

# **HANSARD**

**NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Tuesday, May 26, 2020**

**Via Teleconference**

**Appointments to Agencies, Boards and Commissions**

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## **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Brendan Maguire, Chair  
Suzanne Lohnes-Croft, Vice-Chair  
Bill Horne  
Rafah DiCostanzo  
Brad Johns  
Larry Harrison  
Kendra Coombes  
Claudia Chender

In Attendance:

Judy Kavanagh  
Legislative Committee Clerk

Gordon Hebb  
Chief Legislative Counsel



**HALIFAX, TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES**

10:00 A.M.

CHAIR  
Brendan Maguire

VICE-CHAIR  
Suzanne Lohnes-Croft

THE CHAIR: We're going to call the meeting of the Standing Committee on Human Resources to order. My name is Brendan Maguire, and I'm the Chair. Today, we'll consider appointments of agencies, boards and commissions.

We're going to take a quick roll call. Before we do, we have a new MLA and this is her first committee meeting, so I just want to say welcome to Kendra Coombes. Is that how you say your last name, Kendra?

KENDRA COOMBES: That's correct. Yes.

THE CHAIR: Congratulations on your win and welcome to the circus.

KENDRA COOMBES: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: We'll get staff, including the caucus staff to introduce themselves.

[The committee members and caucus staff introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Thank you, everybody. I hope you're getting through these different and difficult times.

We're going to start with a reminder to keep your phone on mute. I'll call on you to speak just so that we can have better sound quality for the broadcast and for Hansard.

If you want to speak, you can unmute your phone and just identify yourself. Put your phone back on mute and we'll keep a running tally of it, and we'll make sure that you get to speak. You just have to be recognized by the Chair before you speak, like we normally do. If you leave the meeting and rejoin it, that will disrupt this audio. Try to stay on for the entire meeting if you can.

With that, we'll jump into committee business.

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Chair, prior to starting committee business, can I add an item to the agenda?

THE CHAIR: Judy?

JUDY KAVANAGH (Legislative Committee Clerk): At the end of committee business, you'll be asking the committee if there's any other committee business, so he can bring something up then.

BRAD JOHNS: I do have a motion at that time, so thank you.

THE CHAIR: I just want to remind everybody - all Parties - that motions and topics have to pertain specifically to the Human Resources Committee. I know that we're all anxious for the other committees to be up and running, but if it's an issue for another committee it will be deferred to that committee.

With that, we'll jump right into committee business. We have a list of appointees. Who wants to start off?

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: I'll start first. For the Department of Agriculture, I move that Rachael Cheverie be appointed as Vice-Chair and member to the Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission.

THE CHAIR: Are there any comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: For the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board, I move that Danny Phinney be appointed as Chairman and Director, and Stephen Brown as Director.

THE CHAIR: Are there any comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

BILL HORNE: For the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, I move that David Gorman, Patricia Donnelly, and Shauntay Grant be appointed as governors to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Board of Governors.

THE CHAIR: Are there any comments?

BRAD JOHNS: I noted that there are 11 vacancies currently on that board and we've had five applicants. We're only assigning three. I'm curious as to why the other two weren't considered, given that there are 11 vacancies. Particularly, I know that the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is looking at a new major project with that new building. I would think that to have 11 vacancies on that board while they're doing that project, you would think that you would want to have a full board. I'm curious as to why the other two weren't considered.

THE CHAIR: What other two?

BRAD JOHNS: There were five applicants that came in. We are only approving three of them today.

THE CHAIR: We can have staff look into that, but I don't have that answer on hand. We can definitely look into that.

BRAD JOHNS: While we're looking into that, if we could also find out when they anticipate having the other vacancies filled. Once again, given the expansion that the Art Gallery is going under at the current time and over the next couple of years, I would think that it would be a priority to have that board filled.

THE CHAIR: Are there any other comments?

JUDY KAVANAGH: Is the committee directing me to write a letter to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage asking these questions?

BRAD JOHNS: Do you need a motion to do that, Judy?

JUDY KAVANAGH: It doesn't have to be a formal vote, I suppose, if the committee agrees by consensus.

THE CHAIR: We can look into it and see when those seats are expected to be filled. We'll put that forward.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Just for clarity, Mr. Chair, are you directing the clerk to write a letter to the minister asking when those vacancies will be filled? When you say look into it, is that what that means?

THE CHAIR: Certainly. We'll send the letter off and ask for a time frame on when those positions are expected to be filled. Is that okay?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: That's great, thank you.

THE CHAIR: Back to the appointees, would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

BILL HORNE: For the Halifax Regional Library Board, I move that Emily Miller and Heather Rose be appointed as members.

THE CHAIR: Are there any comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

BILL HORNE: For the Sherbrooke Restoration Commission, I move that Emeric Black, Keith Gallant, and Margaret Harpell be appointed as members.

THE CHAIR: Are there any comments?

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Chair, through you to the clerk, I'm just curious how many vacancies are currently on that board?

JUDY KAVANAGH: I'm afraid I don't know that.

BRAD JOHNS: Okay, that's fine.

THE CHAIR: Any comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried. Next please.

BILL HORNE: For the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, I move that Annie Baert be appointed as a member to the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority Board of Directors.

THE CHAIR: Any comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried. Next please.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: For the Department of Finance and Treasury Board, I move that Keith Dexter be appointed as a Director and Vice-Chair, and Cathie O'Toole be appointed as a Director to the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation.

THE CHAIR: Any comments?

BRAD JOHNS: I'm curious in regard to this one. I know that this one does have an honorarium of \$1,000 a year for members, and I think it's \$10,000 a year for the Chair. I believe there were 35 applicants who applied for this. I'm curious to know why we're just re-appointing two people, and we're not looking at bringing on some new members to that board.

THE CHAIR: Once again, we can send a letter out asking when we expect the other spots to be filled.

BRAD JOHNS: I would also like to know what the criteria are for people to be on that one. I know that this is the highest paid of all the committees of the province, at \$1,000 a day. I know that it's one that people are very interested in getting into. I would like to know what the requirements are and why two would be re-appointed.

BRENDAN MAGUIRE: To correct, it's not \$1,000 a day. I know that was a slip of the tongue, but just to correct that, Brad . . .

BRAD JOHNS: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, \$1,000 a year, \$10,000 for the Chair.

THE CHAIR: We can check to see. We could have the clerk look into that one. I'm sure there is something online or something that we could find with regard to criteria. If the committee is okay, we can do what we did with the last one and send a letter off to the proper department to ask when they're expecting the board to be filled. Is that okay with everyone?

Are there any other comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried. Next please.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: For the Department of Health and Wellness, I move that Cheryl Stewart-Walsh be appointed as a Director to the Board of the IWK Health Centre.

THE CHAIR: Any comment?

BRAD JOHNS: My apologies, Mr. Chair. I have also noted with this one that the Nova Scotia Health Authority is supposed to have an appointment on that too. I didn't see

that that was filled. Can we get a confirmation as to whether or not NSHA has an appointment on that board and whether or not it's filled?

THE CHAIR: We can. We'll have the clerk look into that.

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

The motion is carried. Next please.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: I move that Stephen Augustine, Dr. Cynthia Forbes, Susan Spence, and Mark Surette be appointed as Directors to the Board of the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

THE CHAIR: Comments?

BRAD JOHNS: My comment would be that I am glad to see that this one has come forward. I think this is the first round of appointments since the new NSHA was formed in 2015, so I am glad to see that they're finally coming forward. Similar to the IWK board, I have noted that NSHA is supposed to have a member on it from IWK, and I didn't see that. Similar to the last appointment we did, I'm wondering if we can confirm whether or not the IWK is supposed to have somebody on the NSHA. If so, why is there nobody appointed there now?

[10:15 a.m.]

THE CHAIR: We can see if there is anyone from NSHA appointed to the board. We'll have the clerk look into that.

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

The motion is carried. Next please.

RAFAH DICOSTANZO: For the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, I move that Ava Czapalay and Jeannine Lagassé be appointed as Directors to Research Nova Scotia.

THE CHAIR: Any comments? Mr. Johns, no comment?

BRAD JOHNS: No, I'll leave this one alone. Thank you, Mr. Chair. (Laughter)

THE CHAIR: Any other comments? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.



The motion is carried. What's next?

JUDY KAVANAGH: That's it, I think. Those are all the names that we have on record.

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Chair?

THE CHAIR: One second, please.

Does that end the appointments for the ABCs? There's no more? Am I correct?

JUDY KAVANAGH: Yes. That's correct.

THE CHAIR: Just give me a moment before we move forward.

Sorry about that. This is the new normal. My daughter was crying, I had to check in on her to see if she was okay. It's probably a first for committee.

Is there other committee business? We'll ask each caucus first, so we'll start with the NDP. Do you have any other committee business?

JUDY KAVANAGH: There is one piece that the committee needs to go over. I sent out a piece of correspondence from the Minister of Environment in response to a request for information made at the January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

THE CHAIR: Okay, so we have that. Does everybody have that in front of them? Is there any discussion on it?

BRAD JOHNS: I would note that that correspondence was dated on March 11<sup>th</sup>. We're now here in May so I'm wondering whether or not we can get an update on it. It's three months old now. Is there an opportunity to get an update on the correspondence?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I would echo that. This was our request around a timeline for the Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity, which is reconstituted under the new Sustainable Development Goals Act, formerly under EGSPA.

The commission had already lapsed, so a great deal of time had already elapsed before those appointments had come forward to us at the time of this letter, which was in January. We're now at the end of May, so I would like to ask that we write a letter asking for an update on that.

THE CHAIR: Could you put a motion on the floor? It seems perfectly reasonable.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I'd like to make a motion that we reply to the minister asking for an update on the reconstitution of the Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity.

BRAD JOHNS: For discussion in regard to the motion - which I do support - Ms. Chender did say in regard to having updated timelines so that would be included in the motion as well, is it? That's the intent of the motion, to have a timeline?

THE CHAIR: What we'll do is we'll ask for an update on the previous letter that was sent. Like you said, both of you have put your concerns forward that we're now three or four months and we just need the updated information. Any information they can provide us, we will ask for.

BRAD JOHNS: I'm just looking for clarification in regard to her motion. Is the intent to have a more concrete timeline attached? Is that the intent, Ms. Chender?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Yes, I think an update regarding the timeline for those appointments to the Round Table to come forward to our committee is the request.

THE CHAIR: My understanding is that we're asking for an update on the letter and while we would like to see a concrete update, we'll ask for the best possible information with regard to a timeline. We know that things change. Obviously, things can change rapidly, so we will ask for them to provide us with the best possible information and update that they can. Does that sound fair?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: The response that the minister provided indicated that they, in fact, had applications for that Round Table that they were in the process of considering. Obviously, it has been a very busy last six months and nowhere more so than in the Department of Environment - obviously, we acknowledge that. Given that we know those are already under consideration, I think we can ask the question, when will those come to our committee? If they're not prepared to answer that question, they'll give us a different answer, but my motion would ask that we ask that question directly.

THE CHAIR: I was just trying to take into account that there may be personal things going on with some of those nominees, but you're right. We'll send that forward, as stated by the member for Dartmouth South.

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

The motion is carried.

Ms. Chender, if I understand, that was the NDP caucus' business?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: No, Mr. Chair, we have another motion that we would like to bring.

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Chair, I did ask early on during the setting of the agenda that I could make a motion prior to you opening the floor.

THE CHAIR: Yes, and we did say that there will be time made available at the end. Right now, we're going to go to the NDP caucus, then we'll go to Progressive Conservatives, and then we'll go to the Liberal caucus as we did with the introductions. We'll start with Mr. Chender.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I'll put forward my motion and then I'll speak to it a bit, and we can email it directly to the clerk so that she has the text.

I move that the committee write a letter to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education calling on him to require all workplaces to include accommodations for employees with dependants in their plans for re-opening.

With schools closed, Summer camps uncertain, and respite services limited, we know that many employees will face barriers to returning to work. Government has a role to play in requiring businesses to make flexible work hours and other accommodations so that workers with dependants, women in particular, are not further disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

That's the text of our motion. Given your comments at the beginning, Mr. Chair, I'll situate that by saying that this committee is constituted to consider issues related to early childhood development, labour, and education in Nova Scotia - as well as considering the ABCs, which we did. This comes under the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the House of Assembly, Rule 60(2)(c). As you noted, Mr. Chair, we haven't had the chance to meet or consider issues for some time, but we are here constituted as a committee. This is the first time legislative business has been conducted in over 10 weeks.

It feels important to ask this committee to consider a motion which is directly in its terms of reference. It's at the heart of early childhood development, education, and labour. The fact is that we have thousands of children, differently abled, elderly, and immune-compromised people whose caregivers cannot return to business as usual, regardless of their reopening plans.

We're hearing about consultations being conducted and plans being presented, and we would like this committee to request that accommodations for these workers be included in these reopening plans. Otherwise, based on the best evidence we have now, we know that we will lose many hundreds - if not thousands - of people from the workforce. Most of those people will be women. Thank you for considering this motion.

THE CHAIR: Agreed, that's a great motion. We'll open this up for discussion. Are there any comments?

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Ms. Chender, you said you were sending that to the clerk. Can she forward that to all of us to read? It was a lot to absorb.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: Are you able to circulate that?

JUDY KAVANAGH: Yes. I have it now. I'll send it to the members to read through it right now.

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Thank you very much. Then can we have a few minutes just to look it over?

THE CHAIR: Certainly.

Ms. Chender, did you send that off? Judy, did you send that off?

JUDY KAVANAGH: I've received it and I just sent it to the members.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Are we comfortable with a five-minute break - say until 10:30 a.m. - to allow the members to digest it?

Everybody mute their phones. All members read things over and then we'll come back at 10:30 a.m. and we'll vote on it. Is everybody comfortable with that? See you in five.

[10:26 a.m. The committee recessed.]

[10:31 a.m. The committee reconvened]

THE CHAIR: I have 10:30 a.m. on my phone, but on my microwave, I have 10:28 a.m. I'm going to go by my phone. Is everybody here?

Ms. Chender, did you want to read the motion again? Then we'll have the vote.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I move that the committee write a letter to the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education calling on him to require all workplaces to include accommodations for employees with dependants in their plans for reopening.

With schools closed, Summer camps uncertain, and respite services limited, we know that many employees will face barriers to returning to work. Government has a role to play in requiring businesses to make flexible work hours and other accommodations so that workers with dependants, women in particular, are not further disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

THE CHAIR: Any comment?

SUZANNE LOHNES-CROFT: Mr. Chair, our caucus is interested in having this letter sent to the minister, and we look forward to hearing a reply.

THE CHAIR: Any other comments?

BRAD JOHNS: My only concern in regard to the motion is whether or not it may have a negative result in having businesses that are on the fence deciding not to reopen because they cannot make accommodations for employees with children. I certainly support and understand the need to be able to accommodate people with children - I think I fit there pretty good. However, I am concerned in regard to putting too many limits on businesses that they may choose just not to reopen because they can't make the accommodations. I'm curious to know how Ms. Chender sees that.

THE CHAIR: Ms. Chender, do you want to respond?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I would say that the spirit of this motion is that all sectors of business are now being asked to put forward plans about how to reopen in the context of COVID-19. Our position is that one important piece of the context of COVID-19 is that many, many hundreds and thousands of Nova Scotians are acting as either excited or reluctant caregivers in this time. That means that they will be unable to return to business as usual. Just as a business has to put forward a plan for having PPE, a plan for social distancing, presumably, we would also like a plan for how to accommodate workers who have dependants. The reality is that they will have to do that, and if they don't, we will see a much worse economic situation than we are currently in because we will lose that many more workers. In this case, we feel comfortable putting forward this motion.

BRAD JOHNS: Just another follow-up, I'm assuming that this would only be while a state of emergency is still on, or does this continue on past that?

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I think the text of our motion is clear. We're talking about the plans for businesses reopening. When they make their plans for reopening, just as they have to - I don't know what the timelines for the other items that they need to put forward in those plans are in terms of social distancing. I think that will rely on the orders of Public Health and whatever timeline is required for the other plans being presented that Public Health and the Department of Labour and Advanced Education will have some hand in evaluating. We want this to be a part of that plan.

BRAD JOHNS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll support this.

THE CHAIR: The motion is on the floor. Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

Now on to the PC caucus. Do you have any committee business?

BRAD JOHNS: Just for the record, I'm not 100 per cent sure what the protocol is, but I would like to have the record reflect that I do object to the fact that the Chair allowed the NDP caucus to go before the PC caucus. The PC caucus is currently the Official Opposition caucus and thereby I think we should have the opportunity to have the floor first. I don't know what the protocol is, but I do want the record to reflect that.

Although I'm glad that we've had this meeting today - it is great. It does show that committees can do business. As I said to the clerk in my email, I know that Halifax Regional Council has been holding council meetings. In my constituency, I've been having meetings with people via Zoom and other avenues, Skype. Our caucus is having our regular caucus meeting via Zoom. I do appreciate that we're having the meeting today - it can actually happen.

However, I do think that it would be more beneficial if we actually could see everybody's faces and talk back and forth a little bit more. I know initially, our caucus when we started our weekly caucus meetings, it was via conference call, but we've moved on to Zoom and we're finding that much more productive. I'm thinking that there might be an opportunity the next time we meet, if we can't meet in person, to look at perhaps using some of the newer technologies that are available.

Mr. Chair, I'd like to put the following motion on the floor. I move that the Chair of the Human Resources Committee together with the committee clerk make arrangements for our June 2020 meeting of this committee to be held using a technology such as Zoom.

THE CHAIR: Let me comment on a few of those things. I don't think there is any protocol. I will check into that. As long as I've been Chair, I've always started the same way. We've also always given all Parties an opportunity to speak their mind and to put forward motions. The motion that you just put forward, quite frankly, has little to nothing to do with the motion that was put forward by the NDP, so there is not a conflict.

This is the first time I've ever had anyone come forward and say, I want to go first. I can understand why everybody wants to be the first out of the gate. We can look into it, but I think in the spirit of co-operation, this committee ran pretty smooth to that.

Secondly, the reason why we decided to go with teleconferencing is because not everybody has the newest technology. Not everybody has an internet connection. Even me, down in Herring Cove where I am, sometimes my internet connection is in and out. Sometimes I have issues. This for us has been the most reliable way because - aside from that one time in the Summer when we lost our cellphones - the cellphone or home phone is probably the most reliable source for internet. We could be sitting here doing a Zoom conference call and my internet could go out, which happens quite frequently or my router could go down, and then it kind of throws everything out of whack.

What we're trying to do is find the best possible way for everybody to be able to join, no matter where they are in Nova Scotia - that includes media and staff - and at the same time make sure that it's reliable. Mr. Johns, you're out in Sackville. Yes, you have a reliable internet but anything could happen and you could lose your internet and then you're out of the conference meeting.

That was kind of the reasoning and rationale behind it. We could have a staffer who is in Meat Cove. We don't know. We just wanted to make sure we could have media that wants to join on these calls that could be somewhere else or a staff member or, like I said, an MLA. For me, this was about reliability.

It wasn't about seeing somebody's face, quite frankly. I don't really think it makes a big difference. I've done Zoom. I've also had Zoom kick out on me a few times. I don't think it makes a big difference. This is all being recorded. It's being streamed on YouTube right now. For those of you who want to go back and review, you can go back and listen to this. We can look into it. My issue where I'm at is there's no guarantee on reliability and what we want to do is we want to have reliability and make sure this goes smoothly.

BRAD JOHNS: I guess there's two things there. In regard to protocol, I recognize your comment. Maybe it wasn't an issue until now that we're on a conference call that I see it as an issue. I would like a clarification in regard to that. I know that as a legislative committee, we follow the same rules as the House, so I'm curious to see what the protocol speaking order is. I let my objection continue to stand for the record in regard to that.

In regard to how we do our meetings and my motion, I do appreciate your background on that but I don't think it's our job as an MLA to decide if and how we do it. It's to give direction to staff and staff to devise the best way to have the meeting. It may be some people call in via Zoom and some people call in with a teleconference line if they needed to.

I know when we use Zoom on our caucus - we have people all across the province in our caucus - in some cases, they mute their video and they're able to hear perfectly. We've had no issues whatsoever. We have people calling in from Cape Breton and all the way down by Digby so I think we can certainly do that here as a committee, as well. I just leave my motion stand and if anybody else wants to comment on it.

THE CHAIR: I will further comment on that because you had referenced me. My job as Chair is to instruct on how to set up these committees and what we're doing moving forward.

The issue that we have, once again, is around internet reliability with some of these issues. Like I said, I go back to I'm here in Herring Cove and I do, at times, have choppy internet. I'm 15 minutes out of HRM. I've tried all of the big providers.

The issue that I have around your motion is that we could potentially exclude staff and/or MLAs. It's great to see people's faces, but it's more important to make sure that people that have access to this have access to it. We'll put this up for a vote, but I can tell you as the Chair of this committee, at times this may actually exclude me. I don't think that's fair. I don't think it's fair that it may exclude me.

We'll put this motion on the floor for a vote. We can give people five minutes if they want to, but we'll put it on the floor for a vote.

CLAUDIA CHENDER: I want to support investigating this option. I hear your concerns, Brendan, but the reality is that Halifax Regional Council, which represents all parts of the HRM, has been doing this. People can call via audio if they can't join via video.

[10:45 a.m.]

I think that if we look across the country at all orders of government, almost everyone is doing this except for the provincial government of Nova Scotia. Our federal government is doing it with many more remotely situated MPs than we have here in Nova Scotia. Our municipal orders of government are doing it. Provinces across the country like Ontario and Alberta, which have much more disparate landscapes, are doing it. I think it makes sense to explore this.

I think it's no secret that we have been advocating for a long time for the rest of the committees to open up. My fear is that this notion that we can't meet in this way is being used as some kind of Trojan horse for why we can't have those committees at all. We saw in the Public Accounts Committee that there wasn't a unanimous decision to meet virtually. Maybe this was an excuse, I don't know what it is, but I would like a definitive opinion from Legislative TV and from staff on whether or not it is feasible for us to meet virtually in that way.

We know that Kendra was sworn in via video - she's in Cape Breton. Obviously, she's in an urban part of Cape Breton. I think it's an open question. Quite frankly, if we don't have good enough internet across the province for MLAs to meet virtually, then we need to fix the internet.

In the meantime, I would like an opinion or at least to look into the option of meeting that way.

THE CHAIR: We're going to put it to a vote. What I will say again is that this varies from place to place. I used HRM as an example for city council. I just remind everyone that there's not a single person from my community - my councillor has not lived in the community as of right now, so there's actually nobody from my community that is attending that.



I go back to a whole host of issues. No one's saying that we can't do other things. Obviously today it has become clear that this method does work. We have been able to have a productive meeting and appoint many people to boards. With that, I'm going to throw the motion out on the floor for a vote.

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

I heard four yeses and four noes.

BRAD JOHNS: Mr. Chair.

THE CHAIR: Hold on, Mr. Johns. To the clerk, I have heard four yeses and four noes.

JUDY KAVANAGH: Why don't we read through the names and have members say yes or no as we go through?

THE CHAIR: We'll redo that vote.

**YEAS**

**NAYS**

Claudia Chender  
Kendra Coombes  
Larry Harrison  
Brad Johns

Suzanne Lohnes-Croft  
Rafah DiCostanzo  
Bill Horne  
Brendan Maguire

JUDY KAVANAGH: We have four noes and four yeses, which is a tie vote. In a case like that, the Chair casts a second and deciding vote.

THE CHAIR: No.

JUDY KAVANAGH: Now we have five noes and four yeses.

THE CHAIR: The motion is defeated.

Our next meeting will be June 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. It will be appointments to agencies, boards, and commissions. Hopefully, we'll have some responses to the NDP's motion on child care, and then the Progressive Conservative motions on filling the ABCs. This will be done, once again, by teleconference so that everybody has access to the meeting.

BRAD JOHNS: Prior to adjournment, just on clarification for our next meeting, I noted that when the clerk sent out a request for today's meeting, that the Chair had confirmed there were no essential ABCs. Given the fact that when we look at what we looked at today - the Farm Loan Board, the Art Gallery, NSHA, IWK, Nova Scotia Health Board, Liquor Corporation - there were obviously some substantial appointments today.

So we will be having that meeting? We won't be getting an email asking us - we will be having that meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup>, just for clarification.

THE CHAIR: To the clerk, did you want to clarify that?

JUDY KAVANAGH: I suppose it's always the Chair's prerogative to poll the members and ask them if they want to cancel the meeting. For now, we would assume the meeting is going to take place, but if the Chair chooses to poll members on it in June, then that's what will happen.

BRAD JOHNS: For clarification, the prerogative to poll is up to the Chair, regardless of the date being set today.

JUDY KAVANAGH: Correct. The next meeting is scheduled for June 30<sup>th</sup>, but it's not a guarantee that the meeting is going to take place or that it will take place on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Johns, if there is a change to the date - as with this meeting - there will be a poll sent out from the clerk.

BRAD JOHNS: As I said previously, given the May 15<sup>th</sup> correspondence that there were no essential appointments, and looking at the appointments we made today, I'd say there were some very significant appointments today. I hope we have our meeting in June.

THE CHAIR: Thank you for your comments. I'm glad that we were able to have this meeting and it ran so smoothly.

With that, we will conclude committee business. I wish you all the best. Stay safe - a lot of love to you and your families.

We are adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 10:53 a.m.]