69,432. However the expenditure for the executive secretary won't be incurred this year. We won't need her probably until the 1st of May. And we want to get a temporary secretary — I'm showing my age; I call them a Kelly girl — that will come in and help us out for a few months. And that sum would be, for the year, 43,400.

Now it's awkward for me to talk about my own salary. When I was hired by the Legislative Assembly, salary was set by the Board of Internal Economy, and it was set at 60 per cent of deputy minister 2. I didn't know what a deputy minister 2 was. But at the present time my salary is 118,000, and it's based on 60 per cent of what a deputy minister 2 is receiving.

Now since that time there's been a move by the government or by the Legislative Assembly to standardize the salaries of the

independent officers. And it's based on the average of the deputy ministers, and there's quite a difference. The deputy minister 2, that salary's about 196,000. The averages of the deputy ministers is 225,000.

What I am suggesting is — and I think the government's got their nickel's worth because I've been working on this since January without any extra income, and that's fine — but I would like an increase in my salary starting on the 1st of October. And the reason I picked that date, some of you may be aware from reading the newspapers, I have a new task involving the RM [rural municipality] of Sherwood. So hopefully that work will all be done by the 1st of October. So I'm doing that on my own time, and it'll be an interesting challenge, but it won't interfere with my lobbyist work.

So what I'm suggesting is that — and I think this is fair, and I want my salary to be determined by the board rather than in the House because there will be a change — I'm suggesting that I be paid for one year would be 90 per cent of the average salary of the deputy ministers. And I think that's reasonable. That's sort of the process in other jurisdictions.

And particularly in Alberta. My colleague there had the same arrangement with the board that I did, that he was getting 60 per cent of the deputy minister. And then when he took on the lobbyist legislation he was quite busy for that one year, and he wanted it increased to . . . I want 90 per cent because I do want a little time off so I can go to Palm Springs. But I think that's fair, and I would like that to start on the 1st of October.

Now we have a problem and I'm advised by my able friend on my left, Dawn Court, that she said there would be problems to try and increase my whole salary on October the 1st because my Conflict of Interest budget has already been approved by the board. And she suggests that what the board should do until the end of March is that I should just get the increase for the three months. Am I quoting you right? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, so it's just for three months rather than for the whole salary, saving government money again. And then on the 1st of April I would want to have the 90 per cent for my full salary, on the basis of an average salary of the deputy ministers. And at the end of the year, I want then to go back to 70 per cent, which I think would be fair. I'll have a little more responsibility other than my Conflict of Interest duties, and so I've added 10 per cent. And that's what's happened in other jurisdictions. But I would like it to be set by the board and not by the legislature. And I think that's a fair request.

Now the next matter, and it's been difficult for me and I've had a lot of . . . I'm not an expert in this field at all, and that's the cost of the IT consultant. For this lobbyist legislation to be successful, we're going to need some help to assist us in choosing a platform and to manage the project and to then procure development services to begin designing the system.

Now we've spoken to Darcy Hislop from LAS [Legislative Assembly Service], the IT guru, and he thought for this budget year the cost would be approximately \$75,000 to get an expert. And Greg Sykes who is sitting beside me, he did a fair amount of research in the registry systems in Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and Manitoba. And I think we can use that information when we're talking to the expert. I don't know if I

have to go through it, but it's in appendix 2.

What happened in Ontario, they initially had the Alberta system. And then when they adopted a new system, it's a new Microsoft CRM [customer relations management]-based system to replace the Lotus Notes-based lobbyist registry, and that he had a one-time development cost of \$500,000.

Now the Alberta system, I've been to Alberta and talked to the experts there. They had a one-time development cost of \$163,500, and the annual hosting, maintenance, and support is \$30,000 a year. There is some criticism of that system now in the other jurisdictions, and I can't really weigh that until we've contacted the expert.

In BC [British Columbia], they had a one-time development cost of 1 million dollars. And what Manitoba did, they licensed BC's application and hired the firm who developed it to adopt it for Manitoba's purposes. That was an initial cost of 500,000. So we really need an expert to work this all out, and we're going to try and get . . . try and save money. But the other hand, we want to have a good system that we can live with for several years.

Now I'd like to just in summary turn to page 6 and 7 of my submission, and that's a total of what we're asking for. You'll see at the . . . If we're all on page 6, I think this is the summary of our complete request. The first item, our personal services, the salaries and that totals \$74,337, and I already went through the salaries with you.

The next item is the total contractual services. There's the rent — buildings and other space — and we went through that. That's 43,400. Photocopying services, postal, courier, and telephone, and then the big item is the contractual services, which is \$97,000. And that's based on \$75,000 for the IT consultant, \$20,000 for the Kelly Girl, and \$2,000 for the logo. And if you turn the page over, then there's some travelling and business of 9,500; office supplies, letterhead, office furniture and equipment, 14,000, which totals \$16,050. And the grand total is \$246,987, and that's what we're asking for. And I'm ready to take some questions, if anybody has some questions.

The Chair: — Okay. Are there any questions for Mr. Barclay? Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes: — I have a couple. Thank you for the presentation.

Mr. Barclay: — Thank you, Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes: — It covered a lot of the bases and I appreciate that you got good help there. I'm curious about appendix 1 when we talk about other provinces. Do we have an idea, a projected number of registrations that will be out there that we'll probably be dealing with? I see, you know, Manitoba deals with 160. Alberta does 500. Then you go up to Canada which deals with almost 3,000. Where will Saskatchewan be in that mix?

Mr. Barclay: — I'm going to make a prediction, and then I'm going to turn it over to Greg who really talked to all these people. I would think that Alberta would be a little better, perhaps not as many. But a lot of the lobbyists were the same

lobbyists, particularly in the oil industry, that we find in Alberta. So I think it's a good start. Greg, have you any comment about that?

Mr. Sykes: — Without doing some sort of a survey, it's sort of impossible to know. But probably, given our population, that Manitoba might be a closer match. But given that our nature of our economy, Alberta might be a closer match. So if I were guessing — and I would be — it would be between the two somewhere.

Mr. Forbes: — No, that's fair enough. I appreciate that. You know, and I think those are good reasons to do that. And the other question I have or comment I would make is around the IT. And I think it's worthwhile hiring an expert, but I do think that . . . And I don't know what the intention of the board will be, that if the expert comes back and says no, we have to have our own made-in-Saskatchewan plan or something. Because I look at Manitoba and I look at BC and if it's tweaking to get to our kind of work when there's only somewhere, like you say, between 200 and 500 registrants, that I think we should take a look at that. But I think . . .

Mr. Barclay: — I think it's really important I would undertake to do that is that it's such a hairy-fairy area, is that I would immediately come back to the board if it looks like the expert is suggesting figures that interfere with my Scottish heritage.

Mr. Forbes: — Yes, but I appreciate that you've got on appendix 2 what the one-time development and what the annual support is. It gives us sort of a ballpark of what we might be expecting.

Mr. Barclay: — But that point's well taken, and that's the area that really concerns us. And I think we'll just have to move slowly, and if it looks like the expenditures are off the wall, we'll come right back to the board before we . . .

Mr. Forbes: — Okay. Those are my comments. Thanks.

The Chair: — Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Sure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for the presentation, Mr. Barclay. That was thorough and very well done.

The government's good with moving forward as proposed. But as Mr. Forbes just hit on, we would really encourage, on the IT side, looking at adopting one of the other systems that's already been developed as opposed to developing a brand new system. We've seen in these IT development projects in other areas, you know, costs escalating perhaps more than had been anticipated. So we would, you know, really encourage to look at these other systems going forward.

Mr. Barclay: — Yes, I think it's important that when we come to a tentative decision that we come back before the board and raise it with you.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Sure. Okay, thank you, sir.

The Chair: — Any other questions? Seeing none, Mr. Barclay, I had notes here as to when your salary would come into effect.

Mr. Barclay: — The 1st of October.

The Chair: — October. Yes, because I had the concerns that you did raise about other duties that you're currently performing.

[10:30]

Mr. Barclay: — Yes, and I'm starting on them, which would normally be my three or four months holiday. I'm going to be right in the middle, but I took it on.

The Chair: — Your comment that you needed some time off to go to Palm Springs, I think we can accommodate that in July.

Mr. Barclay: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, or maybe I'll go hunting with you in Africa.

The Chair: — A question perhaps for Mr. Sykes. You have the list here of the other four jurisdictions that have this and their development costs. Do you have any time frame as to when these were developed? Because I look at Alberta at 163,000, but that's the original 1999, you know. So we're looking at something that's 15 years old in that case. So I'm not sure how relevant that actual cost would be to today's costs.

Mr. Sykes: — I just don't recall Alberta's project time frame, but the reference to 1999, that would have been when their system was originally developed by Ontario. And we didn't include those development costs for the reason you're raising it, that 1999 numbers would be inaccurate. I think the 163 was spent in 2008, around there. So if you're looking for a date to tie the 163, it was about 2008.

I didn't get from Alberta a full budget, for obvious reasons. They weren't prepared to share the full detail budget. So this was a bit of a guess based on some conversations I had with the deputy registrar there.

The Chair: — Was the Alberta one, they used Ontario's original? So they would have then customized Ontario's application for Alberta's use, and the 163 would have been those costs.

Mr. Sykes: — Correct. Yes.

The Chair: — So they would have paid Ontario something for it possibly.

Mr. Sykes: — To my knowledge, Ontario charged nothing for a sub-licence fee or a very modest amount. On the other hand, when Manitoba sub-licensed or licensed on BC's, there was a part of their development costs were licensing fees.

The Chair: — So the plan is to review the other jurisdictions and find one that works for us. Okay.

Mr. Barclay: — There is just one other thing, Mr. Speaker, I forgot to mention. I was talking to Justice the other day, and the regulations are not prepared yet but we expect them within the month. And they're going to share them with me before they're enacted, and that's rather critical in what we're doing too.

The Chair: — Okay. Thank you. Are there any other questions then related to this? If not, the proposed motion is:

That a request for supplementary estimates funding in the amount of 246,987 be approved for the registrar of the lobbyists and to be included in vote 057, Conflict of Interest Commissioner, for the 2014-15 fiscal year; and further, that this request for supplementary estimates funding be transmitted to the Minister of Finance by the Chair indicating that the additional funds be in place by November 30th, 2014.

Would someone move that motion? Mr. Harrison. Seconder? Mr. McCall. Any discussion? All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

The Chair: — Okay. Item no. 4, discussion and decision, Information and Privacy Commissioner request for funding for additional permanent full-time employee.

I'd like to welcome Ms. Diane Aldridge here today. And if you could introduce your staff, please, and proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Aldridge: — Thank you. To my left is Ms. Pamela Scott, our director of operations. And I'm pleased to introduce Mr. Ron Kruzeniski who will be the incoming Information and Privacy Commissioner effective July 1st, who is behind us.

So in terms of the reason why we're here today in terms of the budget request, we provided an information item in advance, which hopefully everyone has in front of them and has had opportunity to review. Basically we are looking for two things. We are looking for one-time additional funds of \$10,123, and approval to bring the new commissioner's administrative assistant over. And what that would require is making her a permanent FTE [full-time equivalent], and of course there'll be some additional funding going forward to accommodate that request. And that individual's name is Kim Mignon-Stark. So thank you for considering our request, and we'll take your questions.

The Chair: — Okay. Any questions? Well I would like to also welcome the commissioner-in-waiting to our meeting. I think this is probably the first meeting that the commissioner has been to as a statutory officer of the legislature. Okay, if there are no questions, I have a motion to propose:

That a request for supplementary estimates funding in the amount of \$10,000 be approved for the Information and Privacy Commissioner in vote 55, Information and Privacy Commissioner, for the 2014-15 fiscal year, for the purpose of providing administrative staffing support for the commissioner; and,

That the board acknowledges a commitment to the ongoing funding for this additional resource; and further,

That this request for supplementary estimates funding be transmitted to the Minister of Finance by the Chair, indicating that the additional funds are required to be in place by December 31st, 2014.

Would someone so move? Mr. Cheveldayoff. Second? Mr. Forbes. Any discussion? All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you very much.

Ms. Aldridge: — Thank you.

Amendment to Directive #3.1

The Chair: — Okay. Item no. 5, discussion and decision amendment to directive #3.1, MLA travel and living expenses. You have before you in your packages the relevant passages, and it is clause 4(g). And it would read:

for attendance at an out-of-province conference, members must obtain written pre-approval from the Speaker before registering for the conference or incurring any travel and living expenses.

Any discussion? Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — What was the catalyst for this, Mr. Speaker?

The Chair: — Well there's been a number of questions raised about some of the travel and whether or not it's actually related to the duties of an MLA. So if there was information provided prior to the out-of-province conferences to indicate what this is, what the benefit is to the MLA and their carrying out of their duties, then it would be approved, whereas in some cases it may be more difficult to define what that benefit is.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Yes, I appreciate and support the intent of the proposal. I would really like an opportunity though to take it to the caucus prior to approving the provision. So I guess I would ask if we could table this, and we could have a discussion at our caucus about it.

The Chair: — Okay. Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes: — I would support that. And I mean I know that, and the one question I have is that, and it's not a big deal, but there's an inconsistency with conferences within the province, where we agreed to a certain amount, that if it was less \$100 I think is what the number is, that we didn't need to seek your approval. So some consistency there might be worth it. So we would support the tabling and further discussion on that.

The Chair: — Okay. This is for out of province that we're talking about. Okay, if someone would move that we table this for the next meeting. Ms. Heppner. Second? Mr. McCall. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Tabled.

Amendment to Directive #6.2

The Chair: — Okay. Item no. 6, discussion and decision, amendment to directive 6.2, constituency assistant benefits. This has been raised previously at steering committee of the board, and so I would ask Mr. Forbes if he would mind explaining this.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the staff who are coming up with the wording. And it's relatively straightforward. It came to my attention after actually the steering committee did its work and we approved the changes that the staff brought forward that the wording wasn't as clear as it might have been, that there could have been confusion about when we talked about our CAs [constituency assistant], that the wording talked about comparing it to SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union] employees, which are the employees of SGEU over on Broadway. That was not the intent. The intent was always to compare them to the Public Service Commission employees.

And so this just cleans up that language so it's much more clear in any of the benefits. So I think it's straightforward. I would move that we do that amendment and thank the staff for their work on this.

The Chair: — Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The government's supportive of making the changes. Doesn't obviously impact on our constituency assistants, but Mr. Forbes brought it to our attention some time ago, and we expressed our openness to clean up the language which is, you know, a housekeeping issue. And we're supportive of doing it.

The Chair: — Okay, we have a motion to present:

That directive #6.2, constituency assistant benefits be amended as follows: replace the wording "SGEU (Saskatchewan Government Employees Union)" to "members of the PS/GE collective bargaining agreement" in every sentence.

Would someone move that please? Mr. Forbes. Second? Mr. Harrison. Any further discussion? All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Okay, Mr. Boda is on his way, and we will take a short recess until he arrives.

[The board recessed for a period of time.]

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

The Chair: — I'd like to call the meeting back to order. We have the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Michael Boda, with us this morning, as well as one of his staff, Ms. Jennifer Collins. The discussion is the letter and request from Mr. Boda regarding his accommodations. I would like to table the correspondence from Mr. Boda regarding his accommodations and the costs associated thereof. As well, we have a motion that I would like to read out regarding that motion and then we'll

hold the discussion. The motion would read:

That funding in the amount of \$792,000 be authorized for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer in fiscal year 2014-15 for office accommodations.

Would someone like to move that motion, please? Ms. Heppner. Okay. Mr. Forbes seconds. Ms. Heppner, would you like to present the information you have regarding . . .

[11:00]

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Sure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my previous role as minister of Central Services, we had received the estimates for demolition and rebuilds and furniture and electrical and that sort of thing for the Hillsdale property for the Elections Saskatchewan office. We had then as, I think the board had asked them to go back and see if there was any whittling down of the total bill that we could come up with to make this a little bit more affordable. The acting deputy minister at Central Services has done that work.

There's a few reductions that are listed. As we've all toured or most of us have toured the space to get a better sense of what is there and what isn't and what the needs are, there's a reduction in some things like carpeting. I think we've all agreed the carpeting there is pretty nice. A small reduction in millwork. There's a reduction in the furniture allowance. The deputy minister had consulted with a furniture expert — I'm not sure how you get to be one of those, but a furniture expert — to see what funding would be needed considering what is there, what is needed, what isn't there currently. So there was a reduction there. The estimates for mechanical and electrical have not been reduced.

So the total construction portion is just over 600,000. There's some other expenses in there: design work, structural engineering allowance, that sort of thing. So the total, which includes a 10 per cent contingency, comes to just around \$792,000. Central Services is able to do the work. I am told that that work can be completed for November 1st. The timelines are a little bit shorter than previously anticipated because Central Services staff will be doing the work. There is no tender process that's required, which would obviously prolong the length of this project.

I think that's probably about it. I believe that we're confident that the work can be done and in a slightly tighter time frame than earlier anticipated.

The Chair: — Mr. Boda, if you have any comments?

Mr. Boda: — Well I have to say that I'm surprised that Central Services has been doing work on this file. They have not been in touch with my office about this, and we have been very open with them and have encouraged them to be in touch with us at all times. So we have heard nothing from the deputy minister in terms of the specifications that he has come forward with.

I do have to say that there are some questions with respect to the numbers that the deputy minister has put forward. And we would have to look at them very carefully because we had worked very carefully with his team earlier on and they came

up with very different numbers, which included a 20 per cent contingency. And I wondered whether the 20 per cent contingency was included in that number. You will recall that our proposal had been 889 plus . . .

The Chair: — I believe Ms. Heppner said there was a 10 per cent contingency included in that.

Mr. Boda: — Ten per cent. Okay. Well we have not had an opportunity to look at these numbers, and so I am not confident that the job can be completed for \$792,000 according to our needs, given the fact that Central Services team, design team had come forward with 889,000 plus a 20 per cent contingency.

The Chair: — Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Yes. Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'd have to admit to some degree of frustration on this in that we've had officials working on this now for months who are professionals in this field, who have come back with a number, who I had been . . . I understood that they had been working with the parties involved in this matter.

I know this board has taken a tour of the facility as well. The board's prepared today to move forward with this. You know, we're getting letters saying that this has to be done immediately; this has to be done right now. And we end up with quibbling over details. This board's not going to be meeting again until late August; we're just looking at the 21st, I think. So if we want to table it and do more work on it, the government's fine with that if the Chief Electoral Officer wants to go in that direction. But the next letter we get saying we need to do this right now, I'm going to have a bit of frustration with that.

The Chair: — Ms. Heppner.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — I think I had put this on the record the last time that we had this discussion, that any work that Central Services had done was based on the requests made, not on what necessarily would have actually been needed. And as I had already stated today, as an example, the carpeting, I believe the request was to recarpet the entire space. I don't believe that that's actually required after the board has . . . There's a reduction there because it doesn't all have to be recarpeted. Things like that. And part of the savings will be because it's being done in-house.

So again, we could . . . As Minister Harrison has said, you know, we can go back and forth about \$10,000 here and \$14,000 there, but part of the savings is because it's being done in-house and not being tendered out.

The Chair: — Any other discussion? Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes: — Well I feel it's an important issue to address in the urgency part. And you've stated this very clearly, about how we need to move on this. And that's why I seconded the motion is that I think we need to because . . . And when we had talked last, and as Ms. Heppner pointed out, the fact that the work will be done inside, in-house so you'd get rid of the tendering process and that type of thing that I'm very comfortable with.

And now you may feel that there's work to be done, but I think it'd be . . . I think we should pass this motion today. And I'm confident that . . . When we've seen the facility, it was very good and I think it's going to be a great place for, you know, for Elections Sask. So I think that's what I wanted to say, that I think we're ready to move on this and not delay it for a couple of months.

The Chair: — Okay. If there is no other discussion . . .

Mr. Boda: — Yes. I would simply put forward that I agree with your frustration, Mr. Harrison. I believe that my office has been very patient over the course of this process. I've provided you with timelines, provided the board with timelines as to every step along the way. And we have to express our frustration with our ongoing work with the leadership over at Central Services because we haven't been included in the recent process of the changing of the numbers, but also with the fact that there seemed to be disagreement between leadership and those who are planning at Central Services.

We're frustrated by the fact that we have to move forward. Yes, I sent you a letter that we are at an urgent phase and we need to move forward with this. What my concern is is that if we are underfunding a project that needs to be completed, what then happens if we don't have the proper facilities? We're moving from one facility where we don't have the necessary facility, where we're moving to another where it would be the same situation. So I'm concerned that this is being underfunded at present. I am also concerned that we're not able to move forward.

And so 792,000 without having been presented what numbers were reduced and why they were reduced, for example the carpet was not part of the budget. It simply wasn't part of the budget and it's being eliminated from the budget. That tells me that there's a problem with the reductions that were made from 889,000 plus 20 per cent contingency to 792,000 which includes a 10 per cent contingency. And I have to question whether we're going to be able to complete this project on budget.

So I would encourage you to move forward, but I would encourage you to take a serious look at the numbers that were put forward in the April 14th document.

The Chair: — Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well what I would say is we have the best people in government working in Central Services on this. They're experts in their field. This is the number they came back with as the right number — 792. If it's your position that you don't think that's the right number, we'll pull the motion and we can talk about it in August. So I guess it's in your hands. If you don't think that's the right number, and you don't want to move forward with this right now on that number, then the government will pull the motion.

The Chair: — We have a motion on the table, so it would mean tabling that motion if . . . Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes: — I appreciate the frustration. I appreciate the good work that the Chief Electoral Officer has done as well.

And I think that, you know, we're getting close to the summer break, and I would just urge us to . . . We have to move forward, you know. And as you've said very clearly and eloquently, there are elections ahead that we have to prepare for. And I know the work that, you know, Central Services, they have identified some of these savings.

So I would speak against any tabling and I would speak that we move forward, and the good work that has to happen between Sask Elections and Central Services to make it happen will happen. And I'm confident that could happen quickly and everybody could have a good move.

The Chair: — Mr. Boda.

Mr. Boda: — I'm willing to move ahead with the caveat that I think, as we move forward, that I do have concerns about the amount of money that's being allotted to this project. However I am in agreement with you that we have a problem. We have a general election coming very quickly. We need to move forward as quickly as possible. We've been willing to move forward for quite some time on this. So I'm certainly willing to move forward. However, I have fundamental concerns that there won't be enough money allotted to the project to complete it.

The Chair: — Mr. Harrison.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well we'll move forward with the motion. I would encourage the Chief Electoral office to work closely with Central Services on this to make sure that this project can be completed for \$792,000.

There are other statutory officers that would be thrilled to be in a position of getting, not only new offices, but having their budgets tripled or quadrupled in the last few years. So, you know, this board has been very generous with the Chief Electoral office and has been supportive of what you're trying to do, Dr. Boda, in terms of turning the office around and, you know, making sure that Elections Saskatchewan is a first-class elections organization. We're supportive of that. We've been encouraged by the moves that have been made in that regard.

But I do have to express significant frustration in terms of the very generous position the board has taken towards requests from the office and not necessarily having approval from the office with respect to that. So we're prepared to move forward. We'll pass this motion. And we encourage you to work with the Central Services folks who are the experts on this in making sure that we can do it in the budget allocated.

The Chair: — Any . . . Go ahead, Mr. Boda.

Mr. Boda: — I too am grateful for the work that the board has been doing in recent months, evidenced in the fact that we've made very good progress. I've seen you work together in terms of establishing changes within the election legislation, and I think that is a very positive development.

I would like to continue to work with the board on both sides of the aisle here to move forward in a progressive and a modern way. And so as a result I am certainly willing to move ahead with you, but I think it would be inappropriate for me to not

express concerns that I have been expressing for some time when we've had a project which initially it was indicated by Central Services leadership that it could be completed for \$100,000. And we worked carefully with Central Services over the course of the number of months in order to come up with the budget of \$889,000 plus a 20 per cent contingency.

So I simply want to be clear. As a professional, it's important that I offer clarity with respect to understanding what our needs are, working with professionals in Central Services in order to come up with that number, but I am certainly willing to move forward today with you. Thank you.

The Chair: — We have a motion before us, and I will read the motion, moved by Ms. Heppner, seconded by Mr. Forbes:

That funding in the amount of \$792,000 be authorized for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer in fiscal year 2014-15 for office accommodations.

All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you, Mr. Boda and Ms. Collins.

Okay. That brings to a close the items we have on the agenda. I just want to raise for you the possibilities for our next meeting. It has been suggested to me that perhaps August 14 or 15 would be better dates than the next week. So if you would check your calendars to see if — that would be a Thursday or a Friday — if that would work for everyone. It doesn't work for you guys?

An Hon. Member: — We're in caucus.

The Chair: — That would . . . The caucus ends on the 13th.

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, have you got a sense of what the agenda will be?

The Chair: — There would be, so far, two items. That would be the Office of the Privacy and Information Commissioner. We had indicated to the acting commissioner, Ms. Aldridge, that we would be prepared to accept recommendations from the office once a new commissioner was in place as to the direction of that office and what the new commissioner believed there was need for in that office. That would be the main item. As well, perhaps by that time caucuses would have had a chance to look at today's item no. 5, which was tabled, the MLA travel and living expenses.

Ms. Eagles: — What about the following week?

The Chair: — One member has requested that we not go that week. So if not the 14th, 15, then it would be a week and a half after that . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The 14th works for you? Yes, okay. Doreen?

Ms. Eagles: — That's okay. I'll have to change some stuff.

The Chair: — Nancy, how's it work for you?

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — I don't actually have my calendar in

front of me.

The Chair: — Okay. Well we're not going to set the meeting at this time. But I just wanted to raise it with you for consideration so that you could be thinking about it and we can set it as soon as possible before people's calendars do get full because I know it doesn't take very long. But if we were to have it on those dates, that would mean that the Office of the Privacy and Information Commissioner, we would need to get your comments and recommendations prior to that date so they can be considered by the committee.

Okay, if someone would move that the meeting be adjourned? Mr. Cheveldayoff. Second? Mr. McCall. All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This meeting of the Board of Internal Economy is adjourned at 11:18.

[The board adjourned at 11:18.]