



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

of the

# **Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY**

**MINUTES AND VERBATIM REPORT**

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The Honourable H.H. Rolfes  
Speaker



**NO. 2    MARCH 3, 1994**

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**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY  
1994**

Hon. Herman Rolfes, Chairperson  
Saskatoon Nutana

Hon. Carol Carson  
Melfort

Glenn Hagel, MLA  
Moose Jaw Palliser

Lynda Haverstock, MLA  
Saskatoon Greystone

Hon. Eldon Lautermilch  
Prince Albert Northcote

Rick Swenson, MLA  
Thunder Creek

Eric Upshall, MLA  
Humboldt

**MEETING #2 1994**

**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY**

**Room 255 Legislative Building  
8:38 a.m. Thursday, March 3, 1994**

**Present: Members of the Board of Internal Economy**

Hon. Herman Rolfes, Chair  
Hon. Carol Carson  
Glenn Hagel, MLA  
Lynda Haverstock, MLA  
Hon. Eldon Lautermilch  
Rick Swenson, MLA  
Eric Upshall, MLA

**Staff to the Board**

Gwenn Ronyk, Clerk  
Greg Putz, Clerk Assistant  
Marilyn Borowski, Director, Financial Services  
Deborah Saum, Secretary

**MINUTES** Moved by Mr. Upshall, seconded by Ms. Haverstock, ordered, that the Minutes of Meeting #1/94 be adopted. Agreed.

**AGENDA** Mr. Lautermilch tabled a document to replace Agenda Item #8.

Mr. Swenson suggested under Item #11 - Other Issues - that Constituency Office Rental Issues be added.

Agenda, as amended, was adopted.

**ITEM 1 Decision Item - Review of MLA Dental Plan Benefits**

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

That the Board amend Minute #1313 to clarify the Board's intent by replacing "dependent children between the ages of five to thirteen" with "dependent children from the ages of five to thirteen inclusive."

The question being put, it was agreed to.

Minute 1334

**ITEM 2 Decision Item - French Language Training for MLAs**

A debate arising, the item was rejected.

**ITEM 3 Decision Item - Approval of Allowable Expenses under Directive #2 - Telephone and Telephone-Related Expenses (1-800 telephone numbers in Constituency Offices)**

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Mr. Swenson:

That consideration of this item be deferred until further information, including statistical analysis, cost savings and technical data is presented to the Board, by SaskTel and other private communication companies.

The Legislative Assembly Office is to facilitate the presentation.

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

**ITEM 4     Decision Item - Approval of Caucus Offices' request to install a 1-800 telephone line in their offices**

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

That consideration of Item #4 be deferred pending receipt of the information referred to in Item #3.

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

**ITEM 5     Decision Item - Approval of revised Directives #2, #10 and #6**

**Directive #2 - Telephone and Telephone-Related Expenses:**

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Mr. Swenson:

That the proposal to allow constituency office telephone systems to be purchased under the Telephone expenses allowance be rejected at this time.

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

**Directive #10 - Grants to Independent Members**

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

That the last sentence of Directive #10, section (2) be amended as follows:

"This adjustment will not be applied for the fiscal years beginning April 1, 1992, April 1, 1993 and April 1, 1994."

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

Minute 1335

**Directive #6 - Constituency Secretary**

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

That the title of this allowance be changed to **Constituency Assistant Allowance**, and that any reference in the directive to "secretary" or "secretarial expenses" be changed to "constituency assistant" and "constituency assistant expenses".

The question being put, it was agreed to.

Minute 1336

**ITEM 6     Decision Item - Review of Expense Allowance Issues**

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Mr. Swenson:

That Item #6.1, "That the repair of computers and related equipment be allowed to come out of the Communication Allowance", be deferred.

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

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

That Item #6.2 be amended as follows:

"That Members have the option to pay for educational events attended by constituency assistants, such as training seminars, classes, etc. Constituency Office Allowance funds would be used to pay these expenses."



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

Minute 1337

Moved by Mr. Swenson, seconded by Mr. Lautermilch:

That Items 6.1, 6.2 (as amended), 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5, be deferred to allow Caucus consideration.

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

**ITEM 7      Decision Item - Parliamentary Education Video Project Proposal**

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Ms. Haverstock:

That the project proceed.

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

Minute 1338

The Board requested the Clerk's Office to research local Saskatchewan film companies, and to pursue further funding from the project partners.

**ITEM 8      Decision Item - Handout Item #8 presented by Mr. Lautermilch regarding MLAs Constituency Office Equipment**

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Ms. Haverstock:

That SPMC assume the current loan liabilities of certain individual MLAs for equipment in their constituency offices and that SPMC bill the appropriate MLA's constituency office allowance, at the rate currently being paid by the Member, to recover the value of those outstanding liabilities over the remainder of the appropriate MLA's legislative term, and that this option be voluntary.

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

Minute 1339

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Ms. Haverstock:

That the Board accept, in principle, the proposal that SPMC:

Assume ownership of all existing equipment housed in constituency offices, and;

Assume responsibility for providing office equipment to MLA constituency offices.

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

Minute 1340

**ITEM 9      Decision Item - Approval of Expense Allowance Principles**

Moved by Mr. Lautermilch, seconded by Mr. Swenson:

That this item be deferred to allow Caucus consideration.

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

**ITEM 10      Decision Item - Independent Commission**

It was agreed that Mr. Lautermilch, Mr. Swenson, and Ms. Haverstock meet to discuss this item.

**ITEM 11      New Item - Constituency Office Rental**

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

That the Board direct each MLA to provide the Legislative Assembly Office with a copy of the lease

agreement for the rental of his/her constituency office, or a written explanation by the MLA of the terms of the contract.

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

Minute 1341

It was agreed to meet again following the meeting between Mr. Lautermilch, Mr. Swenson, and Ms. Haverstock.

Moved by Mr. Hagel, seconded by Mr. Upshall that the meeting be adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Herman H. Rolfes  
Chair

Deborah Saum  
Secretary



**BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY**  
**March 3, 1994**

**The Chairperson:** — The agenda, you've all received the agenda a few days ago. The first thing that is on the agenda is the review of the minutes of our first meeting of 1994. You'll find those at the beginning of your book. I don't know if you've had an opportunity to review the minutes of those two meetings. If you have, are there any questions or amendments or changes? Or could I have someone move that we adopt the minutes of those two meetings?

Eric, you move?

**Mr. Upshall:** — Yes.

**The Chairperson:** — May we second that motion? Do I have a seconder to adopt the minutes? Seconded by Lynda. Any questions? All those in favour? Approved.

All right. We can then go to our agenda. And, ladies and gentlemen, as you know, the agenda, we just simply put the items on. If you wish to change the order of the items or wish to add or delete or whatever, I would accept that now.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Yes, Mr. Chair. I would suggest that items 2, 6, 8, and 9 be discussed after; in other words, we move up item 10 which is the independent commission. All of those items, those four items, deal with changing monies.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, could I... how would you like to have the items then?

**Ms. Haverstock:** — I think that we should be discussing item 10, the independent commission, prior to items 2, 6, 8, and 9.

**The Chairperson:** — So it will read then: 1, 10, 3, 4, 5 or...

**Ms. Haverstock:** — 1, 10, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, so you simply want to move 10 up into the no. 2 spot. The reason I put that at the end was I thought that would take the most time. But it's up to individuals here.

All right. We have a suggestion, move no. 10 to no. 2. All those in favour? Those opposed? It's opposed, so the item will stay where it is.

Are there any other suggestions? If not, can we start dealing then with... some of these items should not take very long. Could we start with item no. 1, and you will find item... By the way, are there any additions? Anybody wish to add any other items?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I think, Mr. Speaker, I have an item to deal with inventory...

**The Chairperson:** — Inventory?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — And policy decisions. Would that be...

**The Chairperson:** — That could take the place of the one on inventory, no. 8. Is that... I'm not certain...

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I'm going to circulate a document here that deals with MLA office equipment. And I think that might be able to be dealt with under that issue.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. You may want to do it there instead of the item that we have on the agenda.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Right.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Is the issue dealing with the constituency office rental agreements, is that covered off in here?

**The Chairperson:** — No, I don't think so. I did not think that we were going to discuss that today. Do you want it on? Okay.

We have those two additions to the agenda. And I think that the inventory one will probably replace the inventory one that we have on the agenda.

So could we have approval then of the agenda as we have it?

**Mr. Hagel:** — The other item and this one?

**The Chairperson:** — Well inventory and constituency office rentals. Could we have approval? Carol? Secunder?

**A Member:** — Two additions. What's the other?

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Two additions — one's inventory, one's office rental?

**The Chairperson:** — Yes.

**Mr. Hagel:** — And what number does that... is office rental?

**The Chairperson:** — Well they would come under other issues.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Okay.

**The Chairperson:** — Except for the inventory. If we feel, you know, if we feel that it takes place in no. 8, then that's where it should be dealt with.

All right, approval of the agenda? All those in favour? Okay.

Item no. 1, review of MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) dental plan. And here it's just a clarification, ladies and gentlemen. There was some concern — not concern — but some doubt as to just what was meant here, and this happens so often that we forget to put the word "inclusive" in.

So all it says is that dependent children from the ages of 5 to 13 inclusive. There was some doubt as to



whether that included 13. Could I have someone move that we simply make that amendment? Moved by Eldon, seconded by Glenn. Any discussion? All those in favour? Carried.

Okay. Item no. 2, French language training for MLAs. The problem . . . not the problem, the concern here is whether or not MLAs who are taking French classes should have their fees paid for from the LAO (Legislative Assembly Office) office or whether that should be taken out of constituency communications allowance.

Our recommendation is that it should be taken out of communication allowances of MLAs which take French classes. That's our recommendation.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Under the circumstances that we have with budget restraints, I'm not sure that this would be reflected upon as something that the public would smile upon. So I would . . . I understand your recommendation, but this time, Mr. Chairman, I just don't think it would be a very wise decision.

**The Chairperson:** — That is one of the reasons we have suggested it be taken out of communications. There's no increase in funds. That if an MLA wishes to take the classes, he or she must take it out of their communications allowance. We would not expend additional funds. So I want just to make that clarification. I'm not expressing one way or the other how I feel about it.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Are you done?

**Mr. Upshall:** — Yes.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Okay. Yes, I guess I share the same concern that Eric has expressed here, Mr. Speaker, and am most attracted to the recommendation that is presented to us. I think it is legitimate in our nation for this to be the kind of training that is covered for MLAs and would personally consider it, at this point in time anyhow, to be inappropriate that it be covered under Legislative Assembly.

Although in saying that I think I'm recognizing, and maybe I'd ask a little clarification, I think I'm recognizing that does in fact separate MLAs' eligibility for payment for French language training from Saskatchewan public service employees. Is that correct?

**The Chairperson:** — Yes. They are separate and . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — But I mean in terms of applied . . . in terms of policy and practice. Is it the circumstance currently that for public service employees, I guess . . . well let me phrase it as a question rather than a guess here. With public service employees in the province, what are the criteria that determine whether that employee has French language training provided?

**Ms. Ronyk:** — There isn't any criteria that says this employee should be eligible and some other employee is not. It's a matter of the department

approving the funding . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — On a case-by-case basis.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — . . . Or an employee to take the French language. It used to be shared half and half by the federal government and the provincial government. And now that it's wholly at the cost of the provincial departments the numbers have gone down somewhat.

**Mr. Hagel:** — And I think a strong case can be made. There will be certainly some members of the Assembly for whom the ability to communicate in both official languages is in fact pretty significant in their ridings, I would think. And therefore I think a strong case can be made that members be permitted to use their communications allowance to develop their expertise in the language particularly of their constituents.

So having said that, Mr. Chairman, I would express support for the recommendation that you put forward.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe that, at this time in our life in this province, this is the right thing to do. Members are not precluded under their communications allowance, as I understand it, to have translation services. If they have a significant amount of francophone-speaking people within their ridings they're allowed to access whatever they need in the way of written communications or whatever. And I quite frankly think the public would find this perkish.

I mean there's a lot of language groups in this province that are more significant than French. I understand it is the other official language of Canada but we have to think about the milieu in which we do our work here as political representatives. And I mean the next request will come for, quite legitimately, maybe Cree. Certainly German is the number-two second language in our province, and I just think at this time it . . . The next step, should I be having somebody's university education paid for out of their communication allowance? I don't think so. So I think we should vote this down.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Okay, a couple of questions. I don't know what the cost of this would be and I don't know how many people have asked for it. Do we have any statistics to show exactly how important this issue is amongst the members?

**Ms. Ronyk:** — As far as I know, Mr. Chairman, there have been, I would think, no more than three or four requests from members about French.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — For French only? Well I was thinking along the same lines as Rick. I think it's important to be able to communicate. And it is in the member's interest to be able to find a second language to which he has to communicate with a number of his constituents whether he believes it's Ukrainian or German or Cree. Leaving it only to French language may be prohibitive and defeat the purpose, which is



trying to find the best way to communicate with the most people.

I'm just wondering, will we run into the problem in two or three years if people decide that they can take this out of the communication allowance? Because it's not explicitly stated that it is an allowable expense. Should we be putting something in that directive that says if we want to go that way we should be able to include it, not just French language, but language which they deem as appropriate in order for them to be able to communicate. Because I wouldn't want to run into a problem in two or three years where somebody's looked through it and said, oh well that wasn't explicitly stated in our directive therefore it must be excluded.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes. And it would be, Carol. And I think when we went through this I had the same concerns as Rick has. Why not economics or finance? If someone is a critic for example for the Department of Finance, why, for example, wouldn't we allow that person to take a class in finance to help that MLA in his or her position in that area?

So I have some concerns about it too in opening it up. But MLAs have asked us to put it before the board, and that's why it's here, specifically for French.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Well in my opinion, if they believe it's a big enough issue for them to seek education in a second language in order for them to communicate effectively, then it should be their choice when they look at their communication allowance to decide it's more of a priority than something else down the list.

But I don't agree with you on economics or financial matters. I think that's going a little too far. We're just talking about simple communication with the constituents and I would leave it at that.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I'm not advocating that we should fund for finance or economics but I can see it coming, and I had some concern about that. But just because we recommend it doesn't mean that I'm supporting it. MLAs have requested that we put it before the board. They want direction from the board.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you. I think that some of what has been said points to what it was I was trying to raise in terms of changing the order of the agenda, that in fact perhaps this is a case in point where we should have an independent commission, since it deals with something that could be considered to be a benefit or a perk and it does require payment in some form from taxpayers, that we should have input from people other than ourselves as to whether or not they would see this as something that's of great value.

So if we're going to be establishing a panel that is going to inquire into and report on such things as salaries and expenses and allowances and benefits paid to members of this Assembly, it's this kind of thing that I think that they could contribute, I think, very important input on.

**A Member:** — I don't think it will happen.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — I guess in part what I'm saying is, I didn't make a case for why it was I wanted the agenda items changed. And the point I was making with items 2, 6, 8, and 9 is that they in fact . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I know. And part of what I'm saying here is we are sitting here talking about . . . almost everyone at this point has mentioned the public. Is this a priority for the public at this time, and is this something that would be considered a priority, and so forth. Well perhaps that's a case in point. We should be having people other than ourselves helping to determine that.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Yes, I guess we could, and probably at some point in time will be discussing the propriety of process. There are many who would suggest that in the event that the member of the legislature would resign from a political party and from a caucus, that he should go back to the people of the province for a mandate. And many will make that argument. And perhaps that's an issue that the public will want and should be discussing.

But I want to remind Ms. Haverstock that there are many issues on an ongoing basis that the Board of Internal Economy and other boards of this legislature deal with on an ongoing basis. And I would suggest that not every issue can, should, or will be dealt with by an independent commission.

And I guess in retrospect, one of the issues that might have been dealt with a long, long time ago would have been whether or not someone who would resign from a caucus should go back and seek a mandate from the people who represented him . . . or elected him or her.

But I think what we're dealing with here are some day-to-day issues and some requests from members that come on an ongoing basis. And the longer the member from Greystone sits here on the Board of Internal Economy, the more she will understand that there are things that need to be dealt with on an ongoing and a day-to-day basis and they can't be turned over to a commission and should be dealt with.

So in speaking to this decision item, I would want to say that a lot of the points that have been raised have some validity in terms of which language . . . I don't frankly agree with dealing with one particular language only, in terms of training.

I can look at my former riding, Prince Albert-Duck Lake, a large amount of Cree people — the odd Sioux perhaps, but mostly Cree — a big German community in the area, French community in MacDowall, Duck Lake. So you know I would think that if we're going to allow for training that it should be including a broader base than just French.

I think, Mr. Speaker, at this time we should probably not . . . I can't support this motion at this time. I think a lot of people who may want to expand their horizons



could probably do it on their own and I just don't see the need or the necessity for this.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Well it's an interesting case in point because I indeed have been paying for it on my own.

This, Mr. Chair, this particular issue is not the one that I was trying to make reference to — whether or not we have this paid for out of communications or not. The point I was trying to make is that it has come before this board and I thought a decision was being made and I believed that there was going to be a meeting held on the establishment of a Legislative Assembly remunerative panel, an independent commission.

And that if we haven't even defined the mandate of that commission and we are going to be discussing such things as review of expense allowance issues and review of inventory policy decisions and . . .

**A Member:** — No, no, what you're saying is it's not your agenda.

**The Chairperson:** — Order, order.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — You're not comfortable with this agenda, that's what you're saying. You don't set this agenda.

**The Chairperson:** — Order, order. Order.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — In part, what I'm saying is that what we have heard and what I've understood from, I would hazard to guess, all members of this board, is that the public is concerned about and would like input into things that seem to have been decided in a forum that's separate from other places.

So I think that this particular issue, since it deals with taxpayers' money, is one that could have been considered by this panel. And I'm looking forward to our having a definition of the role and the mandate of this independent commission later, which I have indicated to the member that I have spent considerable time putting some information together on for a meeting that is yet to be called.

**The Chairperson:** — Ladies and gentlemen — I'll recognize you immediately — I really would appreciate if members stick to the items before us and deal with them. These are items that have been put before us by members of the Legislative Assembly and all the board has to do is really make a decision for or against and then we inform our members of that.

I would really hope that we could cooperate on this committee and make it work. Let's stick to the items that are here. We'll deal with items one by one and make this board effective.

Otherwise, it just simply isn't going to work; it's going to be a frustrating morning, and so I would just ask members to please let's stick to the topics that are before us and deal with them one by one.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well I only say, Mr. Speaker, that the agenda that you put before us is one that I think should be dealt with. Quite clearly, Ms. Haverstock has another agenda.

Her purpose for coming here this morning was, I believe, quite simply to grandstand before the media, who didn't choose to attend, which is fine. And you know, I find it quite interesting, the only member of the legislature who has indeed benefited by an increase to her personal salary, who has benefited to a 200-and-some per cent increase . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Order, order. I do not believe that that is on the agenda and I will . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, that is my point.

**The Chairperson:** — Order, order.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — That isn't on the agenda nor . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Order. Order, please. We have an item before us and I would want . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — If she's willing to deal with the item, Mr. Speaker, I am as well.

**The Chairperson:** — I am going to hold members to the items that are before us — all members.

**Mr. Hagel:** — A question.

**The Chairperson:** — Could I have a . . . Mr. Hagel, a question?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Yes, I have a question.

**The Chairperson:** — Mr. Hagel has the floor.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I'll be brief because I've spoken already. As I said before I'm not personally opposed to members using their communications allowances to improve their ability to communicate with their constituents. I think there's some legitimate points being made here today that that applies to certainly more than just the two national official languages.

I have to admit as well I'm uncomfortable about reference to this as a perk because I don't personally see it that way. But if it's being referred to that way, then that does cause me to feel some discomfort, quite frankly, because communications allowances are not intended to serve as perks for members. They're intended to deal with the matter of members communicating with constituents.

I think with that, after having heard other members as well, I find myself . . . I'd said earlier that I support the recommendation, but in the context of other things that have been said here, I think I find my view having fringed on that, in terms of the specific recommendation before us.



**The Chairperson:** — All right, I will ask the question. All those in favour of the recommendation, please show your hands. All those opposed? Unanimously defeated.

Next item, please. Allowable expenses under directive #2 — telephone and telephone-related expenses.

Ladies and gentlemen, here there has been some request that we allow 1-800 numbers to be established in constituency offices, and this is one that particularly would be beneficial, I think, to rural MLAs who have long-distance calls. And many MLAs do accept long-distance calls and they are more expensive if you accept long-distance calls. Therefore it may not be an expense at all to go with this. We don't know whether it will or not, depending on how its being used.

So again, just because the recommendation is made does not mean that we are supporting it as such. It's simply a request that has come in.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the work that your staff have done here to put this together. But I thought at the last meeting when we discussed this, we wanted to get some technical people in here to discuss the broader issues surrounding this and other matters relating to telephone. Because I think we want to do this as cost-effective as possible and I . . .

**The Chairperson:** — There's another item on later on also pertaining to that, but on . . . What's the other issue that . . .

**A Member:** — Message manager.

**The Chairperson:** — Oh, the message manager. And the thing is that when members . . . I do recall that most of these are only supplied by SaskTel, and I thought I got the impression last time that we wanted people in from several companies, but most of the requests for these things that have been asked are supplied by SaskTel only and . . .

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well fair enough, but maybe we should have had somebody in from SaskTel to . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, well we can. There's no reason why we can't delay this. There's no reason why these items can't be delayed until we have the technical people. I mean I . . . the only reason it is here today is that there have been requests and we did not want to delay that.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Oh, I understand.

**The Chairperson:** — But if the board wishes to delay those items that pertain to telephone 1-800 numbers and . . . What's that other one again?

**A Member:** — Message manager.

**The Chairperson:** — I'll never get that darn thing — message manager . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I know. Well that's your . . . Well anyway there are a number of other things, Rick. If the board wishes to delay these, why don't we just stand those two items and deal with them at the next meeting and we'll see to it we can have some technical people in.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Thank you. I'm wondering if this 1-800-number toll . . . it would be toll restricted within Saskatchewan?

**The Chairperson:** — Oh yes.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — All right, so in other words, it would be zoned, because there are ways of zoning . . .

**The Chairperson:** — I don't know how it works.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — All right.

**The Chairperson:** — Maybe the technical people could tell us that. I really don't know that, Lynda, at all. I'm not familiar with it at all.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think the analysis of perhaps a phone bill, an existing phone bill of, you know, of a member and how this might be cost effective would be helpful. Because I . . . you know it doesn't present itself to me here on this paper, so I think we should probably bring in some technical people and have a look at the overall services it might be able to deliver. So I think we should defer this thing.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, I don't disagree. But would members please itemize for us specifically what you want those technical people to tell you, so that we can . . . when we contact them we know exactly what you want, information you want, so that we don't call somebody in and say, oh well that should have been somebody else that we should have brought here — so that I will know.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I was done in my . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Oh I'm sorry, I thought you were finished.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I think there are only two issues. I think probably the availability of service, and secondly, cost. Those are probably the only two issues that I can, you know, that I can think of that members might want from SaskTel.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — The other point is, I guess, there are some private industry folks out there who have been providing service to members of the legislature, and I don't know that we would want to isolate them in terms of providing information to the board and to members.

**The Chairperson:** — If I can make a personal . . . and this is just a personal one, I don't find it too difficult to



accept increased services if it goes through SaskTel because the profits of SaskTel find themselves back in the public coffers again.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I too have personal bias.

**The Chairperson:** — So I have a bias and I don't mind telling the members I have a bias. But the problem I think we have is somewhat of a political one and that is if your costs that are shown in the annual report . . . suddenly the telephone bills go up sky high, the public may see that as a real expense for MLAs, but not realizing that really goes back to the public coffers anyway.

But anyway having said that, Glenn, Carol, Rick.

**Mr. Hagel:** — I too share the bias; when there is a Crown corporation that provides this service then and it has been related to our service to constituents, I have a bit of a bias here that SaskTel should be the source of expenses incurred whenever possible.

But on the matter of 1-800, specifically two items, that and then the proposals from telephone company about other services. On the 1-800 what I would ask is that you . . . I don't want to know MLA's name and I don't want to know any detail at all about specifics regarding frequency of calls or places to calls or anything like that — that is and should be kept as confidential — but what I would ask is that we have brought to us an analysis of taking maybe two or three representative rural MLAs and then just walking through using the rates that accrued because of 1-800 and the actual charges, you know, that are being submitted over the course of maybe a 12-month period.

My hunch is that 1-800 will reduce that, not necessarily on any given month, but over some period of time. The fact of the matter is also currently it doesn't improve access in reality because members can accept collect calls now from constituents. So a 1-800 number doesn't, in fact, improve access of constituents to their MLAs but it does improve, I think, the feeling of access to their MLAs. That's important to us.

But in making that decision I'd want to know, that by doing something that doesn't in fact increase the access, that we're not falsely increasing the actual cost. And I simply can't . . . my hunch is 1-800 is less expensive overall but it's only a hunch. And I don't want to draw my conclusion based on hunch and I think what I heard you say, as well . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Apparently we do have some information and if we can just ask maybe the . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — The 1-800 calls are much cheaper, you know, per minute than a collect call. A collect call, depending how far away it's coming from, costs between 43 cents and \$2 a minute. Whereas the 1-800 calls, wherever they come from, cost 43 cents a minute. So it's at the minimum.

Now what you're saying . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — What happens, of course, is that 1-800 gets used much more frequently than collect call because constituents will . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — I expect so. I don't know that there is a lot of use of collect calls. And I don't think that members universally feel that they can accept collect calls. They certainly probably don't promote it. They probably would get more 1-800 calls but it would be at a cheaper rate, and so it's a balance off of access, I guess, and the cost.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, if I could just . . . ladies and gentlemen, I don't want to spend too much time on this and since we have deferred the two items . . . no, no, I shouldn't say we. It's been recommended that we defer them. So I don't want to spend too much time on it if the consensus is that we're going to defer them, because we will go through the same thing again later on.

But I do have Carol, Rick, Eldon and Eric on this list so I will take those. Okay.

**Mr. Hagel:** — I just want a second point then, too, before I conclude then. On the list of things that we would like to have a report on, the list that you'd had, I just can't find what page it is, but as I read it over that looked inclusive to me. So those are a few of the things that I'd want to hear about, availability and cost.

But on the 1-800, the trick here is trying to anticipate the increased use of 1-800 expense that is above and beyond what members are receiving through collect calls now. And there has got to be some advice that we can get from SaskTel as to, you know, what is industry experience when going to 1-800 numbers that we can draw on to determine whether it's a net increase or not or does it balance about the same in terms of total costs.

So I would ask that that specifically be a question that we would ask them to bring. Obviously we can't draw on our own experience because we don't have it. So we need to get it from some place else who has expertise.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Yes, I agree we need more statistical analysis about what's happening here. I just relate this to my own constituency. I have four telephone exchanges in my own constituency — four of them. So that means not only . . . and I think it's very infrequently that people call collect. Most of the time when people want to communicate with my constituency office, it's on their bill. And so there is a whole bunch of calls out there that relate to doing business with my office that doesn't come up and isn't apparent on my bill.

So with all the telephone exchanges we have in rural Saskatchewan, and our desire to communicate more effectively, I think this is a good approach to the problem. But I would like to see more analysis done but I would . . . Where Glenn left off, I think we haven't



got all of the analysis because we can assume that there is a lot of constituents who are paying for the cost on their own bill.

**Mr. Swenson:** — I'd like to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think it would show up as a negative in *Public Accounts* because the benefit is to the constituent. In many case . . . I have 10 exchanges, and we have always accepted collect calls, but by and large they just pick up the phone and they phone. And any direct cost benefit goes back . . . I mean that's to the guys that pay our salary, so I'm not really worried about that. I think you should split the items. There's a lot of issues surrounding MLA constituency offices because of the large parameters.

No. 4 is more direct, except I believe there should be one item added to there. You're only dealing with three entities in no. 4, but I believe cabinet ministers' offices should be included in no. 4, and I think we should talk about it and bring in some technical people for no. 3.

I believe Eldon's right on this, that there are people out there besides SaskTel. And until the issue of cross-subsidization in the Crowns particularly is solved one way or the other, I think legitimately the other people that play in the telecommunications industry would feel affronted if we did not at least analyse what is available, because it's not only cost, as Eldon said, it's the ability to access a service, and there are some pretty far-reaching areas out there.

And that's why I have two different cell phones. I have a SaskTel number and I use a Cantel one because depending on where I am in that huge expanse out there called Thunder Creek, one or the other can give me service, but not both in some places. And I think it's important that we understand that you have to be able to communicate cost-effectively and efficiently. That's my recommendation, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll pass. I think most of the comments that I've made or that I would have made have been raised. I think it important we have more information on these items so we can make a . . .

**Mr. Upshall:** — I agree. I've been elected for seven years, and despite the fact of encouraging people to call collect, I may have one a month. Like there's very little collect calling.

But on the other hand, I think we should have some, as Mr. Hagel said, information from actual bills without names because, for example, I mean the record-setting \$18,000 phone bill from the member from Shaunavon, maybe we could offset that if we had a 1-800 number. That might have been part of the problem there. So if there can be a cost-saving measure in that way, I think we have to know that. So I would suggest that we defer these.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I'm going to separate them. I have a motion on the floor of deferral by Eldon on item no. 3. I'm going to separate these two. On no. 3,

do I have a seconder to that motion? Rick? Any further discussion on item no. 3?

Question: all those in favour of deferring item no. 3? Opposed? Carried.

Item no. 4.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — I'm just wondering whether this type of line covers incoming toll free calls only, or if it can be used for outgoing toll free calls as well with directive no. 4, installation of 1-800 telephone lines and caucus lines.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Incoming.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Just incoming. Okay, thank you.

**Mr. Swenson:** — In our caucus office we already have a WATS (wide area telephone service) line, which is outgoing. Your 1-800 are usually . . . that's incoming. I mean we all just hit 3, and anywhere in the province you go, that's already covered off as efficiently as you can do it, I think.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. So do we want to defer item no. 4?

**Mr. Swenson:** — I'll speak to it and then the members can make up their mind. But I really believe that we should add cabinet ministers' offices to this. And that's just from my own personal experience. There is really no provision . . .

**The Chairperson:** — They're not within the board's responsibility.

**Mr. Swenson:** — They're not?

**The Chairperson:** — No.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Even though they're in this building?

**The Chairperson:** — That's right.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Who pays for their telephone?

**The Chairperson:** — Executive Council, I believe.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Each department picks up each cabinet minister's office? So I guess we'd bring it up in Executive Council estimates?

**The Chairperson:** — Probably.

**Mr. Swenson:** — That's bizarre that people can't phone in here, because right now you can.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I would support deferring this for the same reasons we already discussed. But it's not clear to me what in the world the recommendation means here. It seems to me the recommendation means nothing, when I understand it here.

**The Chairperson:** — Well that the caucus offices be

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permitted to install a 1-800 telephone line and that the caucus offices be responsible for the installation, monthly rental, usage, and advertising costs. In other words, you take that out of your caucus grants.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Right. So how is that different from right now?

**The Chairperson:** — Well do you have a 1-800 number?

**Mr. Hagel:** — No. But why couldn't we, and do this now? This sounds to me as though the recommendation doesn't mean anything.

**The Chairperson:** — What we want to make absolutely clear, is if you install it, we're not going to pay for it. We're not going to take that out of LAO budget.

**Mr. Hagel:** — But that's currently the circumstance, is it not?

**The Chairperson:** — No, not necessarily. And if there's some doubt as to whether or not it should be, that's why it's here. We have been asked or questioned as to if they install it, whether we would pay for it. And we're saying no, we're not going to pay for it. If you want to install it, you take it out of your grants.

**Mr. Hagel:** — I see.

**The Chairperson:** — We're not going to pay for it.

**Mr. Upshall:** — You're not going to pay for the installation.

**The Chairperson:** — We're not going to pay for the installation, we're not going to pay for advertising, and so on.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Once again, isn't the issue of what saves . . . I mean currently, as I understand, the way phones operate in here in a caucus office, that the Legislative Assembly is picking up some of the cost.

**The Chairperson:** — I guess we're picking up all of it.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Now if they're picking up all of that cost at current, why not pick up the cost of 1-800 if that cost is cheaper than what you're doing right now? That should be the argument. If you currently got a bill for X hundred thousand dollars and you can switch that to 1-800 and make a difference, then okay.

So to me this is wrong-headed, the way you're going here. Because why would anybody want to do this and install this when you're already getting the other stuff paid for? What I'm saying is there's a way here to get a cheaper service to replace what we've got.

**The Chairperson:** — You make a good point. Well, okay. Maybe it's all the more reason to defer this. We're going to have to have another look at that.

**Mr. Hagel:** — But this one can't be accurately analysed because we're dealing . . . I think there are collect calls being received.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — There's between about \$20 a month to \$200 a month between the three caucuses.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well then I guess then we need the same kind of analysis as to industry experiences when you own 1-800, and then consider that in the context of expected increased accessibility.

**The Chairperson:** — Could I have a motion of deferral? Moved by Eldon, seconded by Glenn. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Okay, amendments to directive 2, 10, and 6. Now let me see. I'll need some direction here. I've lost the details of directive no. 2. Section 2(a) be amended as follows:

Constituency office telephone expenses including purchase, installation, maintenance, repair, rental, long distance, and directory advertising.

Several members have opted to purchase telephone systems rather than renting their unit through a company. The purchase of a system should be acceptable in the same manner that the purchase of a fax machine . . .

Oh, that's the problem. Okay. Some, instead of just renting their telephone, are now purchasing their telephones.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I'm proposing today, and it'll come up later on the agenda, a solution to MLAs' constituency office equipment and how that might be dealt with. I guess it's been a decision that the government in some fashion . . . and I'm proposing today that Property Management Corporation be the vehicle to assume ownership of MLAs' equipment and so on.

We've got, I guess, 66 MLAs, 66 offices, maybe even more because some MLAs have split constituency offices — rural MLAs. The government in some form or another is going to be assuming one pile of I guess mismatched equipment — desks, calculators, coat racks, fax machines, whatever.

And it's going to cost the people of this province, in my estimation, a considerable amount of money to take back this equipment, then deal with it through salvage, you know, to get rid of it, and then to stabilize a set list of equipment that will go to MLAs' offices. If this is going to be adding to the computers and the coat racks that we're going to be getting back, then I have, I guess, a bit of a problem in terms of how do you deal with salvaged telephones, which is what we're going to be getting.

**The Chairperson:** — But, Eldon, that doesn't change the reality that they're doing it.



**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well my point is this, Mr. Speaker. If there's a way to avoid 66 different phone systems coming back to Property Management Corporation, if Property Management Corporation assumes the ownership of these phones, then I would think that's reasonable. I guess I'm almost contrary to my argument with respect to the presentation to the board from SaskTel vis-a-vis the telephone systems and the inclusion of private operations out there.

I just don't know why we would want to have purchased telephone systems that will end up going back to the government at the end of this term. It's going to be, to my mind, pretty substantial in terms of the cost. And I don't know how we decrease that cost. I mean there's going to be just one mess of stuff coming back, and my guess is it will have no home within government. And are we adding to this?

**The Chairperson:** — I don't think there's any . . . well I don't follow your argument personally, but I don't want to get into that. You and I have talked about this before.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying is, if you've got 66 phone networks that were purchased by an MLA, by 66 MLAs, that then, when these people cease to be MLAs, become property of the Government of Saskatchewan.

**The Chairperson:** — All right. I'll give you a good example. Herman Rolfes is not running again. The next MLA that wins in Herman Rolfes's constituency — I would assume my office will be open during that election — will simply walk in and continue.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well can I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, if the next MLA doesn't want your phone network and would prefer to rent from SaskTel, what then would Property Management Corporation do with your phone system? Or would that MLA . . .

**The Chairperson:** — My system, Property Management Corporation would have nothing to do with it because it's property that's been purchased from SaskTel and would go back to SaskTel.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — No, no. But if you would rent from company B, if you would purchase from company B and that MLA didn't want the system that you bought from company B, where would this go?

**The Chairperson:** — Well let me put it this way. I am not in favour of purchasing at all. I think it should be all rented. I have made this known since I became Speaker, that I think that's the best way to go. Some MLAs have ignored that, have gone out and purchased it.

All this does is clarify what is actually happening with some MLAs. Now if we don't want to do that, that's fine; then just simply say no, we won't change it, and we'll leave it. But some MLAs have gone out and have actually purchased it.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — So what does this do then?

**The Chairperson:** — It legitimizes what some are doing out there.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Speaker, since the directive came down last year, MLAs still have gone out and purchased new equipment?

**The Chairperson:** — I'm not certain if they have since that time. The thing is, Rick, yes, I mean when it come to cellars, some are lease to purchase. So what we're saying then, if they're doing that, let's legitimize it.

**Mr. Swenson:** — They're lease to purchase with the end owner being the government of . . . or the whatever. Because I know that's the way mine is, it's with Cantel and on an ES (extended system) system, but instead of me being the guy at the end of the day, it's whoever. I don't . . .

**The Chairperson:** — That's correct.

**Mr. Swenson:** — That's the way people wanted it, so that's what they're going to get. When I'm done, that ES system goes back to whoever.

**The Chairperson:** — That's correct.

**Mr. Swenson:** — . . . make a boat anchor out of it or whatever the hell they want; that's not my problem.

**The Chairperson:** — I think it has to be clarified to MLAs that . . .

**Mr. Upshall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if it's cheaper for the government — and I think this is what my concern is — to rent a telephone system as I rent my SaskTel OKI phone, or to purchase it. But I think we should have an analysis of whether it's cheaper. Because even if . . . it may be cheaper to purchase it and throw it away at the end of the day than it is for me to rent it for ten years, or seven years, as I have. So I don't know; like to make a decision I'd kind of like to know that, and I don't know that right now.

Logically I agree that we should rent. I mean I believe that because it's easier, but it may be more expensive. Could we do a cost benefit or have SaskTel or Cantel or somebody or an independent expert get us some idea of whether it is cheaper? So SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) has 66 phone systems, like Rick says, maybe make a boat anchor out of them, but it might be cheaper to buy them direct. I don't know that. But we should know that to make a recommendation.

**The Chairperson:** — Well let me just say, as far as SaskTel is concerned, I think if you rent to purchase, it probably is cheaper than just renting. But I'm not overly concerned about that if it's SaskTel. Because I know in the final analysis it goes back to the province again. So I'm not overly concerned.

And if we can avoid the problem as Eldon is concerned about, of having all of this stuff coming back at the end, then maybe straight leasing may solve



the problem.

**Mr. Upshall:** — It would solve the problem, but my point is, is it cheaper?

**The Chairperson:** — Who cares, if it goes back to SaskTel again?

**Mr. Upshall:** — No, but Cantel.

**The Chairperson:** — Well that's a problem, if we go to Cantel.

**Mr. Hagel:** — I think we're probably . . . as odd as it might seem, I think we're probably not in a position to make a good decision here. We've been making a number of changes over the past couple of years, intended to increase the accountability and the public confidence in accountability of MLA expenses.

I have never, ever said that I thought that meant it was going to be cheaper; in fact we can all point to many cases where in fact it's not cheaper, it's more expensive. But it comes about because of a concern with the principle of accountability.

So it seems to me that renting is the most accountable, because as soon as you're done being a member, it goes back to where it came from. However I guess I don't want to be foolhardy in my rush to be accountable, so much so that although it's totally accountable that we're ending up with a higher cost to the public purse. Because that's part of, I think, my obligation and responsibility as well. And so even things like that look simple, you know, that look straightforward on the surface because they don't end up with phones going on the phone pile somewhere. I'm not sure what in the world you do with used phones. The reason that . . . I think there's a good reason that you don't have a used-phone market somewhere, because nobody wants them.

But I know there were some of us who have made decisions related to cellular, if not in our own office, who concluded very clearly that it was less expensive to the public purse to purchase than it was to rent over a longer period of time, particularly if it was a decision made early in your term.

So there are factors that come in: is this in the first year of a term; is it in the fourth year of a term? I mean the responsibility of the expenditure is significantly different depending on when I'm making that decision.

So I guess then with my colleagues here, who have expressed some concern about being able to make what looks like on the surface a straightforward decision . . . and it is straightforward if all you care about is accountability. Then it's straightforward. But that's not all I care about, and for that reason I would want to have a little . . . I would want to have a recommendation that better reflects the criteria that go into making a responsible decision that is both accountable but also financially responsible.

Although I share the bias towards the use of SaskTel equipment and services because that is a Crown corporation owned by the people of Saskatchewan, we still need to be financially responsible. So I guess what I'm making here is an argument for deferral of decision on this item, because I don't think it's as straightforward as it looks.

**The Chairperson:** — Well fine with me. I mean these things . . . the problem, these things are here is because MLAs are constantly phoning in, may we do this, may we do that. And under the directives it's not sure just what they may or may not do.

I will say this off the record. I hope in the future, in future, boards would delegate a little more authority to the chairman of the board to make some of these decisions. Then most of these things would not be here. The chairman would deal with them and get them out of the way. And I think they could be handled . . . many of these have to be done on a case-by-case basis. And because we don't have that authority and it's not that clear, they have to be brought back to the board. And then yes, I agree with you, Glenn, then all these circumstances come in — what do you do in this case? What do you do in that case? — you know, and you can't always meet those. So that's the difficulty that you have.

Okay, we have a recommendation for deferment. Do I have a seconder for that? Rick. All those in favour? Agreed. Deferred.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Mr. Chairman, can I clarify what it is we're to do in the meantime then, like what are we to bring back?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well I can't tell you what to bring back . . . (inaudible) . . . We moved it, but I . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — What do you want to know?

**Mr. Hagel:** — But the criteria are this: that I'm open to perhaps a recommendation that maybe one of the options is that this be a matter deferred to the chair of the committee to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Maybe that's the sensible way of doing it. Or perhaps there are definable criteria, depending on the period of time since the last election.

I use the example, Gwenn, that if I am purchasing something in the first year of a term and expect, say, on average a four-year term, it may be predictably less expensive to the public purse to purchase. And then you return and it goes on a pile somewhere, but there's been less expenditure involved — which is not defensible if I'm making that decision in the fourth year.

And I'm just not clear in my mind. So I guess what I'm asking is for the Legislative Assembly Office that deals with these to see if there is some clear criteria or guidelines that can be recommended. And maybe what you do is you look at that and you conclude it's just too much of a shemuzzle; that can't be done. You end up coming back with this as the best



recommendation or recommendation that it be referred to the chair of the committee. Because you can't define the criteria easily and they have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis to make sense of them. Is that helpful?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, may I ask, do you have a specific problem with a specific member in terms of that member's desire to purchase? I mean has it become a problem in any area? Like I'm not sure why this is here.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — The directive currently allows for fax machines and cellular telephones to be purchased.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Right.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — It does not deal with the telephone in your constituency office.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Has a member asked . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Some have asked to purchase them because it's cheaper.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well I would only say this. We're going to be dealing with the whole gamut of services to MLAs — desks, computers, office equipment, faxes. And my suggestion would be that we disallow purchases at this point.

**The Chairperson:** — That's all the board has to say.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well then, Mr. Speaker, I so move that we disallow the purchases of telephone systems.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, it's been moved by Eldon that the board disallow the purchase of telephone systems in their constituency office. Seconded by Rick. Any discussion?

**Ms. Ronyk:** — These are all from members.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes. All of these.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Does that satisfy the Clerk and the Speaker and the board?

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, yes. Absolutely.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Very good.

**The Chairperson:** — Now we have a direction. Okay, now no. 10 is just that board minute no. 1 of '94 froze the indexing of grants for '94-95 fiscal year. This decision was not applied to directive no. 10, that the last sentence of directive no. 10, section 2, be amended as follows:

This adjustment will not apply for the fiscal years beginning April 1, '92, '93 and '94.

And I believe that was the intent of the board to do that. It just was omitted. So could we have a . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — I am willing to move that if we need that. Is this something that we just carry forward even though there isn't currently an independent member, so that if there should be then it's clear as to how you'd note it? That's the purpose?

**The Chairperson:** — Yes.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Okay, I'll move it.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Second? Eldon. Agreed.

Directive no. 6, constituency secretary. That the title . . . As you know, I think this comes directly from the constituency secretaries. They are doing more than just secretarial work and they would like to be I think referred to as constituency office assistants. And that's all this recommendation does.

Moved by Glenn, seconded by . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — No, I'll move that "secretary" be replaced with the term "constituency assistant" as opposed to constituency office assistant.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay.

**Mr. Hagel:** — And I note with interest, Mr. Speaker, it's the term that the members use. And I note with interest, when referred to later on in some of the papers, in fact the term that's used is constituency assistant. Let's make it the one everybody uses.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, so it should be constituency assistant.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Yes.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Rick, you still second that?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Yes.

**The Chairperson:** — Any discussion? Agreed.

Okay, expense allowance issues. This again, ladies and gentlemen, has come from several MLAs, and I agree with the problem I think that they're having out there. As you know, we have frozen the constituency office allowance for some time and many of them are finding it very difficult to meet all of their expenses out of that particular allowance and would like to take some of their . . . or use their communications allowance for some of what I think are fairly legitimate communication expenses.

So what this does is that the repair of computers and related equipment be allowed to come out of communications allowance. Not an increase at all. It's not an increase. Some members don't have sufficient funds in their constituency office rental allowance to pay for the repair of their communications equipment. And so it's not an increase. So that's the recommendation.

Any discussion?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Just a question. I've got a replacement sheet and I can't for the life of me figure out the difference between the replacement one and the first one.

**The Chairperson:** — Don't worry about it. Just get rid of the first one.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Oh, okay.

**The Chairperson:** — There's just one word.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Oh, okay, all right. It's not essential.

**The Chairperson:** — No, no.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Chairman, this is redundant, if we talk about SPMC handling this stuff. I mean they'll fix the damn stuff.

**The Chairperson:** — Won't fix it right now.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well you never know.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I mean it's . . . Look, I don't care what the board does with it; just give me some direction.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well I think we should defer this until we find out what SPMC is up to.

**The Chairperson:** — Doesn't want to deal with it, that's fine with me.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Agreed.

**The Chairperson:** — Deferred.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Yes.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Moved by Eldon that this item be deferred. Do I have a seconder?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Which item?

**The Chairperson:** — Item no. 6.

**Mr. Hagel:** — 6(1)?

**The Chairperson:** — Well 6(1) and (2) or just 6(1)?

**Mr. Hagel:** — It's got nothing to do with (2).

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Only (1).

**The Chairperson:** — Only (1).

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Yes.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, that item 6(1) be deferred. Eldon moved it. Rick seconded it. Any discussion? All those in favour? Item is deferred.

I hope you people deal with your MLAs on these now.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well no, no. Mr. Speaker,

let me comment to that.

**The Chairperson:** — No, we're going to simply say . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — No, no, I want to comment to that.

**The Chairperson:** — No, we want to say no to them. I mean we will say no to them.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I want to comment on your comment.

**The Chairperson:** — All right you go ahead. Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — We will deal with our MLAs. I think one of the issues that we need to deal with here is flexibility, quite clearly, and we want to allow that for members.

But you know in terms of changing rules as to what's allowed from which expense allowance, I don't know that that is what we want to be doing. I mean these allowances were put in place after, I think, a lot of thought and I don't know that we want to be expanding what these . . . you know the mandate, I guess, of these allowances.

I understand that rent is higher in some areas. No one argues that. And I mean you can make 50 different arguments for 50 different requests in terms of expanding these. I don't think that this board would be taking a responsible position to be expanding the allowances. And quite clearly we'll deal with our MLAs.

**The Chairperson:** — No expansion, I want to make that very clear, there's no one more dollar spent.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well then . . . I'm not talking about one more dollar spent. Like I don't understand how these requests come to the board. I don't know what this means.

**The Chairperson:** — Simply. I'll give you an example: individual A pays \$1,000 a month for rent; doesn't have any additional money to repair her equipment out of office rent. She has however some money left over in her communications. She wants to be able to use part of her communications to pay for her computer and her fax machine and photocopy machine out of her communications allowance. So she's going to cut back on her communicating with her people in her constituency because she needs that money to repair her equipment that she needs for communicating. That request has come. We've said no, under the present circumstances you can't do that.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Agreed.

**The Chairperson:** — She has said: take it to the board; I want that item to be taken to the board. And that should be the prerogative of MLAs to do that, and that's what they have done. So that's why it's here. And if the board says no, that's fine, and we would simply say no to them; the board has clearly given us



directions that no, you can't do that. Period. That solves the problem.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I guess what I'm asking, Mr. Speaker, are you the advocate of the MLA? I mean are you . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Not the advocate.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — . . . lobbying on their behalf? Because your comment's not well taken.

**The Chairperson:** — I'm sorry, but if you take them that way, you're pretty damn sensitive this morning.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Very sensitive.

**The Chairperson:** — All right, fine with me.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Chairman, I think we have a communications problem.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, because the darn machines aren't fixed. No, no, just a joke.

**Mr. Swenson:** — We're dealing with how this board functions. I presently am the leader of my caucus. Ms. Haverstock is the leader of her caucus. Two cabinet ministers, the caucus chairman for the NDP caucus sitting here. I don't have any she's in my caucus so obviously this problem emanates some place else. But if some of my members have a problem with the way things function, I ask them to come to me as their representative on this board and vent them. I want to sort the wheat from the chaff before I come here and take up members' time.

Now if we've got members that are independently going to you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the position you're in, and baring their soul as to the wrongdoings of the directives, then I think it's incumbent upon you to contact the lead person in each of the three parties represented here so they can deal with that issue before we take up members' time with it. That's the communication problem.

If one of my members is badgering you unbeknownst to me, then I'd like to know about it. And I'll sit him down in my office and we'll have a chat about the facts of life. And if after that chat it is deemed that it is sufficiently warranted to take up members' time here, I'll bring it to you, sir.

**The Chairperson:** — I appreciate that Rick, very much. But let me . . . and I'm not going to divulge the individual here, but the letter that was sent directly to me was carbon copied to the members of the board. And obviously the members of the board should have been familiar with it, and if not, they didn't read their literature. And it was carbon copied to the members of the board and I will talk to those members after the meeting.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Could you bring it here today?

**The Chairperson:** — I have it here but I don't want to

divulge. I will take care of it by talking to the members of the board after the meeting.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Mr. Speaker, it may have been, but unless I missed my mail I've never seen anything remotely connected to this, and I don't think other members have either. So maybe it was cc'd and never sent.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I will talk to the members concerned who were carbon copied.

**Mr. Upshall:** — I agree with Rick. I mean if our members have a problem, the rules are laid out before them. It's not for them to come to you and say, can I do this, can I do that? All you do is hand them the rules book. If they have a problem they have to come to their members. Rick's members come to him; Lynda's members go to her; and our members come to us. And that way we have the case to present before this board. Otherwise, I'm like Eldon. I really don't know what we're talking about here. I mean I kind of know, but I don't know if I know for sure.

Same thing with every one of these things here. And my point being, if you're going to bring as chair, every question or request that comes to you as an agenda item, we're going to spend an awful long time on things we don't really know about. I think you just send members back to their caucuses and say . . .

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Mr. Chair, I guess part of what I was under the understanding from how you framed many of the things that have been brought here, is that they're actually requests for clarification, of staff. Is that not correct?

**The Chairperson:** — In many instances that is correct, but in other instances the members really feel that the policy of the board and the directives that are there really are not meeting their needs and would like to have the board change those.

So they ask the chairman of the board who sets the agenda, by law, to put these on the agenda. And that is what has happened. And until that Act is changed, The Legislative Assembly Act is changed, I don't think the chairman of the board has any right to say to an MLA, no I won't put that on the agenda.

That however does not mean that the members or the chairman shouldn't say to the members, have you contacted your members on the board. And if those members then refuse to listen to her or his request, should that member then be cut off to have access to this board? I mean that's the question I think we have to ask ourselves.

And just because members of this board think that it's an illegitimate request, does that mean that that member should not have the right still to petition the board? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well that's a question I think we have to ask ourselves.

**Mr. Swenson:** — That is, Mr. Speaker, in all due respect, that is a fairly extreme position for a member



of a caucus to take. That may in fact occur. I have some very independent-minded people around my operation. But most of them would take the opportunity to discuss with their representative on the board certain issues, and I . . . it's a question of time. We all know how difficult, Mr. Speaker, it is to get us together, and we have a lot of weighty things . . . I mean Ms. Haverstock's right.

The bigger issue of an independent analysis of how we do our business is very important and we need to sort of move along and get to that. And if individual members are trying to whipsaw this committee through you and your staff, I find that offensive.

The chain of command is to the folks in the shop down there. And if they don't understand or are uncomfortable, it goes to Marilyn and then it goes to Gwenn and then it goes to you, sir. And if we're uncomfortable, it comes here. And then it is dealt with. I understand. Am I wrong? Is that the chain of command or isn't it?

**The Chairperson:** — That's basically it. That's correct.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Okay, if one of my members, and I request this of you, has a problem with the way things are being run and doesn't agree with what this board then would do, please notify me.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I will do that. But I would also ask the three leaders here, who are here, to please make that plea to your caucus.

**Mr. Swenson:** — It'll be done today.

**The Chairperson:** — Make that plea to your caucus. Because some members get pretty persistent with staff. Why can't this be done? Why can't I have this? You know, and I simply say to staff, look, you carry out the directives, then you send them to the Speaker and I talk to them and I simply say, well go back to your members. And that's what they do. But if some people still insist . . . French, for example, is a good one. Been around for two years now and I have put it off and put it off and put it off and you haven't seen it on the agenda, but it comes back and comes back.

So anyway, let's . . . Where are we now? I've lost track. No. 2.

**Mr. Hagel:** — . . . we voted on 6(1). I don't think we have voted.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, all those in favour of 6(1) deferred. Agreed.

Item no. 2. The members have the option to pay up to \$250 per year for educational events attended by constituency assistants, such as training seminars, classes, etc. Constituency office allowance funds would be used to pay for these expenses. That's the recommendation.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I support the recommendation in principle. I don't support the

specific number, 250.

**The Chairperson:** — Oh, change it then.

**Mr. Hagel:** — And I guess my view is that it should not have a number. MLAs have the obligation to operate their offices and as part of that, meeting the obligations, we will all hire staff who will have a whole range of backgrounds and experiences.

And even in the years that I've been, I think there's a dramatic change in the demands of the constituency office today as compared to 10 years ago. But in the seven years that I've been a member it has changed substantially. And the combination of skills and experiences that is needed for a good constituency assistant is virtually impossible to find from a person who has all of those before they come to you.

And I'm just . . . as a simple example, the ability to use computers in modern technology for communication purposes combined with the human skills that are involved in being a caseworker for constituency problems. It's a unique combination.

And I think members have the obligation to provide the offices in a combination of ways, including the expertise of their staff, and I would support this recommendation with, in terms of specific wording: to allow members the option to pay from the allowance; and eliminating the words, "up to \$250 per year." We all have limits, and the allowances are our limits, and we have to make priority judgements as to how we use those allowances.

**The Chairperson:** — Would this be satisfactory: That members have the option to pay for educational events attended by constituency assistants such as training seminars, classes, etc. Constituency office allowance funds should be used to pay these expenses. Would that be satisfactory?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Yes, where are you? Oh, on the bold . . .

**The Chairperson:** — No. 2. That members have the option to pay for educational events.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Yes, I'll move it with that wording.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, the recommendation, I guess . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — I was actually on the next page of the recommendations. Where I was . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, you're right, and that's where I should have been. That constituency office allowance be amended to allow members the option to pay for educational courses attended by constituency assistants. Okay?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to make the recommendation, in light of the discussion we've just had in here, I would like to take this entire 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 — all five of these, and have a very frank discussion with my caucus on these issues before I quite in good



conscience, do anything with them in here. I'd like to vet them by the very people who they affect.

I have not had one request from any of my members to discuss their constituency assistants taking courses. It has never come up. And maybe I'm a dummy or I'm too authoritarian or something — or they're scared of me — I don't know, but I'm not hearing this. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to vet this by all of them so that I know that none of them are the ones that are causing these problems.

So I'll move that, Mr. Chairman.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll second that. I have not had representation, and I don't know that any of the government members have had representation from caucus members in terms of purchasing doughnuts in constituency meetings, and I frankly would want to spend a little time talking with some of the caucus before we would move on these recommendations. So I'll second Mr. Swenson.

**The Chairperson:** — Could you repeat the numbers? Oh we have them here. Oh no, that was going to be . . . I guess we have two motions on the floor. One moved by Hagel, but I didn't have a seconder to Hagel's motion, did I?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, perhaps we could deal with Mr. Hagel's motion and then move on to the . . .

**The Chairperson:** — I did not have a seconder to Mr. Hagel's motion, so I'll be asking for a seconder. If no seconder then it's dropped.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Which motion is on the floor?

**The Chairperson:** — Hagel's motion.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I'll second Mr. Hagel's motion.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, I have a seconder to Mr. Hagel's motion. Any further discussion? Okay, the motion reads that:

The constituency office allowance be amended to allow members the option to pay from the allowance, for educational courses attended by constituency assistants. The course must be relevant to the job duties of the constituency assistant.

That is the motion.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Not this 250, as I understand it, Glenn.

**Mr. Hagel:** — The intention is that it is not limited to party or constituency office operations. If you send your staff on a course, that you can use that part of your allowance. Right now we don't have a part of allowance to give approval to do that, and I mean that

may be okay in the 1700s.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Can we agree then that we change that wording but still allow these packages to be vetted by caucuses? Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** — We've got to deal with this motion first.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Which is on the floor?

**The Chairperson:** — Yours is on the floor. Now we deal with that motion first. All those in favour of Mr. Hagel's motion? Opposed? Carried.

Now, Rick, would you move your motion?

**Mr. Swenson:** — I move, Mr. Chairman:

That items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as amended, be deferred to allow caucus consideration of the items.

**The Chairperson:** — All right. Second? Mr. Eldon.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Yes, okay . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . What are you referring to Rick?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well you wanted the wording changed, which I think is most appropriate on no. 2.

**The Chairperson:** — All these items, he's saying 1 to 5, that they be deferred. Even though we've changed the wording of your motion, it does not take effect. It is deferred for caucus consideration. Is that correct, Rick?

**Mr. Swenson:** — That's correct. And Glenn, in good conscience, whether it's 250 or your wording, I can't honestly have a reason to vote today on this without talking to some people. I don't know if it makes sense or not.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, we have a deferral motion and a seconder. Any discussion? All those in favour? Carried.

Ladies and gentlemen, the next one is the parliamentary education video. And I'm not sure if you had an opportunity to have a look at this. We have really done very, very little other than the brochures that have been put out by the Legislative Assembly to give members and other people an opportunity to see how the legislature works and how laws are passed and how elected members work.

Other provinces have taken a fair initiative in developing some kind of a video that can be used by schools and by MLAs and by the public at large to I suppose broadcast and to advertise our roles, a role of democracy, the role of the Legislative Assembly, and so on.

The proposal here is to produce a 20- to 30-minute video for the 95th anniversary, and that this video would be available to the public and to the MLAs and



to the school boards that could be used.

The budget implications are between 40 and \$50,000. We have had various departments who have committed themselves certain sums of money, to a total of \$26,000. What the recommendation is that we take another \$15,000 from the Legislative Assembly as a partner in developing this video for the 95th. It would be done for the 95th anniversary. At the last page on this particular topic you will see what the content of the video would really be like.

So the recommendation is that we proceed with this, and really we need a decision from the board on this today. If the board says no, fine; then that's the end of it. But we can't delay it very much longer because if we're going to get it done for the 95th anniversary, then we have to start working on it and we need to make sure that we have sufficient time to meet the deadline.

So that is basically it. It certainly also would be a very helpful tool. I think many of the new MLAs who came in in '91, it would have been a very helpful tool for them to sit down and view a video like this to have a better understanding of the role of the MLA; how laws are passed; and how the Legislative Assembly really functions.

And so as I say, we are about one of the few provinces that hasn't done anything in this area for years. And also we have I think one, two, three, four, five different departments who are interested in sharing the costs of this and doing something.

This is something, I must admit, has been a personal goal of mine over the years to try and get something like this done. And I make no bones about it that I am very, very supportive of this and I think it can enhance the role, not only of the legislature, but of the MLA, if it's well done.

So my recommendation is that we join as a partner in this and try and produce a 20- to 30-minute video for the 95th anniversary. Just a recommendation.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, the money that would be . . . is this budgeted? This is all within the Legislative Assembly's budget, the portion we would . . . or would we need an appropriation of incremental funds here?

**The Chairperson:** — Well we have \$5,000 for print, which we would divert to this. We would be short \$10,000.

Let me say to the members that I am not quite satisfied yet with the contributions made by some of the others. If the board says yes to this, I would pursue further additional sums of money from those who have said that they would contribute, and maybe from some other sources, to see whether or not we can cut down the costs from the Assembly.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I would be very much in support of this proposal. And I guess I

would want to see, and hopefully it could be, if we could have incremental funding from other areas, if we could find money from other areas or from the budget itself, from the budget of the Legislative Assembly office. There may be a place we could find that internally. I don't know that I would support an extra expenditure. But I'm sure somewhere in the little nooks and crannies of . . .

**The Chairperson:** — I want to be very clear. I don't think that's possible. No, I don't say that . . . we're running into additional costs on other items that I . . . I'm not sure. We will try. I would certainly try and do that, but there may be additional costs. I don't want to mislead the board.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well I support the concept. And if we can do it without incremental funds I would support the motion.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I'll certainly do that, but I couldn't guarantee that. If it's conditional, then I want to make it very clear that I might not be able to meet that.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — What's the deadline?

**The Chairperson:** — Oh we really have to get going on this because some of these others are . . . the other departments and stuff are asking for, you know, for commitments. And I think also if we're going to meet that deadline, Eldon, we would have to . . . we should really get going on it very shortly.

Also the person that's been heading this up for us is leaving, as you know. Bob was heading this up for us and he . . . so the new person would have to get himself acquainted with this again.

And if the board . . . You know, I think it's a good concept, by the way. But if the board feels that, look, at this particular time we can't do it, I can understand that.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — Well I think it's a really exciting project and very positive, and I certainly support it. I firmly believe whatever you do, you do well. I don't know if \$40,000 or 50 is what is necessary. I would like to proceed with this and come back with some more firm costs. Like what are we talking about and the cost associated with it, because I see we have Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation for \$5,000.

And I believe that if we go back to these groups after we have something sketched out in a little more detail, we'll be able to find more money. But I think it's necessary. I think the timing is very, very good. And I do want to say though, let's not produce anything second rate. If we do it, let's do it well and make sure that we get enough funding to do it.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, Carol, I agree with you. If we can't do it well, we shouldn't do it. We shouldn't do it.

But my understanding is, we must start in April and it's going to be tendered. So I think that there's no doubt



that we should come back to the board with more detail on this. But the principle is what we want today. The board agrees in principle to . . .

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — I just wanted to say one other thing. We have some very good local production companies in Saskatchewan we support through SaskFILM, and I think there's a good partnership that can be established here. We should be aware of that.

**The Chairperson:** — Sure. And if you can give us some names and stuff, we would really appreciate that too. Lynda, you had your hand up before?

**Ms. Haverstock:** — No, I just wanted to indicate that I fully support this undertaking.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Any further discussion on it?

**Mr. Upshall:** — I'm sorry, I didn't hear what Ms. Haverstock had to say.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — I said I fully support this . . .

**Mr. Upshall:** — Two points, Mr. Chair. First of all, you said we were agreeing in principle. Well I think by supporting this, we are voting for \$15,000, are we not?

**The Chairperson:** — Well not necessarily 15; 10 probably. And as I said to Eldon, I'll give him my guarantee that we'll try and find it. But I can't, you know . . . But as you well know, all budgets are very tight and I'm not sure that we could find it.

**Mr. Upshall:** — . . . we would be going back to the other departments, like Department of Education, \$2,000. I think that's extremely low.

**The Chairperson:** — I agree.

**Mr. Upshall:** — And the second point is that if we're going to do this — and I was just trying to . . . I couldn't remember seeing it anywhere, the distribution of the video. I think it should be in every regional library and I mean accessible to the education system with the least expense as possible.

Because if we're just going to make a video, nobody's going to see it if there's just half a dozen.

**The Chairperson:** — But hopefully we could sell it. I mean I don't think under the 40, \$50,000 that we can do that, the distribution. But hopefully the Department of Education and some of these people would, you know, put it in their budget and say okay, look, this is a very worthwhile project. But under the 40, 50,000, we can't do that. But maybe in future budgets we could have a look at it — next year's budget — how we can distribute it. But not for the 40, 50.

I'm just told the Department of Education will distribute it through the schools at their expense.

**A Member:** — Okay, that's great.

**The Chairperson:** — I wasn't aware of that detail. Okay. Did I have somebody move that?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I'll move it.

**The Chairperson:** — Eldon moved it. Seconded by? Lynda. Any further discussion? All those in favour? Carried. Thank you.

Now where are we? What's the next item here? Okay, no. 8. This is the inventory policy decisions. And I don't know just how we're going to deal with this.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I passed around I guess an information item. Or I guess basically if the board can agree to this, what I think is probably the easiest way to handle the furniture initiatives and how we would deal with putting together the MLAs' constituency offices, given the fact that the government has assumed ownership of the equipment, what this does and what the recommendation would do, would turn over the ownership to the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation of all existing equipment.

The other part of it is that as I understand it, some members of the legislature purchased equipment with personal loans, personal loan guarantees, to supply their offices. The directive now would indicate that it's certainly not property of the members of the legislature, but government property. And this would assume the government would buy this recommendation, assume the liability of those outstanding personal loans.

I understand there's 32 MLAs, if I'm right, that have outstanding loans, and I guess there's an aggregate of somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$34,000. And this would allow for Property Management Corporation to assume that as well. So I think it would sort of simplify the way things are handled.

We've put in, on the second page you will see we've put in a list of what in fact might be equipment that members of the legislature would get under the new system. It allows for computer, typewriters, fax machines, dictation devices, cell phones, photocopiers, calculators, furniture.

And I guess what we would want to do is put something together that would be in line with what members of the legislature received as equipment from Property Management Corporation in the building. That would be pretty much similar to what would happen in the constituency offices and it would be fair for all members. And so I put this proposal forth.

**The Chairperson:** — Eldon, could I just ask one question for clarification purposes. When you are saying that SPMC assume the outstanding loans, am I correct in saying what you mean by that though, is that the MLA would be paying those loans off through their . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — From their existing



allocations.

**The Chairperson:** — From their existing allowances.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — There would be no incremental funding to members of the legislature. They would be paying this out of their existing funds and the goal would be to ensure fairness. If a member has a monthly liability of so much, that that would then just be assumed by Property Management Corporation but would come out of their existing allocation.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Eldon, did you move that?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I move that, yes.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — I guess I just want to have a little clearer understanding. What would be the date of assuming a liability then?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — You know, I guess we can do it at the beginning of the fiscal year. I haven't put a recommendation in, Lynda, in terms of date, but I think we would want something in place soon. We may be able to do it for April 1. Do you have any preference?

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Well, no. I'm just wondering, if it's this year, what implications does it have on the budget of SPMC? Anything?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — None on the budget of SPMC basically. It would be minimal. I think the only budget implications on SPMC would be the \$34,000 that it would be assuming in terms of the personal loans that members of the legislature have incurred.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Because basically everybody's got their equipment.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Yes, I think for the most part a lot of members have. But I know in some instances members have gone out and bought a computer system and assumed a personal liability over a period of time to pay for it, you know perhaps a 10,000 or \$5,000 computer system that you couldn't take monthly from the allowance that's available.

So what this would be doing would be Property Management Corporation would assume the loan and the amount for the repayment would come out of the existing funds that the members are allocated. To my mind, it would make no sense for members of the legislature to have a personal liability for government-owned equipment. And as per our directive, the equipment is now the property of government. So that's basically what this is doing.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Eldon, is there any way . . . when I looked at this thing again, I'm not sure we should designate, like a 486 or something like that. I mean I don't know what government does as far as . . . but you know all that crap is obsolete in six months almost sort of thing, and I don't want to lock ourselves into something that . . . because a lot of stuff is leased now

and under a renewal process. You know even printers . . . I mean, there's a printer today that was purchased . . . They all change. They get cheaper actually as you go along so . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Rick, what we tried to do here was just put together sort of a list of, you know, of the kinds of things that would be supplied to members of the legislature. The federal government supplies members of parliament with office equipment. They get a list of whatever it happens to be, enough to equip and run a constituency office.

I don't think that any of this is cut in stone, and if members of the legislature . . . and certainly there's no pressure on us now. All of the members of the Legislative Assembly have existing offices. I think where this might come into effect would be probably after an election or if in fact there's a by-election where there's no equipment available.

But I think what we should do and I think I'd want to do, consulting with you, is to sit down and determine a specific list of what we think would be required to staff an MLA's office. This is not a cheap proposal. Let me make this as clear as I can. I don't think we're saving the people of Saskatchewan any money by implementing this process, because it will be expensive. I think MLAs have been very diligent. And I look at some of the constituency offices that I've been in, I see used desks, I see old IBM computers, as are in my office in Prince Albert; I see three MLAs in Prince Albert, as an example, working out of one constituency office.

And I don't think this is going to change the fact that MLAs will bunch together, but if we start standardizing the equipment, I think you'll see it is going to be fairly costly. And so I think we have to be very diligent in terms of how we put this together collectively, how we put the list of equipment together. I don't know that we want cadillac offices out there. We want members to be able to serve their constituencies with adequate equipment.

We put this forth just as sort of a guideline in terms of what we might put out there. But I think we need to spend more time on putting this list together in terms of requests from Property Management Corporation as to what they would supply. But I guess basically we're dealing with a concept here.

**The Chairperson:** — I have Carol and then . . . Rick, you spoke to this, didn't you?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Yes, I was just . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Yes, I wasn't sure whether . . . I forgot where I was at. Okay, Carol and then Glenn.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — I think the principle of it is right. If the equipment goes back to the government at the end of our term in office, then the liability should be assumed by SPMC.



My question is what Eldon was just talking about. There are at least two items on this list on page 2 that I know I don't have in my office in my constituency, so I guess we have to be very careful about whether we're going overboard in providing cadillac offices or whether we draw some basic minimums. And anything above that then, if the member wants to purchase it, then they can own it. But let's not get too ambitious about providing everything under the sun. Let's just keep it as simple and as straight as possible.

So I have some concern about page 2 and the list that we have there and how far it goes.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I like the idea. I think we're definitely heading in the right direction here. And also, as I said earlier, I recognize that accountability doesn't always mean cheaper, and that may be one of the implications here.

What I'm not certain of is what the implications of this proposal would be on the constituency office allowance that members have currently. Because the constituency office allowance hits a number of things. We are currently considering and I support, that from constituency office allowance there could be expenditures related to staff training. We just dealt with that just moments ago and will be considering . . . I'm going to be proposing that staff costs related to travel . . . (inaudible) . . . from constituency office allowance. The proposal that was put here that we haven't dealt with isn't workable in my view. But we also . . . members will have, obviously, office rental of space that comes out of that allowance and then into the mix then is equipment.

Now what I am not certain of is whether this has . . . when I look at the items that are described as note 1, would there be a charge to the members' allowances that would go then . . . would be billed from SPMC? And if that's the proposal, then we'd need to have some decision as to what that might be.

Some of our urban members who are in ridings in which it's hard to get relatively low cost space, have got a problem. Some of our rural members who, in my view quite justifiably, feel a need to have more than one office — they may not both be open full time but they've got to be rented full time — have got some . . . you know, may have some problems. And with the change in the constituency boundaries I mean some of the rural ridings will be getting larger and we may find some of the MLAs finding themselves quite legitimately, you know, feeling the need to have three constituency offices in ridings.

So these are things that all have to be part of the mix. And what I don't see here . . . I do see reference to a \$100-a-month fee related to copier, but I don't have any notion as to what the monthly fee may be for the provision of the other equipment to MLAs. And maybe we don't need to deal with that right now because we're kind of dealing with it in principle and I support the principle very strongly. But before we can get down to crunchy decision making, we have to have some notion about the real-life implications, vis-a-vis

members having to live within their constituency office allowance of \$1,198 per month.

And maybe, Eldon, if you could give us some notion as to what's been thought about there.

**Hon. Mr. Laudermitch:** — Well I think what we're talking about is a constituency office, as opposed to two or three. Members of Parliament represent — let me use Prince Albert-Churchill River as an example — almost half of the land mass of this province and they are supplied a set of equipment from the Government of Canada to operate a constituency office. I don't see this as being three offices in rural Saskatchewan or two in urban Saskatchewan. I see this as being "a" office.

I think we need to sit down and collectively determine a specific list of what goes into these offices and there was no attempt here to deal with the specific list. I think it's going to take some discussion with the caucuses, with the opposition and the third party and the government caucus, in terms of what we actually put in. There is no . . . I don't think there's any urgency to developing this list.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Is the notion that there would end up being a package out of which members could select and this one costs you so much a month and so on? Because members with our current structure still have to be able to juggle their office operations in the context of the total monthly maximum.

**Hon. Mr. Laudermitch:** — Yes, and I think that's fair enough. It's all that we can determine. I don't think that we want to put anything . . . you know we don't want to build rigidity into this thing. What we want to do is allow members to serve their constituents. That's the goal. That's the reason the constituency offices were put in place. I think that's what we need to do.

So I think working with the Clerk and with what information we can get from the federal government in terms of what they're using, there may be other provincial administrations that are using this process, that we can maybe draw on their experience. We can put together a specific list of what will go to members, how it will be delivered. Basically what we're dealing with here is the concept that the equipment is owned by the government, not by members of the legislature, which was the case and which we have changed, and we're trying to deal with liabilities that members had assumed for equipment that now no longer belongs to them.

And I think what we would want to do is have the Clerk bring a recommendation to us, you know based on whatever research that might be done, in terms of a specific list as to how we would deal with a new member coming in in a new situation. We were I guess fortunate in some respects, the member from North West assumed the equipment that belonged to the former member, Mr. Solomon, and so we didn't need to deal with it in that fashion; it just transferred to her. But I think we do need to put this in place.



**The Chairperson:** — I still have a . . .

**Mr. Upshall:** — I agree with this. The one thing that I would be concerned about is the definition of office and I don't know, Eldon, if I heard you correctly by saying this would be "an" office, because I'll give you my particular situation. I would defy anybody to get away with their life by taking an office out of either Humboldt or Watrous and that means I'd have to staff, furnish two offices. Now I assume that there will be flexibility in this because there would certainly have to be for many members in the rural to . . . I have to have two offices, and others have to have two offices at two major trading centres.

So . . . is my assumption right? That this would allow for flexibility? Or are my assumptions wrong according to the Chair?

**The Chairperson:** — Well I think your assumption is wrong from what I've been listening to the mover.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well we have an aggregate amount right now of what? \$1,198 a month? Right? And I don't see an expansion of that. Now I think within the context of those dollars we will want to put together offices.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well you might have to have two chairs, one in each office.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I may have to, or I have to have two computers and two photo copiers and two everything.

**Mr. Swenson:** — There must be solutions here because I know Geoff Wilson had an office in Swift Current and he had one in Assiniboia. And he got whatever the Government of Canada decided he would get, and anything else came out of his pocket.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — And that's what we need to look at.

**Mr. Swenson:** — And we need to take those examples. There's people out there that have dealt with far larger ridings than what we're dealing with. And maybe there's some technological things that are available to us now that can solve some problems or whatever. But the public seemed quite comfortable with those MPs (Member of Parliament) and how that processed.

I was very comfortable doing it the old way, because I think the public got the bang for their buck. But they won't accept that any more, so therefore it has to do what Eldon's talking about here. We have to be very firm, I think, on the total, and then be as generous as possible on how members can move things around within that parameter. That's the mood they're in and that's the way we've got to be.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Well I do think that this is one of the reasons why it's very difficult to make a decision sort of out of a context and then have implications later on, so I very much support the idea of flexibility.

Just to raise a case in point, I think the case for rural constituencies has been made very well. But if in fact we experience what we hope in the province to experience, and that is economic growth — in other words, increased activity — then the amount of monies that people are going to be paying per square foot for anything in urban Saskatchewan is going to increase considerably.

If the budget remains the same and people have already, for example, let's say in my case where one would sign a lease agreement and you sign a lease agreement where the amount you're going to pay for rent for your office, for example, goes up proportionately over a four-year period of time but your budget remains the same, or perhaps in some cases may even be decreased, that's something that if you can't predict that, can create real problems for just being able to capitalize on and use your dollars well and use in the proper kind of manner.

So what we have to be cognizant of here is a real sense of flexibility. If what we're saying is that . . . I mean what in fact ends up happening, we have to end up saying, do we never sign a lease for longer than a year? Do we never? You know, that kind of thing. So it's both an urban and a rural problem.

And I think that perhaps this is a bit of an aside from what we're talking about here, but it is extremely important that we remain flexible and thoughtful about this. Because what we decide today sure can have an impact on one year down the road.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Like you will note that this document certainly isn't specific, because there's a lot of things that I think need to be worked out. What we would want to do, I guess, is to have the responsibility of providing equipment for MLAs in the hands of Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. That's probably the most . . . the easiest vehicle to make that happen. That Property Management Corporation would assume the existing assets as per the directive of the board, and that we deal with the outstanding liabilities that members have.

I think what I would like to see is a recommendation at the next meeting in terms of the equipment, maybe a proposed list, that we could sit down and discuss. And you know, I think that would to me make some sense.

**The Chairperson:** — Eldon, could I suggest . . . We have a half an hour; we've got one more fairly big item to consider. Could I suggest a couple of things. One of the things I need to check is with the Act, whether or not this is legal for the board to do. I don't know if you've checked that or not.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — It's been checked.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. But I do want to check it also to . . . there may be some question as to whether the board has the authority, of whether we have to move an amendment to the Act to do this. And I would like to have legal counsel check that out for me.



But having said that, does the board . . . do we want to leave this just as a recommendation today? I don't know just how to proceed with this. Do we want to accept it in principle with, you know, conditions attached? How do you want to proceed with this? I don't know quite . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well I'd like the board to accept it in principle in terms of Property Management Corporation dealing with the MLAs' offices, you know, the office equipment and putting all that together. I think the one thing that I would like the board to agree to today is if the Property Management Corporation could assume the liability of the members of the legislature. You know I don't know why we would have MLAs with personal liabilities on equipment that's, by directive of this board, owned by the government.

And so I would move that Property Management Corporation assume the liabilities, the outstanding liabilities, of the members and . . .

**A Member:** — Of those 34 members.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I think it's 32, if I'm right. And there's an aggregate of, what, \$34,000, if I'm right?

**The Chairperson:** — Eldon, yes, I have two concerns about this. Number one, what about those members who don't want that to happen?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well I think it should be voluntary. If they want to keep their personal liability, that fine. I don't know why . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Some are very small, eh, and may be paid off in a few months or . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — But for those that do, you could work that through, Gwenn, with them and with SPMC.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Now secondly, I wonder if you want to add on — just so it's clear for members — that this will come out of their existing allowance.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Exactly.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Can we add that on? So that it's very clear that it's not an advantage to those members.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Agreed.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, do we have a seconder for that? Lynda. Any further discussions?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Could we just have the motion then?

**The Chairperson:** — Oh. Why does somebody always have to make it difficult for us?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Details, details, details.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. That SPMC assume the liabilities of MLAs with an aggregate value of 34,000 and that the — what's the word I want? — the cost — it's not the cost that I want — that the loan payments come out of existing MLA allowances.

All those in favour? Opposed? Unanimous.

Oh yes, I assume, ladies and gentlemen, that if the MLA now is paying \$200 a month or \$300 a month, that they will continue to pay that and not would suddenly decrease it to \$2 a month or something.

I might be a little paranoid, but . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — No, no, Mr. Speaker, we appreciate . . . if it's paranoia, we appreciate it.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I'll tell you, MLAs will be coming back and I want to make absolutely certain.

Okay, we have one other issue and that is, I believe . . . not just one, there are a couple of them. One is the . . .

**A Member:** — We didn't have a motion on that.

**The Chairperson:** — Oh, did we not vote on that? Please remind me.

All those in favour of that motion?

**Mr. Hagel:** — What is that motion?

**The Chairperson:** — Oh, gee.

**Mr. Hagel:** — All those in favour of that stuff.

**The Chairperson:** —

That SPMC assume the liability of the MLAs to an aggregate of 34,000 and that the loan payments come out of existing MLA allowances at the current rate that they are paying.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Just a point of clarification, Gwenn. Will the 34,000 look after it? That's the figure I was told. Is that . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — I think it's probably more than enough, but maybe we don't need that figure in there.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Why don't we remove the figure? Because we need it covered.

**The Chairperson:** — It's very close there.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Okay, sure.

**The Chairperson:** — We can take that out. That's no problem.

Mr. Hagel is going to ask me again what the motion is.

**Mr. Hagel:** — There's one way to prevent that, Mr.

Chairman.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, to have the vote.

**Mr. Hagel:** — No, no. Read the motion.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay.

That SPMC assume the outstanding liabilities of MLAs, and that the loan payments come out of existing MLA allowances at the current rate that they are paying now.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — And that it's voluntary. We need that.

**The Chairperson:** — Oh yes: "And that this be voluntary."

Yes, some MLAs may not want to.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — We would work on the wording when we do the minutes and then you approve those minutes when it's time.

**The Chairperson:** — Yes, sure. All those in favour? Carried.

I'm told that I've got to revert back to something else here that I forgot.

Oh yes, we didn't vote on the agreement in principle on the motion moved by Eldon. Was that seconded by somebody? I think, Lynda, you seconded that, didn't you?

Okay. All those in favour? Here we go again.

**Mr. Hagel:** — I hate to be an annoyance in the interests of democracy, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I don't know what his motion was from that far back.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well then how can we vote on . . .

**The Chairperson:** — Well it's that SPMC . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Now you know why our caucus meetings last for days. Mr. Hagel is a detail person.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay.

That the board accept in principle that SPMC assume the responsibility for providing new equipment for MLA constituency offices.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I'm wondering if we want to reword that.

**The Chairperson:** — Well that's what you have here.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I think:

That SPMC assume the responsibility for equipping constituency offices.

**The Chairperson:** — MLA constituency offices. Okay.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Take the word "new" out.

**The Chairperson:** — I just took what the minister had written here:

SPMC assume responsibility for providing equipment for MLA constituency offices.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Agreed.

**The Chairperson:** — Do you understand that, Mr. Hagel?

**Mr. Hagel:** — That I understand.

**The Chairperson:** — And that was seconded by Lynda. All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Just to be clear of what we just voted on here then, that didn't include the second and third items? Well I guess we've passed one related to the third. It didn't include the second item then?

**A Member:** — We already passed that.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — That's already been passed.

**The Chairperson:** — Well it's that the whole proposal that has been presented here. We will take care of that in the minutes as long as the members know what we . . . I mean that SPMC provided, SPMC assumes responsibility and SPMC accepts the current liabilities of MLAs. That's basically what we have decided.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Well let me just raise my . . . let me just mention the reason I ask, Mr. Chairman, and you can give me a simple yes or no.

**The Chairperson:** — Or maybe?

**Mr. Hagel:** — Or maybe. Probably maybe.

If by assuming ownership we mean that what MLAs currently have becomes the property of Property Management Corporation now, and we implement a . . . what we're looking at is some kind of a fee schedule where we're continuing to pay for equipment that we've already paid for, but we're continuing to pay it to SPMC because now they own the stuff that we have now, then I'm opposed to that.

And this says: assume ownership of all the existing equipment housed in the constituency offices.

**The Chairperson:** — The board still has to decide the effective date, and that has not been discussed here. I, I guess maybe by mistake, thought that some time in the future SPMC would assume ownership. They won't assume ownership today will they?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — No. I think that's what we want to bring back.



**The Chairperson:** — Exactly. That has to be considered.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — We're agreed to the principle. We've already decided that the Government of Saskatchewan through some vehicle, owns the equipment that sits in the existing MLAs' offices. We've determined that. We have determined that the government will supply equipment so that offices can function. Right? So what this is, in my opinion, is agreeing to those principles. So what we will have brought back to us is a list of what will in fact go into the offices when we supply a new one. Okay?

**Ms. Ronyk:** — We would also need to agree on whatever the administrative structure and accountability and so on would be, and I'm wondering if you would tell me who I should work with in SPMC to establish the process.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — You can work with Mr. Woodcock. He's aware of all of this and he's willing to put together the details with you.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, is that fair enough? I think this has to be dealt with at subsequent meetings. I mean we can accept this in principle and now we've got to work out, you know, everything . . .

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — All the details.

**The Chairperson:** — That's right.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — There's a lot of details to work through.

**The Chairperson:** — Exactly. Okay? Can we go to the next item?

Okay, the item no. 9, members' expense allowances. And, ladies and gentlemen, this is really for the guidance of MLAs, and you know this is put in our handbook, in that little black handbook, so that MLAs can turn to it and say, okay . . . If an MLA says well may I buy this or may I buy that, if they'll look at this and say okay, does it meet these principles; and if they say no it doesn't, then they should possibly say well no, I can't do that. It's really only a guide and this has been in our handbooks for years. It's updating the . . . I think it's in our handbook right now, isn't it? It's just to update it as to decisions that we have made. I don't think there's anything in there that is new to MLAs.

Have you had a look at those?

**Mr. Swenson:** — I'd like an explanation again, and I don't know where it fits here. Maybe B would be the place. Can you or Gwenn or somebody sort of lay out for me what is considered partisan, and what's allowable and what isn't allowable? Give it your best shot, because that one's always sort of mystified me a bit.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — I'll give it my best shot, yes. And this isn't something that we are called upon to judge in terms of administering members' affairs. Members

basically, for the most part, must make those judgements themselves.

But the advice that we give to members is that . . . it's expected that members, when they're communicating with constituents, whether it's through your newspaper or newsletter or wherever, are going to take policy stands; you're going to criticize the stands of the party on the other side, whether it's government or opposition. So in that sense, the content of your messages may be political, it may be partisan. I mean it's going to be clear where you stand, that you favour this or you don't favour something else. And there's no question that members have to be able to do that. That's your purpose. You are to communicate your views, your ideas, to your constituents.

I think where the traditional line has been drawn is that the public funds provided through the Legislative Assembly are not to support your particular party. It's not to benefit your party in a party sense. And therefore it's party labels that aren't allowed, it's party fund-raising, and party membership drive efforts that aren't permitted to be financed by the public funds. Those should be financed by party funds.

**Mr. Swenson:** — So something like . . . you can't solicit funds for a political party on Legislative Assembly letterhead or something like that.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — That's right.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Okay, I think I understand. What's the recourse, what's the reasonable process that this Assembly should follow in those situations? If that is done, if a member violates this, what is the proper procedure?

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Well I guess it's a judgement call as to whether somebody has violated it. And I would expect that ultimately it would be decided right here at the board. This is where . . .

**Mr. Swenson:** — Is it a board issue, or is it a privilege issue, or is it a legal issue? I mean what . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Well it would normally come up when a member submits a communication expense claim. If the member asks us, you know, this is what I've done, is that acceptable or not. Sometimes we see the actual ad and sometimes we don't. It's not required that we see it, so they're often paid without us knowing what was in it. So no judgement is being made as to whether it's acceptable or not. Therefore, if it goes out into the newspaper and some other member sees it and objects, I suppose then the thing to do would be to find out whether it was paid for out of a MLA allowance and then to raise it, I suppose initially with us, for information as to whether that would normally have been accepted in the ones that we see, and then to raise it with the Speaker and the board. I don't think it's so much a legal thing as it's a directive — a matter of complying with the directive.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Is this new? I'm not sure



why we're dealing with this.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — It's in the communication directive. The communication funds are not be used for . . . this whole guide and principles thing. Well it's not been reviewed by the board before. These are the things that we think of usually at time of orientation of new members. We're looking for ways to give members some guidance, because there's always questions, specifics about well, could I do this or could I do that?

**The Chairperson:** — Eldon, the problem is with new members that have been elected, I think, since '91. And they're asking the people who have to administer this, well where does it say that I can't do that? Where does it say that I have to . . . everything I do has to benefit all my constituents? There is nowhere it says that. And then we have to say, yes, but that's always sort of been accepted as a principle that what you do out of public funds has to serve all of your. . . And if they had these guiding principles, then they could look at those and say, oh yes. No, it doesn't meet no. 1, so I can't do that.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like the opportunity to share some of this with our caucus. And I think other members might, you know, might just feel the same. And I'd like to see this come back at a subsequent meeting.

I think we had some communications problems perhaps between your office and mine. I had a 10:30 commitment and I see the meeting was scheduled to 11.

**The Chairperson:** — We knew that. We knew you did, but we thought that the meeting could continue without the presence of Mr. Lautermilch.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I don't know if that can happen. But before I leave, if I could just make the comment with respect to one of the agenda items, the independent commission.

**The Chairperson:** — Could we just have a decision on this? Do you want to defer this?

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Please.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. The seconder? All those in favour? I know you want to make the comment on it but I . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — I think we're deferring it for discussion. And I just ask that one thing be considered by members when we're referring it to our caucuses. I'm troubled by the second "all" on item B. I'm not sure that that needs to be there.

**The Chairperson:** — Well I mean, take it back and give us what you think should be the wording and then I think we can discuss it at a subsequent meeting.

**Mr. Hagel:** — Yes, Mr. Chairman, I simply wanted to point that out to other members.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, all those in favour? Deferred. Who seconded that? I think Rick did. Yes, I think so . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well if you leave then the meeting can't continue.

**Hon. Ms. Carson:** — I have people in my office right now.

**The Chairperson:** — Well okay, I can fully understand that. But what I'm saying is that if you leave, Carol, I can't continue.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Do we agree that the issue of the commission will be dealt with at the next meeting? At the top of the agenda?

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, I have Lynda.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — If I may, in response to what's been raised, item 10 was I think discussed at the January 6 meeting that there would be a commitment for Rick, myself, and Eldon to meet. And what I would like to recommend, Rick, is that that meeting take place as soon as possible, and that we in fact come forward with a draft report for the board to consider, that that would be more expeditious use of our time.

And the key components I think that were supposed to be decided were duties of this commission, the composition or membership, the time frame for reporting, as well as the contents and scope of report. And I would simply recommend that the three of us get together and do a little work before we come back here to talk about this.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Eldon and most of the other people would like to see that happen too.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay, ladies and gentlemen, before we . . . I know people have to leave but, Rick, I'm not quite certain on the constituency office rentals, you were going to put that on?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well yes, there was the issue surrounding whether they should have leases or . . .

**The Chairperson:** — The reason I'm asking is so we can maybe do some work on that.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Yes, I would like a directive that members provide either a copy of the lease or a written explanation by the lessee of the terms of the lease contract. Because in my own case, I have a month-to-month agreement with some folks in Winnipeg who own the Hammond Building, and it has never been a problem and it's never been a problem paying it or anything else. But the situation has arisen and I think it's important for members to understand that this board give the direction for that. And I'm sure all members will comply — and most probably already have — but that this board send out a directive that they either provide a copy of the lease or a written explanation by the lessee of the terms of the contract.

**The Chairperson:** — Okay. Now, ladies and



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gentlemen, can I get some direction, can I get some direction as to when you want to have your next meeting and how soon? I know that the three people have to get together. Can I leave it with those three people to contact me as to when you would like to have your next meeting?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Can I move that motion, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairperson:** — Which motion?

**Mr. Swenson:** — The one I just made.

**The Chairperson:** — Oh, well absolutely, if you wish, sure.

**Mr. Hagel:** — And I'll second it.

**The Chairperson:** — Go ahead. We need . . .

**Mr. Swenson:** — . . . exactly what I said.

**A Member:** — Isn't that what we've already done?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well it hasn't had our formal directive of it . . .

**Mr. Hagel:** — It hasn't been done by directive.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Not by directive.

**The Chairperson:** — Are you sure?

**Ms. Ronyk:** — What you're saying is what's required is a copy of the lease or a letter explaining the terms from the lessee which is . . . Is that the member or the landlord?

**The Chairperson:** — That's the member.

**Ms. Ronyk:** — The member. Okay, well that's different.

**The Chairperson:** — The other instruction we had was from the lessor . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, but that was the instructions, I think. We got a letter from the lessor. But if members want to change that to the lessee . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Well as long as it says who the money is going to.

**Mr. Swenson:** — I mean I signed my name on that thing, and as I understand it, that holds me responsible for everything I do in life. So I mean if I send you a letter that's a lie and I sign it, aren't I liable?

**The Chairperson:** — Oh, sure you are, sure you are. No, no, I don't care. Rick, I don't care, I was just asking — last time it was lessor and now we're saying lessee — I don't care.

**Mr. Swenson:** — I'm responsible, I'm the lessee, I'll sign it.

**The Chairperson:** — No, just a minute. We have to make a decision on this. If Carol leaves, we can't make a decision. All those in favour of that . . .

**Ms. Ronyk:** — Who's the seconder?

**The Chairperson:** — Glenn Hagel. All those in favour of that recommendation? Carried. It's basically what we had agreed to before but it wasn't done on a motion.

**A Member:** — By the board.

**The Chairperson:** — By the board. We've carried it.

**Mr. Upshall:** — . . . with regards to the next meeting?

**The Chairperson:** — Yes.

**Mr. Upshall:** — I would suggest that the . . .

**The Chairperson:** — I think those three people should.

**Mr. Upshall:** — Three people, after they have met, inform you and then we . . .

**The Chairperson:** — That's correct. Can we have a motion of adjournment? There are lots of them. Thank you. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

March 3, 1994

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**CORRIGENDUM**

On page 22 of the *Board of Internal Economy: Minutes and Verbatim Report* No. 1 January 6, 1994, right-hand column, third paragraph, the word "excluded" should read "included".









