



PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

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Ninety-Third Meeting

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

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**HANSARD**

Speaker: Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

The Management Commission met at 9:30 a.m. via video conference.

**SPEAKER (Bennett):** Good morning everyone.

Sorry for the delays. We did have a few little technical issues getting Members to connect, but I think we're all good now.

Today, I'm just going to list the Members that are present, along with those members of staff. First of all, we have the hon. Barry Petten, Opposition House Leader; the hon. Lisa Dempster, MHA for Cartwright - L'Anse au Clair; Lela Evans, MHA for Torngat Mountains; Craig Pardy, MHA for Bonavista; Lucy Stoyles, MHA for Mount Pearl North. Minister Hogan sends his regrets, the Government House Leader, as he's unable to participate this morning.

Our staff, we have Kim Hawley George, the Clerk of the House of Assembly; Deputy Speaker Brian Warr; Bobbi Russell, Principal Clerk of Committees and Director of Policy; and Gerrie Smith, our Law Clerk.

Welcome everyone.

Without further ado, we'll just get right into the agenda. We have seven items to discuss this morning at our televised meeting.

The first agenda item is the Approval of Minutes included in today's briefing package. It's the draft minutes of the meetings that were held on August 23 and October 15, 2023. Further, as required under the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* and advisement of the decisions taken at the in camera meetings on those dates also, for the information of the public, the minutes from these in camera meetings will be posted on the House of Assembly website following today's approval.

I will open it up to Committee Members to see if there are any questions, comments or

any errors or omissions they would like to bring forward. If there's not, we will call for a motion to adopt the minutes.

Any Members have any questions first?

**L. DEMPSTER:** So moved.

**SPEAKER:** Moved by Minister Dempster and seconded by – was that you, MHA Stoyles, or was it –?

**L. STOYLES:** Yes.

**SPEAKER:** Seconded by MHA Stoyles.

All those in favour by show of hands?

MHA Stoyles and MHA Evans, are you in favour?

**L. STOYLES:** Yes.

**SPEAKER:** All those against?

Motion carried.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

**SPEAKER:** Item 2 is the Speaker's Reports regarding Rulings on Allowance Use. As per section 24 of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, which outlines the process for ruling on allowance use, the act gives the Speaker authority to make rulings when expenditures of Members have been rejected for payment, provided the ruling is distributed and receives concurrence from the Management Commission Members.

The report detailing all such rulings for the period ending today has been circulated to the Commission with their briefing package and is posted on the House of Assembly website as a part of the briefing package for today's minutes. Again, this item is only for reporting purposes and everybody should have seen the expenditures that were identified in their briefing package.

I'll open the floor to see if there are any questions. No need for a motion on this, but if there are any questions any Members of the Commission may have.

Hearing none, we'll move on to the next item, 2.b. which is the Speaker's Reports of Urgent Financial Matters under Delegation of Authority. The act delegates authority to the Speaker with respect to urgent financial matters relating to the administration of the House of Assembly and statutory offices. An urgent financial matter to extend the Hansard transcription software system by amending the existing service agreement requires approval prior to September 30, 2023, when the current agreement expired.

I did consult with the Government House Leader, the Opposition House Leader and a Member of the Third Party for issuing the following direction. Basically, the direction would have been that this agreement be extended with the current vendor for Hansard transcription software system per the negotiated terms and approved by a pre-commitment of funds for the fiscal years 2024-2025, through to 2029-2030 for this service, basically a five-year term.

Again, this is only for reporting purposes, but we will see if any Members have any questions or comments on that.

Hearing none, we'll move forward to item 3, Financial Reports. The next agenda item is a reporting item again to the Commission. The *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* states that the Commission must "regularly, at least quarterly, review the financial performance of the House of Assembly as well as the actual expenditures of members compared with approved allocations." Financial reports and Member expense reports for the period ending June 30, 2023, are included in the briefing package for reporting purposes.

Again, there is no motion required for this. It is more for transparency. I was wondering do any Members have any questions or

comments as it relates to this particular item.

If everyone is good, we'll move on to item 4. The *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* requires an annual audit of the accounts of the House of Assembly and statutory offices by the auditor appointed by the Commission. The act states that the Audit Committee must review the audited financial information, the audit report and any recommendations with the auditor and recommend their approval to the Management Commission. The Auditor General informed the Audit Committee that no significant matters were identified to report.

In correspondence dated August 31, 2023, the Audit Committee recommends that the Commission approve and sign the audited financial information for the House of Assembly and statutory offices for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023.

Any comments? Anyone have any questions on that item?

All the information is provided in your briefing package. I don't know if any Member of the Audit Committee would like to comment on anything.

If not, I will call for a motion that the Commission approves the audited financial information for April 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023, for the House of Assembly and statutory offices as recommended by the Audit Committee.

Can I have a mover for that motion, please?

Moved by MHA Pardy.

Do I have a seconder?

Seconded by MHA Petten.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**SPEAKER:** All those against, 'nay.'

MHA Stoyles how do you vote?

**L. STOYLES:** Yes.

**SPEAKER:** MHA Evans how do you vote?

**L. EVANS:** (Inaudible.)

**SPEAKER:** In favour.

Motion carried.

Item 5 is, again, for information purposes, with reference to the Audited Financial Statements of the Office of the Auditor General for the year March 31, 2023.

Under section 32 of the *Auditor General Act*, the Management Commission appoints a qualified auditor to annually audit the Office of the Auditor General.

Subsection 32(3) of that act provides that the auditor appointed submit their report to the Commission and to the Auditor General. In accordance with provisions of section 32, the audited financial information for the Office of the Auditor General for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023, is presented to the Management Commission.

I'll open the floor up to any questions or comments any Members may have. Again, all the information is provided in your briefing package and will be available on our website.

Seeing no questions, we'll move forward to item 6, the Appointment of Auditor for the Legislature for the year ending March 31, 2024.

Pursuant to subsection 43(2) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, the Management Commission must appoint an auditor of the accounts of the House of Assembly and statutory offices before the end of the fiscal

year, upon the recommendation of the Audit Committee.

In correspondence also dated August 31, 2023, the Audit Committee recommends that the Auditor General be appointed as auditor, pursuant to paragraph 27(7)(b) of the act. Again, the information on this is provided in your briefing package.

Before I call for a motion, I'll open up the floor to any Members of the Committee.

Hearing none, I'll call for a motion that the Commission directs, pursuant to subsection 43(2) of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, that the Auditor General of Newfoundland and Labrador be appointed to audit the accounts of the House of Assembly and the statutory offices for the fiscal year ending the 31st of March 2022.

Can I have a mover for that motion?

MHA Petten.

Do I have a seconder?

MHA Pardy.

All those in favour, show of hands.

**L. STOYLES:** Aye.

**SPEAKER:** I heard MHA Stoyles.

MHA Evans, are you in favour? You're not coming through. I'm not sure if you're muted.

All those against the motion?

Motion carried.

Item 7 is regarding Ruling on Allowance Use. I will have to recuse myself from this particular item and I'll ask Deputy Speaker Warr to take the Chair.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER (Warr):** Thank you, Speaker Bennett.

If we're all good to go, the next agenda item relates to the request from the Member for Lewisporte - Twillingate in accordance with section 24 of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, which gives authority for the Commission to make rulings on allowance use.

The expenditures by the Member were rejected for payment as they were incurred in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, but were not submitted within the 30 days of the end of the year as required by subsection 7(2) of the rules. The expenses are in compliance with all of the provisions of the rules and Corporate & Members' Services has confirmed that there were sufficient funds remaining in the applicable allocations for the 2022-2023 fiscal year and had been submitted in that year.

The motion would be that the Commission approve payment of the expenses totalling \$250, \$300, \$50 and \$100 to be paid within the appropriate allocations for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Bobbi, are we asking for a mover and a seconder for this?

**B. RUSSELL:** Yes.

**CLERK (Hawley George):** That's correct.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay.

Can I have a mover for that motion, please?

It has been moved by MHA Barry Petten.

A seconder?

It has been seconded by MHA Craig Pardy.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

**L. STOYLES:** Aye.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** MHA Stoyles, I heard you.

MHA Evans, are you on the line?

**L. EVANS:** Yes, in favour.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

I guess that is the end of our televised portion of this meeting and I certainly want to thank everybody for joining in.

I would ask Members of the Commission to stand by for the in camera portion.

**SPEAKER (Bennett):** Thank you, Deputy Speaker Warr.

The Speaker recessed the meeting to transition to an in camera session.