

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 Thursday, September 19, 2019 at 1 p.m.

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

Also present were Gordon D. Hebb, Q.C., Chief Legislative Counsel, Deborah Lusby, Director of Administration, Office of the Speaker and Annette M. Boucher, Q.C., Assistant Clerk.

1) Minutes of June 12, 2019 meeting

It was pointed out that the June 12, 2019 minutes reproduced a segment from Hansard for item 4 of the agenda "April 1, 2019 Consumer Price Index." The Chief Clerk noted the motion of June 12, 2019 on this topic did not have a seconder and for greater certainty it would be helpful to have a motion confirming the motion of June 12, 2019 prior to approving the minutes.

It was moved by Hon. Geoff MacLellan and seconded by Hon. Labi Kousoulis that the June 12, 2019 motion made pursuant to Section 52 of the *House of Assembly Management Commission*, that there be no increase in members' allowable expenses equal to the increase in the Consumer Price Index for 2019-2020 fiscal year, be confirmed.

CARRIED

It was moved by Mr Allan MacMaster and seconded by Ms Rafah DiConstanzo that the minutes of the June 12, 2019 meeting be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

2) Business arising from the June 12, 2019 minutes

Hon. Geoff MacLellan asked if there was an update on the accessibility challenges regarding MLA Alana Paon's constituency office. The Chair responded that there was no update as to the process or lack thereof regarding compliance.

3) Financials

a) Final 4th Qtr 2018-19

b) 1st Qtr 2019-20

Ms Lusby indicated that the Final 4th Quarter was being reported at this time as the last date to submit MLA expenses for the 2018-19 fiscal year was June 27th for expenses incurred by March 31, 2019, the end of the fiscal year.

She pointed out that the Audit Committee requested a change in the format of both reports – in particular a column has been added showing 2017-18 actuals so forecast to actuals and budget to actuals can be compared.

A discussion followed regarding enhanced video capabilities for certain committees and making committees more accessible with the use of such services as CART displays. Some small items are being put in place within existing budgets however, enhanced services would require a physical expansion of the already-cramped Legislative TV control room at the House of Assembly and the addition of at least one staff full-time equivalent. These amounts are not included in the current fiscal year budget that was approved by Treasury Board for 2019-2020.

Various options have been costed to enhance video and accessibility capabilities for committee meetings. Each year as part of the budget process the House of Assembly can identify budget pressures for the consideration of Treasury Board and the cost of enhancements that cannot be absorbed could be identified as budget pressure. Treasury Board considers the request for additional funding for a particular project or program and determines whether funds will be allocated or not.

Regarding CART services the Chair noted there was not a great expense associated with the service in 2018-19 and the cost was absorbed in the Legislative TV operating budget.

Ms Lusby indicated she would put together a report for members of the Commission detailing the various project proposals and the costs associated to each project.

4) MLA Pay Schedule for 2020

Currently MLAs are compensated with a fixed annual amount per calendar year and payroll processes the pay based on 26 bi-weekly pays. In 2020 provincial employees will receive 27 bi-weekly pays instead of 26.

The Commission members were presented with 2 options for the payment of MLA pays in 2020:

- a) continue with 26 bi-weekly pays; or
- b) receive 27 bi-weekly pays resulting in a decrease of each bi-weekly pay of approximately \$78.00 for MLAs and \$110.00 for Ministers for the same annual pay.

It was moved by Ms Claudia Chender and seconded by Hon. Geoff MacLellan that for the calendar year 2020 MLAs receive their fixed annual salary in 27 bi-weekly pays.

CARRIED

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the Speaker adjourned the meeting at 1:18 p.m.

These minutes were approved by the Management Commission on January 22, 2020.

Certified

Speaker

Chief Clerk