

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

A meeting of the House of Assembly Management Commission was held in the Committee Room, One Government Place, on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 at 11 a.m.

Present were: Chair, Hon. Kevin Murphy, Hon. Geoff MacLellan, Hon. Labi Kousoulis, Ms Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, Ms Rafah DiCostanzo, Hon. Chris d'Entremont, Mr Allan MacMaster, Ms Claudia Chender and Mr Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk.

Also present were Gordon D. Hebb, Q.C., Chief Legislative Counsel and Deborah Lusby, Director of Administration.

1) Minutes of the January 22, 2019 meeting

It was moved by Hon. Geoff MacLellan and seconded by Hon. Chris d'Entremont that the minutes of the January 22, 2019 meeting be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

2) House of Assembly Management Commission Audit Committee

Mr Ferguson indicated that pursuant to Section 15 of the *House of Assembly Management Commission Act*, two members of the Commission are to be selected by the Commission to be members of the Audit Committee. One of the two members may not be a member of the Government. Hon. Chris d'Entremont has filled that role in the past but will no longer be a member of the Audit Committee.

It was moved by Hon. Chis d'Entremont that Allan MacMaster be nominated as a member of the Audit Committee. There were no other nominations and the Chair declared the motion carried.

CARRIED

3) Caucus and Leader Budget adjustments for the cessation of the Public Service Award (PSA)

Ms Lusby informed the Commission that the House Leaders had been informed of this situation. Given that the Public Service Award (PSA) was cancelled in 2018 and paid out, caucus budgets needed to be reduced to offset the 1% charged annually on all budgets as contributions towards the PSA amount.

The Department of Finance and Treasury Board reduced all the other division budgets by 1%, however given that the caucus budgets are fixed by *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulation 33*, and the Leader's budgets were set by the predecessor LIEB and have not changed in many years, the Commission must pass a motion reducing those budgets by 1% relative to the now discontinued PSA.

The resulting reductions to the budgets are: \$6,300.00 for the PC Caucus, \$3,000.00 for the PC Leader; \$6,200.00 for the Liberal Caucus, \$3,900.00 for the NDP Caucus and \$2,000.00 for the NDP Leader.

It was moved by Hon Labi Kousoulis and seconded by Hon Geoff MacLellan that the caucus budgets and the Leader's budgets be reduced by 1% for 2019-2020 to reflect the discontinuance of the 1% contribution in those budgets towards to PSA.

CARRIED

4) April 1, 2019 CPI

Pursuant to Section 52 of the *House of Assembly Management Commission Regulations*, the fixed amounts for member expenses may be increased by the lower of the CPI for Nova Scotia or Canada effective April 1 annually. The CPI at April 1, 2019 for NS was 1.3% and for Canada 2%.

The Hansard transcript for this agenda item is as follows:

We'll move to Item No. 4, the annual decision on the CPI increase effective April 1st. Ms. Lusby.

DEBORAH LUSBY: Regulation 52 allows for a potential increase to regulation amounts by the lower of CPI for Nova Scotia or Canada. Nova Scotia CPI of April 1, 2019 – the year before was 1.3 and Canada is 2.0. So the lower of that would be a potential 1.3 per cent increase.

THE CHAIR: Is there any discussion? Mr. MacLellan.

HON. GEOFF MACLELLAN: Obviously, in speaking with other caucuses and their representatives, I think we are in a position where we feel we'll hold and freeze those, and not increase by the CPI.

THE CHAIR: We'll take that as the motion. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

5) Update re MLA Alana Paon's extension to June 20, 2019 to create barrier free access to her office

Mr MacMaster informed members of the Commission that the matter continued to be worked on by the MLA and her landlord. He was unable to confirm that the work would be completed by the June 20, 2019 deadline.

A lengthy discussion followed. Ms. Lusby referred to a May 30th email from the MLA indicating that the landlord informed the MLA that he was agreeable to have a concrete slab poured for the accessible parking area and that both the MLA and the landlord were aware of the June 20th deadline.

The Chair indicated that he would send a reminder letter to the MLA regarding the June 20th deadline.

A further question was asked about what the consequences would be for the MLA if the June 20th deadline was not adhered to. Mr Ferguson indicated that the legal effect would be that the MLA would not be reimbursed for the rental of the constituency office if the work was not completed by that date.

6) 4th QTR 2018-20 preliminary Financials

The report was distributed to members in advance of the meeting. Ms Lusby indicated the reason the report is preliminary is that MLAs have up to 90 days following year end to submit expenses relating to the previous year. Therefore, in early July a final fourth quarter report will be prepared.

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

These minutes were approved by the Management Commission on September , 2019.

Certified

Speaker

Chief Clerk