

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

The fourth meeting of the House of Assembly Management Commission was held in Committee Room 2, Dennis Building, on Tuesday, October 19, 2010 at 2 p.m.

Present were all of the members of the Commission, namely: Mr Gordon Gosse, Hon. Frank Corbett, Ms Pam Birdsall, Mr Maurice Smith, Hon. Manning MacDonald, Mr Andrew Younger, Hon. Chris d'Entremont, Mr Neil Ferguson (Acting Chief Clerk) and Hon. Charlie Parker, who acted as Chair. Also present was Gordon Hebb, Q.C., Counsel to the Commission, and Deborah Lusby, Director of Administration, Office of the Speaker.

1) It was moved by Hon. Corbett and seconded by Mr Younger that the Minutes of the meeting of September 28, 2010 be approved. **CARRIED.**

2) There was discussion regarding the work of the Committee that had been established to review the position of Chief Clerk of the House. The Chair advised that the Committee recommended that the position be full-time and that advertising be commenced. Moved by Hon. d'Entremont and seconded by Mr Gosse that the Director of Administration be directed to move forward with the process of finding a Chief Clerk. **CARRIED.**

3) The Director of Administration advised that the House of Assembly Management Commission Audit Committee would be holding its first meeting on Tuesday, November 2, 2010.

4) The Director of Administration for the Speaker's Office outlined various changes that will be made to the expense system when the move is made from the calendar year to the Province's fiscal year so that SAP can be used as the reporting system.

Committees are currently paid after the six-month period of work, but to effect the switch to the fiscal year there will be a payment period for January 1st to March 31st, 2011 so the committees will be paid for three months work on March 31st, 2011.

Thereafter, the six month cycle would be restarted, which will require a change to the regulations to match the fiscal year.

The House Leaders, the Whips and the caucus chairs are currently paid twice annually at the beginning of the six-month period of work. They will still receive a payment on January 1, 2011, but for three months. On April 1st the six month cycle would be restarted, which will also require a change to the regulations to match the fiscal year.

For franking and travel, Members will be given a three-month allowance for January to March, with no carry forward at the end of March 31st. On April 1st, 2011 they start their 12-month cycle anew.

For constituency expenses, Members will also be given a three-month allowance for January to March with no carry forward. On April 1, 2011 they start their 12-month cycle anew.

For advertising, Members will get 10 per cent of their \$4,198 per month for January to March, and then on April 1, 2011 start with the new 12 month amount. If a member has not applied for the \$1,000 additional promotional funds prior to December 31, 2010, that timeline will be extended to March 31, 2011. Then, after April 1, 2011 all members are eligible to apply for these additional funds on an annual basis.

There will be no change or impact on the living allowances.

For other travel, the allowed numbers of 52 commuting trips per year, four caucus trips, and two Ottawa trips, will be divided by four, and for January to March, 2011, Members will be allowed one caucus trip, 13 commuting trips and one Ottawa trip, but it is realized some flexibility may be required on these amounts of travel so the circumstances will be considered as they arise. A new slate on the number of annual trips permitted will come into effect on April 1, 2011.

Members will not be able to go “out of pocket” on expenses – that is, overspend in one month and recover the amount from the allowable amount in the next month. This cannot be done under SAP, so Members can only submit for the maximum amount per month that they are allowed.

5) The Commission considered a list of nine issues staff had identified with the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations*. Mr Ferguson explained a number of “housekeeping” amendments that needed to be made for the sake of consistency and a draft resolution to make those changes. After some discussion, the following motion was made by Mr Younger and seconded by Hon. Corbett:

Be it resolved that:

- 1) Subsection 20(2) of the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations* is amended by deleting “usage for” and substituting “use of”.
- 2) Subsection 30(1) of the *Regulations* is amended by deleting “Board” and substituting “Commission”.
- 3) Subsection 31(7) of the *Regulations* is amended by deleting “of the House”.
- 4) Subsection 31(8) of the *Regulations* is amended by deleting “of the House”.
- 5) Section 39 of the *Regulations* is amended by striking out “a leased motor vehicle on the same basis as is a member of the Executive Council for a government leased or purchased vehicle” and substituting “payment of the same motor vehicle operation expenses as a member of the Executive Council”.

- 6) Subsection 41(3) of the *Regulations* is amended by deleting “Chairman of the House of Assembly Management Commission” and substituting “Speaker”.
- 7) Section 50 of the *Regulations* is amended by striking out “Consolidated” and substituting “General Revenue”.
- 8) Subsection 57(1) of the *Regulations* is amended by deleting “Chair of the House of Assembly Management Commission, the Vice-chair or a person designated by the Chair” and substituting “Speaker, the Deputy Speaker or a person designated by the Speaker”.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

Ms Lusby advised the Commission of several issues that had arisen with the application and interpretation of Section 19 of the *Regulations*, respecting the leasing of constituency space and the involvement of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. She recommended that subsection 19(1) be revised to read:

“**19 (1)** The member shall research and locate appropriate office space using the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal as a resource as the Department may have available space in a building owned or primarily occupied by the Government of the Province, such space to include not less than

- (a) a private area for the member;
- (b) space for a constituency assistant;
- (c) a waiting area;
- (d) access to public washrooms; and
- (e) a separate meeting room if possible.”

Ms Lusby also recommended that subsections 19(5) and (9) of the *Regulations* be repealed.

Ms Lusby recommended that the Commission approve bank fees, Interac fees, money order fees, cheque order costs and similar payments as allowable expenses falling under clause 21(1)(m) of the *Regulations* and this was moved by Mr Gosse and seconded by Ms Birdsall. **CARRIED**.

Ms Lusby recommended that subsection 23(11) of the *Regulations* be amended by adding “new” before “member” in the first line. This change was moved by Hon. Corbett and seconded by Mr Younger. **CARRIED**.

The recommended change to subsection 19(1) and the repeal of subsections 19(5) and (9) were moved by Mr Smith and Seconded by Mr Younger. **CARRIED**.

6) The Commission discussed funding for annual constituency office open-houses for constituents, which had been authorized by the former Internal Economy Board but which were not addressed under the *Regulations*, which had been deferred from the previous meeting. It was moved by Mr Younger, seconded by Hon. Corbett, that a

Member be permitted to have an annual constituency open house at a cost of no more than ten per cent of the amount allowed under subsection 43(3) for the month in which the open house occurs, and that the cost of advertising the open house is not included the allowance for the open house. **CARRIED**

7) The Commission considered the schedule for future meetings and agreed that since the House would be sitting in November, the two tentative meeting dates on November 9 and 30 be dispensed with and that instead of meeting on December 14, the Commission meet at a time to be called by the Speaker with suggestions made that it be on the morning of December 8, 2010.

It was moved by Hon. d'Entremont that the meeting be adjourned. **CARRIED.**

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

These Minutes were approved by the Management Commission on January 11, 2011.

Certified

Speaker

Clerk (Acting)