

# **HANSARD**

**NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**STANDING COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Thursday, October 8, 2009**

**Committee Room 1**

**Organizational Meeting**

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**VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Clarrie MacKinnon (Chair)  
Gary Burrill  
Trevor Zinck  
Michèle Raymond  
Sidney Prest  
Hon. Wayne Gaudet  
Harold Theriault  
Hon. Murray Scott  
Hon. Richard Hurlburt

In Attendance:

Kim Leadley  
Legislative Committee Clerk

Gordon Hebb  
Chief Legislative Counsel



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2009**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**9:00 A.M.**

CHAIR  
Clarrie MacKinnon

THE CHAIR: Good morning, folks. We'll call the Veterans Affairs Committee to order. We will begin by going around the table with introductions. I know everybody knows each other, but perhaps for some of the Party folks who are here today who may be new - could we start with the member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley?

[The committee members introduce themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Since we are a small group here this morning and there are some new faces from a Party perspective, perhaps we'll go around the room as well.

[The support staff introduce themselves.]

THE CHAIR: This is an organizational meeting, as you know, and I don't expect we're going to be here for too many minutes. However, I would like to begin by having a little look at the mandate. Although there is no written mandate for the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, it says, "[This] report was written with the understanding that the committee be established for the purpose of considering matters pertaining to the Royal Canadian Legion and Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces." There is some consideration that perhaps we might expand the role or change the mandate of this committee, and I would certainly like to have your input on what we can possibly do when most of the Veterans Affairs' matters are of a federal nature.

So if there is any input that any member would like to make in relationship to an expanded role, I certainly would like to hear that. Any comments?

The honourable member for the Eastern Shore.

SIDNEY PREST: Being a new member, I have and my family has a lot of background, being veterans and a military family. I certainly would like more information on what is available to the Legions of our province and what is available for veterans and veterans' families. Certainly, the information for me would be very helpful.

THE CHAIR: The honourable member for Clare.

HON. WAYNE GAUDET: Mr. Chairman, maybe just in response. Normally committee members on this committee we invite witnesses to come in to basically do exactly what you're proposing. We invite people, different representatives from different groups to come in and explain to us in terms of what's available, for example, from Veteran Affairs Canada. As an MLA, there are probably some times that you will be contacted by constituents who are looking for information. So for us it's an opportunity to gather some information, to gather some contacts, so when we are approached or contacted by a constituent, at least we have individuals we can turn to for assistance in order to help people back home. So part of the mandate of our committee is to invite witnesses or guests to come in to provide us with information that would be very useful to have back in our constituency.

THE CHAIR: The honourable member for Cumberland South.

HON. MURRAY SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, first of all I want to say that I appreciate the opportunity to be on this committee. I was the Chair for a while and it is a wonderful committee and a great opportunity to help, to advance the cause - whether it's Legions, veterans or whatever. But I was just going to ask, we haven't approved the agenda this morning, because we have some additions that we would like, if we could.

THE CHAIR: Sure, by all means. The agenda is so sparse that we certainly didn't put that forward. But I'm sorry, I was supposed to do that.

MURRAY SCOTT: That's okay. If I could, under the PC caucus, we have already spoken to Nova Scotia Command and the President and Treasurer would like an opportunity to present here at the committee. I would also like to add Wilf Edmond, Legion Dominion Command President, Canada.

THE CHAIR: Certainly, these agenda items are for upcoming meetings and the agenda itself has on it only Gordon Hebb for a few remarks in relationship to mandate. But we will get to the agenda in a few moments, if that's okay.

MURRAY SCOTT: If you want to wait then to add them on.

THE CHAIR: If we could wait, perhaps, if you don't mind?

MURRAY SCOTT: Sure.

THE CHAIR: Because we wanted to call on Gordon perhaps to say a couple of words about the mandate on the committee and how it might be expanded and be a little bit more useful. Not that it wasn't useful in the past but perhaps to be more inclusive in some areas.

GORDON HEBB: There's not a lot I can say - the rules aren't terribly helpful. The mandates set out in the 60's, sets out the nine Standing Committees and says for greater certainty which in the next subsection of the Rules then sets out mandates, you might say, for some of those committees. But in fact there are only - of those nine committees, there is actually only further information beyond it's title, for five of those nine committees. Even when you read that material, a lot of it is out of date, referring to departments that don't exist any longer. It hasn't kept up. The rules have not been amended since 1999.

The provisions that do follow in that section, I don't see as being totally comprehensive. As I say, they say for greater certainty, I think they just help clarify what the mandate is. The mandate really stems from the title, so really the rules aren't terribly helpful. They say it's the Veterans Affairs Committee and they don't tell you anything further.

The committee has had something they've put together themselves. The committee that has done the most of this, as I understand it, is the Public Accounts Committee, which has produced extensive material, some of which they refer to as additional mandates. There's a document on the Web site that refers to operating principles - some of them are just things that you would gather from the rules, some of them things the committee has come up with on its own, but some of them are just things like substitutions which are part of the rules explaining the right of substitution when somebody can't come.

None of these things for the Public Accounts Committee have had approval of the House, so they're really internal documents of the committee. I can't see any reason why this committee can't outline if they wish to - in a more formal way - what they see their mandate as. It doesn't really have any official status that would require approval of the House. I probably wouldn't be recommending anything like that, because once you do and get the approval of the House as to the mandate, then that's your mandate and then you're kind of restricted by it.

As well, I might say, Veterans Affairs is a federal jurisdiction, but that doesn't mean you can't go there at all. There is some overlapping jurisdiction. I think it's fairly

open to the committee to explore pretty much anything with respect to veterans' affairs, things that affect them, with respect to your provincial jurisdiction.

I don't know if there's a lot more that I can say than that, but I would certainly be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

THE CHAIR: The member for Halifax Atlantic - and we welcome you here this morning, and also the member for Dartmouth North.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: A simple question, and I should probably know the answer, when was the committee established? What year?

GORDON HEBB: Well, the present rules came into - when they were totally rewritten in 1980. I believe these committees - as far as how long that has been around since then - but there would have been a previous set of rules before 1980, and I well imagine the committee may have existed before then, but I couldn't tell without going back and finding those old rules.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: So we don't really know if this may have been a committee established in 1950 or - who knows.

GORDON HEBB: It could well have been. I'd have to do some looking to see when the committee first arose - you'd have to find the old rules and see when the committee first appeared. The particular rule that comes under has been there since - it does refer to the previous rules - it says that particular rule's been there since 1955. Whether the Veterans Affairs Committee has been in that rule since 1955, I can't tell from looking at these rules.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: That's okay.

THE CHAIR: The member for Clare.

WAYNE GAUDET: Are there restrictions in terms of who we may call to appear before this committee? Are there restrictions? I'm hearing the Chairman talking about changing the mandate. Maybe the Chairman could indicate what kind of witnesses were you considering?

[9:15 a.m.]

THE CHAIR: It was suggested by one honourable member - not a member of the committee - that a lot of RCMP officers serve in capacities overseas in training of police forces and so on. I don't know if that's an area that we would like to expand into as well. We put the mandate on the agenda because the question was raised - what is the role of the committee and the guidelines for our operation and so on. Some members are new to the committee and some members are new to the Legislative Assembly itself. It was just a

discussion point.

Having heard what Mr. Hebb has had to say, maybe there's no need for us to stir a pot in any way if things have operated well - I'm new to the committee as well. I've served on other committees and I believe the mandate seemed to be a little bit more clear in those committees. Certainly, if it's the pleasure of this committee to move forward and leave the limited mandate that's there in place, then certainly this was just a discussion point for getting us going.

WAYNE GAUDET: I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we maybe begin addressing the veterans' issues, and if we have extra time on our hands then we may lean in other areas if time permits.

THE CHAIR: Is that generally agreed? We were not going to operate on votes in this committee, I don't think, unless it's imperative on some occasion to do so. Certainly from a meeting perspective, I don't know how often we do want to meet, and from a time-sharing perspective as well, I think normally it's equal time for each caucus even though there are more members from one caucus than another. I think the precedent is equal time, and certainly some members will not have as much time for questioning as others, but I think in an open and transparent government - no matter who is in power in our democracy - I think that's the fairest way of operating. Is there agreement on that as we begin our first meeting?

MURRAY SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, my experience has been that this has been a pretty informal committee. You'll find that you'll have a witness here that one particular member may have a real interest in or a lot of questions for, and there may be other members who will just take in what's discussed and after the meeting make some suggestions. Maybe there may need to be a resolution to the House, maybe a recommendation to the government to do something.

I think you'll find that it won't operate like the House does, that you have to try to divide equal time. There will be times where there can be lots of interest and other times where there may only be interest from one or two members. So I think you'll find that it will work fairly well on its own without putting a lot of strict guidelines to it and trying to formalize it too much. That has been my experience.

THE CHAIR: Is it fair that we proceed with just the raising of a hand and go on like that?

HON. RICHARD HURLBURT: As long as it's fair on both sides of the table.

THE CHAIR: It certainly will be. No toing and froing on this committee, please. No toing and froing on this committee. This is going to be a very friendly committee and a very fair committee. Anyhow, having gotten that behind us, perhaps we should proceed with looking at the agenda items of future meetings, and certainly the member for

Cumberland South is ready with a suggestion already.

MURRAY SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to add in that we had already sent in a suggestion we had from the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command, but we wanted to add to the agenda today as well the possibility of Wilf Edmond, president of the Nunavut Command of Canada; Calvin Hillier and Carl Doty, I guess it is, the Last Post Committee.

THE CHAIR: The Last Post Committee?

MURRAY SCOTT: Yes. Then the other thing we wanted to add to the agenda for discussion - it doesn't have to be today, it could be at a future date - was, we used to do the Remembrance Day cards for veterans - every veteran in Nova Scotia received a Remembrance Day card from - I believe at the time it was from the committee. Do you remember when? Gordon Balsler initiated it. (Interruption) Yes. Anyway, we want to see if there might be an opportunity to reinitiate that process of sending Remembrance Day cards out to all the veterans in the province. We used to do it, and it stopped.

THE CHAIR: It's certainly an excellent idea. Is there an up-to-date list with so many of our vets as you look at - The legion would be able to supply that to us?

MURRAY SCOTT: I believe so, yes.

THE CHAIR: Is there agreement that we move forward with that very positive idea that did take place in the past? General agreement? Excellent suggestion.

We have in front of us the list from each caucus, and certainly there can be additions to the list and there can be additions, of course, as we move along as well. We will alternate, I assume, from caucus to caucus, certainly.

The member for Halifax Atlantic . . .

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: When would you like to hear those additions? Is this the place or when?

THE CHAIR: Well certainly now would be quite appropriate.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: A couple of things that I had been wondering about. I certainly would be interested to talk to somebody about admissions to veterans' long-term care programs, to Camp Hill and so on, how that interacts with the other long-term care admissions; be interested to hear from the reservists, somebody like Colonel Bruce Turnbull.

Another thing I had heard of, there's a very interesting program being done - I think in Washington State and it is being done by the state - on post-traumatic stress



disorder. It's actually a re-integration program, kind of an experiential thing, be interested to know what kind of work . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: We all need that.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: I know, I said it from the beginning, absolutely, that is no joke. (Interruptions)

Anyway, it is a really interesting program and they have been doing a lot of experiential learning and so on and basically helping people step down into ordinary life and make some constructive use of the experiences that they've had as veterans. So I would personally love to know more about that program and whether it is adaptable to this situation because we do have people coming back, even as reservists.

THE CHAIR: Excellent points, all three. Other suggestions?

The honourable member for Clare.

WAYNE GAUDET: Probably one of the first witnesses we should bring in, the fact that it's on the Tory list as well, is to bring in our Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command, to provide us basically with a background - who they are, who do they represent, what kind of service they provide.

I'm sure many members would find it very informative and will probably have questions as well, they have people in all of our areas, service officers, what do they do. I'm sure members around this committee room will find it extremely helpful. So that would be my first suggestion where to start.

THE CHAIR: General agreement that we proceed in that vein, and would it be appropriate to also have Dominion Command and Last Post in at the same time? Or would that be too much? Certainly if we have a two-hour meeting, I'm sure we could look after all three at that time. Is that appropriate? Is that your pleasure?

RICHARD HURLBURT: I think that's filling the agenda with too much for that one meeting. I think that you'd have a full agenda just with Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command because I know we would have a lot of questions for them and I'm sure the other Parties would.

THE CHAIR: Certainly the member for Yarmouth has a good point and is there general agreement that we limit the first session to the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command? Agreed.

The next meeting we should decide whether we're going to be meeting while the House is in session and I think probably some committees are not meeting at this time. What's your pleasure in relationship to that?

The member for Clare.

WAYNE GAUDET: Mr. Chair, the history on this committee - I've been a member for many years, just to share with the new members - a decision was made on several occasions and again, we're left to basically make our own decision this time around, but previous or past history, this committee did not meet when the House was sitting. I just want to indicate that to the committee. It's for us to decide, either we're going to meet or we're not going to meet when the House is sitting.

THE CHAIR: Very good.

The honourable member for Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley.

SIDNEY PREST: In the past, how often did the committee meet?

WAYNE GAUDET: Once a month.

SIDNEY PREST: For the whole year?

WAYNE GAUDET: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I'm sorry, that was the member for Eastern Shore. I'm getting you two mixed up here this morning.

The honourable member for Halifax Atlantic.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: Out of town members, just make sure. I mean you all have times when you are in, right, predictable times.

THE CHAIR: The honourable member for Yarmouth.

RICHARD HURLBURT: Well through the week when we're in for caucus meetings and that, have it arranged around that.

THE CHAIR: So is there general agreement that we not meet while the House is in session? Agreed? All right. And the frequency of meetings - looking over the past history, sometimes this committee has only met twice in a year. I think some years even less than that. I think in more recent times, it has met two or maybe three times in a year. I think that while we're not looking at changing the mandate, we have a lot of items that are listed from the various caucuses. I believe we should be meeting perhaps, at your pleasure, of course, but we should be meeting more frequently than twice a year.

Is there some kind of general agreement that we meet every two or three months? Can we have a little commentary in relationship to that?

WAYNE GAUDET: I would suggest we attempt to meet once a month. I know the difficulties this committee has had. Maybe Kim could provide us with some - I know the committee members have always looked at inviting some witnesses to come in, but the challenge that has arisen many times is those witnesses are not available for different reasons.

It might be for our committee to attempt to meet once a month. At the same time, I think before we adjourn this morning it might be worthwhile that we have a second possible witness lined up just in case our first choice is not available for the first meeting. I just wanted to share that with committee members.

THE CHAIR: Would it be reasonable then to have the Dominion Command and the Last Post as alternates? They're sort of in the same vein and that was the suggestion of the member for Cumberland South. Could we have some discussion on that?

RICHARD HURLBURT: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to also state that I think it's important for this committee to have Veterans' Affairs in here. They're the ones who look after the funding for vets so that all committee members can find out how you go about getting some assistance for some of our vets. I can tell you my father-in-law is a vet and the hassle we have to go through to get a hearing aid or get something for him, it's unbelievable.

Maybe there's a different approach and we could - all committee members - have it so they could take it back to their caucuses with a better understanding and clarity of how to approach this.

THE CHAIR: The member for Dartmouth North.

[9:30 a.m.]

TREVOR ZINCK: I think what should come out of today is maybe we come up with a list. I don't see it as being a problem to be proactive and attempt to meet on a regular basis, on a monthly basis. But in doing that, if we can maybe line up some of these folks in the next coming weeks. Veterans' Affairs, I agree, so what's the next step to take in booking them in. Let's pre-book them for a certain month and let's get a lineup and really be active. This is our chance to let veterans around Nova Scotia know that we are interested. I don't think it should be every three months, I think we should be more active.

We have to come up with a lineup and if we do that and if someone does cancel out, we just go back and book somebody else in.

THE CHAIR: That's an excellent suggestion. Certainly, Veterans' Affairs Canada, as suggested by the member for Yarmouth, is right up there in importance as well. The

member for Cumberland South.

MURRAY SCOTT: I'm just wondering, Kim, do the veterans themselves have an association?

KIM LEADLEY: I'm not sure. I think maybe through the legions, I think that's all.

MURRAY SCOTT: Is that it? Just the legions?

TREVOR ZINCK: I think. I can check.

MURRAY SCOTT: It'd be nice to hear from a couple of veterans about some of the issues they may face themselves.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: The Merchant Navy has an association . . .

MURRAY SCOTT: They do, yes.

THE CHAIR: There are some local associations of veterans and one, not a breakaway from the legion, but the Overseas Veterans Association was for those who actually were overseas. I know there's a chapter of that in Pictou County with diminished numbers in it as the years go by.

So is it agreed that perhaps we go with a list for the next three meetings, at least, because I think if we try to plan six meetings down the road, it might be somewhat difficult. Perhaps one from each caucus - would that be fair, one suggestion from each caucus? I think we're all agreeing that the importance of the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command is number one. Would that be fair to say?

TREVOR ZINCK: I would really be interested in seeing Veterans Affairs as well, to give us that even broader scope of what possibilities are out there so that, you know, we're more informed. I mean it might be after Christmas, obviously, but I think it's important to get them in here as soon as possible.

THE CHAIR: Are you suggesting that as number two?

TREVOR ZINCK: Perhaps.

THE CHAIR: Because we sort of had agreed previously that the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command - but we can change that if you want to have Veterans Affairs in first.

TREVOR ZINCK: No, no, I agree with the Nunavut Command, number one, but I think it's important to get Veterans Affairs in here to give some of the new members and

some of the new folks to the Legislature more information.

RICHARD HURLBURT: Because you're going to hear two different stories then ...

TREVOR ZINCK: Absolutely.

RICHARD HURLBURT: You're going to hear from Nunavut Command and then you're going to hear Veterans Affairs. You'll hear two different stories and we'll have to put it together.

TREVOR ZINCK: Yes, and I would like to get that broader scope, you know, from the local perspective, but then from national as well.

THE CHAIR: It seems that we have general agreement that the first would be Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command, the second would be Veterans Affairs Canada, and do we want to zero in on a third? It looks as if the PC caucus had actually suggested the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command and the Liberal caucus had suggested Veterans Affairs Canada, although we all agree on those. Is it fair to have the third one from the NDP caucus list? Is that okay?

Would you please suggest one, bearing in mind that we also have the admissions to Camp Hill, the reservists, and the post-traumatic stress suggested by the member for Halifax Atlantic. (Interruptions) It has been suggested to me that the post-traumatic stress could be dealt with at maybe the first and second meetings, but certainly Veterans Affairs Canada could be incorporated there, I think.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: I was thinking of a particular program, I'm not sure, but anyway, yes, we could talk about that.

THE CHAIR: And then if it needed further -

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: Yes, okay.

THE CHAIR: You are suggesting the reservists?

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: Maybe just because that's a broad category of people and if we're - I don't know how people feel.

THE CHAIR: Is there general agreement, that would be the NDP's first suggestion?

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

So we have the next three meetings lined up. The card issue, who is going to follow through with that? Can staff get a list of the veterans? That's a very touchy situation, because every day when you look at the Chronicle Herald, you'll see the little flags. So we don't want to be sending them out to people who have passed on, and I think the list has to be one that is quite up-to-date. If we end up with a list that is relatively old from the legion, then it could be quite embarrassing to this committee, I believe.

MURRAY SCOTT: Sorry, Mr. Chairman, yes. On that issue, though - Kim, something tells me, and I'm trying to remember now, we involved the schools and the kids wrote cards to the veterans in their area. We'll just do a little research here, someone will, because -

TREVOR ZINCK: I will.

MURRAY SCOTT: Would you, Kim?

TREVOR ZINCK: Yes.

MURRAY SCOTT: It would seem to me that we provided to the local schools and they determined through the local legion who the veterans were in their area and they wrote a card to each - each one wrote a card to a veteran and signed it.

TREVOR ZINCK: Yes, I think that's how it worked.

MURRAY SCOTT: It was on behalf of the committee or something.

THE CHAIR: Is it agreed that we leave that to Kim?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sure.

THE CHAIR: Now, we don't want to belabour the meeting this morning for any reasons. I think we have worked out the time-sharing. I think we have worked out the next three meetings of this committee and I think we've decided that we're not going to meet when the House is in session, but it would be, I think, important to have a meeting before November 11<sup>th</sup> and hopefully the House will be finished by then. Is there agreement that we try to have a meeting before November 11<sup>th</sup>?

TREVOR ZINCK: I would probably suggest that we look at either later in November or perhaps the first week of December to follow up Remembrance Day, but I'd suggest probably we're looking at later in November because we have agreed not to meet during the House session.

MICHÈLE RAYMOND: All I would say is that the writing of cards to veterans sounds wonderful. It's the organizing of the schools that could be a massive challenge

and I don't know if you're going to be doing that all by yourself or not. It would probably easily take three weeks of lead time if we as a committee need to somehow get schools writing those cards, I think. That's just my two cents worth. Is that something that you were involved with before?

TREVOR ZINCK: No, Darlene was, I think, with the Veterans Affairs Committee of '98, I believe and with Gordon Balsler - he had already started it, I believe.

MURRAY SCOTT: The school boards agreed to put it to the schools, the schools agreed, once they got them, they put it to the kids. Once it left here it was pretty good.

THE CHAIR: So Kim will check into that and, certainly, if it was something that was organized and it took several months before, we may have to let it go by the boards this time, but we will make every effort. Is that fair, Kim?

TREVOR ZINCK: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Any other matters that we should discuss this morning?

SIDNEY PREST: Just a question, usually when witnesses are called, is it usually a group or can it be an individual?

THE CHAIR: I think it can be either but the member for Clare has a history on it.

WAYNE GAUDET: Mr. Chairman, normally what we had seen in the past when we do invite a witness to come in, usually that individual is accompanied by several other members. Normally the Chair will instruct the witnesses at the very beginning that they are given 10, 15, 20 minutes for presentations without any interruptions and then once they're done the Chair will coordinate questions around this table. That's basically how the procedures in this committee have been in the past.

Again, I've seen this place packed. I'm sure with the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command they'll probably bring their executive and probably a few extra people along. It's hard to say if you're going to have one witness, but that's basically left to the witness or to the guest we invite, if they want to come in by themselves or if they wish to bring someone along with them.

THE CHAIR: Thank you for the clarification. The next meeting then, it has been suggested that we look at the latter part of November or perhaps even into December. It has been the practice of this committee to meet on the second Thursday of a month and that would, of course, be the 12<sup>th</sup> of November, and we may still be in the House. But the 10<sup>th</sup> of December would be the other date that we could possibly look at, if we want to continue the precedent that has been set before of the second Thursday of the month which doesn't interfere with other committees.

The member for Dartmouth.

TREVOR ZINCK: So there is no other opportunity for either the 19<sup>th</sup> or the 26<sup>th</sup> of November? I wouldn't want to go too late into December.

THE CHAIR: And we don't have to follow that, the second Thursday, that was . . .

TREVOR ZINCK: Yes, if it doesn't interfere with any other committee, I would suggest probably the 26<sup>th</sup>; I think that would be a safer date. I wouldn't want to go the 10<sup>th</sup> or any later into December.

THE CHAIR: Is that agreed?

WAYNE GAUDET: The 26<sup>th</sup> is fine with me.

THE CHAIR: So we have the 26<sup>th</sup> firmly set for our meeting and you, of course, will be contacting the Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command and see if that's okay and we will proceed from there.

Are there any other matters that should come before us today?

I think we have set a course and it may be hard to meet the one meeting a month that has been suggested, but what a great step up from the two meetings a year that has taken place in the past. Even if we only get eight meetings in in a year, I think this would be really honouring veterans by taking this committee - not that it hasn't been taken seriously in the past, but to meet more regularly than has been done in the past.

I certainly thank you for your attendance and your input today.

If there are no other closing comments from anyone, the motion is to adjourn.

Is it agreed?

It is agreed.

[The committee adjourned at 9:43 a.m.]