

# **HANSARD**

**NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

## **HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

**Thursday, July 28, 2016**

**Legislative Committees Office**

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**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

Hon. Kevin Murphy (Chairman)  
Hon. Michel Samson  
Mr. Gordon Wilson  
Hon. Labi Kousoulis  
Mr. Iain Rankin  
Hon. Christopher d'Entremont  
Mr. Larry Harrison  
Hon. David Wilson  
Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk of the House of Assembly  
(Non-Voting Member)

**In Attendance:**

Speaker's Office Adviser  
Ms. Deborah Lusby  
Director of Administration  
Office of the Speaker

Mr. Gordon Hebb  
Chief Legislative Counsel



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2016**

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

**1:00 P.M.**

CHAIRMAN  
Hon. Kevin Murphy

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll call the meeting of the House of Assembly Management Commission to order for July 28, 2016.

We'll just go around the table - please state your name for the purposes of the record.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, everybody, for coming. The agenda and materials were all circulated in advance, and everybody has hard copies in front of them.

We'll first have an approval of the January 21, 2016, minutes. Mr. Ferguson.

MR. NEIL FERGUSON: The minutes were circulated. I didn't find any errors in them. I know from time to time Mr. Rankin has found things I've missed, but unless anybody has any corrections, it would be in order to have a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2016.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. d'Entremont. Seconded by Mr. Rankin. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried. Minutes approved.

Item number 2 on the agenda is the proposed House of Assembly Management Commission Regulation amendments. Mr. Ferguson.

MR. FERGUSON: You will all recall that these were discussed at our last meeting but deferred. If the members wish, I can go through the reasoning for them again. I'm seeing a lot of shaking heads. (Interruption) Yes, Mr. Hebb has pointed out that at the end there are several additional ones. You'll see that they simply involve a bunch of cross-references in the existing regulations that were incorrect.

For instance, the first one says striking out "42(4)" and substituting "43A(3)." The next one is striking out "26" and substituting "26A." They're simply internal mistakes that are being fixed. Those were not discussed last time, but they are simply housekeeping errors that have been identified by the Office of Legislative Counsel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it would be good to go through them as briefly as you could, the changes, to refresh everybody.

MR. FERGUSON: Okay, the first one is required - the current subsection directs non-outside members to table in the House a report of their overnight hotel stays. However, under parliamentary procedure, the order of business "Tabling Reports, Regulations and Other Papers" is only open to ministers and the Speaker, so an individual member has no right to table things under that order of business.

All this does is fix it by saying that they have to give them to the Speaker, who will table them. The original one came from the Remuneration Review Panel, and when they said, we want the members to table things, they weren't aware of the fact that it was not a possibility. So that's what that fix is.

The next group of them are in response to the Auditor General's observations. They pointed out that various sections of the regulations providing for the reimbursement of overnight stays for members were inconsistent in reference to rates. Some referred to a fixed amount, others didn't. So in order to achieve consistency, it was proposed that the reimbursement rate for hotel stays would be at the government rate for the establishment where the member stays, as government rates often vary from establishment to establishment. It's simply saying that the government rate applies.

The next one is the one that deals with four constituency open houses. The original resolution was that a member can have an annual constituency open house at a cost of no more than 10 per cent of the monthly constituency allowance in Regulation 43(3), which was \$428.20. The advertising cost is excluded from that. The proposed amendment is in response to a request that members have the option of holding up to four smaller open houses annually, as long as the total amount that they expend on all of the annual open houses is no more than that sum of \$428.20. It was to afford the members the flexibility to run things the way they want. They can have four small ones or one big one, but it provides

the ability for members to run things in their constituency the way they think is best for their constituents.

I believe that covers all of them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions or comments from the floor?

Do we have a motion to adopt these proposed amendments? Moved by Mr. Samson. Seconded by Mr. Gordon Wilson.

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

The motion is carried.

Item No. 3, the CPI adjustments as of April 1, 2016, as per Regulation 52.

Ms. Lusby.

MS. DEBORAH LUSBY: Regulation 52 says that subject to the commission approval, the fixed amounts could be increased by the lower of the federal or provincial CPI as of April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. April 1, 2016, the federal or Canada-wide CPI was 1.7, and Nova Scotia was 1.2.

That is for discussion amongst the commission, whether they want to increase the fixed amounts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Samson.

HON. MICHEL SAMSON: Mr. Chairman, I move that there be no CPI increases to the members' expense allotments this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any discussion on that? Seconded by Mr. d'Entremont.

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

The motion is carried.

Item No. 4. Ms. Lusby.

MS. LUSBY: The financial reports were circulated with the agenda. First, we have the fourth quarter of the 2015-16 fiscal year, and I also circulated the first quarter of the 2016-17 fiscal year, which would be as of June 30, 2016.

Since they were circulated in advance, if you have any particular questions today, or if you have any in future, I'd be happy to answer them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions from the floor arising from those reports?

Hearing no questions, can we have a motion to adopt the reports as presented? Moved by Mr. Samson. Seconded by Mr. d'Entremont.

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

The motion is carried.

That brings us to the end of the agenda. We do have one in camera item. We'll ask anybody who is not supposed to be in the room to excuse themselves.

[The public session adjourned at 1:15 p.m.]