

HANSARD

NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
REVIEW THE ESTIMATES OF
THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
AND THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Legislative Committees Office

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE ESTIMATES OF
THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
AND THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

Hon. Kevin Murphy (Chairman)
Mr. Gordon Wilson
Hon. Michel Samson
Hon. Labi Kousoulis
Mr. Iain Rankin
Hon. Christopher d'Entremont
Mr. Larry Harrison
Hon. David Wilson
Mr. Neil Ferguson, Chief Clerk of the House of Assembly
(Non-Voting Member)

In Attendance:

Speaker's Office Adviser
Ms. Deborah Lusby
Director of Administration
Office of the Speaker

Ms. Annette Boucher
Assistant Clerk
House of Assembly

Mr. Gordon Hebb
Chief Legislative Counsel



HALIFAX, TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW
THE ESTIMATES OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
AND THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

11:00 A.M.

CHAIRMAN
Hon. Kevin Murphy

MR. GORDON WILSON (Chairman): Good morning everybody, I call the meeting to order. I am Gordon Wilson, the MLA for Clare-Digby, the Deputy Speaker, filling in for our Speaker who couldn't make it here today. He is going to call in on the phone. He's online now. The Chief Clerk will go over that process with him, so he is allowed to participate in the conversation but not voting.

Welcome everybody. This is the Special Committee of the House of Assembly that we're starting with first. We'll start with introductions.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. We also have representatives here from Election Nova Scotia and the Auditor General's Office who we'll probably address later with questions.

I'll now turn the meeting over to the Chief Clerk.

MR. NEIL FERGUSON: I just note that Mr. Allan MacMaster is here at the table. He's invited by virtue of the legislation as he's the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, but he is not here for the purposes of either a quorum or for voting.

This is the meeting, as you've stated, of the Special Committee to review the Estimates of the Office of the Auditor General and the Chief Electoral Officer under both pieces of legislation that govern them. Normally what we would do is proceed with motions to approve the recommendation of their estimates to Treasury Board, that is the function of the committee.

The first one we will deal with on the agenda is the 2017-18 estimates of the Auditor General's Office. You will see from the materials that were previously circulated that the amount requested for that budget year is \$3,833,009. I guess we would entertain a motion, Mr. Chairman, to approve that amount and, as stated, Mr. Spicer is here from the Auditor General's Office if anyone on the committee has any questions about the materials that were circulated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So we have a motion on the floor . . .

MR. FERGUSON: Not yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're looking for a motion on the floor to accept the Budget Estimates for the Auditor General's Office in the amount of \$3,833,009. Moved and seconded by Mr. Rankin and Mr. d'Entremont.

Is there any discussion? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

I'd like to note that Mr. Kousoulis is in attendance at the meeting now also. The Chief Clerk.

MR. FERGUSON: The next item, No. 2 on the agenda, is the 2017-18 Estimates of Elections Nova Scotia. The amount is \$4,454,000.

Just to be clear, in recent days - I believe it was on Friday - there were new materials submitted. There's one slight change and the materials have been given to the committee. The request is for an additional 0.5 full-time equivalent but it does not change the amount requested. It's going to be absorbed within the administration budget, and it is being done for succession-planning reasons to allow for the transition from an experienced staff person who will be retiring to somebody who will be a 0.5 FTE in training to maintain election readiness. Again, the amount is \$4,454,000. A motion would be in order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're looking for a motion for the Budget Estimates for Elections Nova Scotia for \$4,454,000. (Interruption)

The Honourable David Wilson made the motion. A seconder? (Interruption) We don't need a seconder.

Is there any discussion? Would all those in favour of the motion please say Aye. Contrary minded, Nay.

The motion is carried.

That concludes our business for the Special Committee of the House Assembly. We will now recess for a few minutes and move into the regular session of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

[The Special Committee adjourned at 11:06 a.m.]