

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

The seventh meeting of the House of Assembly Management Commission was held in Committee Room 1, Dennis Building, on Wednesday, April 27, 2011 at 11:30 a.m.

Present were all of the members of the Commission, namely: Ms Becky Kent, Hon. Frank Corbett, Ms Pam Birdsall, Mr Maurice Smith, Q.C., Hon. Manning MacDonald, Mr Andrew Younger, Hon. Chris d'Entremont, Mr Neil Ferguson (Chief Clerk) and Hon. Gordie Gosse, 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) The Commission met in camera pursuant to subsection 9(1) of the House of Assembly Management Commission Act and, pursuant to subsection 9(2) of that Act, advises in these Minutes that it made one decision:

The Commission approved a revised standard form of Contract of Service for Constituency Assistants.

The Commission then commenced the public portion of its meeting at 11:35 a.m.

2) Minutes

It was moved by Hon. Chris d'Entremont and seconded by Ms Birdsall that the Minutes of the March 29th, 2011 meeting be approved. **CARRIED.**

3) Franking and Travel

Mr Ferguson informed the Commission that subsection 42(3) of the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations* requires a review and an assessment of the amounts pertaining to postage and travel as separate entities with the resetting of the amounts accordingly. This exercise must take place within 12 months of the enactment of the Regulations, which happened on June 9, 2010. Mr Ferguson pointed out to Commission members that they may want to begin thinking about this issue, but did not necessarily need to resolve the issue at this meeting. After some discussion, it was agreed that the data collected thus far is for too short a period of time to allow a meaningful assessment and that there would be merit to having a full year of data to assess for the purpose of review as contemplated in the Regulation. It was moved by Mr Younger and seconded by Hon Corbett that subsection 42(3) of the Regulations be amended to provide that the review and assessment contemplated under that subsection take place within 3 months of the end of the 2011-12 fiscal year. **CARRIED.**

4) Caucus Funding

Mr Smith informed the Commission that the Treasury Board requested that all departments reduce their budgets by 3% this year, followed by 1% in each of the two subsequent years and that the Commission should do the same with respect to caucus funding. Mr Smith moved and Mr Younger seconded the following motion:

Be it resolved that the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations* are amended as follows:

1 Subsection 33(2) is repealed and the following subsections substituted:

33(2) Each caucus office is entitled, for support services including employment positions, to

- (a) for the fiscal year 2011-12, \$449,595.00 plus \$44,287.29 times the number of caucus members determined at the beginning of the year;
- (b) for the fiscal year 2012-13, \$445,099.05 plus \$43,844.42 times the number of caucus members determined at the beginning of the year; and
- (c) for the fiscal year 2013-14 and subsequent fiscal years, \$440,648.06 plus \$43,405.98 times the number of caucus members determined at the beginning of the year,

and a pro-rated proportion of \$44,287.29, \$43,844.42 or \$43,405.98 as applicable for the remainder of the year for each additional member the caucus gains during the year.

33(2A) Section 52 does not apply to the amounts set out in subsection (2).

The motion was **CARRIED**.

5) Suspension of Section 52 of the Regulations for the fiscal year 2011-12

Mr Ferguson explained that Section 52 of the Regulations mandates a yearly increase, on April 1st of the fixed amounts set out in the Regulations, by the increase in the Consumer Price Index for Nova Scotia for the previous year. For 2010 the Consumer Price Index for Nova Scotia was quite high at 3.9% and this would undo the previously passed budget reductions if an amendment is not made to Section 52.

There was discussion as to whether there should also be an amendment to Section 52 to state that if there would be an increase in the fixed amounts it would be in accordance with the Consumer Price Index for Nova Scotia or the core Consumer Price Index for Canada, whichever was lower. Hon d'Entremont moved and Hon Corbett seconded the following motion:

Be it resolved that Section 52 of the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations* be repealed and the following Section substituted:

52. The fixed amounts set out in the Regulations, except the amount in clause 50(a), is increased on April 1st of each year by the increase in the Consumer Price Index for Nova Scotia or the core Consumer Price Index for Canada, whichever is lower, for the previous year, rounded to the nearest dollar, and the Regulations are amended accordingly.

The motion was **CARRIED**

Hon d'Entremont moved the following motion which was seconded by Hon Corbett to give effect to the suspension of any increase for the 2011-12 fiscal year:

Be it resolved that Section 52 of the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations* be amended by

1 adding "(1)" immediately after the Section number; and

2 adding immediately after subsection (1) the following subsection:

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the fixed amounts set out in these Regulations are not increased for the fiscal year 2011-12.

The motion was **CARRIED**

6) It was moved by Mr Smith that the meeting be adjourned. **CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

These Minutes were approved by the Management Commission on 2011.

Certified

Speaker

Chief Clerk