



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES**

**Hansard Verbatim Report**

**No. 5 – November 6, 2013**



**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

**Twenty-Seventh Legislature**

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES

Hon. Dan D'Autremont, Chair  
Cannington

Mr. Warren McCall, Deputy Chair  
Regina Elphinstone-Centre

Mr. David Forbes  
Saskatoon Centre

Hon. Jeremy Harrison  
Meadow Lake

Mr. Gene Makowsky  
Regina Dewdney

Mr. Greg Ottenbreit  
Yorkton

Mr. Doyle Vermette  
Cumberland

Hon. Gordon Wyant  
Saskatoon Northwest

[The committee met at 17:30.]

**The Chair:** — I would like to call this meeting of the House Services Committee to order, please. With us this evening we have Mr. Ottenbreit, the Government Whip; we have Mr. Makowsky, the Government Deputy Whip; we have the Hon. Gord Wyant, the Government Deputy House Leader; and the Hon. Jerry . . . Jeremy Harrison, the Government House Leader. On the opposition side we have MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Doyle Vermette, the Opposition Whip; we have MLA David Forbes, the opposition caucus Chair; and MLA Warren McCall, the Opposition House Leader. There. I got through that with only one error.

The first item of business on the agenda for the committee to deal with is the election of a Deputy Chair. Ms. Sproule was the Deputy Chair and when she left this committee to sit on another, the position became vacant. So I would open the floor to nominations. Mr. Forbes.

**Mr. Forbes:** — I would nominate Warren McCall as Deputy Chair.

**The Chair:** — I don't think we need a seconder for that but if somebody would like to second it? Mr. Harrison. Any other nominations? If there are no further nominations, is it the pleasure of the committee to elect Mr. McCall as Deputy Chair? All in favour?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Agreed. Carried.

Okay. On today's agenda we have consideration of the recommendations for revisions to the rules and procedures of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly, and once we have discussed and passed the motion, I will table the committee report. We have a report from the subcommittee that was giving consideration to the rules of the Assembly. We spent a considerable amount of time on this over the last 18 to 24 months on working it, and we've had a number of various members who have served on the steering committee.

It's been a laborious process. There has been lots of meetings of the steering committee, and there have been lots of meetings of the members from either side outside of the formal steering committee process. And I think this has worked quite well, that members have come forward with ideas to refine our rules and also to put into our rules a number of our practices that we have been utilizing for a number of years but weren't codified in our rules. So when they're in the rules in a written state, it's easier for everyone to understand and follow them, rather than following a tradition or a practice of the House.

So I'm glad to see that a number of these things are changing and that our House rules have been looked at by various other jurisdictions across the country, and they have emulated some of these. And hopefully they will again take a look at our new set of rules and perhaps find some value for their Houses there as well.

So I would like, if someone would move a motion to adopt the

draft report of the fifth report of the House steering committee, and I would ask that someone move the following motion:

That the subcommittee's report be adopted as the fifth report of the Standing Committee on House Services and presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Harrison.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — So moved.

**The Chair:** — Seconder? Mr. McCall. All in favour? Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Mr. Chair, if I can . . .

**The Chair:** — Yes. Okay, I would like to recognize Mr. Harrison.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Great. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to put on the record, kind of much similar to what your comments on this, but this was a very laborious and complicated revisions to the rules that we've done over the course of the last near two years. So I really want to thank the officials: Greg Putz who's our Clerk, for his leadership; and your team, Iris; and the folks that have all played a role in preparing the recommendations and putting options before us as elected members. I want to thank you for that. Thank the opposition, Warren and Cathy, for the work you've done on this as well.

I think we had probably over a dozen meetings at different stages in putting these together and coming to agreement on I think some pretty important provisions. There are dozens of changes, literally dozens of changes that we've made, and I think that they make our rules probably the strongest in the country. So you know, I can say too, from my own perspective, having gone through these in, you know, significant detail — not just kind of the broad strokes of the rules but in very significant detail, some of the more nuanced points — it's really kind of increased my understanding of parliamentary procedure as well, and I think that's part of the case for all of us that were involved. So I just wanted to say that, and we look forward to having these in place tomorrow.

**The Chair:** — Mr. McCall.

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And . . . [inaudible] . . . just at this point join my colleague in saying some thanks. And first off, Mr. Speaker, my Government House Leader colleague for the continued and determined work on making sure that we have this report here in front of us today. Certainly I'd thank my predecessor, Cathy Sproule, who'd done some good work I know with the Speaker and Government House Leader on the subcommittee, and as well to Clerk Putz and officials. I know that certainly our caucus appreciated coming out, the Clerk and the Speaker coming out for a particular briefing on any questions that were there.

And again, if you've got good process, you get to the point where we are today, where we're quite pleased with the work that has gone previous. Rules evolve, and certainly there's an ongoing refinement that's in mind as we approach these things.

But this is certainly a substantial piece of work and a fairly significant step forward in terms of the rules. So on behalf of the official opposition, we're glad to be part of it and look forward to their implementation.

**The Chair:** — Okay. Well thank you to everyone for your assistance in this. And I just want to remind you though that we're only half done. We still have the multimedia rules and private members' day to work through. And I look forward to continuing this with intensity for the next while, while we proceed with the second part of this. And that'll give perhaps some of the other members of the committee the opportunity to get more deeply involved in this as well.

So I'd like to thank everyone, especially the Clerks, for their assistance — Greg, Iris, Kathy — for taking part and sitting in on most of these meetings with us, and their valuable advice as well.

At this point in time, I would entertain a motion of adjournment. Mr. Wyant.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — So moved.

**The Chair:** — All in favour?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried. This House stands adjourned to the call of the Chair. Or excuse me. This committee stands adjourned to the call of the Chair.

[The committee adjourned at 17:39.]