

**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2011**

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

2:06 P.M.

**CHAIRMAN**  
Hon. Charlie Parker

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Ladies and gentlemen, we'll call the Management Commission meeting to order. I want to welcome everyone here this afternoon. This is a regularly constituted meeting of the House of Assembly Management Commission. My name is Charlie Parker, chairperson. I'm going to ask members to introduce themselves around the table.

[The commission members introduced themselves.]

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You have before you the agenda for this afternoon's business and the first item on there is the approval of the minutes of our last meeting which was October 19<sup>th</sup>, it's in your package, everything should be there in sequence. What's your pleasure on the minutes from last time?

**HON. MANNING MACDONALD:** I so move.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** It has been moved by Mr. MacDonald and seconded by Mr. Gosse that we accept them as printed.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

No. 2 on our agenda is an item called Tickets for Events - how many tickets to events are members allowed to expense? Mr. MacDonald, do you want to speak to that one.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Mr. Chairman, this matter was brought to my attention by one of our members and I think there are some other members who are concerned about the fact that you can only buy one ticket to an event. But I see there's an exception there, whether it's your CA, or whether it's - I'm just looking for the page, I just noticed it on here. So far we have been reimbursing for one ticket - by we, I mean the Speaker's Office - unless it was for a CA or staff person who was asked to attend at the request of the member. We have had numerous requests for multiple tickets.

I guess the member who approached me on it was concerned about the fact that he's still only allowed to get one ticket for an event and wants at least two. What I'm saying is that the option for two is actually there if it's a CA or a staff person, or both. The member is saying that it should be two irrespective of who the other person is, his wife or something, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a recommendation from our director of administration? Do you have any thoughts on that?

MS. DEBORAH LUSBY: I was more looking for clarification. We've interpreted Section 21(1)(k) to mean one ticket because members can submit expenses for their expenses, their individual expenses or their office expenses. So we've interpreted that to be one ticket.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unless again it was for their CA or their spouse.

MS. LUSBY: Not spouse. CAs are allowed to attend events or meetings on behalf of the member, so in that case the CA would be entitled to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The CA or the member, that's the only two people that would be allowed - there's two that I'm hearing as a sort of a maximum is it?

MS. LUSBY: Well, we've had requests where a member would buy a table and we've had requests . . .

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Which was the practice in the past.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Younger.

MR. ANDREW YOUNGER: I just throw two thoughts out there. One, I think one of the areas you run into confusion is between the caucus office budgets and the constituency budgets because there is no limit on the caucus office budgets. All three caucus offices purchase tables or purchase two tickets, or whatever the case may be, in certain cases, I don't know how frequently. It seems to me there should be some harmony between whatever the regulations are going to be.

On the second side, if it is going to limit to two, although I understand the intent of saying a member and a staff person, whatever the case may be - frankly, I would generally buy one anyway so it doesn't really affect me as much - but I'm just wondering what are we getting into in terms of policing this to make sure if somebody buys two, it's their constituency assistant going and then somebody else goes that's not a staff person or a constituency person? At what point is it easier just to say, here's the number you're allowed - if we're going to have a number - and just leave it at that. At what point do we have to start sending a photo to show who it was that actually was at the event?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Smith.

MR. MAURICE SMITH: My position on this would be that there should be one ticket only. If you're taking your staff person, your CA with you, that's already provided for, for the second ticket. I don't think we should be buying tickets for spouses or significant others or anyone else; I would be very strongly opposed to doing that. To deal with Mr. Younger's issue, the person who is making the claim has to in their own mind say, my EA didn't come so I'm not going to claim that and if I take my wife, I can't claim that. It's a question of honesty.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So you feel it should be one or two if you take your CA, but that's it.

MR. SMITH: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other comments or thoughts on it?

MS. PAM BIRDSALL: I think a limit of two would work.

MR. SMITH: No, I'm not suggesting, but the second one would be for a staff person or a CA.

MS. BIRDSALL: Exactly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to put that into a motion?

MR. SMITH: Yes, I'd move that any ticket purchased should be limited to the member and a support staff or CA.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have a seconder for that?

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: I'll second it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Manning MacDonald that the ticket limit be one, or two if it's a staff person.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

No. 3 on our agenda is just some update here from our director of administration on a few different items. First of all the audit committee on the report, on the status of that.

MS. LUSBY: We've invited Mr. Lauchlin McKenzie, right here, who is the chairman of the House of Assembly Management Commission Audit Committee. I just wanted to give an opportunity for him to meet everybody and perhaps you can introduce yourself.

[2:15 p.m.]

MR. LAUHLIN MCKENZIE: My name is Lauchlin McKenzie, I'm a chartered accountant, a retired partner with the firm of KPMG, I was with them for about 30 years. I'm mostly retired now, or at least working on it, although that's not to say I don't have lots to do. Speaking of tickets, I encourage you all to buy tickets for Canada Games because I am the chairman of finance and administration for that, and I've got a million dollars in my budget I have to make from ticket sales. So I encourage you all to buy as many tickets as you can, but you can't put it through this committee. (Laughter)

I'm looking forward, I see this as being of interest, it's sort of a new area for me and we've had two meetings to date and largely it has been to orientate the other lay member, Leo Gallant, who is the Dean of the Business School at St. F.X., to orientate Leo and myself to the business of the commission and so on, so we've done that. We spent a little time addressing some of the initial things we have to do in terms of arranging for audits and other things. I must express my appreciation to Deborah and Neil, who have been the utmost help to us in getting us familiar with what the role of the audit committee should be. Thank you.

MS. LUSBY: Thank you very much for coming today. So that's the update from the audit committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, moving right along then to the on-line MLA expenses update.

MS. LUSBY: The November expense claims were posted on-line on Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, with little fanfare. December claims received up to December 30<sup>th</sup> were sent to the members on January 7<sup>th</sup>, which was Friday and they'll be posted first thing tomorrow morning, I would assume by 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning. We'll continue with that kind of cycle through to the end of March, so usually by the end of the first week in a month we'll have them out to the members for a quick review and then by the middle, around the 10<sup>th</sup> or so - if that's a Wednesday because I like Wednesdays - to post those on-line. We'll have those posted on-line each month.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions on that aspect of her report? Mr. Gosse.

MR. GORDON GOSSE: I'm just wondering how many hits would you have had on the site?

MS. LUSBY: Well the first week there was about 60, so we figured there were 52 members and our office. It is increasing. I meant to have a count actually for today and I'll send something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was going to ask you, the report for December, some people have an extra report to balance off the year, so that will be . . .

MS. LUSBY: January 30<sup>th</sup> is the very latest to get your expenses for 2010 in, so if you did do the December claim already and you have some other expenses that have arisen, then January 30<sup>th</sup> is the very last date to submit them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's the supplement for December?

MS. LUSBY: Right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions there, then the members' manuals and the new forms on-line.

MS. LUSBY: We haven't met since we did get the members' manual on-line and also we did print some copies reluctantly because they're changing regularly, especially the new expense claim forms. I just want to refer everyone to go on-line on a regular basis and check there for updated information and not rely on printed material. If there is anything significant that does get changed in the manual, we'll send an e-mail out to your caucus offices which will then be distributed to all the members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, any further questions? On-line is the new way to go, it's the way we are in 2011, so it will take a little while for members to fully adjust, but we're getting there.

We'll move on to (d) - Administration Initiatives. Again, Ms. Lusby, you can bring us up to date on the recurring payment system you're working on.

MS. LUSBY: There's a write-up in there, so I won't go over it in great detail, but there is a lot of interest by the members that we manage recurring payments on their behalf. We will be doing that for anything that is the same amount per month. We'll start with the constituency office leases and the apartment leases. We will have that implemented for April 1, 2011 at the latest, although I've talked to a few members who we will use as test cases just to get set up and rolling, so that when we go for everybody on April 1<sup>st</sup>, all the kinks will be worked out.

The other initiative is to allow members to take advantage of purchasing for government resources. We have met with TIR, the department that looks after stationery stores and mail services, with the Queen's Printer and the chief information office, to allow members to make these purchases directly as any other government internal office would be able to do. They won't have to pay out of their own money and then wait for reimbursement - they'll be able to charge their order directly.

So every constituency office has an order number now that was set up in order to manage your expenses on-line. So this will allow you to have access to these types of services that can be charged directly. So if you want to get the Queen's Printer to print your newsletters, who will then pass it on to postal service to mail it out directly for you, that can all be handled without you having to write a cheque and then wait for reimbursement. That's something that we will have in effect for April 1, 2011 as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Smith.

MR. SMITH: Can you send out a list of contacts, services or whatever they're called that are available?

MS. LUSBY: I'm preparing an information piece for all the members that will have all this information in it that should go out by the middle of February, I hope - don't hold me to that date - with everything all at once. I kind of want to put it all together as opposed to little bits coming out here and there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will be all there?

MS. LUSBY: Yes, how to do it, how you sign on, and all the rest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Great. Inventory control.

MS. LUSBY: Inventory control, through your caucus offices, everybody has received a letter outlining what needs to be set up for inventory control and little stickers. By the end of the month, we've asked that you send in your inventory form of any items that have been purchased since October 27, 2009. Simultaneously in our office, we're going through your expense claims since that period, just the pullout copies of the invoices and receipts to be part of the inventory backup. So that's more of a reminder to send those forms in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And the date again was January . . .

MS. LUSBY: The 28<sup>th</sup> I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: January 28<sup>th</sup>, you want those back in. Any questions to our director of administration on any of these initiatives that she's working on or in the process? The first one there, recurring payments, there's just those two items, the apartments and the

constituency offices, but is it planned that down the road there be other types of recurring payments?

MS. LUSBY: If it's the same amount per month.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, so like a telephone bill is going to vary month to month so that wouldn't work?

MS. LUSBY: No.

MR. SMITH: Your office cleaning maybe or something like that that is regular.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Something that's very consistent month to month.

MS. LUSBY: Yes. We'll start with the big ones first and then as we get the hang of it, we'll be able to add on more. It needs to be a formal lease that has a start date and an end date so that something doesn't continue because if the member isn't paying it themselves, they could forget that this is something that they have set up, so we do need a start and an end date and a formal lease.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. MacDonald.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Are the leases that are in now for the apartments, is that sufficient, the yearly leases that we send over to you?

MS. LUSBY: Yes.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: Okay, so I don't have to do anything else then.

MS. LUSBY: That's part of our process right now in getting this organized, we have to make sure we do copies of all the leases. The members need to sign off on an approval form that they approve us to pay their rent directly and then we need to contact all of the landlords to get their banking information for a direct deposit. So there are some steps here that need to be taken which is why we're going to get it all laid out before we set it up.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Smith.

MR. SMITH: I just wanted to ask, if your rent is higher than the allotment you wouldn't be able to do that?

MS. LUSBY: No, it would just be the maximum, but we'd still need the lease on file for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other comments or questions? We move on to No. 4 on our agenda, Regulation Clarifications and/or Recommended Amendments. There are three of these here and I'm going to ask our Chief Clerk to start this off.

MR. NEIL FERGUSON: Mr. Chairman, you'll recall at the October 19<sup>th</sup> meeting that Ms. Lusby went through in detail all of the changes that we're going to make to manage the shift from the calendar year to the province's fiscal year. There is going to be a three-month period, from January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>, where we want to treat it in effect for most of these as a mini-year. Everything that you would normally get in a 12-month period will be reduced to one-fourth of the allotment, as best we can.

What I propose doing just since it has been a couple of months, is just in a very brief way take you through what we are calling the House of Assembly Management Commission fiscal year transition regulations. You'll see throughout these when we refer to commission regulations that we're talking about the main set of House of Assembly Management Commission regulations and we are talking about the transition period - that's that three-month period from January 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> - which is that period that is between the end of the last calendar year that we're going to operate on and the beginning of the first fiscal year that we're going to operate on. The idea is, as I said, just to reduce the 12-month amounts available to a proportional amount for the transition period.

That takes us through the first three sections and I'll just go through the rest of them:

No. 4. For the purpose of Section 29, which is the payments to committee chairs and vice-chairs, the amounts payable to them with respect to the transition period is one-fourth of the amounts provided for and is payable on March 31<sup>st</sup>, that's the end of the period. As you'll recall, the practice now is that you only pay it if the committee has actually met, that's why we wait until the end of the transition period for that one.

No. 5. For the purpose of Sections 31 and 32, and those are the payments to the House Leaders, Deputy House Leaders, Whips and caucus chairs, the amounts payable to them are one-fourth of the amount for the year and they're payable on January 1<sup>st</sup>, because those positions are payable in advance.

No. 6. For the purpose of Section 33, which is the annual allotment for caucus funding, the transition period and the subsequent fiscal year shall be considered to be one year when combining them because the principle of Section 33 is to start at the beginning of the year and provide fiscal stability based on the number of members you have. It allows you to budget based on the funding available and it doesn't suddenly disappear when a member might leave. So we're considering that 15-month period to be one year so that people aren't stuck trying to pay for 15 months out of one year's funding for proportionally increasing that to be 15 months, by saying you're getting x amount that you would normally get, plus one-quarter, which is the money to cover the first three months of the transition period.

MR. YOUNGER: It still ends March 31, 2011.

MR. FERGUSON: No, it ends March 31<sup>st</sup> . . .

MR. YOUNGER: Oh you're going . . .

MR. FERGUSON: It's extending it so that you still have the funding stability and it's just providing you with the same monthly amount overall.

MR. YOUNGER: A 15-month period.

MR. FERGUSON: For a 15-month period.

MR. YOUNGER: I just don't understand why you wouldn't have done it the same way we're doing it for everything else in a short year.

MR. FERGUSON: Because the practice has been as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, all the different caucuses will have had a year ahead. If we suddenly say we're going to do three months, there's a change then, and you won't have had that traditional amount of time you've had for budgeting. You may make some expenditures at the beginning of the year for a year . . .

MR. YOUNGER: But everybody has known this is coming . . .

MR. FERGUSON: Pardon?

MR. YOUNGER: Every caucus office has known that this is changing to a fiscal year for six months, or four or five months at least.

MR. FERGUSON: That's the way we've structured it. If you wanted to move something else when we get through to the end, then it's up to the commission to decide.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Once we finish that first section, then we can come back for comments.

MR. YOUNGER: Certainly.

MR. FERGUSON: We're moving now to No. 7. For the purpose of Section 34(1) of the regulations, which is the caucus and task force meetings, the maximum number of trips permitted during the transition period will be one.

For the purpose of Section 36, the amounts payable to the Leader of the Opposition and Leader of a recognized Party with respect to the transition period is, once again, one-fourth of the amount for the year.

For the purpose of Section 40, the maximum reimbursable amount payable to each Deputy Speaker - and this is on receipts - with respect to the transition period, shall again be one-fourth of the amount provided for.

For the purpose of Section 42 of the regulations, the amounts for franking privilege and postage and travel will be one-fourth, again. There is no carry-forward of any unused amount after the end of the transition period.

No. 11. For the purpose of Section 43 of the commission regulations, which provides for constituency expenses, there will be no carry-forward of any unused amount after the end of the transition period.

Specifically within Section 43, you'll see No. 12 here. For Section 43(4), which deals with the 10 per cent advertising and also for the one-time special additional promotional payment, any member who has not used the amount provided for special additional promotional items during the calendar year 2010, may continue to apply for that until March 31, 2011, and the amount available for specific, additional promotional items during the transition period shall be one-fourth of the annual amount, again.

[2:30 p.m.]

No. 13. For the purpose of Sections 45(1), 45(4) and 46(1), which provide for trips to Ottawa or alternative trips, the number of permitted trips is reduced to one for each of those subsections during the transition period.

Finally, No. 14. For the purpose of Section 49 of the commission regulations, which deals with travel between a member's constituency and Halifax, the number of permitted trips is reduced to 13 during the transition period. But a member who is required to make more than 13 such trips can apply to the Speaker for permission to make up two more trips during the transition period in exigent circumstances. The idea is we don't want to be too rigid and, if it's really necessary, then there is an approval mechanism. Normally you have 52 a year and some people may take more trips at a particular time of year. We just wanted to be reasonable and flexible.

So those are, in summary, the fiscal year transition regulations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now, are there any comments or questions or thoughts about these? Mr. Younger.

MR. YOUNGER: Thanks, and sorry for getting into the middle there. I have a little bit of difficulty with No. 6 in that every single thing we've done here, whether it's trips to franking to everything, has been done into a shortened year and there has been tons of notice on the shortened year. I understand that offices make expenditure commitments and so forth, and that's fine. Frankly, our office, the Tory office and the NDP office would have budgeted

for January, February and March, and nobody's budget is changing for January, February and March. I just don't understand why No. 6 - everything else we're looking at as a one-quarter, except for that one which we're suddenly going 15 months ahead.

MR. FERGUSON: I think the reason, if I can respond, is that that's one thing that is out of the control of the caucus. They don't know if a member is going to suddenly leave partway into the month of January and they don't have control over that. They may have budgeted it, but if it's going to affect . . .

MR. YOUNGER: But in fairness (Interruptions)

MR. FERGUSON: That was the principle . . .

MR. YOUNGER: Obviously this situation makes it a little bit weird because there's that hypothetical situation, which is not so hypothetical at the moment. (Laughter) Okay, then, let's talk about that, here's the situation. I completely agree on what you're saying but the thing is everybody knew that they had a budget, it was going to be a short year of January, February and March. So January, February, March, nobody is losing any money because of what has happened and everybody knew we were coming into a short year. Everybody in this room, every caucus knew we were coming into a short year. I could die tomorrow and there could be a by-election in February and the NDP could win that seat or the Tories could win that seat, or whatever the case may be, and everybody knows that is always a risk and we always knew where that fiscal year was going to change.

Frankly, what we're talking about here, in fact, is we're probably talking about two members because there's another one that may be leaving - maybe more members, who the heck knows. Maybe we have members leaving, maybe the NDP has members leaving for a federal election that we conceivably could create a massive financial liability for this division just because we want to create a 15-month, go-forward year, and that is unconscionable and it is not defensible. (Interruption) We've known this is coming for a long time. I know it sounds like - and my apologies to the Progressive Conservative House Leader because this isn't about beating up on them, although it probably feels like it.

HON. CHRISTOPHER D'ENTREMONT: I'm just joking.

MR. YOUNGER: No, I know, I don't want them to feel like it's beating up on them. To me it's unconscionable because what we're doing is, let's say two members of the NDP leave and maybe Manning decides he's going to run against Cecil up in - what the heck is the name of that riding?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sydney-Victoria. (Interruptions)

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: There's already a Liberal there. (Laughter)

MR. YOUNGER: Then we're talking about caucuses conceivably - we could be at hundreds of thousands of dollars of extra payments because of shifting around of members and it doesn't make any sense.

MR. FERGUSON: I'm not saying I'm married to or fighting for these things, I'm just saying that the long-term funding stability was the principle that was at play. I'm totally open to whatever the commission wishes, but I'd just point out that these were circulated before any recent Party moves, you all had them well before that.

MR. YOUNGER: Fair enough and I did read them at the time and I understood that - I read that one the wrong way because I was reading all the rest and putting them into context and saying, okay, we're at a three-month year the way we are so it's not . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Corbett.

HON. FRANK CORBETT: I guess my run at this comes from the perspective that each one of these falls in line with an individual. We're running an office and I'm responsible for my MLA travel, I'm responsible for my postage and franking. But when we get to the issue of operating a caucus office, there are multiple layers there. There are rental spaces, there are employees, all the apparatus that goes with that. What we're doing is extending this by a 90-day period. We're not saving them harm from this, if there is harm. What we're saying is, look, this takes a little bit longer, one's a dinghy to turn around and the other is a full-scale ship. Those of us who have done transitions from government to Opposition, Opposition to government, we've always known the fact that there has to be a little bit of financial leeway here to allow this to transpire.

It is three months longer, it's 90 days longer than anybody else gets and I appreciate that, but I think the fact of the matter is, it's a much bigger movement. I would think if you went to the three individual office managers - and I appreciate what you're saying, Andrew, that everyone kind of knew this - but when you're managing 15, 20, however many people work in an office, how our leases work, how equipment leases work, I think it's a little larger than just all of us doing it as a one-off. It causes me no distress to go to the 15 months here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. d'Entremont wants to speak but, Mr. Ferguson, did you have any response to any of that?

MR. FERGUSON: No, that was largely the point that I was trying to make about the caucus being somewhat different from the other ones.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. d'Entremont.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Just to sort of reiterate what Mr. Corbett just said, it's a big ship to turn around all of a sudden and it's only going three months, it's not like we're extending it for 15 years. But when you lose people within your caucus, you still have to pay

the people who are in there and you still have the same lights to turn on, you still have the same copiers to pay for, and you still have everybody's personnel contracts . . .

MR. CORBETT: Severance packages.

MR. D'ENTREMONT: Yes, the severance packages that might have to go along with it as well. I don't see this three months being anything out of the ordinary. Yes, we've been planning for it for awhile, but at the same time there are things that we need to have in place for this one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Younger.

MR. YOUNGER: I would just say that I don't disagree with the issue that we need to pay for severance and all that sort of thing, but the fact of the matter is on March 30, 2012, somebody could resign and you would still be stuck with the same problem and because the money starts coming April 1<sup>st</sup>, which would be a worse situation than there is now, so I don't know that that argument holds a lot of water. You can always end up in that situation because of the timing.

I hear what the Deputy Premier is saying, but my concern is that the reason we've waited so long to transition to this, what we're talking about, and I agree, whether you look at it as three months or 12 months, depending on which way - it's that glass half-full, glass half-empty thing - my concern is we've been trying to clean up these regulations for a year now - more than a year really - and it's another period of time before you can look at a budget and see a year's budget. From my perspective it's continuing to hold over just getting this cleaned up and moving ahead and getting beyond the whole MLA expense thing and the Auditor General's Report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further comments? I guess we need a motion to proceed. Is there anybody who has a motion in mind for Schedule A - Transitional Regulations Respecting the . . .

MR. CORBETT: I make the motion that we accept the report that's before us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is for No. 4 (a). It has been moved that we accept the Chief Clerk's recommendations. Is there a seconder? Mr. d'Entremont. It's moved by Mr. Corbett, seconded by Mr. d'Entremont.

Are you ready for the question? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried, with one negative.

On No. 4 (b), our Chief Clerk is going to fill us in again on the amendments to the payment dates, moved to April 1<sup>st</sup> fiscal year.

MR. FERGUSON: In your package, you'll see a shorter set of amendments to regulations titled Resolution Respecting an Amendment to the House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations. These are the few amendments that are necessary to the actual House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations themselves, to effect the changeover from the calendar year to the fiscal year in relation to those things that are paid on certain dates for certain periods of time.

The first thing you'll see is in one, we've added a definition of "year" to mean the fiscal year of the province as defined under the Provincial Finance Act. It used to be the calendar year, as you know, so now we're just moving it to the fiscal year and we wanted to make it clear.

There are three quick amendments. The first is in Section 29(4) of the regulations, and that is the one that provides for the payments to the committee chairs and vice-chairs. It is amended by striking out June 30<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> and substituting September 30<sup>th</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup>. As I said in relation to the last set, those are the ones that get paid after the six months if the committee has actually met.

The next one is in No. 3 and it says Section 32 of the regulations. To be clear, that's the one providing the payments to the House Leaders, Deputy House Leaders, Whips and caucus chairs. It is amended by striking out January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> and substituting April 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>. So again, that's the first of the year and then the six-month period because those ones, as I said in the last set, are paid in advance.

Finally, Section 52 of the regulations - that's the one that provides for the annual increase for the consumer price index - is amended by striking out January 1<sup>st</sup> and substituting April 1<sup>st</sup>, so that the fiscal year is the one that we're considering. I'd like to also point out that these are effective April 1, 2011, so we're passing them now with foresight so they will just come into effect on that date.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions or comments on that? If not, do we have a motion to accept it? Moved by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Manning MacDonald, that we accept the amendments as outlined by our Chief Clerk on the April 1<sup>st</sup> payment dates here.

Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Finally, No. 4 (c), a change to Clause 26(3)(a). Mr. Clerk.

MR. FERGUSON: This is a very simple, straightforward one. You will recall a couple of meetings ago, I believe it was, we amended the regulations because they provided that the Leaders of the Official Opposition and another recognized Party would be provided with a government-leased or government-purchased motor vehicle, and that is no longer the practice. This is a consequential one that we missed at that point so we're just fixing this to match what we've already changed.

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: I so move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. MacDonald, seconded by Mr. Younger, that we accept the recommendation of the Clerk in No. 4 (c), a change to Clause 26(3)(a).

Are you ready for the question? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Is there any other business to come before the commission?

MR. MANNING MACDONALD: I move that we adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a motion to adjourn. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

We are adjourned.

[The commission adjourned at 2:44 p.m.]