



Standing Committee on Crown Corporations

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON CROWN CORPORATIONS
2001**

Hon. Andrew Thomson, Chair
Regina South

Kevin Yates, Vice-Chair
Regina Dewdney

Graham Addley
Saskatoon Sutherland

Greg Brkich
Arm River

Yogi Huyghebaert
Wood River

Carolyn Jones
Saskatoon Meewasin

Warren McCall
Regina Elphinstone

Don McMorris
Indian Head-Milestone

Peter Prebble
Saskatoon Greystone

Brad Wall
Swift Current

The committee met at 11:08.

The Chair: — I'll call the meeting to order.

I'd like to welcome everyone here for another set of meetings of the Crown Corporations Committee. For the information of the committee, we have Mr. Goulet substituting for Mr. Prebble for some of this morning. Those are the only substitutions I have at this . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I have a second substitution and that is Mr. Elhard substituting for Mr. Huyghebaert. There we go.

We have two items of business today to deal with. One is the business plan for the committee. We had in our discussions this, I guess, late spring talked about a set of meetings this fall to deal with a series of reports that were still before us as we try and catch up.

And the second is the election of a new Chair. And I don't think it makes any particular difference in the order we do this in, so why don't we deal with the future business of the committee first.

Mr. Wall: — Would it be in order to consider an amendment, a motion to amend the agenda for today's meeting?

The Chair: — Certainly.

Mr. Wall: — Then in that case, Mr. Chairman, thank you. I'd move that the agenda for the November 21, 2001 meeting of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations be amended by adding the following:

3. A discussion of SaskEnergy's recently announced investments in Chile and Mexico and SaskTel's recently announced investment in Medicine Hat, Alberta and now (I guess as of today) Newcastle, Australia.

And if I might just very briefly speak to that motion. I think it was yesterday . . . actually it was on Monday that I first heard of SaskTel's investment in the Medicine Hat company, All-Knight Security. Late last week, Friday I think, is when SaskEnergy made their announcement regarding Mexico and Chile. And then today we have this latest very significant announcement by SaskTel in terms of their intention to invest some millions of dollars in Australia.

And yesterday I had a chance at least in the morning, in light of these current affairs, to send off an e-mail to you. I know you're the outgoing chairperson, and depending on the order that we do things today, you may or may not be participating in today's deliberations.

However, I wonder if the committee would consider us having a discussion of that, understanding that it would be nice to have some officials to do that as well. And I think we'd be more than willing to wait if they could make it over. Obviously these are very current issues, and so we would make that . . . I would make that motion.

The Chair: — I was quite convinced that you were going to move that we delete the election of a new Chair, but I'm a little

disappointed, but that's okay.

We're just going to have Viktor make a set of copies of the motions so we have it in front of us. I should tell the committee that I do have here an e-mail from Mr. Wall yesterday morning that I received while I was in cabinet very much outlining the points that he had mentioned and asking if we could schedule officials. Obviously we weren't able to schedule officials for today on short notice, and the work plan of the committee should be discussed first.

Let me also just review while we're on that, very quickly, the items that we had agreed to out of our second report. And I think the second report has been circulated to committee members.

Just to review that we have dispensed with our review of SaskEnergy, SaskTel, Sask Water, and CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) for the years under review that have been referred to us at this point. We have still remaining: Information Services Corp. for 2000; SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) '98, '99, and 2000; SaskPower, '98, '99, 2000; and Opportunities Corp. '98, '99, 2000.

In addition, the legislature has moved a referral motion to us to deal with the Provincial Auditor's report as it relates to those items that we had previously discussed. Is there discussion on it?

Mr. Yates: — Yes, Mr. Chair. I have some concerns in debating or discussing an issue without the appropriate officials present to discuss the issue. And the officials were unavailable today as the Chair has indicated, so to have any meaningful discussion about these investments without those individuals present is not possible.

So I would think that it's not reasonable to actually discuss those particular investments today. And as there have been numerous investments over the years by both SaskTel International and SaskEnergy, these aren't necessarily significantly different than previous investments, there will be ample opportunity in the future to discuss these particular investments when we can have appropriate officials available.

The Chair: — Is there other discussion?

Mr. Elhard: — I think the presence of officials might be significant if we were in a position to discuss the nuts and bolts of the investments, if we needed financial details, if we needed very specific information. But I don't think that necessarily that their non-attendance here would preclude a philosophical discussion of the propriety of and the necessity of taking provincial monies, monies generated from taxpayers in this province, and spending them abroad.

There is a small investment in Medicine Hat, I guess, when you compare it to the . . . what I understand is a \$160 million announcement this morning. The Medicine Hat investment pales by comparison at a mere \$1.1 million.

But you know, for some of us living in southwest Saskatchewan

who have for years said to this government and the people of this province that we are losing people and investment from southwest Saskatchewan to Medicine Hat on a daily basis, now to find one of our own Crown corporations investing in Medicine Hat because they finally have realized that it is a growing and thriving market — you know, I find that particularly odious, frankly.

We have a very strong concern about the propriety of an investment of that nature in Medicine Hat. I think it sends the exact opposite signal that this government would want to send to the people of this province.

I think that that particular investment should be seen as undermining the government's own stated belief that investment opportunities in Saskatchewan are sound and that we are in need of a more positive attitude about our own economy and our own environment and how it's important that we invest in Saskatchewan. It seems that SaskTel doesn't even believe the government's view by having undertaken this investment in Medicine Hat.

So I think from a philosophical point of view about the propriety of these types of investments, we could have that discussion here today.

The Chair: — Just for assistance to the committee, remind the committee — and Mr. Elhard, I know that you're a visiting member to the committee so you may not be aware of it — the committee only has the authority to deal with items referred to it by the Assembly. This is not a free-ranging discussion that we have on philosophy in this committee, but those debates are frankly better served in the House itself. And I know that we have had many a good discussion during private members' days about this.

This committee is not the place to do this kind of a discussion. If you are asking, as Mr. Wall has suggested, that we deal with specific significant transactions or deal with specific reports, that would be in order. But general questioning is not . . . this is not the forum for that.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually you made the point that I raised my hand to address in terms of the philosophical discussion and its place in this committee. And I was going to make the point that we could only review matters referred to us by the Legislative Assembly and that there's ample opportunity to have those philosophical discussions in the legislature.

Mr. McMorris: — Just in . . . I guess in light of the statement made by the Government House Leader in the paper just recently that the work of the legislature is being done in the committee structure, this committee hasn't met since June and this is our first opportunity to do some of that work. I question why we are unable to.

The Chair: — If you're asking me about the scheduling of the committee, I can tell you that Mr. Wall and I have not had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Yates who serves as the ad hoc steering committee to arrange a time to meet. And I believe that we had talked . . . in fact, that's the very purpose of this meeting today is to sort out the work plan for this fall.

So as we move . . . once we have dispensed with this item, we can move on certainly to talking about the future business of the committee.

Mr. McCall: — I would just like to re-emphasize the fact that on the second report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations to the legislature in terms of future business of your committee, of our committee here in the Crown Corporations Committee, there's Information Services Corporation 2000, that report to deal with; Saskatchewan Government Insurance, the reports for '98, '99, 2000; the SaskPower Corporation reports for '98, '99, 2000; and the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation '98, '99, 2000. Now certainly there is ample work that has been agreed upon in the work plan for us as a committee to sink our teeth into.

And I would just, you know . . . We've got reports here that date back to '98. And in January of this year they will be four years behind. So in terms of having enough to keep this committee wisely occupied and engaged, I think we've got plenty on the work plan to sink our teeth into.

There's also the matter of the Provincial Auditor and the Spring Report of 2001. Now due to the overlap and the question as to the propriety of the spring reports going to either Public Accounts or to the Crown Corporations Committee, that report as well has sat unexamined by a committee of this legislature and committee of MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) since the spring.

And so again to reiterate, we've got plenty to do and to keep us, you know, serving the people well in looking into these matters as an oversight committee.

Mr. Wall: — Probably the most credible argument against the motion that I've made here this morning was the one you made, Mr. Chairman, as regards the officials' unavailability. If they're not available, they're not available.

And we could obviously have a discussion as the member for Cypress Hills has pointed out, and I think it would be in order of the committee. These are significant transactions and there's not just the details of them; there is the philosophy of them that I think it's worthwhile for any standing committee to speak to. In addition to that, the member for Indian Head-Milestone has rightly pointed out that your own House Leader has said that, well the business of the legislature — including the philosophical debates I think that the member for Cypress Hills highlighted — well they can take place in the committee. And now we have committee members saying no indeed, they can't take place here; we're only going to deal with the hard numbers.

Fair enough. If the officials aren't available, perhaps it would be better to find a time and wait for them to become available. I happen to think — although one-day notice is short, admittedly — that those officials are accountable to this legislature; that, at the very least, the government could send a signal to the Crowns that says, look, I mean you folks report to us. These are very significant transactions that have occurred. They are the subject of much debate across this province in terms of overseas investment and out-of-province investment, especially in a competitive community like Medicine Hat.

Having said all of that, maybe we should go ahead and deal with this motion as it's clear it's going to be dealt with. And we may have then maybe a more . . . a compromise that's more amenable to members of the committee then.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was going to suggest that in fact we deal with this issue and then talk about a work plan and within that work plan look at how we can accommodate some of those needs you have.

The Chair: — Okay. We have had debate. I simply want to remind the committee of rule 100(1) as is outlined in our orientation and perhaps I can get the actual wording of the . . . rule 100(1) of the rules of the Assembly states:

The Standing Committee on Crown Corporations is empowered to review the annual reports and financial statements of the various Crown corporations and related agencies, as received; and the said Committee is authorized to question the operations of the Crown corporations and related agencies for periods outside the year under review.

As such, the motion certainly is appropriate before us. It doesn't change the work plan which is on the agenda and I would suggest then that we proceed to vote on it.

All those in favour of Mr. Wall's amendment as circulated? Down. Those opposed? Motion is defeated.

We have then the . . . Perhaps while we're on the topic then of future business of the committee, we can deal with these items. I would draw to your attention the second report of the Standing Committee on Crowns which has set out four items that we had discussed that we had wanted to deal with.

In addition, I would note that the Assembly has referred to us the Spring Report of the Provincial Auditor as it pertains to the CIC Crowns. And those chapters, I think there are four of them, 11 through 14 — Crown Investments Corporation, SaskTel, Sask Water, and ISC (Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan) — and that we should perhaps . . . My suggestion would be is that we should perhaps deal with the Provincial Auditor's report as a priority item as it is a direct referral from the Assembly and then work . . . perhaps have the steering committee of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and Mr. Wall work to sort out how we would prioritize the other agencies that we had previously discussed in the second report, namely ISC, SGI, SaskPower, and Opportunities Corp.

Now if there are items that the committee on second review would like to eliminate from that list, as we have with STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company) and some of these others, we could certainly do that today or we could leave that to the steering committee to deal with at a future date.

Mr. Adley: — I would suggest that we leave it to the steering committee as you recommended.

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Chairman, not wanting to consider the deletion of any items from that list . . . I think we're comfortable with those, though I would like to have a discussion if I can — and I think it should be by the whole committee, not by the steering committee — of the addition of

some of the items that obviously we've indicated that we have an interest in getting to as quickly as possible.

And in that regard I have another motion that would amend the second report, perhaps, if that's in order or at least . . .

The Chair: — The amended report has been sent to and concurred by the Assembly.

Mr. Wall: — You're right, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: — But in terms of setting the work plan, if you have a suggestion on how we could proceed, we could look at it that way.

Mr. Wall: — Well what we would like to do then, and I can formalize it in a motion if you find that's the right way to go. If not, we can simply just have a discussion. And I would like to put it to the committee, though, in a formal way in terms of a vote. And so maybe I will move, Mr. Chairman:

That the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations review and discuss SaskEnergy's recently announced investments in Chile and Mexico and SaskTel's recently announced investment in Medicine Hat, Alberta and Newcastle, Australia, prior to the end of 2001.

And if I can just speak to this very briefly. I also believe that it's in order in terms of reference of this committee . . . Sorry, I think I'd better initial this here. I also think it's very reasonable. These are . . . I mean I think that all of us would agree, especially in light of today's announcement by Mr. Ching in terms of SaskTel's activities in Australia, these are huge investments on the part of Saskatchewan people, on the part of all of the owners of these Crown corporations. And they come at a time when the Government of Saskatchewan, when the Premier has announced that he's going to have a committee of his cabinet focus on investment attraction. Ironically all of the Crowns seem to be in a hurry, in a lineup to invest outside the province while he has struck this committee.

And notwithstanding the philosophical debate which arguably we'll have in a session — whenever the government, if ever the government calls one again — we can have the discussion on the details of those particular deals, of those investments. I think Saskatchewan people, in the absence of any other forum to ask the questions, would appreciate the chance to, through elected members on the government side and in opposition, ask detailed questions of the Crown officials on these particular deals.

Wayne's touched on the smallest of all three that we've pointed out is the one in Medicine Hat which is particularly odious for us in the southwest side of the province who have for years — and I was the economic development officer for a time in Swift Current — tried to compete with that same city. And it's very difficult to do with some of the natural advantages they have. The NDP (New Democratic Party) arguably have done a lot for the Medicine Hat economy already without investing another million dollars directly into a company there. And I think people would like to know specifically what equity share SaskTel got for that investment and the long-term prospects for that million as well as the much larger investments overseas . . .

so . . . and in Central America.

So again in the interest of being reasonable and setting some reasonable times, I would hope that committee members, even those who would support initially those announcements that have been made recently, would at least want to ask the detailed questions that it is our privilege to ask and our duty to ask of Crowns and do so in a time frame that's reasonable and give us about a month and a half, a little bit less than a month and a half to arrange those meetings with officials. So I guess we would make that formal motion, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: — Before I rule on the admissibility of the motion, Mr. Wall, perhaps you could clarify the specific investments that you're speaking of. The Newcastle one, fine, we understand has . . . I understand some kind of a press release was done today on that.

Mr. Wall: — Right.

The Chair: — The Medicine Hat investments?

Mr. Wall: — That was in an announcement made on Monday, Mr. Chairman, by SecurTek or by SaskTel subsidiary SecurTek, of a \$1.1 million investment in a company called All-Knight Security, which is a Medicine Hat-based security, home-security business . . . well, and business-security business.

The Chair: — And the SaskEnergy . . .

Mr. Wall: — And the SaskEnergy announcement of last Friday. I guess it would be the last sort of 30 per cent that was dealt with in that announcement of, I think it was over a hundred million dollar announcement. But between 23 and \$29 million, I think depending on how much SaskEnergy decides to take in the Mexican interest; are the SaskEnergy announcements from Friday, the expansion or the acquisition of more equity in the Chilean . . . in its previous Chilean option . . . or play, I should say — I beg your pardon — as well as the Mexican project.

These will be no doubt reported in the 2000, I guess it would be . . . well it should be reported in the 2001 annual reports that we're going to receive in a few months.

I think we should debate them now. I think they're significant transactions and would completely be reasonable and I think the Crowns . . . I should say this: SaskEnergy, to their credit I think, have been very forthcoming with information on this particular initiative that they've taken anyway, in terms of their offer to provide information and their stated willingness to be quote "transparent", is how it's been put to me, and we certainly applaud them for that.

And I think they would welcome the opportunity to come before this committee — I won't put words in their mouth — and get into the details of the deal. That's my opinion. I think they would be interested in coming and I think we would be served by doing that.

The Chair: — I have other members who have indicated they're interested in speaking. Let me outline the issue and the

problem that we have before us, Mr. Wall. I'm reluctant to rule your motion out of order, but I think at this point it's likely I will end up doing so on the following basis.

The committee is able to deal with items which are properly before it. That certainly involves significant transactions and the annual reports that have been referred. The 2001 annual reports have not been tabled yet, so they're not properly before us.

We have in place as you know from the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations from 1994, that CIC is to provide by notification of letter within a 90-day period after a significant transaction, a letter to the Chair outlining the objectives of the transaction, the financial implications, and the statement of changed liabilities for CIC and Saskatchewan, and the authority under which such a transaction has occurred. The committee has then gone on to define what significant transactions involved. That includes, obviously, acquisition of major investments or assets, material change in the terms and conditions, divestment of a major asset or investment.

These items — I would anticipate the ones that you have mentioned — may or may not fall into those categories. But at this time I can tell you that as Chair I have not received any such notification of these items and as such have no information to provide to you. Once the Crown corporation provides it as we have outlined — within that 90-day period — these will be circulated to committee members, at which point any member . . . and we'll take this I think as notice now that you were interested in scheduling a meeting to discuss these.

That would be an appropriate process to follow, but at this point we have no transactions, no notification to look at, and no detail. So this is a case where I'm going to have to rule the motion out of order based on the direction we've received on how to handle significant transactions. But we can certainly take as notice of intent for you to request the discussion once the significant transaction report's been received.

Mr. Wall: — I guess I believe, Mr. Chairman, that if this committee and if yourself felt it important enough, steps could be taken here to accommodate the motion in terms of corresponding perhaps even with the . . . with the Speaker in terms of our duties to the legislature.

I also happen to think that this committee can . . . if there's a will on the part of its members, this committee could indeed look at these transactions prior to the end of December. In fact it would lighten the workload that we would then have in the spring. And as you know, even though we were meeting regularly during the session, we still left a lot of work on the table and we still haven't considered many reports from what will be now three years ago.

So we have the chance now in between the session, before the session, to deal with what I can guarantee are several issues — three in particular — that are going to take up a lot of time of this committee. We're going to be asking a lot of questions. So I know that if there was a will to get this done, we could get it done. And we would hope that there would be that and the interest on the part of all members, including the Chair and the outgoing Chair, to facilitate this discussion.

The Chair: — Mr. Wall, I don't want to be argumentative but I am bound to rule on these items as they come forward within the parameters that we've been presented with. This committee is a sub . . . is a committee of the Assembly, and as such can only operate within the bounds of what we've been presented.

There are no items properly before the committee to discuss this and we have dispensed with . . . we don't have the 2001 reports available to us nor do we have the detailed significant transaction reports.

So I'm going to suggest, having made the ruling, that we proceed to talk about how we would structure the rest of our work plan. And I think the question was: do we want to at this point set aside, set a priority of items, or do we want to leave this to the steering committee, the ad hoc steering committee to deal with?

I do believe that the Provincial Auditor's report should be a priority item as it was a direct referral. And as such I think we should treat that as priority 1.

In terms of the other structuring, there was some discussion about going and possibly meeting at Innovation Place to take a look at the Opportunities Corporation's investments first-hand in Saskatoon, and obviously we have two very large corporations that still need to be reviewed, namely SGI and SaskPower.

So is there a preference within that priority, within those items, on how we deal with this or should we leave this to the steering committee?

Mr. Addley: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I agree with the plan that you laid out but I do think that it should be dealt with by the subcommittee that you recommended.

The Chair: — Is there other discussion on this? Are we agreed then to leave this to the steering committee of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and Mr. Wall, to sort out future meeting dates and arrange the priority of business?

Mr. Wall: — I wonder if we could have a bit of a discussion on members' expectations, because we can do that as a steering committee and I certainly have no problem with that, but, you know, I think we should have a commitment.

In light of the volume of work we have in our second report, in light of the coming annual reports for the year 2001 and the continued activities of the Crowns that, you know, will no doubt result in questions and work as well for this committee . . . that we shouldn't at least have a discussion about how often we're prepared to meet right now.

We haven't met since June and you're right, Mr. Chairman, that we haven't spoken to arrange a meeting and that's why we're here today. So why don't we do that now instead of just sort of leaving it open that we will meet someday in the future and that yes, eventually the steering committee members will phone each other?

I wonder if . . . I think we'd be prepared to meet on a fairly regular basis from here on in and I wondered if the government

members will be able to provide some information as to how would they feel about that.

Mr. Addley: — From my understanding we've had a discussion as to . . . or a suggestion that we deal with it through the subcommittee or the steering committee, pardon me, and that's what we're discussing whether we do that. And I think the alternative proposal that the member from Swift Current is talking about is a different suggestion.

So I think if we want to . . . my understanding or my thought behind this is that the steering committee will come up with a work plan, a suggestion and say this is what we . . . how often we want to meet rather than do it in a . . . take up the time of the Crown Corporations Committee. So I think that there is a competing suggestion, and the suggestion is that the steering committee actually do that work.

Mr. Yates: — Yes. I would move:

That the steering committee put together a work plan.

And if I could speak to it now, I'd just like to say that we're on the same page as you are, Brad, but I think that two or three of us can sit down and put together a significant number of days or the next couple of months easier than six or seven can. We also are on the same page in moving this ahead and getting some significant time here, and you know, if not sooner than January, in January.

The Chair: — We have a motion by Mr. Yates to refer the work plan to the ad hoc steering committee comprised of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and Mr. Wall, and I have Mr. McMorris on the list.

Mr. McMorris: — I'd just like to know . . . I certainly think it would be a good opportunity for us to across the table set out a bit of a work plan. I realize that it can be done in the structure of the subcommittee of three. But we've got a lot of work here and it would be nice to hear a commitment across the table that we're going to get this done and not just every Thursday when we're in session when there's competing interests. This needs to be done as soon as possible because there's a lot of other work to be done, obviously within the 90 days or just past the 90 days, if that's the ruling of this committee.

Mr. Wall: — Well I'd obviously concur with the member for Indian Head-Milestone. I can't believe we're arguing about this, frankly. I mean it would take . . . you know, here's the agenda. We've got one more item on the agenda; it's going to be an election of a new Chair. There's not much suspense there as far as I know. We pretty much know that's kind of a . . . that's going to be a slam dunk.

Why can't we have a discussion that'll take 10 minutes? If anyone . . . I mean I'll throw it out . . . well I shouldn't because I guess the motion's on the table. But when the motion is passed — because there won't be much suspense about that either, frankly, Mr. Chairman — well I won't have had the opportunity to say this, to have just simply throw out biweekly meetings as a starting point and pick a date. I mean I don't know why we can't do that. Committees all across the province do that. Volunteer groups do it. They just pick a date together and we all

. . . We have nothing else to do here, folks. So we can all . . . we can do that and still go home for lunch.

Mr. McCall: — You know, before you start waving your arms too much, it's . . . like I . . . In terms of, you know, you've outlined what you mean by a commitment to a certain amount of time before Christmas and certainly after Christmas. And I think from today we recognize on our side of the table as well that we've got a substantial amount of work to get through.

And so as far as, you know, what's . . . what do you mean? And biweekly has been pointed out. So in terms of, I guess, do we want to commit to meet at least three times before the Christmas break? Four times? What do you mean by making a commitment?

And then a couple or three weeks after Christmas? You know, I guess I need some more information on what you mean by that. Because . . . Anyway.

The Chair: — By what you mean, I'm sure you're asking through the Chair.

Mr. McCall: — Of course. Of course I am.

The Chair: — I'm going to suggest that, seeing no other speakers on the speakers' list, that we will proceed . . . that we will proceed to . . . we will proceed to allow Mr. Wall one more comment. Mr. Wall.

Mr. Wall: — Well thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the member for Elphinstone is going to now have to vote against the motion by the member for Dewdney. Because what he's wanting to do here, and I congratulate for him, is have an open discussion. He's got specific questions about what we want. We can take care of that quickly.

There doesn't have to be any concern on the government side, Mr. Chairman, because, you know, they got the numbers. So we could have this discussion. And I'd appreciate what the member for Elphinstone said. I think we can have a . . . we can answer the questions that he's asking of us.

The Chair: — I have a better solution for you. I would think that under the next item we may be able to accommodate a very good discussion between you and the member for Elphinstone and the member for Dewdney. But on this motion I have no other speakers. So we will proceed to the question.

The motion in front of us is moved by Mr. Yates:

That the steering committee be charged with determining the future business of the committee.

All those in favour? All those opposed? It's carried.

The next item that we have in front of us is the election of a new Chair. I must tell you that I have written the Speaker to advise him that I, due to my new responsibilities in the cabinet, will no longer be able to carry on as Chair of the committee. And as such it is appropriate that we elect a new Chair.

Let me just say, personally I will miss the procedural debate.

This has certainly kept my Thursdays interesting, and I look forward to continue on as a member of the committee.

So with that, I guess I leave the chair.

Mr. Kaczkowski: — As the committee Clerk, it is my duty to preside over the election of the Chair, and I will call for nominations for that position now. Mr. Yates.

Mr. Yates: — I'll nominate Warren McCall.

Mr. Kaczkowski: — Mr. Yates has nominated Mr. McCall for the position of the Chair. Any further nominations? Mr. Elhard.

Mr. Elhard: — I'd like to nominate Mr. Addley.

Mr. Addley: — Can I un-nominate myself?

Mr. Kaczkowski: — Mr. Elhard has nominated Mr. Addley to the position of Chair. Any further nominations?

Seeing none, is it agreed that nominations do now cease?

Members: — Agreed.

Mr. Kaczkowski: — I would now invite one of the members to move a motion that Mr. McCall be elected to preside as Chair of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations. So we'll start with Mr. Yates.

Mr. Addley: — Can I withdraw before we acclaim that?

Mr. Kaczkowski: — You can decline the nomination, yes.

I'll just read the motion into the record. Mr. Yates has moved:

That Mr. McCall be elected to preside as Chair of the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations.

All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? I declare the motion as carried, and invite Mr. McCall to take the Chair.

The Chair: — Okay. Seeing that we've been through the work plan, and . . . Mr. Thomson?

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Mr. McCall, if you have some comments, certainly I don't want to interrupt those but otherwise, I would move that we adjourn.

The Chair: — I was about to entertain such motions.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — I so move.

A Member: — I was going to say, he's moved the motion.

The Chair: — So moved, the motion to adjourn from Mr. Thomson.

Members: — Agreed.

The committee adjourned at 11:48.