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**Official Report
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(Hansard)**

Wednesday 16 January 2002

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 16 janvier 2002

**Standing committee on
government agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

Chair: James J. Bradley
Clerk: Donna Bryce

Président : James J. Bradley
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX**

Wednesday 16 January 2002

Mercredi 16 janvier 2002

The committee met at 1006 in room 151.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

LLOYD JACOBS

The Chair (Mr James J. Bradley): I'll bring the meeting to order this morning. The first item of business for the standing committee on government agencies today is the report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, December 13, 2001.

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Lloyd Jacobs, intended appointee as member, Social Benefits Tribunal.

Mr Bob Wood (London West): I move its adoption.

The Chair: The first appointment we are dealing with is a selection of the third party, Lloyd Jacobs, intended appointee as member, Social Benefits Tribunal. Mr Jacobs, would you come forward, please?

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved its adoption. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

You would know, I believe, that you have the opportunity, should you see fit to do so—this is entirely optional—to make an initial statement. Subsequent to that, each of the parties will question you for up to 15 minutes. Welcome, sir.

The second item of business is the report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, December 20, 2001.

Mr Wood: I move its adoption.

Mr Lloyd Jacobs: Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. I am pleased and relieved to be here this morning. I hope you all had an occasion to reflect over the holidays, as I have, and that we all will start the new year with a good footing.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved its adoption. Is there any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Mr Wood: I have a motion for which I seek unanimous support. I move that the deadline to consider the following intended appointees be extended until the end of the business day January 16, 2002: Dr Suhas B. Joshi, Marlene Hogarth, Linda Cloutier, Mark P. Duggan, John R. Williams, Shirley Fahlgren and Gordon Joseph Chong; and that the deadline be extended to consider the following intended appointees until the end of the business day January 23, 2002: Allan F. Leach, Ravi N. Shukla, Hugh Nicholson, Susan O'Hara, Wendy McPherson, Ronald Atkey and Christopher V. Braney. I seek unanimous consent and support for that motion.

I am aware that the Social Benefits Tribunal has a very responsible role to play in the administration of government policy that directly affects the lives of many Ontarians. I would therefore consider it an honour and a privilege to have the opportunity to contribute to Ontario and Ontarians as an adjudicator on that body.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent? We do. I'll put the motion. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you, Mr Wood, for your assistance in that regard.

Obviously, I would not be here before you today if those with whom I previously had occasion to demonstrate my desire and competence did not feel that I am a credible candidate to serve in the capacity under consideration.

I want to point out to committee members who would know this that from time to time there are deadlines which cause us some angst in terms of people being able to appear before the committee. This is particularly true when the Legislature itself is not in session. So Mr Wood, the government caucus and the other two parties have been kind enough to co-operate in this matter so that we are able to consider all these appointments. I appreciate very much, Mr Wood, your co-operation and your caucus's co-operation in this regard.

Growing up in Jamaica, my life revolved around school, church and work. These tenets of everyday life were constantly reinforced at home and throughout the community. One such reinforcement that has had an impact on me to this day was a sign printed in bold, black letters on a commercial building across the street from where I lived that read, "Do your best and God will do the rest."

During my final year in high school I came upon a book called *The Wealth of Nations*, with the caption, "The Creation and the Distribution of Wealth." I was curious. I wanted to learn more. It was not until 1975 that I was able to enrol in an economics program at the University of Waterloo. Those studies helped me to better understand the imbalance that is often created when the various market forces operate simultaneously in

a society such as Ontario. As well, I grew to appreciate the challenge governments face in trying to create policies that seek to minimize the imbalance or the gap between those who have and those who don't.

I moved to Toronto upon graduation and, in keeping with my interest in working with people, I entered the life insurance business, working mostly with low- to mid-income families. You could say I have been in the people business all my life, working mostly in sales and marketing.

I am married and have two grown children.

In 1992, I was recruited by the Centennial College Centre of Entrepreneurship in a capacity that directly tested my assessment and character-judgment skills. I received a 98% success rating in that exercise.

My direct experience as an adjudicator came in 1996, when I had occasion to be appointed to the Commercial Registration Appeal Tribunal as a part-time member.

Over the years, I have been involved in a number of community-based organizations: a charter member of the Council of Jamaicans and Supportive Organizations and the Scarborough Chamber of Commerce; a member of the Scarborough Social Planning Council; a director of York Condominium 404; and on the management committee of a local church.

As a family, we have contributed regularly to the Salvation Army and the Goodwill centres as well as to the food bank.

Mr Chairman and members of the committee, my life experience has allowed me to be able to empathize and encourage, to observe and listen, to inquire, analyze and understand. I can be objective. I am a professional. I am confident, therefore, that despite coming from the private sector, or perhaps because of it, my unique views and experience will help me to lighten the load of the tribunal, and Ontarians will be the beneficiary. I know you have some questions, and I would be pleased to answer them as forthrightly as I can.

The Chair: Thank you very much, sir. We will be beginning today, as the rotation goes around, with the government.

Mr Wood: We will waive our time.

The Chair: Mr Wood has indicated the government will waive its time, so we will proceed to the official opposition.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Happy new year, Mr Chair.

The Chair: Likewise, sir.

Mr Gravelle: Good morning, Mr Jacobs, and welcome. I think, as you know, there have been some very substantial changes to the welfare system in this province since this government came into power back in 1995. Are you familiar with most of the changes, which obviously would be significant in terms of your taking this position with the board? Are you familiar with those changes, and can you give us any thoughts on what you think of the substantial changes that have taken place?

Mr Jacobs: I am familiar with the changes, to an extent, from what I've been able to gather from the pub-

lic press. Of course the act has changed now to the Ontario Works Act and Ontario Disability Programs Plan Act that replaces the former act under the former Social Assistance Review Board.

You asked for my opinion on those changes. I think the changes, given the time when they were made and the economic circumstances, were well-founded in general. If you ask whether I think they've been successful in terms of what the response has been from those who are affected by the changes—and when I say “those” I'm talking both within and outside government—I don't think I have enough information to indicate one way or another in that vein.

Mr Gravelle: But you did say that because of the economic circumstances you felt the changes were justified.

Mr Jacobs: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: What do you mean by that?

Mr Jacobs: The changes, as I know them—one change was to reduce the amount of fraud that was occurring in the welfare program, and the other was to adjust the welfare rate downwards for those who were in receipt of benefits in such a way that it was fair to those who were employed—the working poor, as we would say—to create some fairness there. In other words, it didn't seem fair for one not working—and I use the term “working” advisedly; it could be volunteer or whatever—to take home a higher disposable income or more than one who is getting up every morning and going to work day after day. That's one aspect I think was fair and still is.

Another aspect of the changes had to do with providing training or assistance for those receiving benefits to allow them to enter the workforce in a productive capacity.

Those are some of the changes as they come to mind now. I think they all were well-founded, and I still believe they were the right thing to do.

Mr Gravelle: I think all of us around this table would agree that welfare fraud is certainly unacceptable, but we might perhaps differ—you talked about a high level of welfare fraud. I think statistically it's a very small percentage. I think the vast majority of people who are on social assistance don't want to be on social assistance and have had some difficulties with the eligibility system. So I have a slight concern with your comments, because they suggest to me that you think there is a larger number of people on social assistance who are doing so fraudulently, and I just don't think that's the case.

If I may ask you one or two more questions. The board you're about to go on is an extremely busy one. If you look at the actual caseload, it's kind of interesting. There's pretty much the same caseload now as when there were far more people on social assistance, even though the numbers have decreased. I believe that one of the reasons is that under the Ontario disability support program we know that the vast majority of people who first apply for disability support are actually turned down and are forced to go through the appeal process. Are you familiar with that and, if so, does that concern you at all?

Certainly one of the concerns I would have is that a large number of people who are in very difficult circumstances when they are applying for disability support are forced to go through an appeal process to get it. I think that's something that should concern us all. When you look at the caseload numbers now compared to five years ago, you would think they would be a lot less, because the numbers certainly are a lot less. What are your thoughts in terms of the fact that a large number of people are turned down initially and are forced to go through the board for an appeal process?

1020

Mr Jacobs: I don't know if I would agree with you that a large number of people are being turned down.

Mr Gravelle: Well, it's true.

Mr Jacobs: Well, it's some relativity. If they are, then there's a justifiable reason for that. I'd assume that those who were turned down were turned down because the act that relates to their particular case—if those acts are adjudicated properly, and I assume they are, in the absence of an appeal, then I think those cases that were turned down were justifiably so.

If you're saying the number of cases going to the tribunal has been reduced because those who are seeking assistance are frustrated by the system or by the legislation, then as an adjudicator it's not for me to say whether the system that is in place should or should not be changed to make it easier for those who are seeking assistance or to make it more palatable for more people, or for fewer people to be turned down.

Mr Gravelle: Certainly I think the assumption that if people are turned down then they were properly turned down is one that—obviously, if you're going to be serving on the Social Benefits Tribunal, I would think you'd want to operate from the presumption that indeed there may be some merit to the applications that come forward. If you look at the system the way it is, I think a number of people are getting their decisions overturned because the process is immediately pushing them into the Social Benefits Tribunal as opposed to helping them out initially. That's one of the concerns we have, and we think that is what's so important about the Social Benefits Tribunal.

Can I ask, Mr Jacobs, if you belong to a political party? Are you a supporter of any political party?

Mr Jacobs: Yes, I do.

Mr Gravelle: May I ask you which one that is?

Mr Jacobs: I appreciate your smile. I'm a member of the PC Party provincially.

Mr Gravelle: I do have other questions, but is there anything you want to ask, Mrs Dombrowsky? There are others I want to ask.

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Go ahead.

Mr Gravelle: Are you sure?

Mrs Dombrowsky: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: OK. How much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have until 10:25, about two and a half minutes.

Mr Gravelle: I would like to get your thoughts as well, Mr Jacobs, on one thing the government—in fact, I think the minister came out yesterday and talked about the number of people they've managed to eliminate from welfare who have been in our prison system, the correctional system. One of the concerns that has been expressed to me by the John Howard Society specifically, although they are not disputing the fact that people who are in the correctional system should not be receiving benefits while they are in the system, is that Ontario Works no longer actually goes and interviews people who are in the system to prepare them for their return to society. What happens is that people who are leaving the prison system come out and then have a period of time they must wait to get benefits, if indeed they do need benefits. Obviously it's a challenge for them to get out and get back into society, and one of the concerns they have expressed is that it's a prescription for disaster if they are not at least being spoken to and dealt with in advance and allowed to at least receive some assistance when they return, because if they come out of the prison system and have absolutely no income and no ability—have difficulty getting it right away—that indeed this is wrong.

I guess I share the concern, and I think there probably should be a greater effort made to help people return to society and for those who need assistance to perhaps be spoken to while they are still in the system. What are your thoughts on that?

Mr Jacobs: Thank you for the question, and I appreciate the fact that you did indicate there is some assistance to people to reintegrate into society. Maybe it's not as great as you would like to see.

What I can say is that I would not have any control in who comes before the tribunal. What I can say to you is that if anyone comes before me to appeal a case, as an adjudicator I will be as impartial as anyone possibly can be and I won't make any assumptions until all the evidence is put forth and I weigh those in relation to the relevant legislation and make a finding of fact. Based on that, I can empathize with the constituency of which you speak. I certainly do. But my role as adjudicator would not permit me to give any indication that I'm biased or in a position to influence or to form policies. My job would simply be to deal with the cases as they come before me.

I haven't been to the John Howard Society or dealt directly with the person, but I'm aware of people from a lot of different sections of society who are in very bad straits, and I'd say in my capacity I would do whatever is required within the law to assist them.

Mr Gravelle: Because I think—

The Chair: Thank you. Those are your questions. Your time has expired, Mr Gravelle, at least in this committee and for this particular individual. Now I go to the third party, Mr Martin.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I look at your resumé and I don't see anything in it that would indicate this would be an interest of yours, this whole area of social assistance and social benefits and the Social

Benefits Tribunal. Why would you be seeking this particular appointment, if that's the case? There's no educational background here, there's no experience in this. Why this appointment? There's a myriad of stuff, being a good card-carrying PC, that you could have applied for and probably been successful in attaining. Why this particular one?

Mr Jacobs: I appreciate the question. I thank you for that, and I suspected you would ask that. I've done over 100 resumé's. The resumé in front of you, I don't know how current it is. In putting a resumé together, the normal thing is to make it two pages. I'm 53 years old. I have a lifetime of work and experience, and what I'm happy about is that I'm before you now with the opportunity to maybe expand on what you have in front of you. My resumé doesn't tell the whole story, so to speak.

To answer your question more directly, I've always thrived on challenges and new situations. This assignment presents a new challenge and it would give me an opportunity to demonstrate the skills I've acquired over the years from different areas to serve Ontarians.

I had a three-year appointment on the Commercial Registration Appeal Tribunal; that was in 1966. I sense that's where my interest started to develop to serve in the capacity we're considering now. On that tribunal I learned quite a number of things. I learned that I had the capacity and the mindset to work as an adjudicator. At the same time, I sensed I was helpful to people in the sense of leaving them with a positive feeling regardless of how the decision ended up, whether it was in their favour or not. I was able to deal with them in such a way that they were helped.

At the same time, from my own perspective, working on the Social Benefits Tribunal would help my own personal development and fulfillment in terms of what I'm able to contribute to society, I hope.

1030

The Social Benefits Tribunal in my own estimation is a very important, very responsible tribunal because it deals essentially with socio-economic issues. My education might not have been spelled out in there, but I have a degree in economics from the University of Waterloo, and in those studies it wasn't strictly raw economics; there were a lot of social issues as well. There was a lot of politics; there was some law. So while I was at the commercial registration tribunal, I thought this was something that I would want to do, I think I can be very helpful here, and that's when I started to inquire as to what might be available, particularly at the Social Benefits Tribunal, as it is now called.

Mr Martin: Thank you for that. It certainly doesn't give me any more comfort that you really have any background at all in this field—perhaps a dabbling in it during your economics degree in Kitchener, but there is nothing to indicate to me, either in your resumé or what you've just shared with me, that you have any experience, knowledge or understanding of the whole area of social service and social assistance. It concerns me because these are some of our most vulnerable people we're deal-

ing with, those most at risk in our communities for a number of things on a number of fronts.

I'm still wondering why, with your background in business and economics and even your tenure with the commercial registration, whatever, where you made people feel good even if they didn't get a positive response from the tribunal—I assure you that in this instance it's very difficult to make people feel good about not having enough money to feed their children. What they want is the basic necessities of life, and you're going to be in a position to make decisions of that significance for them, and yet no background in it, no understanding, it seems, of some of the very important issues. When my colleague from the Liberal caucus asked you what you knew of the act, you said that it was changed to deal with abuse of the system. Well, what about the issue of poverty and trying to eradicate poverty in the province? You didn't mention that at all. Is that a concern for you?

I ask the question again: given the lack of experience and the lack of education in this field, what is it that you think you can bring to this tribunal that would give me any comfort that you will understand the sometimes very critical need of some of the people who will come before you for the very necessities of life to look after themselves and their children?

Mr Jacobs: I appreciate your question and your comments around it. I don't believe that to be an effective, fair, good, impartial adjudicator on the Social Benefits Tribunal precludes individuals who are coming from a background other than the strict social service area. I say that because a lot of people who may be on welfare now were perhaps at some time in a position like yours and mine. Things change, people get into problems and things fall. So I understand poverty in the total sense and, more than that, I believe I understand some of the things that may contribute or lead to that.

I'm not poor, relatively speaking, but I understand poverty. I've known of people who are poor as well as anyone who has worked all their life at the food bank. I have enough experience to be able to determine issues, to weigh evidence and extract from that evidence the facts that relate to the issues and from those facts then to apply the relevant law and, from that, apply the law to those facts to come to a decision as to whether one merits the finding of the tribunal. So if you're saying I'm not capable of serving on this board because I'm coming from an economics background, I'm coming from the private sector essentially, then I think that's not the way I see it.

I'm not going on the board as an advocate; I'll be an adjudicator. So irrespective of whether I spent all my life as a director of the food bank, that shouldn't make any difference in how I find a particular case that comes before me, because I will have to do that based on the law of the day.

The Chair: Unfortunately your time is up, from 10:25 to 10:35.

Mr Martin: Can I use some of the government's time—

The Chair: I'll have to ask the government.

Mr Wood: No.

The Chair: The government has indicated that it is unwilling to give you—

Mr Martin: I have some other really important questions to ask.

The Chair: I recognize that very much, Mr Martin. I am at the mercy of the committee. So the questions have been concluded. Thank you very much for being with us, Mr Jacobs, and you may step down.

I will be moving sideways to ask questions, so I'll ask Mr Gravelle, the Vice-Chair, to come in here. It's a matter of parochialism in this case as it involves the Niagara district.

SUHAS JOSHI

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Suhas B. Joshi, intended appointee as member, Niagara District Health Council.

The Vice-Chair (Mr Michael Gravelle): If I may call the next intended appointee, Dr Suhas B. Joshi, intended appointee as member of the Niagara District Health Council. Welcome. You have an opportunity to say a few words and then we will move to questioning, which we will begin with the official opposition.

Dr Suhas Joshi: I am Dr Suhas Joshi, a resident of the Niagara region for the past 14½ years. My wife is also a physician and she also works in the Niagara region. We have three children: two of them are attending university and one is attending high school in St Catharines.

Since 1987, I am practising in the Niagara region as a laboratory physician. As far as my professional practice goes, I have worked in all the hospitals in the Niagara region at one time or another, either directly or indirectly.

For the past 14-plus years, I have always been involved, both medically as well as in the community in this region. I have been the president of the Lincoln County Academy of Medicine. I was a delegate to the Ontario Medical Association council and was also on Niagara region's physician coordinating committee during the hospital restructuring time.

Presently I am the regional director and chief of laboratory medicine services of the Niagara Health System. I am also the director of MDS regional reference laboratories in Thorold, in the Niagara region.

I also provide the directorship to the St Catharines General and the Port Colborne General site. I am a member of the medical advisory committee, the Niagara regional clinical teaching program subcommittee and the human resources subcommittee of the Niagara Health System. At present, I chair the regional transfusion medicine committee and also I am the chair of the executive committee of lab medicine services. Last July, I was elected to be the chairman of the tariff committee of the Ontario Medical Association section on lab medicine.

As a physician "health care provider," I am interested in serving on the Niagara District Health Council, and I believe that if I am granted the honour and privilege of

serving on the Niagara District Health Council, my experience and leadership skills would most certainly complement and positively impact the Niagara District Health Council.

With that brief opening statement—

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much, Dr Joshi. We will begin with the official opposition.

1040

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Welcome to the committee, Dr Joshi. You are a resident of my constituency. I'm very interested in this matter of health care in the Niagara region. One of the reasons, among others, that we have people come before the committee is that it's a great experience for members of the committee to learn a lot more about specific areas and some of the challenges.

You would know that one of the major challenges we face in the Niagara region is a shortage of physicians, particularly family physicians but also some specialties. There have been some initiatives undertaken, both at the local level, with the co-operation of the Niagara District Health Council and the direct involvement with the regional municipality of Niagara, and with some of the municipalities.

I guess I'll ask a general question, because we all need advice of people who have your experience in this regard. How on earth are we going to get a sufficient number of family physicians for the Niagara region, and those in specific specialties? Do you have any magic formula that you can share with the committee?

Dr Joshi: Certainly this is a big challenge. I have been part of discussions in the Niagara region at various committee levels. This challenge is not only for the Niagara region, it's provincial. When you look at the current state, it seems that the shortage actually encompasses general practice as well as specialists: psychiatry, surgery, anaesthesia. Several initiatives have been started, have been undertaken. Some of them are in response to the acute shortage which has arisen. I think it's nice to address the acute shortage which has arisen. However, I think one has to also do long-term planning. In any planning process, what one has to do is recruitment and retention; these are the two things. But I think they are band-aid treatments. It doesn't address the root of the matter.

For addressing the root of the matter, I think we have to see something that in fact I have discussed with some of my medical colleagues and some of the administrative people and that I would like to pursue: that we initiate a project by which the medical students from the Niagara region get into the medical programs. I don't want to call it a quota system, because I think that somehow takes away striving for excellence, but I think there are good students available in all communities. What we have to do is tap those resources, make those students go into medical programs. McMaster University is close to us. So I think if we have, for example, a reasonable number of students right from the Niagara region who go there and come back and provide the service—and I think

some program can be built around that for a four- or five-year period, at which time it will, in conjunction with the initiatives which have been taken to address the shortage, complement that.

Mr Bradley: I'm pleased to see that you want to address it, both on the short-term basis—which is an acute problem, especially when you look around at some of your colleagues and see that not all of their hair is black. A lot of their hair is grey now. Many of those individuals, family physicians and others, are working very long hours in a day to serve the people who are their patients. If I look around, I see that some of them are going to be close to retirement unless they decide to work many years beyond what would normally be retirement. So I think your suggestions are good.

I have a concern about tuition at medical school. Your suggestion is good. I would think that it's because you have to have more money to live in Toronto and so on. There was a study, I think at the University of Western Ontario—and Mr Wood may be able to help out a little later with this—which seemed to indicate that more and more now only the children of wealthy people—well, not only, but they have a greater chance of getting into medical school. It skews it around the province. It means that perhaps Toronto has far more people who would be eligible to go, and they're likely to come back to Toronto.

Do you think that we should be keeping medical school tuition at a "reasonable" level, so everybody has access?

Dr Joshi: I think making the medical schools accessible to good-quality students is more important than simply making them available to those who can afford it. In any society, one should always offer a sort of level playing field for all the players. At the same time, there are initiatives that have been taken, including by the Ontario Medical Association, where bursaries and certain financial assistance are available.

But as far as affordability is concerned, that's something that needs to be looked at. There can be a variety of ways and means to address that and make it available to those people who really are interested and who are able. We don't have to bring mediocrity into the medical system by virtue of only those who can afford it and are able to get into the system. However, those people who are qualified, who are very bright—I think that way we will make sure our medical experts have the cutting edge over technology and the ability to deliver services.

Mr Bradley: Thank you. My next question would relate to the community care access centres. As you would be aware, it is provincial policy now, and the goal of many medical systems around the world, to discharge patients at an earlier point in time and perhaps with more serious complications medically than used to be the case, the theory being that you would save money and that perhaps some would even be better off outside of a hospital setting. Psychologically speaking, some people just hate a hospital setting.

Our community care access centre has said it is several million dollars short of what it would need to be

able to provide adequate services for those leaving hospital and others who need home care. What would you be prepared to do as a member of the Niagara District Health Council to address that problem?

Dr Joshi: We have to ensure that when patients are discharged early they have enough support at home. In any situation we have to make sure the patient's condition and the outcome do not suffer as a result of cutbacks. As far as the quality and standard of health care is concerned, it should always come first, not the cost. Cost is important, but the new technology—for example, at one time the admission for the removal of a gall bladder was six to seven days; now patients can be discharged. By discharging—I can speak on behalf of my clinical colleagues—we want to make sure the patients can cope with that situation when they are discharged. My rule is—I think probably I'll make sure that the recommendations that come out of the district health council are such that would strongly advocate the interest of the patient so that the health of the patient is not in jeopardy.

Mr Bradley: We're going quickly, because we only have 10 minutes apiece, and I'm told I have one minute left, so I have a short question on cardiac care. Our information—and you would be aware of this—is that we don't have the kind of cardiac care we would like to have in the Niagara region in terms of some immediate service that you might get. A lot of people have to go to Hamilton for that service. As a member of the Niagara District Health Council, would it be one of your goals to improve our access to high-quality cardiac care in the Niagara region? We have some excellent physicians there who work very hard at it, but not always the facilities.

1050

Dr Joshi: Absolutely, 100%. There are two issues that are very important. One is oncology. We will have a radiation-oncology centre in the region, hopefully by 2005. I think an excellent cardiac centre is equally important, particularly if you look into the Maclean's report that came out and several reports that came out. Cancer patients have a life-threatening, challenging situation to cope with; they do have, however, time. But in the matter of heart, if the flow is blocked, that's the end of it. We need to have a state-of-the-art cardiac facility in the Niagara region. It's a catchment area of almost half a million population. Hamilton is almost 45 minutes away. There is not much time. We need to have a state-of-the-art facility where we can have angiograms, so when patients are diagnosed with having a cardiac condition, ischemia, where the supply of the blood to the heart is less, we need the ability to have angiography in the region, angioplasty and whatever else goes on with an extended cardiac care facility. We need it, and I'll strongly advocate that.

Mr Martin: Thank you very much. You've obviously, for this position, got a fairly extensive background. There's no question of your qualification. It's just a question, for me, of where you come from on the larger questions of priority and how we fund the health care that you've said we all deserve, and what role government

should play in that and what role, if any, the private sector should play. That concerns a lot of us here in this place. When appointments come before us, we're always concerned about where those people are coming from. So the first question is, are you a card-carrying member of any political party?

Dr Joshi: Can I preface that by saying that I'm progressive in terms of thinking, I'm democratic in my approach, I'm liberal in care and compassion and I'm conservative in using resources. Having said that, it has nothing to do with the question you asked. No, I'm not a member of any party.

Mr Martin: OK. What is your perspective on the state of health care in the province at the moment? What are the biggest issues, from where you sit?

Dr Joshi: As far as health care is concerned, the cost of health care has steadily gone up and we have been struggling all the time to provide health care by utilizing the resources in the most appropriate way. As a result, no matter which government was in power, they tried all the time to be fiscally prudent and make sure that, without compromising the quality of patient care, things could improve. As a result of that, various initiatives, including the hospital restructuring and a variety of different changes, have taken place. As a society, we have to understand and come to terms with, can we afford not to have state-of-the-art? When standards of practice exist, then certain things are expected. We have to make sure we pool our resources in the most appropriate way. We have done it in Niagara region. I think there used to be 10 hospital corporations; now we have two. Small, fragmented delivery of health care was very, very expensive. There was a lot of duplication and a lot of redundancy. As a result, following the directives of the hospital restructuring commission, there were two corporations which were saved, a lot of money has been saved, and it has been reinvested. What we need to do is use our resources well and convince the powers that be that it is a good investment when you invest in the health of your citizens.

Mr Martin: OK. We heard a couple of issues raised by the member from St Catharines. What, in your view, are the major challenges facing the communities that you will represent on this district health council from a health care perspective?

Dr Joshi: Right now the biggest challenge—I mean, there are several challenges. One is in terms of human resources.

As far as shortage is concerned, there is a human resource shortage for physicians no matter which physician you are looking for—general practice, specialist. In fact, in my own department—ours is a small but essential department. It's supporting the diagnostic departments, radiology as well as laboratory medicine. It's important, basically speaking, supporting the delivery of services. Out of eight physicians, there are two vacancies and two physicians are more than 65 years of age. One is in fact more than 70 years of age.

So human resources: physicians, nurses, technologists, no matter where you look. If in the 1990s cost was a

driving force for everything, now human resources is going to be one. We would like to limit spending money, but one issue is going to be, where are you going to find qualified people? Human resources is number one.

Number two is access to health care. I think that is very important. Two issues which I had already alluded to: oncology, or the cancer treatment, which fortunately we will have by year 2005, and cardiac. Lots of reports have pointed out that Niagara region does poorly when it comes to cardiac maladies, particularly of an ischemic nature where potentially these are lethal conditions. So these two things need to be upgraded.

The other thing is the promotion of health. We treat the ailments. We have to make sure that we actively promote health at the same time, actually take measures to prevent certain conditions which lead to the disease process.

Mr Martin: Just to shift gears for a minute, I note from 1998 to the present you're the co-director of the MDS Niagara regional reference laboratory. Is that a privately owned and run operation?

Dr Joshi: Oh, yes. It is privately run. In fact, I used to be co-director before. I have been associated with MDS Labs for 17 years, as a consultant, now as a director. I have also been involved with the public health care system for the last 20 years.

If the question is, is there going to be a conflict of interest—I don't have a conflict of interest. Maybe the question is, if there is a conflict of interest, what will I do? If there's a conflict of interest, I'll push myself aside, as probably the present chair has done, because he is representing my constituency. I'll just sit aside and let others make the decision for me.

Mr Martin: You will probably agree with me that in the area of laboratory services, the cost has been increasing quite significantly over a number of years now, and a lot of that is going to a for-profit portion of private institutions. If we're grappling with a question of making the best use of money and trying to stretch it, and this issue of laboratory services continues to raise its head, might you not find in most instances, or in a lot of instances, that you are in conflict and that your appointment may not be as obviously beneficial as you've presented here to us this morning?

Dr Joshi: That approach would be quite a wrong approach, for two reasons. Number one, I don't own that lab; I'm just a consultant and director. Number two is that presently, as you must be aware, an initiative which is called Ontario regional lab service program is being undertaken. The Ministry of Health has even supported quite actively the idea of private-public partnership. We cannot deliver in silos. We have to make sure that best practices are in place and we use our resources to the best abilities.

As far as the Ontario regional lab services plan is concerned, what the ministry is also looking at: there is going to be a single-envelope funding for lab services. There is going to be more co-operation. In the first phase, three regions have already undertaken that process,

which was actually the Ottawa region, the central-east, which is Oshawa and surrounding region, and the northwest, Thunder Bay area.

1100

Now, in the second phase, central-south, which includes Hamilton, Niagara region, Halton and the Haldimand-Norfolk area, Kitchener—these regions are also undergoing the same process. The idea is to provide umbrella funding. What we will be looking at in that, in which I am actively involved, is what is good for the patient. Ultimately, any person or any individual who has the interests of the patient at heart will be able to withstand all kinds of pressures from any groups.

Mr Martin: Again, looking at your resumé here, I see you're director of pathology, St Catharines General Hospital; director of pathology, Welland; director of pathology, Port Colborne; and you're involved with the Niagara regional reference laboratory. First of all, given all this work, how are you going to find the time to put the time that's necessary into the district health council? And even from that perspective, don't you see as well that you may be confronting some significant conflicts of interest in many of the decisions you will have to make as a district health council in the allocation of resources?

Dr Joshi: If you go to these labs and ask my technologists if they have ever seen or felt that Dr Joshi has ever come across as a person who was not serving the interests of the patient and was taking a particular side, I think you will get the answer no. I think I'm a very, very fair and honest man, full of integrity, and it has never been questioned. While I can see why you are asking the question, I can tell you with equal honesty and integrity that I have no conflict of interest whatsoever.

The Vice-Chair: Any questions from the government members?

Mr Wood: We will waive our time.

The Vice-Chair: Dr Joshi, thank you very much for being here today. We'll be voting on the appointment later in the day.

We are now going to switch positions again, Mr Chair.

MARLENE HOGARTH

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Marlene Hogarth, intended appointee as member, Social Benefits Tribunal.

The Chair: Our next intended appointee is Marlene Hogarth, intended appointee as member, Social Benefits Tribunal. Ms Hogarth, please come forward. As you would be aware having viewed the others, you have an opportunity to make an initial statement as you see fit, and subsequent to that, members of the committee will direct questions to you. Welcome to the committee.

Ms Marlene Hogarth: Thank you, Mr Chairman and members of the committee, for allowing me to appear before you this morning as you consider my proposed appointment to the Social Benefits Tribunal. I would consider it an honour and a privilege to be able to serve the people of Ontario in this capacity.

I am a lifelong resident of the city of Thunder Bay, a great place to live and raise a family, as Michael will attest to. I have been active in my community, church and on volunteer boards, usually working my way through the ranks to become president.

I was born into a family involved in the hospitality industry. As a result, at an early age I learned the rigours of being part of a family-owned business, including the long hours and always being on call.

I'm an elementary schoolteacher by profession, teaching full-time and part-time for many years. As a teacher, I respected each of my students for the individuals that they were. In the classroom I taught my pupils to be good listeners but, most important, I had to be a good listener myself. This is a skill needed to be an effective adjudicator.

While serving as a public member on the Ontario College of Pharmacists, I sat on various committees that were both challenging and educational. I learned to have an open mind, to listen to facts as they were presented and to make unbiased decisions according to legislation. My goal was to have members come out of the hearings knowing that I weighed the evidence before me and rendered a fair and just decision.

As a public member of the Medical Review Committee, I was elected as co-chair, the first public member to serve in that capacity.

The experiences I have had and the skills I have developed over the years make me capable of being a fair, compassionate and impartial adjudicator, and therefore a good member of the Social Benefits Tribunal. I look forward to your questions and will answer them to the best of my ability.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We commence our questioning this time with the third party.

Mr Martin: Thanks for coming this morning. You've obviously come a long way, so we'll try to honour that. First of all, in coming to this position, I've looked through your resumé and from what you've just presented I certainly recognize a level of experience that's quite significant and impressive, but there's nothing in here that indicates any background in the area of dealing with some of the people you will have to adjudicate re their case, so my level of comfort in supporting your appointment isn't quite there yet. Maybe you could share with me why you want this appointment; why it is, considering that you'll be dealing with—I don't want to be too dramatic here—life-and-death issues in terms of some of our more vulnerable and at-risk people out there in our community, you would feel qualified to adjudicate in those circumstances and those situations.

Ms Hogarth: Well, I heard about this tribunal from a member who is sitting on it—or I should say, was sitting on it when it was first the Social Assistance Review Board. This member didn't ever give exact cases but just said what a rewarding job it was. She said it was very difficult, it was very time-consuming, but it was very rewarding. As she explained the type of person you had to be to be able to sit on a board like this, to sit on a

tribunal and face different appellants who came from different walks of life, she said I had the same qualities that she figured would be good for this tribunal, that I would have something to add to it. I believe that through my whole life, through my church work, through the organizations I have belonged to, I have come across people who have had assistance at one time or another and do feel that I understand exactly where they're coming from.

Mr Martin: What sort of concrete or formal experience, background or training do you have in the area of social services, the delivery of programs or the needs of people who find themselves in need of adjudication by the Social Benefits Tribunal that would give me a level of comfort to support this appointment?

Ms Hogarth: I would like you to have a level of comfort with me in this appointment even though I do not have a degree in social service work. I don't think you need to be trained in the field of social services to have a feeling for what people need. I think that past experience and life's experiences quite often are just as important as the degree that's hanging on the wall.

Mr Martin: These issues can be quite complicated and involved. Any of us who sits around this table here will have had experience of people in front of us in our office appealing for help, appealing for some understanding re their circumstance and their issue that obviously isn't being heard or understood at a table where the resources that they need are being delivered.

This government appoints people on a regular basis to commissions and boards related to the Ontario Securities Commission and that kind of thing. I don't think for a second they'd suggest that we appoint anybody to those commissions who doesn't have some experience, knowledge and training in the areas of finance and economics. The person who came before us earlier this morning to be appointed to the same board was making the same case, that you really don't need to have any kind of definitive or formal background to be able to do a good job in this field. I would suggest that the same argument would hold here as holds in appointments to other areas of specialty where I'm sure the government would demand some knowledge or background in finance or economics. You don't think that's necessary in this instance, given that you're dealing with some very crucial and critical issues, where people's lives and ability to feed themselves and their children are concerned?

1110

Ms Hogarth: That certainly is a long question that you asked. Let me just get that worded around to the best of my ability. Remember, first of all, there is an intensive six weeks of training that you are put through, so I would hope that somewhere or other in this training some of the background that you think is required of a member of this tribunal should be given to us. Other than that, all I can say is, remember that I have worked with children who have come from all walks of life. I think that gives you a very good background as to people who might need some assistance and where they come from and the effects it has on the family.

Mr Martin: Do you have any particular political affiliation?

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mr Martin: Would you mind sharing with us what it is?

Ms Hogarth: I'm a member of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

Mr Martin: Thank you very much.

The Chair: That concludes your questions?

Mr Martin: Yes.

The Chair: We now go to the governing party.

Mr Wood: We will waive our time.

The Chair: They waive their time, so we come to the official opposition.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good morning. I was interested and I believe I understood from your comments to the member for Sault Ste Marie that you first became aware of the role of the tribunal from an acquaintance.

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Is that how you've come to apply to be here?

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: It's because you are aware of the functions of the tribunal and you had an idea that you would like to participate civically and this was something you thought you might like to do?

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Did anyone encourage you?

Ms Hogarth: This lady did, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK. I would like to focus on the issue of workload, caseload at the tribunal and the fact that there are literally thousands of people awaiting a decision, and in many cases these are people who find themselves in situations of difficulty. Do you have any ideas or would it be a priority for you to ensure that even more cases are heard with you as a member? That would be a significant increase in workload, I would suggest.

Ms Hogarth: I've never been afraid of hard work. Anyone who knows me understands that well. I know that the chair has really been dedicated to trying to get as many cases through as she possibly could. I am available for as many hours a week as are needed, so I would do my utmost to have as many cases heard as possible. But I must say that is the chair's responsibility, because they are the ones who schedule you when, where and everything else.

After talking to the chair, she did stress the fact that they are trying to get as many cases through as possible, so therefore the decision-writing has to be done immediately following and there is not to be any straggling around. I think they really do keep you in tow to make sure you get your work done on time. But I certainly would be willing to do as much as I possibly could to make sure that the backlog is cleared up.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I respect that while it is the responsibility of the chair to do the scheduling, as a member of the committee you would certainly advocate for a schedule as heavy as possible that would accommodate the most to be heard.

Ms Hogarth: I definitely agree with that. I do not like having any type of a backlog on any committee.

Mr Gravelle: Good morning, Ms Hogarth. How are you?

Ms Hogarth: I'm just great, thank you.

Mr Gravelle: I think I have an idea of who that acquaintance is. Would it be somebody who would have previously been sitting on the Social Assistance Review Board from Thunder Bay?

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: Would that be Evelyn Dodds?

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: Because Ms Dodds was a reasonably well-known person in terms of her activities politically back in Thunder Bay, of course, as well.

Ms Hogarth: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: I should say that Ms Hogarth and I are friends. We're not just acquaintances; we're friends. Even though we don't share political philosophies, we have known each other for some time. It's great to see you here.

I want to ask the same kinds of questions, though, if I may. I think the changes that have been made to the system have made it very difficult for people. We still see a lot of people who are, as Mrs Dombrowsky pointed out, appealing. Particularly on the Ontario disability support program side, the truth is that the vast majority of people are initially turned down and they end up going through the Social Benefits Tribunal. That concerns me a great deal.

Are you aware of the fact that's one of the reasons why the caseload is so high and, if so, does that concern you?

Ms Hogarth: It would concern me, but no, I'm not aware of that. I've had background information from what I've been reading, but I did not realize that it is the social disability part of it that is more backlogged than the other side, the Ontario Works side.

I know it would be a hardship for these people, but remember I'm there just to follow the legislation. I'm not that to make the rules and to make the policy. I just do what I'm supposed to be doing.

Mr Gravelle: But did you use the opportunity when you were talking to Ms Dodds about this to ask her about how the process had gone? My understanding is that, quite frankly, there is a higher number of cases that are actually overturned than there were before, which leads one to think that the quick turnaround or the automatic turnaround is not a good idea.

You're making people wait unnecessarily and I think suffer and a lot of the appeals actually are successful, which does suggest something. But did she talk to you at all about that? I would think maybe she would have briefed you.

Ms Hogarth: No, I'm sorry. I talked basically to the chair about those types of things. All I know is that I'm not responsible to make the legislation; if I were on this board, I just have to follow the legislation. Therefore, whatever I feel has nothing to do with the responses that I'd be giving.

Mr Gravelle: I want to make one more run at something. I do want to ask your opinion of something, if I may, and maybe you'll give me the same answer. I want to bring up the issue I brought up earlier about people who obviously are in the correctional system and who come out of the correctional system. The person who called me from the John Howard Society is Ambi Chinniah, who is from Thunder Bay and runs the John Howard Society. He's not arguing that people should be receiving social assistance while they're in prison, but his concern is that when they do come out, to have to wait for assistance is obviously, as he described it, a real prescription for disaster in that people come out and are more likely to reoffend if they come out with nothing.

Do you have some thoughts on that, that at least there should be an ability for the system to go in and help people, so that when they are exiting from the correctional system they will at least not be left in a position where they have absolutely no means of support and have to wait a certain period of time? Does that concern you at all? I ask it again because Mr Chinniah is from Thunder Bay and you and I are also from Thunder Bay, so I just wanted to try to get your thoughts on that at least. I don't think that would be inappropriate for you to comment on it.

Ms Hogarth: I don't think it matters if you're from Thunder Bay and coming out of the prison system there, or if you're coming out of the prison system in Kingston or wherever. I'm sure there are programs in place to help these people, and I don't think it's necessarily the Social Benefits Tribunal's position to have a position on this.

As you know, it doesn't matter what my opinion is, if they should have all the help in the world or if they shouldn't have any help. My job is just to follow the rules and the regulations and to enforce them, and to make sure that everybody has a fair hearing so that they leave that hearing knowing I have listened to them intently, that I have weighed the evidence and also, further to that, that I will write a decision up that they will be able to understand and not necessarily in legalese language which you know, as well as I do, no one can understand.

Mr Gravelle: But I think it is important or valuable for you to have an opinion on it, and I suspect that you do have feelings on it, which I don't think would be inappropriate to share with the committee. Again, you're quite right about whether it's Thunder Bay or Kingston or any other parts of the province; it's just that it was our own, the executive director of the John Howard Society in Thunder Bay, who addressed the concern to me. I certainly do want to follow it up with the appropriate authorities, and I thought I'd take advantage of the opportunity this morning to ask your thoughts on it.

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Ms Hogarth: Are you asking me again?

Mr Gravelle: I guess I am.

Ms Hogarth: Well, would you just ask the question? I can't remember it now.

Mr Gravelle: I take it your position is that you will be as fair as you can, but you don't wish to express your

opinion on any of the policy changes or decisions that have been made by the government.

Ms Hogarth: That's right, because it's not my responsibility to make the legislation.

The Chair: I believe that concludes the three parties' questioning. Thank you very much for being with us, Ms Hogarth.

Ms Hogarth: Thank you very much.

The Chair: I just want to warn the Vice-Chair that I'll be leaving the chair in a moment, but before I leave the chair I understand there's a request that we deal with the three appointments that have been done so far. Is it correct that there has been that request?

Mr Wood: There was, which I agreed to, until—we expected someone here who hasn't arrived yet, so I guess we can have the discussion but we're not in a position to have the votes. I don't know whether that's going to get us anywhere. We may have to put it over until 1.

Mr Gravelle: I was the one who made the request, Mr Chair, because I have something I have to do right at noon, but let's carry on. If that's the case, Mr Wood, let's carry on to the next appointment and we'll do them all. I'll make the adjustments I need to make sure I'm back here for the vote at noon. Is that OK?

The Chair: Thank you very much. We will continue, then.

Mr Gravelle: If I may, could we do all four at 1 o'clock? Mr Martin, would that be OK?

Mr Wood: We would need some guidance as to how long this is going to take. Bear in mind that we've got people arriving at 1 who think they're going to make a presentation.

Mr Gravelle: I'll make a point of being back here so we can do it at the end of the next—I'll be back in 20 minutes, if that's all right.

The Chair: That is certainly fine.

Mr Gravelle: I'll make adjustments so we can do that before we break for lunch.

I'll ask Ms Dombrowsky to assume the chair, then.

The Chair: I ask Ms Dombrowsky to take the chair, since I will want to direct questions regarding the Niagara District Health Council.

LINDA CLOUTIER

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Linda Cloutier, intended appointee as member, Niagara District Health Council.

The Acting Chair (Mrs Leona Dombrowsky): The next intended appointee is Linda Cloutier, who is the intended appointee as member of the Niagara District Health Council. Good morning, Ms Cloutier. Welcome. You have an opportunity to provide some introduction to members of the committee before you receive questions. If you'd like to begin.

M^{me} Linda Cloutier: Thank you. Bonjour à vous tous. I'm going to start in French and finish in English.

J'aimerais en premier lieu vous remercier de l'opportunité que vous m'offrez d'être ici ce matin ainsi

que du temps précieux que vous m'accordez. Je dois vous avouer que je suis un peu surprise de me retrouver ici avec vous aujourd'hui. En effet, comme vous pourrez probablement le constater avec la date sur la lettre de présentation jointe à mon curriculum vitae, j'ai exprimé un intérêt à faire partie du Niagara District Health Council en mars 1998. Au printemps 1999, on m'a convoquée pour une entrevue et une personne représentant le ministre m'avait alors indiqué à ce moment que le processus était assez long. Je peux vous assurer que ce fut un moment de grande surprise lorsqu'en décembre dernier, on m'a jointe par téléphone pour m'inviter à paraître devant vous, le comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux. Une excellente leçon de patience et de persévérance, me direz-vous. Alors, je me présente.

Mon nom est Linda Cloutier. D'aussi loin que je puisse me rappeler, la santé a été au coeur de mes préoccupations professionnelles et personnelles. Vous avez sans doute noté que je suis à la fois technicienne ambulancière et infirmière, et que je possède deux baccalauréats, l'un en sciences infirmières et l'autre en arts, avec une majeure en éducation, ainsi qu'une Maîtrise en éducation. En fait, je travaille présentement à compléter ma thèse pour une seconde maîtrise, cette fois en service social.

J'ai été embauchée par le Collège des Grands Lacs en 1995, et nous avons choisi, ma famille et moi, de venir nous installer dans la belle région du Niagara. Dès notre arrivée, nous nous sommes sentis à l'aise et chez nous. C'est pourquoi, lors de la fermeture du campus à Welland en 1999, nous n'avons pu nous résigner à quitter la région pour venir nous établir à Toronto. J'ai donc depuis les trois dernières années appris à faire preuve de grande patience dans mon aller-retour Welland-Toronto-Welland.

Depuis plus de 13 ans, j'ai travaillé dans différents milieux, hospitaliers et autres, au Québec et en Ontario. Tel que j'ai indiqué précédemment, j'ai occupé depuis les six dernières années un emploi de professeure-coordonnatrice au Collège des Grands Lacs. En plus d'avoir enseigné les disciplines du nursing, du service social et, à l'occasion, de garde éducative à l'enfance, j'ai occupé un poste d'intervenante en action sociale et en counselling à temps partiel au Centre de santé communautaire du Niagara. Je crois connaître assez bien les besoins de la population francophone de la région du Niagara. J'aime offrir un service direct à la clientèle et rester près des gens, de leurs besoins et de leurs aspirations.

Over the years I have volunteered to different organizations. I have been an instructor for St John Ambulance, meeting with all grades 1, 4 and 8 in the French schools in Welland and Port Colborne's territory. I am also a past member of the board of governors for the Centre de santé communautaire Welland-Hamilton-Wentworth. I have been a member of the francophone senior services community advisory committee, which led to the creation of the Centre de jour at the Foyer

Richelieu in Welland. In 1998, I occupied the position of president of the school council at the Nouvel Horizon elementary school.

People I have worked with describe me as a dynamic, open-minded, self-motivated, self-directed, dedicated individual, always welcoming new challenges. I'm a team player and I enjoy the intellectual stimulation required to solve problems. Throughout the years I have developed an interest in helping people reach a better understanding on issues related to their health as well as their well-being in general.

In closing, I will be delighted to answer any questions you may have.

The Acting Chair: Thank you, Madame Cloutier. We will begin with members from the government.

Mr Wood: We'll waive our time.

The Acting Chair: Then we will go to the members of the official opposition.

Mr Bradley: Welcome, Madame Cloutier.

As members of the committee will have noted in the initial remarks, we have a significant francophone population in the Niagara region, particularly in the city of Welland and the city of Port Colborne, though also throughout the region. One of the areas where all provincial governments over the years have tried to make an effort to accommodate the needs of the francophone community has been in providing services. Do you see any specific areas where an enhancement of those services or an improvement to those services might be necessary?

Ms Cloutier: I believe that the lack of doctors is a big issue for francophone and anglophone people, but probably a little bit more for francophones. I have lived in the Niagara region since 1995, and I was fortunate to be able to find a French doctor, but there are not many of those. I think that for people who are just arriving in the region, coming from Quebec or some parts of New Brunswick, it is a difficult task to be able to find a doctor who speaks your own language so you're able to express yourself and explain whatever problems you might have.

Mr Bradley: A second component of that—and I asked Dr Joshi, who was with us earlier, about this—is the access to medical schools and the block to that for those who are of modest income or financial background. I think of northern Ontario, where there are a lot of people of a francophone background. The city of Timmins would be approximately 50-50. In the city of Sudbury, somewhere in the neighbourhood of one third of the population would list its mother tongue as French. If the tuition is too high, it would seem to me that people from northern Ontario, at least a lot of people of northern Ontario, and other places where there would be a significant francophone population, wouldn't have the same opportunity as people from Toronto, for instance, to afford to go to these medical schools. Do you see this as a challenge and do you think that tuition is a significant block to students going to medical school?

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Ms Cloutier: Yes. Finishing my masters, I can tell you it's quite expensive; I'm finishing at Laurentian. In

the readings that were given to me, actually, there was some information given about McMaster trying to make partnerships with different hospitals in the Niagara region, to try to bring some of the students in McMaster. I don't know if I'm answering the question properly.

Mr Bradley: No, you are.

Ms Cloutier: I think some of the students from Toronto or from McMaster, the Hamilton region, if they're training in the Niagara region, will see how things work there and that might be an incentive for them to be able to come. I think there is some money also that has been allowed by—I'm not sure. It was \$200,000 that was given by the medical students' association, something like that. So that might help. Other than that, I think there is something happening at Laurentian University with a program for medical students that's going to be offered there very soon. So I think it is being addressed.

I just want to say that I don't think the issue of filling all the positions—there is a coordinator who was hired in June of last year to try to find as many doctors as possible for the region.

Mr Bradley: Yes; that is, we would recognize, a major problem. But I'm going to go to another one because we have such a short period of time, another area of interest to you.

You have had some experience with emergency care, with, shall we call it, ambulance care. We have a major problem in the Niagara region. The responsibility for land ambulances was downloaded to municipalities. My government member friends would say it was transferred and there was a switch of responsibilities. The regional municipality of Niagara has some problems with the funding of it because of unanticipated costs because of provincial regulations which they must meet, and they should meet those. But there's also a problem with ambulance dispatch services. The government of Ontario has a report sitting somewhere right now on ambulance dispatch services because there have been some major problems.

Is this an issue that you would be raising, number one, I guess I'll ask. I don't want to make it too complicated a question. Is this an issue that you would be raising? And second, do you believe that the dispatch service would be better located in Niagara than in Hamilton?

The reason I say that is there have been some serious operational problems, as you may be aware, with dispatching from Hamilton. There is a report, presumably with recommendations, sitting somewhere. I wrote a letter to the Minister of Health about this matter and there was an article in the St Catharines Standard that did not make reference to my letter; I'm sure some editor must have killed that somewhere along the line because I spoke to the reporter for 15 minutes about this matter. So I'm sure that reporter would have written something about it but it just didn't quite make it to the final story.

That's a long way of saying, do you think it would be better to have the ambulance dispatch services in Niagara than in Hamilton, serving Niagara?

Ms Cloutier: I was not aware of the problem but that's definitely something I would be interested in look-

ing into, because I worked on the ambulance, because I worked in the emergency room. So I think to keep the people as close as possible to the action is what works, if that would be to have the dispatching done in Niagara. I would have to read and look into it, but that's something that I would look into.

Mr Bradley: The next question you may have a difficult time answering and if you didn't give as full and frank an answer as might be the case, I would understand it. You would know that the community care access centres are going through, shall we call them, changes at the present time. It said in the Kingston Whig-Standard, a reputable newspaper, I'm sure—Mr Johnson reacts in agreement, I'm sure. It said in there that to get new members to replace some of the present members who are resigning from the community care access centres, they were asking the local Progressive Conservative association to submit names. Would you think it would be wise to find as wide a group of people as possible to solicit people for those boards rather than simply the Progressive Conservative association, or is that a question you can't answer?

Ms Cloutier: Actually, I think it's a question I cannot answer. I'm sorry.

Mr Bradley: I accept that. That's probably true.

Another question I would have some interest in is that of combining of hospitals and again the community care that's needed as a result of the combining, the closing of beds and so on. What do you think can be done to improve community care—that is, home care—in the Niagara region?

Ms Cloutier: I guess there's a lack of doctors but there are also a lot of professionals who could give a lot of help in the community. I'm referring here to nurse practitioners, to different nurses. I think there are a lot of different alternatives that have to be looked into to be able to offer the proper services to the community.

Because I have worked at the santé communautaire, I think it's a good idea to have a lot of different professionals from health care and social services grouped together to be able to refer somebody in a fast, effective way. That would probably be something.

The Acting Chair: You have one minute left, Mr Bradley.

Mr Bradley: The last question will be on the position of the Niagara District Health Council as it relates to a smoking ban in public establishments. I'm reading an article that says they hedged on it. It says, "Health Council Hedges Support for Smoking Ban." Since smoking is identified as such a major problem in terms of health care, do you think the Niagara District Health Council should be advocating in favour of ending smoking in public places where the public has access?

Ms Cloutier: Absolutely.

The Acting Chair: We now move to the member from the third party.

Mr Martin: Good morning. How are you? There's no question, in my view, as to your qualification for a job of this sort. The only question I would have initially,

though—and I have a few others—is, why would you want to spend the kind of experience and knowledge that you have in this way as opposed to being perhaps more hands-on in some other organization that is actually doing something in the region to improve health care delivery?

I know in my own area the district health councils up until 1995, and for a long time before, were really active advocates on behalf of the community, bringing people together, looking at things. The kind of exposure and work that they were doing was phenomenal. Since the change to the more regional district health councils now, they have disappeared. You don't hear, in our area anyway, of them at all. Every now and again a report comes out, I guess, and even those aren't as widely shared as we used to get. Given that—and maybe you can comment on that—why would you want to spend your time there?

Ms Cloutier: On the hands-on part, I was working in the health care centre and I was working in the Collège des Grands Lacs, and I'm being paid for that. That's one part. The other part: I think the volunteer part is quite important. It's more than just taking part in the francophone community of Welland and the region. I think it's more just to give back. I have done my master's at Brock and I have lived there. I think it is natural for me to give back to the community. When I was reading about the mandate and everything—you have to remember that I applied in 1998 for this, a long time ago—it seemed like something that would suit me and that I was interested in learning about. I understand that there's training also being offered in the beginning.

Mr Martin: I guess the point I'm making is that when you look at the mandate of the health council, it's all advisory to the minister. Basically, in my view, and this is quite cynical, rather than taking a gun to the heads of the DHCs in the various regions who, like any effective advocate on behalf of health care in a region, will challenge the government of the day—I know when we were government the district health council in the Soo was forever in my face about all kinds of things. It was good, because it challenged me to rise above and work with and try to come up with answers and bring people together. Nowadays, the district health council is a puppet of the government in many ways, if that even. The question was, why would you want to participate in that?

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Ms Cloutier: I guess I was not aware of all that. I'm young and I still hope that there's hope in this and that we can make a difference. Even though it's an advisory committee, I think there is still some input, that the community has to be able to be heard, and that's one way of being heard.

Mr Martin: I noted in your answer to the member for St Catharines that you're doing your master's at Laurentian.

Ms Cloutier: Actually, my second year.

Mr Martin: That's where I graduated from in 1974.

Ms Cloutier: Really?

Mr Martin: A fairly long time ago.

Across the province and in the area taken in by the district health council that you're applying to be part of, there's an issue of how you deliver emergency care and of attracting doctors. Perhaps you could enlighten us here, and it might give me some understanding of your understanding of what the issues are.

Sudbury seems to have been fairly successful. Sault Ste Marie is really struggling right now; we're actually in crisis mode. As of February 1, it has been announced by the hospitals, unless something changes, there won't be a doctor on duty for the midnight shift, which is critical, because they don't have the doctors. Sudbury has been able to attract doctors and apparently a significant number of doctors willing to work in emergency. Have you been following that at all, and could you enlighten us as to why Sudbury has been so successful when other areas don't seem to be able to get the job done?

Ms Cloutier: I'm not sure why, but I think we still focus too much on the fact that doctors are the only professionals able to give the services. There are a lot of other professionals. Once again, the nurse practitioner has an expanded role that could be used if the doctors cannot be found, at least for now. I think there are other alternatives that we have to look into. For sure nurses are not going to replace doctors, but there are a lot of walk-ins, for example, in emergency who could be seen by a nurse practitioner.

The shortage of doctors is something that has been going on for a long time. Sudbury was probably able to offer better incentives because it's in the north; I'm not sure. But we have to look into it.

Mr Martin: To comment on your comment on the nurse practitioners, I tend to agree with you that we have a number of health care professionals who are under-utilized. But, as a doctor shared with me last week in the Soo as we grappled with the issue in our area, when somebody goes to emerg they don't want to see a nurse or a nurse practitioner; they want to see the doctor. It's a mentality that has to be changed, I guess, in people.

Ms Cloutier: But I guess we still think of emergency as big accidents. A lot of people who still go to emergency will go to emergency either because they don't have a family doctor or they have to see somebody fast. It's not always emergency. Emergency has two subsections, I feel. It's not always heart attacks and something that has to be dealt with.

Mr Martin: But sometimes it is.

Ms Cloutier: Triage has to be done; that's what I'm trying to say. Triage has to be done in emergency.

Mr Martin: Yes, but sometimes it is—

Ms Cloutier: Yes, of course, when it is.

Mr Martin:—so it's important to have at least one doctor available quickly if it is a heart attack. Our problem in the Soo is that we're not going to have a doctor on duty on the graveyard shift—no pun intended. That's maybe what it's going to become if we don't do something about it. Thank you very much.

The Acting Chair: That would conclude the questions. We thank you very much for your participation, Madame Cloutier.

The Chair: Thank you very much for the procedures today. We now move to deal with the appointments themselves. I'll be looking for motions in a moment for each of the appointees, and then there will be a discussion and vote. The first was Lloyd Jacobs.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence in the appointment of Lloyd Jacobs, intended appointee as member, Social Benefits Tribunal. Any discussion, first of all?

Mr Martin: Yes. I will not be able to support this appointment, given both the lack of experience, training or involvement in any of the social services field by this gentleman and, secondly, his lack of understanding of why it might be necessary to have that kind of background and understanding in this very critical and crucial work of determining whether people who are most at risk and most vulnerable in our communities deserve or qualify for the most basic of supports. So I'll be voting against this appointment.

The Chair: OK. We also have Mr Gravelle.

Mr Gravelle: I also will be voting against Mr Jacobs's appointment. He made some comments during the interview that did concern me. The fact that he indicated that so many people were turned down on an initial basis was probably justified gave me some concern, simply because I think someone in this position certainly should not be making that assumption. Obviously, the Social Benefits Tribunal's job is to give those people who are appealing the opportunity to explain why they feel the decision is unfair. Perhaps he didn't mean to phrase it the way he did, but he did say that, and that certainly gives me concern. So I also will be voting against Mr Jacobs. The government members might have some concerns about those comments as well.

The Chair: Any further discussion? If there is no further discussion, I am going to be calling the vote. All in favour of the motion?

Mr Gravelle: Is that an official vote, Mr Chair?

The Chair: It's an official vote, yes. Again, I'll call it: all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Mr John Hastings (Etobicoke North): Is that an official vote?

The Chair: That is an official vote.

Now we have Dr Suhas B. Joshi, intended appointee as member, Niagara District Health Council.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Any discussion? If not, I'll call the vote.

All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next is Marlene Hogarth, intended appointee as member, Social Benefits Tribunal.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Discussion?

Mr Martin: Again I won't be supporting this appointment, for somewhat the same reason as in Mr Jacobs's case. I don't think Ms Hogarth has the background, experience or training to bring to this very critical work of providing the basics where some of our most vulnerable and at-risk citizens are concerned. We have here a second obviously politically connected Conservative member being brought forward to this critical tribunal.

We know, from as late as yesterday, the attitude of this government where the most vulnerable and at-risk are concerned: we whack them, and when they show any life at all and get up, we whack them again. I'm not going to be party to appointing members of this party to those very critical decision-making bodies concerning the livelihood of people in my own community who just need to be helped in a time of some difficulty, so I'll be voting against this.

There was one other comment I wanted to make. It's interesting that Ms Hogarth comes to this appointment from a previous appointment to the pharmacy commission overseeing delivery of pharmaceutical care, now to the tribunal. If you remember, her mentor Ms Dodds came here just a short while ago from the tribunal. They both seem to be on the same sort of professional track here. I think it's only right that somebody, at some point, challenge that kind of behaviour as well. So I'll be voting against this, and I'll be encouraging others to do the same.

Mr Gravelle: I will also be voting against Ms Hogarth's appointment, despite the fact that I do know her, and she's a friend and she's a good person. I think the fact that she was reluctant to give her opinion on a number of issues that I suspect she has very strong feelings about—all I can certainly say is that with Ms Dodds being in that position from Thunder Bay, and having a very strong position publicly on the issue of people who are on social assistance, and then followed by Ms Hogarth, there are so many people whom I would like to recommend to the government, whom they might want to consider appointing from Thunder Bay, some people who perhaps can provide a better balance.

Ms Hogarth took great pains to say that she will be very fair in terms of her dealings with the people who come forward for an appeal. But I do think that ultimately we're left in a position where people who have supported, perhaps in a very strong way, the government's decisions related to social assistance over the last six years may be inclined to not be as sensitive, perhaps, as I think they should be. So as I say, despite my personal relationship with Ms Hogarth, I will be voting against it as well.

The Chair: Any other comments, discussion? If not, I'll call the vote.

All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next appointee is Linda Cloutier, intended appointee as member of Niagara District Health Council.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Any discussion?

All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The committee will reconvene at 1 pm in this room. We're now adjourned.

The committee recessed from 1154 to 1305.

MARK DUGGAN

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Mark Duggan, intended appointee as member, City of Kenora Police Services Board.

The Chair: I'll call the committee to order. Our first intended appointee this afternoon is Mark Duggan, intended appointee as member, City of Kenora Police Services Board.

Mr Duggan, you may come forward. I know you would be aware of the procedure we follow of having the nominee make a few initial remarks if he or she sees fit and then questioning by the committee. Welcome to the committee, sir.

Mr Mark Duggan: Thank you, Mr Chair. Thank you for saying Dug-gan and not Doo-gan. I've heard it both ways many times.

I would like to begin by thanking you for this opportunity to be a candidate for the Kenora Police Services Board. In my opening remarks I would like to explain to the standing committee on government agencies who Mark Duggan is and why I would be a good board member.

I am a born-and-raised resident of Kenora, taking all my education in Kenora except for a two-year college diploma in hotel management, which I took at Confederation College in Thunder Bay from 1973 to 1975. In 1975, I made the decision to return to Kenora, get married and raise our two children, who are 22 and 21 years old respectively. Since that time I've been very involved in our community, assisting to improve the quality of life.

I'm a very strong organizer and a communicator, which I feel is an asset for the Kenora Police Services Board.

It's important that you know I was on the police services board from 1996 to 1999. I have taken the orientation training for members and I do have three years of experience. While I was on the board, I sat on the personnel subcommittee and the negotiations committee. I stepped aside by choice in 1999 when the three towns, Keewatin, Kenora and Jaffray Melick, became the city of Kenora. At the time, the government of Ontario wanted to have a representative from the Keewatin Police Services Board, so that the transition of the two boards to one would be a smooth one.

In 2002, we are a city that is working very well with the Kenora Police Service and the Ontario Provincial Police under one police services board with five board members. We have some very large issues to face in our future, and there's a need to have a strong, experienced board in place to deal with them.

One very large issue is the new adequacy and effectiveness standards regulation that came into effect

January 1, 2001. This will take extensive consulting with our partners. The role of the board is to establish policies and set objectives and priorities with our police chief, and I am very aware of this. I am aware of the powers of the board and the guidelines we must follow so there's no interference in its operation.

My involvement in the community is varied. I was a town councillor from 1989 to 1991, a hydro commissioner from 1991 to 1994 and have been back on the hydro commission since 1998. I've been a director of the Kenora Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Kenora Rotary Club since 1985 and president in the year 1993-94, and also a member and chair of Kenora non-profit housing from 1989 to 1994. These are just a few examples of how Mark Duggan wants to give back to the community he lives in.

I am presently the general manager of the Best Western Lakeside Inn, which is the premier hotel in Kenora. You may ask if I feel there is a conflict being a police services board member and serving alcohol. I am pleased to say that our record with the liquor inspector speaks for itself. There are no infractions on our record, and we are recognized as a respected property.

You may also like to know that some of our guests who have stayed with us include the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Ontario, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, leaders of many political parties and many of the MPPs in this room and outside this room also.

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We are a very recognized hotel and we are also the only union hotel, with 75 outstanding employees. I mention the fact that we are a union hotel because as a police services board member we are involved in budgets and we need an understanding in financial statements, negotiations, hiring, evaluating, communicating, attending and chairing meetings. I have a great deal of hands-on experience in many of the same related police services board responsibilities as the general manager of the hotel.

This is just a quick summary of who Mark Duggan is. I thank you very much for the opportunity of coming down from Kenora and bring you greetings from the first city of the province of Ontario from the west.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Duggan. I will ask the members of the committee if we should invite other hoteliers to equally advertise. You have province-wide advertising.

Mr Duggan: If this was a Rotary meeting, I'd probably be fined.

The Chair: We begin our questioning in this case with the official opposition.

Mr Gravelle: I'm going to make a pitch for the Lakeside Inn as well. It's a beautiful place. Kenora's a beautiful community, of course. For those who are watching on TV, the Lakeside Inn overlooks the water and it's an amazing sight, particularly in the summer with the sun going down.

Mr Duggan: Any time.

Mr Gravelle: Any time, but remarkable when the sunsets are gorgeous. It's beautiful.

Mr Duggan, I do want to ask you a few questions. You made reference to the effectiveness and the adequacy standards that are set up, which I think some smaller police forces are certainly having some difficulty with. Is that part of what your concerns are, that it's more difficult to achieve them with a smaller force, or a force of your size, or is it something else altogether?

Mr Duggan: We have a challenge in front of us in Kenora to meet some of those standards, yes. Our police chief and the force are doing that. One challenge that we had to meet the standards was to develop a containment team. When I was previously on the board, we looked at that expenditure long and hard and found there was a need to meet that standard. I think the Kenora Police Service is working very hard to meet those standards and at this point, we're not having any difficulty doing it. We have extreme co-operation, not only from the members of the force, the Kenora Police Service, but we have a unique situation in being very close friends of the Ontario Provincial Police, who share our responsibilities.

Mr Gravelle: One of the interesting and very positive realities of Kenora is that in the summertime Kenora becomes a bigger place because of the extraordinary number of people who visit, for a number of reasons. You have visitors year-round, of course, but you have more people from Victoria Day to Labour Day. I presume that changes to some degree the challenges, or at least it increases the challenges of the police force. Is that a fair statement to make?

Mr Duggan: Yes. The population right now would be about 16,000 people. On July 1 through August 1, it would be close to 80,000 people.

Mr Gravelle: Exactly.

Mr Duggan: We have a lot of visitors, tourists, who come to our area. Kenora is a service centre for a lot of northwestern Ontario, so it brings in a lot of people, which is good for the economy but also puts a strain on some of the infrastructure.

I think we're handling it quite well. Our force has worked very hard and our chief and deputy are doing an excellent job with the recruitment of the force. Their levels are 31 officers at this time, so they're in good shape and they're meeting the needs right now.

Mr Gravelle: Would you be arguing probably that the force could be larger, though? There are great challenges obviously on a fiscal basis for all municipalities that have their own police forces.

Mr Duggan: If the chief were sitting here today, he'd want more officers. What chief wouldn't? What there is now is better communication and coordination of efforts between the Ontario Provincial Police and the Kenora Police Service. The Kenora Police Service, just for the information of the committee, takes care of what was the old town of Kenora and the Ontario Provincial Police take in the jurisdiction of the old towns of Keewatin and Jaffray Melick and the surrounding area. So there is some excellent coordination that's going on right now and we don't foresee a problem at all in that.

Mr Gravelle: The amalgamation is working, I take it. It sounds like you're saying it's working. Are the

residents of the former communities of Jaffray Melick and Keewatin, generally speaking, pleased to be part of the city of Kenora?

Mr Duggan: Yes, they are. Kenora now has its act together as a city. I was explaining earlier that the economic development in our community is taking off quite nicely. Next week, Weyerhaeuser Trus Joist is taking applications for a new plant—

Mr Gravelle: That's very exciting.

Mr Duggan:—a state-of-the-art plant that's coming. They're expecting 5,000 people to apply for 200 jobs, and I think that's just an indication of all the spinoff that's going to occur in our community. With the lake being what it is, I think a lot more people are going to explore Kenora and develop some economic base there.

Mr Gravelle: I wish you luck. I'm sure you will be a superb addition to the police services board. Give my best to Mayor Canfield, if you would.

I know my colleague Leona Dombrowsky would like a question or two as well.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good afternoon, Mr Duggan. I was interested, when I read the background, to learn that in your community, as well as in mine and many others in the province of Ontario, nuisance bears are quite an issue. First of all I'd like to understand from you, do you believe that nuisance bears are a Ministry of Natural Resources issue or a police issue?

Mr Duggan: It's interesting how that got into the folio, given that there are so many other things that probably could have been there, including our recent visit of the Hells Angels. I think that spring bears, any bear that is causing a disturbance in a community—and I live in a residential area with a backyard on to the bush. When I call for help, I would like to have anybody who can respond to it as fast as possible. So when it's in a residential area, my suggestion is that the police need to respond. We're in a school area in the home I live in. I think that the police do have a role in responding, and they have responded. Why that's in that package—that's not one of our bigger issues in Kenora.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Certainly it is a big issue, though. It does go to the safety within communities. In communities in the part of the province where I live, we do have nuisance bears actually walking down main streets. The frustration, of course, is that when individuals phone the local police, they would say that they don't have the resources to deal with that particular issue.

Mr Duggan: I can tell you that in Kenora, when there's a bear in or around any residential area, the police do respond and act in the safety of the community first and get rid of the problem.

Mrs Dombrowsky: They actually remove the bear?

Mr Duggan: Yes. They work very closely with the animal control officer for the city of Kenora, who is very busy during that time of year. Natural resources takes care of the jurisdiction around the outside of Kenora and so far it has worked out very well with the animal control officer. Tranquilizer guns are readily available and the response time is immediate. Traps in Kenora are fre-

quent, depending on what area of town you live in. But it hasn't been as bad a problem this year as it was last year.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I could relate some stories from my part of the world that would not be similar. It continues to be a significant problem and does threaten the safety of individuals in many communities across Ontario.

You have brought to this conversation the topic of biker gangs. Is that something that is new to your community? Do you have the sense that you have the resources to deal with those issues?

Mr Duggan: We had a visit last July of the Hells Angels. They were handled very well by, again, a coordinated effort between all police forces. There were no incidents in Kenora. They came, they played and they left. They were checked at the border and they were monitored while they were in Kenora, and there were no stories or front-page problems at all during their stay.

Mr Gravelle: I just want to pursue, actually, the question Mrs Dombrowsky asked about the bears in the city. I wasn't going to ask that because we had an opportunity to discuss it beforehand. But I know that one of the frustrations certainly in the city of Thunder Bay is that with the downloading of responsibilities, or the lack of clarity as to who is responsible for it, it certainly is an issue in Thunder Bay. There was a concern about the fact that there were more nuisance bears running around.

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Is it not a concern, at least in terms of the funding—obviously, if the municipal police force is doing the job, which I think is encouraging to hear—is there not some frustration that there should be at least some separate or appropriate funding for it? That's one of the concerns that certainly has been expressed in Thunder Bay and many other communities in the province. I maintain that this should still be a responsibility of the Ministry of Natural Resources, but I guess you don't agree with that. My question is related to that, that it is a responsibility that has been added on, but maybe you don't feel that way.

Mr Duggan: My point is that when the problem comes into the city limits, then I think it's up to the city and its departments to take care of the problem. We have a very extensive animal control office, and they have enough staff assistance to take care of the problem in a quick, professional way. So we haven't really had that major problem, because of the efficiency of this person who is also under the police services board.

Mr Martin: That's interesting, because in my community they have to contract with a private operator who has some traps and goes out and tries, to the best of his ability—one person—to deal with a nuisance bear problem that is a problem not only in Sault Ste Marie but in Algoma, where farmers, for example, are taking control into their own hands and going after these bears because they are threatening their animals. In some instances they're shooting them but not killing them, and then you've got a mad bear running around. It is a huge problem.

First of all, you had a stint with the police services board and you had a chance to take a look at other things you might want to do with your time and your life at this stage. Given the challenges we face today in policing, why would you choose to do this again and want to do this?

Mr Duggan: I'm very interested in my community, where it's going and where it can go in the future. I think my history since 1975 has been to give back to the community as much as it has given to me. I enjoy the quality of life in Kenora. I made a decision to go back to Kenora to raise my family and make a living. I just feel that the Kenora Police Services Board was something that I enjoyed for three years. I could have stayed another three years, to do a six-year term if I were reappointed. I was enjoying it, but I saw an opportunity. As I said earlier, Keewatin had their own police services board and Kenora had their own police services board. They were still going to have a board of five and they were looking for someone to step aside and let in one of the Keewatin board members. I took a look at what I was doing personally in the hotel field and where we were at, from a perspective, and made a judgment call that I would step aside. I volunteered.

At this time of my life, when there is another opportunity—I enjoyed it; I think that I can add a lot to the board. As I said, negotiations and things that it takes to run a hotel are very similar to the board responsibilities. I can add that expertise to the board table and assist the chief, the deputy and the chair much like I do in the hotel business.

Mr Martin: What are the biggest issues for policing in your area?

Mr Duggan: The biggest issue for us is the workload of the officers. Because of the influx of visitors to Kenora, there is a workload situation that needs to be managed. The other concern we're having is keeping up to the standards for a smaller municipal force.

Right now we have a situation, with the passing of Bill C-59 in the summer of 2001, where we have an opportunity of leaving things as status quo, having the Kenora Police Service service just Kenora, and with the co-operation and understanding of the Ontario Provincial Police, they can take care of Keewatin and Jaffray Melick and the surrounding area. So it's a bit unique. Sudbury, Timmins, Caledon and Kenora are about the only four that have that opportunity, and right now it's working very well. There's excellent communication, sharing of resources, sharing of manpower. If the phone rings for an emergency, they respond. I think that's what we want from a Kenora perspective.

Mr Martin: So the imposition of the new regulations that all police services boards have to live up to now, given the two approaches, won't be a huge problem for you?

Mr Duggan: It's interesting, because under the old system the Ontario Provincial Police had a dive team. When someone drowned in Kenora, two miles outside the jurisdiction of the Kenora Police Services Board, we

waited three days-plus for the dive team to come from Orillia to find a body that was lost. I've seen that happen too many times. Under these new standards, besides the containment team and a number of other things, the Kenora Police Services Board developed a dive team so that they could actually respond to an emergency, if required, immediately, rather than wait three days for the dive team to get to Kenora. I think that's important. That's one of the co-operations and standards that is now in place, and I think it's a good one.

Mr Martin: Has the reality of September 11 made any new expectation or change in terms of policing in your jurisdiction at all?

Mr Duggan: I would say it's not as visible as it may be here in Toronto. Business is as usual in Kenora. I think, like the people around this table and the people in this city, we are all more aware of life today after September 11 than before.

I had the pleasure of hosting the board of directors of the police services board in Kenora on September 10 and 11. The chief of Toronto, the chief of Niagara Falls, the chief of Sault Ste Marie and a number of the board members were there. They all responded to the best of their ability from 1,200 miles away as to how they could react to the September 11 issue. I think we're a different country than we were, and that has fallen into Kenora in a certain way. Business is somewhat as usual, but I think we're just a little more aware.

Mr Martin: Do you have any concerns yourself about the heightened sensitivity now, whether conscious or unconscious, to people's ethnic origin being a problem or presenting as a problem?

Mr Duggan: I don't foresee that at all. I may have expected that question from some of the previous people who have sat here before. In Kenora I don't see that. It's interesting because as I was flying Air Canada this morning at 6 am—I think you just do that. You look down the plane and you are just more aware today than you were before September 11 of the people who are on the plane. I'm not making a judgment at all, I'm just more aware of who all is on the plane. I think I respect multiculturalism more now than I did before September 11. I don't think that's bad; I think that's a good move, that I can appreciate people for what they believe in and who they are and personally try to understand more about that.

Mr Martin: OK. Certainly there are some concerns given the response of the provincial government in bringing in a couple of new people—Major MacKenzie for one and I'm just trying to remember the RCMP officer—

Mr David Pond: Inkster.

Mr Martin: Inkster—to advise the government on issues of policing, particularly where terrorism and September 11 are concerned. There were comments made, particularly by Mr MacKenzie, around the question of the appropriateness of ethnic or racial profiling. What would your position be on that, and will that influence your board at all, the provincial approach to all of this?

1330

Mr Duggan: No, it won't influence me at all. I'm 1,200 miles away from Major-General MacKenzie. He probably will not have a need to come to Kenora and be concerned about something that may be happening in our area. I am a very open-minded person. We have a lot of natives in our community and I look at everybody as a person. I don't label people; I take them for what they are and what they can provide as an employee of the hotel that I run. I have a wide variety of multicultural people in our hotel. I have 75 employees, and I find it very satisfying to have a good mix of different nationalities in the building. I don't know where you're going on it, but I can tell you that I'm a very open-minded person and I take people at face value and I'm very strong with that.

Mr Martin: Where I was going with that is that I am afraid, and hopefully I'll be wrong, that there may be an attitude that works its way down from the top into various policing operations across the province that would see things like racial profiling as just another tool, not recognizing the damage it can cause to groups of people and individuals. But I'm satisfied with your answer.

There's just one other question on a different—back to a subject, actually, that we touched on with the Liberal caucus, the question of the Hells Angels. When they came to Toronto, I'm not sure whether there was an order put out, but it was certainly suggested that people not serve them in their establishments if they were wearing their colours. Was that a realistic thing to expect or to do, and how did you deal with that in Kenora?

Mr Duggan: I can tell you that they came to our hotel and they were served, as any guest would be. Did they have their colours on? Yes, they did. It didn't bother my staff or myself. They were guests of the hotel. They did not stay with us—they took over another hotel property in Kenora—but they came and dined with us a few times. I had one fish off the docks of the hotel, and it wasn't a problem.

Mr Martin: OK. Thank you.

The Chair: That's your time concluded. The government caucus.

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I had a couple: one was about the police service and the other was about tourism. In the one about the police services, I was wondering if there is a detachment office in Kenora.

Mr Duggan: Yes, there is.

Mr Johnson: For the OPP, I meant. Do you see this as being a long-term relationship or do you see that it may evolve into one service for the new municipality?

Mr Duggan: We're hoping for status quo at this time because it is working. We would like to have Kenora Police Service challenge themselves to meet the standards in front of them. If it gets to a point where the standards can't be reached and the community isn't protected as well as it should be, then the decision needs to be made whether to go to a larger force and take over the whole area and beef up the 31 members in order to do the job properly or to go into contract policing with the Ontario Provincial Police.

Mr Johnson: Yes, and I would suggest from my experience that even more than the standards, the personnel will drive that too. My experience in small police services was that a lot of responsibility fell on the chief. If you had a good chief, things were good, and if you didn't, then things weren't. My example of that right now is the town of Cobourg that I read a little bit about.

The other question I wanted to ask was about tourism. I see that you were director of the Kenora Bass International from 1990 to 1999. I assume that's bass fishing in Lake of the Woods?

Mr Duggan: Yes, sir.

Mr Johnson: Is it connected to the waterway of Lac Seul?

Mr Duggan: No, it's not.

Mr Johnson: Are bass native to Lake of the Woods?

Mr Duggan: Yes, they are, largemouth and smallmouth. We have both largemouth and smallmouth bass in Lake of the Woods.

Mr Johnson: OK. My point is that they were not native to Lac Seul.

Mr Duggan: No. They are to Lake of the Woods. We didn't realize we had the resource we had until we started that tournament, which was supposed to be a walleye tournament. In discussions with the Ministry of Natural Resources, they suggested we go after a species that's basically unheard of and unknown. From that point forward, it has been a major economic boon.

Mr Johnson: And bass are more fun to catch than pickerel anyway.

My point was that bass were introduced sometime between 1915 and 1920 by Mike Ament, who emigrated to Sioux Lookout from Brussels, Ontario, near where I live. He was a brother of my mother-in-law. He introduced bass to that waterway. The first one, according to his diary—there was a train wreck, so he lost all the fingerlings that were being shipped up to stock the lake. He also discovered a second species of muskie. The tiger muskie, indeed, is the one he discovered. It's named after him. The Latin name has his last name right in it. I just thought that was trivia.

Mr Duggan: I appreciate it, because that tournament has probably dropped over \$1 million in one weekend, just because of it.

Mr Johnson: It's very important to your town.

Mr Duggan: Bob Izumi enjoys it very much.

The Chair: As you can see, any question can come forward—

Mr Duggan: From bears to fish.

The Chair: —and we learn something every day in this committee from our members and from those who come forward as applicants. Thank you very much for being with us.

JOHN WILLIAMS

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: John R. Williams, intended appointee

as chair, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp board.

The Chair: The next intended appointee is John R. Williams, intended appointee as chair, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp board.

Mr Williams, you may sit at the appropriate place. As you are aware, you have an opportunity, should you choose to do so, to make an initial statement and be questioned by the political parties represented on this committee. Welcome.

Mr John Williams: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. My name is John Williams. I'm from Belleville, Ontario. I've been in the hotel business—this seems to be a hotel business program here this afternoon—for the last 23 years. I own and operate three hotels in that area: a Holiday Inn franchise, a Best Western franchise and a Ramada franchise. I employ just over 200 people in the hospitality business. My community service includes being past chairman of the local hospital board, past president of the Rotary Club, past chairman of Albert College board of directors, chairman of a local fundraising campaign for the Belleville hospital, where we just finished raising \$20 million from the community. Presently, I'm a councillor with the city of Quinte West.

I joined the OTMPC board at its beginning in 1999 and am presently on its executive committee. I feel we have made good progress with this board and its mandate, which is to lead, with the private sector, development and promotion of Ontario as a tourism destination in key markets. I believe it's important to provide continuity to the position of chairman of this board. My experience in the industry, my chairing of boards in the past and my desire to get things done are the strengths I can bring to this table. I am one who looks for results and who expects fiscal responsibility.

I am here to answer any questions and to bring you up to date as to any information about OTMPC, what progress we've made in the last three years and what we look for in the future.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. We will commence our questioning with the third party.

Mr Martin: Thanks very much for being here today. Certainly marketing the province and the tourism industry is an important initiative. I know in my own area we're having some difficulty this year, because we don't have enough snow. We like to market ourselves as a place to come and play, drive snow machines, ski and ice-fish. I guess all the marketing in the world isn't going to solve that problem.

1340

However, when a couple of the new initiatives were announced, in partnership with some of the work of this corporation, one of the criticisms I had for the government was that it's fine to market, but if you don't have attractions for people to come to, it's difficult. They'll come once, they'll look around, they'll see, they'll participate, but they won't come back again.

A number of attractions in the north, around our region, are struggling economically to keep their feet

under them. Do you think the government has any role to play, not only in marketing but in ensuring that the attractions we're marketing are actually up to snuff, first class?

Mr Williams: Yes. Our organization is primarily into marketing. That's what the board's role is. But as you said, the other important part of marketing is to make sure we're marketing a product we're happy with and that we can attract the right people to, and that they're happy when they get here. So, yes, I think it's a role also, not of this committee but of the government, to make sure we're keeping up those attractions where we can, and reinvesting so that we do—it's like any other product you have; you have to keep putting money back into it. You can market it to death, but if you don't put the materials back in, the product won't stand up when the people show up. As you know, we're marketing this province throughout the world, and it's very important that we keep putting money back into facilities.

Mr Martin: The other concern I have, of course—and I'm not sure we want to get around to it—is the very competitive nature of this industry. Every part of the province thinks it has the most wonderful offering to make and would like people to come to their area. How are you, as a member of this board, going to make sure we're all dealt with fairly, that the north, the east, the south and Toronto get their fair share of this marketing opportunity?

Mr Williams: First of all, let me say that I'm from the east. As an operator, I think it's been noted in eastern Ontario that sometimes we don't get the attention that Niagara and Ottawa seem to get. A lot of times, the bigger centres seem to get the money and the small areas don't.

First of all, we have good representation around the board table of people who represent different areas within the province. We also have committee members, some 200 people who work on different committees with us, volunteers—this is a volunteer committee; it's a volunteer board—who again represent different areas of the province. They all bring expertise to their committees, and then back to the board, on what their areas need.

I think we try to be very fair in the marketing dollars, so that we are seen as covering all the areas in the province. Toronto and the bigger areas do sometimes attract more, but our idea is to bring them to the larger centres in some ways and then try to make sure they get outside the bigger centres.

I think that the number and type of people we have represent the industry. We have a good cross-section, and I think everybody is very fair in the way they look at it to make sure we market the province equally as much as we can. That is the way we try to make sure we have equal representation covering the province.

Mr Martin: The money that's being put in now and some of the particular programs that have been announced for example, the pride in Ontario program—are they adequately funded?

Mr Williams: As you know, there have been two announcements. One was \$4 million that was announced back in the fall, and then there has just been another \$10 million of extra funding that's been announced. This is meant to market Ontario through TV, radio and newspapers, particularly in the border states. It's fair marketing launched for the whole province. That \$4 million has gone out since October, and as I understand it, we have a strategy to spend the \$10 million that's just been approved in a very short time. All the campaigns are ready to go, and will cover a large amount of TV, magazines and radio, as I said, across the border states, primarily, to attract particularly the US market.

Mr Martin: Do you think that will be enough money to do that?

Mr Williams: I think it's a good amount of money. We appreciate the fact that there's been more put into it since 9-11. There's some real fallout from September 11, as I'm sure many of you know. From the tourism point of view it was tremendous. I'm sure many of you have heard the numbers. It has started to come back some. It's better than it was. September-October was not good, but November-December was better. As we go into the first quarter and into the second quarter we'll hope that things will improve, but we need this extra money to make sure we get the message out that we are safe and this is a good place to come, and encourage particularly our American friends to cross the border and visit.

Mr Martin: You've mentioned targeting across the border, border communities and that, but what about reaching out to other jurisdictions like Europe, for example? I've been over to Ireland a few times in the last couple of years and one of the things that's happening over there with the booming economy is people are now starting to take vacations like they've never before. They're going to Portugal and Spain. Now, for example, Australia is in there. They buy a full-page ad in the big daily newspapers on a regular basis and they're getting apparently some significant folks going over there. But Canada, and Ontario in particular—and our part of Ontario, which concerns me the most—we're not on the radar screen. Should we be doing more in that jurisdiction, or is it too far?

Mr Williams: No, we do some in each of those jurisdictions. We do some; not a lot—not in comparison with what we're doing in the US particularly. There is some market, the money that's spent in Europe. There's some market that's spent in Japan. There was very little done in Australia, although there is some. It is covered across, but the majority of it, for sure, is spent domestically both within the US and within Ontario, to try to get Ontarians to travel. There is some money spent in each of those markets you mentioned.

Since September certainly the Japanese market was hurt tremendously. The Japanese people did not feel comfortable travelling. We had tremendous cancellations in Japanese tourists throughout September and October. In October there would typically be 10,000 people on buses travelling throughout Ontario and Quebec, and I

think the figure we heard—there were 40 people. The Japanese are very cautious about travelling when those kinds of things are going on.

We have taken the markets we feel are the most important and where we can spend the money wisely, and in that case we are doing some in those other markets you mentioned, but primarily it's in the closer markets.

Mr Martin: Just one more question, if the Chair might, and that's on this question of September 11 and the move to harmonize activities at the border. For me, who lives in Sault Ste Marie across the river from the US, if it means that our border becomes as militarized as the American border, it doesn't present a very welcoming atmosphere for folks coming across. Given that there still hasn't been any—maybe I'm wrong on this—concrete link to Canada producing the terrorists or having significant terrorist cells operating in it, does it make sense to you to be making it even more difficult for people to come in and enjoy some of what we have to offer, as opposed to continuing down the road that I thought we were on before September 11, which was trying to open up those borders and allow people to come in a lot more freely?

Mr Williams: Of course, from a tourism point of view we'd like to be as friendly as possible and I think that's always been the issue. We know the market is huge over the border in the area you're in and the area in Windsor and down where we are. So from a tourist point of view of course we want to keep it that way. On the other hand, we want to make sure that it's safe, and I would hope we could come up with a way that it works for both of us so that you'd feel that people can travel back and forth and feel safe doing that and they feel comfortable coming here and it's not a major problem to get across the border.

I hope, in doing whatever we do in the future, it's made as user-friendly as possible and that we don't make it any more lengthy than we have to, but on the same hand I understand the concern about safety. So from a tourism point of view, the border is extremely important, absolutely.

1350

The Chair: That's the end of your questions. The government caucus.

Mr Hastings: Mr Williams, what conversations or co-ordinated plans do you have working with the Canadian Tourism Commission? They have a substantial budget. A friend of mine used to work in the special events industry. He hasn't been in this field for about seven years now, but he says that over the last 25, since the 1960s, a very spotty record by the CTC or its successors, not much coordination with the provinces compared to what you see with some of the national airlines of Europe, Australia—Qantas. Do you think we could be doing more in terms of getting coordinated dollars from the CTC to focus on the American and European markets through air flights and what you're doing with drives in buses?

Mr Williams: Absolutely. I think we have made some better inroads into that, particularly in the last year. CTC

has their committees, as you know, somewhat as we do here. There has been a distance in the past, and we sometimes haven't coordinated funding as well as we could. We've got programs running where we sometimes should be joining and doing the programs together rather than us doing our thing for Ontario and the federal government doing theirs. We have started that process. Some of the committee members are now coming to other committees that are meeting within both, trying to share knowledge, trying to share programs, looking at funding and how we can make the dollar the province has work with the federal dollar and therefore go further.

If we can keep that process working, with myself and other board members who make an effort to get to these committees and make CTC understand that we want to work with them, I think you'll see that improve a lot in the future. But it has not worked as well in the past, and I think it is one goal of OTMP to make sure that we try to fix that problem and make it a little bit more friendly for both.

Mr Hastings: If you look at the Qantas ads right now running on certain Buffalo border stations, you can see that the CTC doesn't have any connection with what I call Air Monopoly, Air Canada. We should be getting a greater profile, and not just Ontario but the other provinces. It seems to me that is really lacking. If you use Qantas or Swissair—I note they're in bankruptcy, coming back.

Mr Williams: Again, I agree. Sometimes that comes from CTC, sometimes it comes from the airline, where they may not want to be as friendly with us and that, but I think we have an opportunity. It's important to me that these dollars—these are government dollars but, as you know, this is an organization where we also try to bring private funding to the table. We try to share. We try to make these dollars go further.

The last year, the year before last, we were able to bring \$12 million in extra funding which was brought from operators like myself who got involved in things that the province was doing. This year we're in right now we hope to be \$17 million. So our goal is to be able to take the dollars we have from the province, bring dollars from the operators and other people who are interested in the programs and therefore make the message go farther. I think if we do that, continue to do that, we can grow that, but we also need to work very closely with CTC and make sure we're getting a better bang for the buck. So we'll continue to try and do that.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): Mr Williams, thank you very much for coming and taking a role certainly on OTMP, because what does make it successful is people who give their time as opposed to any government agency trying to come up. I know there are ministry people who do help out and are very good and work closely with you.

I just want to say that the dollars announced since September 11 are over and above what's already spent in marketing in Ontario, the \$120 million over four years that OTMP has, and, as you've said, leveraged with

private dollars. The \$4 million announced for the fall and winter campaign actually turned out to be a \$7-million campaign, with some money from the private sector and some \$700,000 from CTC. We'll give them some credit for that.

Your spring and summer advertising campaign above the OTMPC amount is another \$10 million that was committed to that, and CTC will be contributing, I think, \$2 million. So those are aggressive plans, and I think you need the proper people to manage those numbers and get the results. So I wish you luck.

Mr Williams: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Mazzilli. Any further government questions? If not, we'll move to the official opposition.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good afternoon, Mr Williams. I really am not especially familiar with the role of the OTMPC, so would you please help me? Do you have a budget? You must, because you have a business plan.

Mr Williams: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: So you have a budget. Am I to understand that it's \$120 million, which will cover the next four years, \$30 million a year?

Mr Williams: Yes. That's approximate.

Mrs Dombrowsky: In the background, it indicates that part of the objectives of the corporation is to undertake joint marketing initiatives. So am I to understand from that statement that representatives from the industry also contribute to your budget?

Mr Williams: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Do they match?

Mr Williams: That's what I'm saying. Last year we were able to bring \$12 million extra to the table, and this year we hope to bring \$17 million. That's done through cash; it's done sometimes in kind, where an industry may give something like room nights or something to some promotion that's being done to attract people to the province. But the total is growing, and the idea is to grow that total each year so that we can continue to bring more. As I see it, as an operator, it does two things; one is that it helps because our dollar goes further. If we can take the \$30 million or \$35 million and we can stretch it into \$50 million, then of course we can get more bang with our dollars. The other thing it does, particularly in a smaller operation—I run smaller hotels, not the bigger ones—it gives us an opportunity to participate in some good marketing programs at a decent dollar that gets our message out, which I wouldn't normally be able to do. So I can buy a \$1,000 ad in a publication that the province is doing that's going all over, huge, and because it's offered to me and it's offered to many operators in eastern Ontario, it gets my message out. So the idea is to grow the dollars and therefore get further and also help smaller operators.

Mrs Dombrowsky: How accessible are the resources of your corporation to the small mom-and-pop operations that exist, for example, in my riding? I ask this question because you've made a curious statement, to me. You've suggested you are a small operator. I have to tell you that

by the standards of most operators in my riding, you're a big operator. Can you explain how the services of your corporation are available to all of the tourism service providers?

Mr Williams: Sure. Let me give you an example of an events publication that's done every summer. I guess I'm comparing myself to some in the city when I consider myself smaller. But I understand exactly what you mean: someone who is running a small fishing lodge, for example, or a small motel.

The province puts out, as I said, these publications. You have an opportunity as an operator to participate. As I said, the ads can run anywhere from \$350 to huge, way up. Our idea is to get that information out to the smaller operator, where they can buy into that program so that instead of them having to spend huge amounts of money to go in a very glossy—which they probably couldn't afford any other way—this is a sales tool. There are a number of publications that are put out where we try to get to the smaller operators.

Our goal, though, and we don't always do it as well as we should, and this is one thing that I'm very concerned about in making sure that we do better, is to make sure that message gets out to every operator, including the smaller operators. Sometimes they don't see the opportunity, and then they don't get involved. One of the things that's very clear as a sales effort is to get that message out to everybody, particularly in areas like eastern Ontario where I think sometimes in the past we haven't got as much attention as we'd like. So it will be our goal to make sure that sales opportunity is put in front of as many people as we can that are operators, whether they're small or large, and therefore give them that opportunity to market their property better.

1400

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK. If I can go back to the point you were making about engaging resources from the industry sector, you indicated that last year you received \$12 million and you hope that will increase to \$17 million and you want to build on that. Is it the thought that at the end of four years, when all government support for this corporation will cease, the industry will then carry on in the role?

Mr Williams: No. I think we would hope that we can prove to the government that if it's \$30 million, for example, maybe we're able to get it up to \$25 million or even further, so that we can prove we took the money the government had and made it go that much further, we did that much more with it. Of course, you know the results are only in how visitors increase and how the tax dollars increase and how it makes sense from the government's point of view. We hope we would still see some support from the government but that we would certainly be able to have a higher ratio of dollars coming from the private sector to support it. We would still hope there would be some support from the government.

Mrs Dombrowsky: So, while it is the government's fiscal plan that the corporation will be terminated in 2003-04, probably members who would have served on

the corporation would be advocating for some continuation of that program, you would expect?

Mr Williams: I think it all depends on the results, and I believe very strongly that we have to prove we can make the numbers work.

Mrs Dombrowsky: That's my next question: do you have an accountability component within your corporation?

Mr Williams: Yes, we do. We have a number of accountabilities that we follow and track very carefully as to how we're spending the money and what kind of results we're getting. We also have a committee on the board that looks at that stuff specifically and reports on how we're doing, both financially—

Mrs Dombrowsky: Who do they report to?

Mr Williams: They report to the board. Those people as a committee report to the board. We report our findings—

Mrs Dombrowsky: To the minister?

Mr Williams: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK, so it's a public document.

Mr Williams: That's correct.

Mrs Dombrowsky: So the public can see the kind of return they're getting for that investment?

Mr Williams: Absolutely. We're accountable to the minister on how we spend the money and the results we get with it.

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK.

Mr Williams, are you a member of a political party?

Mr Williams: Yes, I am.

Mrs Dombrowsky: And what party would that be?

Mr Williams: That would be the PC Party.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Do you have any particular role with that party?

Mr Williams: No.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You're not a member of the executive?

Mr Williams: No.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Those would be all my questions, Mr Chair.

The Chair: Mr Gravelle?

Mr Gravelle: Good afternoon, Mr Williams. I'm curious about the relationship of the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp and the Northern Tourism Marketing Corp. I'm from Thunder Bay. Does the funding envelope for this include the funding envelope for northern Ontario?

Mr Williams: Presently it does, yes.

Mr Gravelle: So you're the chair—or you would be the chair—of the entire organization, which would include the northern component?

Mr Williams: Well, no. The way it works is that the funding, as it sits presently, comes through the OTMPC but goes to the north. They have their own board, as you're probably aware.

Mr Gravelle: Yes.

Mr Williams: Mr Bill French—I think you know Bill.

Mr Gravelle: I know him well.

Mr Williams: He sits on our committee and represents their board on our committee—I guess you'd say it that way—but the funding comes from OTMPC and flows—

Mr Gravelle: They have their own funding envelope that comes from you originally and then they—

Mr Williams: That's correct.

Mr Gravelle: One of the questions I have in relation to that—and I should probably speak to Mr French about it, because I know him quite well and I think he's a good choice for the position—is one of the problems we often seem to have when maps are made to promote areas of the province. The maps have not been correct, and it has happened on more than one occasion. Communities that are extremely important communities, certainly in my riding in northern Ontario, are left out or they're switched over. It befuddles me as to how this can happen if it's being managed out of the north. Certainly every one of us would look and see that Schreiber's there; it's not there. And why isn't Red Rock in?

How is that handled? My understanding is that it's done by a firm outside the north. Do you agree it should be done by a northern Ontario firm, or can you at least explain—I'm sure you're familiar with this, because it's happened twice now.

Mr Williams: The northern group, as you know, does a lot of their own publications. They do it for fishing; they do it for a number of the activities that are done in the north. Bill and his committee sort of do like we do. They take their funds and try to get local operators to jump into some of their publications. My understanding is that in most cases the north doesn't do too bad a job of it. I think maybe some of the publications that come out of the south don't do as good a job of making sure the map is in place.

Mr Gravelle: That's it. That's exactly right.

Mr Williams: That's another thing. We have the same problem when it comes to central and eastern Ontario. On one map, you'll find that eastern Ontario or central Ontario starts at Highway 400 and goes one way, and then on another map you'll find it somewhere else. We're trying to work at that to make it more consistent so that we fix that problem. We're working closely with Bill. I think there are some conversations going on now as we speak as to what's going to happen with that agreement in the future. I understand the Minister of Tourism and the minister of the north are having some conversations as to how they are going to handle that as we go forward, because I believe their funding is up for renewal this year. We haven't heard what that result is, but we'll certainly continue to work very closely with the north and try to correct these areas that we have run into and particularly, as you mention, these maps and stuff, because it's very important.

Mr Gravelle: Are you indicating there's some possibility that it no longer will be handled the same way, that there will be a separate funding envelope?

Mr Williams: No, I don't know. I guess I just say that; I don't know. All I know is that there are some con-

versations that have been going on, and we haven't been made aware of the results.

Mr Gravelle: Just back to the map thing for a second, it befuddles me how this can happen twice, because again certainly the people who are managing the system in the north would be the first to spot the error. I know these things can happen, but it's just awful. The same community has been missed or targeted twice in a row. It really is frustrating, because you would hope that when you're dealing with professionals, obviously, they would do a good job. You wonder where it falls apart. Where does it fall apart? Again, I would think it would go back to you to look at and you would spot a problem. It's certainly a frustration. I have even spoken about it in the House.

Mr Williams: I agree. It's one we need to fix. Recognizing that it has happened once, it shouldn't happen a second time, but hopefully it doesn't happen a third and we can fix it so that it doesn't. Sometimes you've got two or three printers looking at it. In this case, somebody from the north needs to make sure they get a good look at it.

Mr Gravelle: That's right. I couldn't agree with you more.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your questions, Mr Gravelle. Because of time, thank you very much, sir, for appearing before the committee. You may step down. Decisions will be made at the end of the day.

SHIRLEY FAHLGREN

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition and third parties: Shirley Fahlgren, intended appointee as member, Child and Family Services Review Board.

The Chair: The next individual to be considered by the committee is Shirley Fahlgren, intended appointee as member, Child and Family Services Review Board. You may come forward, Ms Fahlgren. You have the opportunity to make an initial statement, if you see fit, and then questions will come from members of the committee. Welcome to the committee.

Ms Shirley Fahlgren: Good afternoon, gentlemen of the committee and lady of the committee, as well as Mr Arnott and Mr Pond. I am pleased to be here this afternoon to present myself and some details about my background and experience which I feel are pertinent to serving on the Child and Family Services Review Board.

Geographically, my background and continuing association with many regions of Ontario are diversified. Born in southern Ontario, I grew up in mining communities, namely, Pickle Crow and Red Lake, where home schooling provided my elementary education, with the exception of one year in a public elementary school in Elmvale. Following the completion of the first two years of high school in Red Lake—it only went to that point at that time—I was enrolled in a private boarding school in Winnipeg for grades 11 and 12. Summer saw my return to Red Lake, where I worked for the Hudson's Bay Co,

the store there, until after graduation from the University of Manitoba with a bachelor of arts degree in English and psychology.

Following my marriage, I taught at Red Lake high school until our move to Sault Ste Marie, where my husband was employed as a pilot with the then Department of Lands and Forests. A year later we moved to Ottawa. During our five-year residency there, I worked as a typist of French communications for the Department of External Affairs.

North Bay was our last move, to a community that was a great place in which to raise our four children. Homemaking, teaching in a secondary school, counselling students both vocationally and personally, volunteering in a number of organizations and training for promotion as a figure skating judge provided a broad base of experience and challenge in partnering and in understanding children and youth, especially through coaching extracurriculars such as gymnastics, drama, choir and cheerleading.

My continuing association with many regions of Ontario from Kenora and Kapuskasing to Toronto and Ottawa is a consequence of my avocation, which is evaluating figure skating tests and judging competitions, allowing me the opportunity to interact with boys and girls of all ages.

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In a volunteer capacity, administratively, I have served as chair of the northern Ontario section of the Canadian Figure Skating Association, now renamed Skate Canada. The northern Ontario section is an area extending from the Manitoba border to Gravenhurst. For 10 summers, I was director of the North Bay international summer skating school, which at its peak attracted 250 skaters from many provinces and several states. In addition, I assisted with the organization of Ontario Winter Games and co-chaired the Canadian National Figure Skating Championships held in North Bay in 1986.

Other interests included serving on the board of Women in Non-traditional Trades, singing in two church choirs, and recently becoming a member of the Rotary Club of Nipissing.

The recipient of several awards in both school and skating venues, I value the award of merit from the Ontario School Counsellors' Association in 1985, the evaluator judge award for Canada in 1998, and the election to the North Bay Sports Hall of Fame in 2000 as particularly meaningful.

Fortunate in three careers—teaching for 25, real estate for 13 and executive assistant to MPP Mike Harris for 11—I look forward to applying the skills and expertise acquired in those careers to serving on the Child and Family Services Review Board. My compelling interest in education and the well-being and success of young people, combined with my personal and professional experiences, I believe qualify me for this appointment. I know that the safety of all parties in the school setting is of paramount importance, that the preparation for a return to school for expelled students is an essential con-

sideration and that a keen desire to resolve appeals justly and expediently is mandatory.

I thank you for your consideration of my appointment to the Child and Family Services Review Board and look forward to any questions you may have.

The Chair: We commence our questioning with the members of the government.

Mr Wood: We'll waive our time.

The Chair: The government has waived its time, so we move then to the official opposition.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good afternoon, Ms Fahlgren. I have had it brought to my attention that there was once a report called the Fahlgren report. I believe it dealt with northern Ontario matters. Are you familiar with that report?

Ms Fahlgren: I'm sorry. Would you repeat that, Ms Dombrowsky? I didn't understand the first part.

Mrs Dombrowsky: It has come to my attention that there has been a report written in the province called the Fahlgren report.

Ms Fahlgren: Oh, OK.

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK? I am asking you if you are familiar with the report and if you might be connected to the individual who would have authored it.

Ms Fahlgren: I am somewhat familiar with it. I think it was done in the early 1980s. It was on the environment. It was originally the Hartt commission, I believe, and it was completed by my brother-in-law, Ed Fahlgren.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I see. And it was on the environment?

Ms Fahlgren: I believe so.

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK, because someone had just indicated that there had been a report of that title. Thank you very much.

It's very obvious you would be familiar with the role of agencies, boards and commissions in the province. I guess my question to you this afternoon is, why would you express some particular interest in serving on this particular board, given the gamut there is, the various boards and agencies that provide services for the people in the province? What in particular is of interest to you with this particular board?

Ms Fahlgren: Education for children and youth. I think it covers pretty well both my vocational interests and avocational interests. From the figure skating viewpoint, I often have opportunities to speak with unsuccessful candidates who are somewhat crumpled by what they perceive as their inadequacy. It is an effort to explain to them that it's not they who are being tested; it is the test and whether or not it is reaching the standard.

It's the same in a school setting. As a counsellor, I found—and I'm speaking vocationally here—that it was very, very important to gain the trust of students from grades 9 through 13 and to really help them explore what situations are open to them and how their subjects will lead to where they want to go eventually. That's my answer.

I think learning is living. If we don't have children and youth who are motivated to learn, we're going to be in a

pretty bad situation. I think the safe environment has to be—and of equal importance are our efforts to influence expelled students to adopt a different view of life and to become motivated to be responsible individuals.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I appreciate all your comments and certainly would agree with them for the most part. However, you do appreciate that the role you will have, as I understand it, will not be to deal directly with the individuals but rather to assess and to judge whether a decision that has been made about a course of action has been appropriate or not.

That you would talk, for example, about students who would be expelled, I think we would all agree that when a youngster would find himself in that situation, very probably it would be the result of a very serious need for additional supports within the family or within the school system.

As a matter of fact, this morning I had the opportunity to meet with some community mental health representatives who would say to me that there are not sufficient resources within our communities to deal with the problems, particularly with our young people, and that when there has been an identification made that these youngsters should be getting some support, in order to access the professional services and supports that they require there are waiting lists of eight or nine months, even over a year in particular parts of the province.

The issue that the people brought to my attention was that in that period some very serious things can happen in a school, for example. Given that that is a reality, that there are children who have been identified with some very serious needs who have not been able to access the resources that may help them, that may prevent some violent outbursts and that you might have an understanding of that, would that have any impact on any decision you might make on a review board?

Ms Fahlgren: I think, as you said earlier, I would not be dealing as a member of the board with that particular issue. Certainly I personally understand where you're coming from, but again, it would be my responsibility to review all the evidence presented, to weigh it, along with two other members of the committee, and reach a just decision.

There are many reasons for children and youth acting out, and I'm not prepared to go into those because they're not really pertinent to the board that I am seeking appointment to.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Actually, I couldn't disagree with you more. In fact, I think we have a responsibility, and I would suggest that in your role you would have a responsibility to review some of the reasons why a youngster might—

Ms Fahlgren: Absolutely, to review the reasons, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: —be in that particular position. I guess maybe then the fault is with me in that my question was not clear to you. Were you to understand that a youngster might be in this situation because there were not resources within the community that could have ameliorated that situation earlier, would that assist you in making a decision on a case?

Ms Fahlgren: It could.

Mrs Dombrowsky: What other issues would you want to consider?

Ms Fahlgren: So far as the student is concerned?

Mrs Dombrowsky: Yes.

Ms Fahlgren: Whether or not he or she is taking medication, whether there is a developmental disability, what's happening in the home life, what is the historical background in both school and home; all those would weigh in.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Would you agree that expulsion is really a last-resort measure and that if there was any way that a youngster could be maintained in a regular school setting, that in fact would be the resolution to be sought?

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Ms Fahlgren: That's a very interesting question. I'm going to speak from experience as a teacher. I never did experience a desire to have someone suspended or expelled, but I certainly was aware—even in private school, I witnessed two expulsions. It was for repeated severe infractions of rules that had to be observed.

But going back to your question, is it a last resort, I think there has to be prolonged discussion, not only with the student but with others in his home life, and counselling there, to see how they are reacting or responding to his or her needs. I think expulsion is a serious action and if there are other ways of dealing with it—but that again would not be my responsibility, because I would be reviewing, along with two others, this information. But in answer to your question, I think, yes, it is a last resort.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I am somewhat heartened to hear that, because when you read the criteria of reasons for which a youngster might be expelled from school, they are indeed serious. I have some experience in the education field, so I certainly am aware that there are very serious situations that can arise. We as a society have an obligation to ensure the safety of all the children who would be in that facility, but at the same time, I think there is an absolute need to recognize our responsibility to provide whatever supports and services children might need to prevent them from coming to school with a weapon or making some very inappropriate threats. A youngster can be expelled, according to the wording of the law, for assault. Sorry, am I—

The Chair: No, you have one minute.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I think for me, I really need to understand that people who serve on this board would consider some of these very serious actions for which a youngster might have been expelled and for which the family or the advocate for the youngster might come to appeal; that you would be open to understand that very many times, while the action is quite severe, some of the conditions that would have caused the action are equally as severe and totally beyond the child's control and there should have been some intervention at a much earlier age and stage that would have prevented that particular outburst or action on the part of the youngster.

I would hope that in your role you would first of all make all of those considerations and then also use the influence you might have in that role to press for and ensure that there are adequate services and supports for families and children within our communities, because that is a serious problem right now.

Ms Fahlgren: As you say, it's the responsibility of everyone to address that issue.

There was another thing that you mentioned there. I think it was insofar as looking back again at the evidence. Of course, because it is an appeal, that is the function of the review board.

The Chair: That would be the conclusion of your time. Mr Martin, the third party.

Mr Martin: I was interested in the comment you made that you worked as executive assistant to Mr Harris. Are you still in his employ?

Ms Fahlgren: No, I'm not.

Mr Martin: When and why did you leave his employ?

Ms Fahlgren: Approximately three months ago.

Mr Martin: Any reason you want to share with us why you would have left that employ?

Ms Fahlgren: My contract was fulfilled. I had been there 11 years.

Mr Martin: In looking to get involved in other ways in the public life of the province, you've chosen this one. Why would you have picked this out of a fairly large offering of public appointments that are obviously out there? I know of your background with children. That's probably part of it. Is there anything else?

Ms Fahlgren: I guess it was the Safe Schools Act that really zeroed my focus. From time to time there would be press releases coming in about what had been planned and the code of conduct and those kinds of things, and it just continued to deepen my interest.

Mr Martin: You'll be making decisions or contributing to decisions that will affect some very vulnerable young people in some difficulty, not only with society but with themselves in many instances. Besides your volunteer work, and it's quite extensive and it's impressive, and your teaching career, is there anything else you've done or studied that would prepare you to actually consider these cases and make decisions that you would be able to live with as good decisions on their behalf?

Ms Fahlgren: I haven't included this in the statement I read, but certainly within the 11 years that I was executive assistant to Mr Harris, I dealt with many problems that involved families as well. I guess that came as a result of having done it in high school. So that again made me very aware of perhaps what you were saying, Ms Dombrowsky, that there are many reasons for things happening, and I took an interest in that. So I would say that has some bearing on it as well.

Mr Martin: But you have no specific training or—

Ms Fahlgren: Aside from a specialist in counselling.

Mr Martin: OK. That's fair and that's probably significant in this kind of work, understanding where young people might be coming from. You mentioned the safe

schools issue. There are a number of other considerations that this board looks into too. What's your understanding of the board's jurisdiction where they are concerned?

Ms Fahlgren: They're reviewing appeals for residential placements, emergency secure treatment decisions, refusal by licensees for adoption placements and the expulsion. I think there is one with the Solicitor General's custody, but somehow I think that's been removed. I don't know.

Mr Martin: In those areas, and again they are very significant in the life of young people, any particular background training or experience, other than your counselling, that you might bring to those considerations?

Ms Fahlgren: You mean to residential placements or secure treatment?

Mr Martin: Yes.

Ms Fahlgren: I think the teaching experience was a broad introduction and continuing understanding of things that can bother students, particularly in grades 12 and 13. The acting out in grades 9 and 10 and even in 11 sometimes is just budding maturity, not yet in bloom. But as students reach grades 12 and 13—now it will be only 12—there is a pressure on them not only to perform to their own satisfaction but to the satisfaction of their parents and of their peers in other ways. I'm reflecting on becoming a student: "Do I really want to go to university? Do I want to go to college? Do I want to find a job and work?" I think those pressures are severe, and I'm certainly cognizant of them not just through the teaching but also from the skating, because sometimes commitment to skating means seven hours a day plus school, and the pressure is tremendous; that is, if you're going to go into national or divisional competition. Sometimes that can set a student, or a skater who is also a student, awry. I think my experience in those two venues has been adequate. No, I can't express beyond that.

Mr Martin: In considering this appointment and thinking about it and perhaps talking to some folks about it, what was it that you wanted most to achieve in your term in this role?

Ms Fahlgren: On this board?

Mr Martin: Yes. When it's all said and done, what would you have hoped to leave by way of your mark on it?

Ms Fahlgren: As a legacy? I haven't thought about that.

Mr Martin: In looking at it and obviously being attracted to it, what is it that you wanted to do?

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Ms Fahlgren: I want to become conversant now with what's happening, why an expulsion would occur, and to assist, with the other two members, in making the best decision for the—I hesitate to use the word "rehabilitation"—preparation of the expelled student to return to school.

Mr Martin: What about in the other areas that you will have to consider?

Ms Fahlgren: At this point I don't know that I'm—apropos to that, I just don't know. But certainly they are

of great interest to me. I've been aware of the Concordia Centre in North Bay, which has now lost its name and has become something else. There is supposed to be a CTC, a treatment centre, ongoing. I think it's in the works. I have gone to several meetings of many of the organizations that address these concerns because of my interest.

Mr Martin: There is one other area that I don't think we touched on in our conversation here this afternoon, and that's the area of disclosing information to people who have been adopted so that they might make good decisions or access services or whatever. What's your view on the disclosure of information?

Ms Fahlgren: Are you saying to the adoptee?

Mr Martin: Yes.

Ms Fahlgren: I think it would have to be very carefully considered and the best decision made, because perhaps the disclosure would not have a positive influence; perhaps it might. I haven't looked into it. I'm sure that training will be presented. I'll look forward to that.

Mr Martin: Thank you very much.

The Chair: The governing party is—no. That concludes everything. Thank you very much for appearing before the committee. You may step down.

Ms Fahlgren: Thank you, Mr Bradley.

ROGER CLARKE

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition and third parties: Roger N. Clarke, intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board.

The Chair: The next individual to be considered is an intended appointee as a member of the Ontario Film Review Board, Roger N. Clarke. Mr Clarke, would you come forward, please. As you would be aware, you are entitled to make an initial statement or say nothing, whatever you like, at the beginning. I should mention that we simply deduct it from the time of the government members, so you can take as long as you wish, sir—up to 10 minutes.

Mr Roger Clarke: Start the stopwatch.

The Chair: Welcome to the committee, sir.

Mr Roger Clarke: Thank you very much, sir. I would like to make an initial statement; brief, I think.

Mr Chairman, members of the committee, it's my privilege to appear before you today pursuant to a hoped-for appointment to the Ontario Film Review Board. Perhaps I may be permitted to outline what I trust you will agree are valid credentials and experience for such an appointment.

It's my understanding that one of the primary qualifications for a public appointment is a demonstration of interest and involvement in one's community. May I be permitted to outline my involvement.

Currently I am a member of the Scarborough Youth Justice Committee. This involves sitting on panels to hear cases involving youth in trouble with the law, as determined by court officials who report to the Attorney

General's department. The work of these panels helps to alleviate an overburdened court system from having to hear charges of a relatively minor and non-violent nature. It gives young people a second chance to rehabilitate themselves with no criminal record. It also involves an apology to the victim and determination of limited sanctions for the guilty, by their own admission, youth. Everyone on the committee is a lay member, not part of the legal community, and is of course a concerned member of our increasingly complex society.

I've also performed public service through my membership in the College of Optometrists of Ontario. In addition to being a public member of council for the college, I also served on several college committees, such as quality assurance, strategic planning and communications. While chair of the communications committee, I spearheaded the establishment of the college's first Web site, whose primary objective is to serve the interests of the public.

I also participate in my local ratepayers' association, where one of our principal objectives is to oversee proposed developments in our community.

For four years I also served on the board of my children's elementary school parent advisory council, that is, from its inception. As the father of two grown children and, more important, two young children, eight and 13, I feel it's very important that Ontario parents be afforded meaningful and understandable guidelines and ratings as to the suitability of films for consumption at all ages. I plan to take my new responsibilities very seriously, with a view to this end, and look forward to the training and indoctrination that will be provided to me by the Ontario Film Review Board.

Thank you for your consideration, and I welcome your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, sir. This time, it will begin with the official opposition.

Ms Dombrowsky: Good afternoon, Mr Clarke.

The Chair: Hold on. I saw Mr Hastings looking at me in a scolding way. It does begin with the official opposition.

Mrs Dombrowsky: With regard to the role of the film board—and of course you've had an opportunity to review the background and you're familiar with the references to community standards—while I think I have some appreciation of the term myself, do you not find that to a degree somewhat ambiguous and very challenging to achieve?

Mr Roger Clarke: I would certainly agree it's challenging to determine. However, I think it's open to interpretation, and that interpretation, as I understand it from the composition of the board, is that it takes people—brings people, I should say, because it happens here in Toronto. It brings people from all parts of Ontario together to basically reach a consensus as to what is acceptable, how something should be rated, whether it's viewable by young and impressionable minds, that type of thing. But it's certainly a challenge, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Another question I have, particularly following the holiday season, when it's very popular

for youngsters to receive new video games—over the holidays I had actually two conversations with families who purchased these games because they were popular, because their youngsters had mentioned the names, and when watching them being played they were really very surprised to see the violent content within the video games, which are unregulated at this point in time in Ontario. Do you have an opinion about that, and do you think the Ontario Film Review Board might have a role to play to assist families? Families spend a good deal of money on this sort of paraphernalia for their video machines and I think sometimes feel somewhat betrayed, because the names can be a little bit elusive. So what might seem like a pretty innocuous game, when they actually see what it involves, they can be pretty concerned. It might not be the violence, but it can be especially frightening or some disturbing images, you know, people having their heads cut off and blood coming out. These are games that are recommended for very small children. It's just interesting that I had those two conversations, and I do think they're real stories that relate to, not what you do, but maybe something you could do. Do you have an opinion on that at all?

Mr Roger Clarke: As I mentioned in my opening statement, I have two young daughters at home. Luckily they've evinced little interest in the commercially available games. They, for example, access TVO, and TVO has some pretty good games and they change fairly frequently. So there's a renewal that goes on there.

I understand it's a voluntary system now of rating these games. I can anticipate that it would be a good thing to be able to rate them and classify them, but it might be difficult. The reason I say that is that from a technological or logistical point of view some of these games, many of them, are very complex and layered, and therefore one would almost have to be an expert to get to some of these layers, albeit there may be murder and mayhem going on at all layers. But let's say you wanted to get something that was particularly salacious. It may be at level 15, and if you're as inept as I am, you'd only be able to get to level three. So I can see that while it may be an ideal situation, it could be difficult to actually implement. That's not to say it shouldn't be considered or even attempted.

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Mrs Dombrowsky: Wouldn't you, though, as a member of the board, simply assume that while we know the reality would be that not all children would be able to get to the 15th level, one child could? Wouldn't you make that assumption?

Mr Roger Clarke: I'm sorry. You misunderstand me. I didn't mean that a child couldn't get to that level. What I meant was that the reviewer might not be able to get to that level. Therefore you might get a miscue from the reviewer, who would only go so far and then say, "Oh, well, I guess it's OK," but in reality the thing you might object to was hidden deep in the depths.

There are reviews you can get from computer papers and computer magazines, which do review these things.

There are people who are known, or like to be known, as gamers. They're the people who play the particularly violent things. In some cases there are literally thousands of people around the world playing this glorified chess game, if you will. I think it's a little bit like the Internet, though; it's a difficult thing to regulate.

Mrs Dombrowsky: But I'm just saying that as a parent in a store, it's always very helpful for me when I can see what the rating might be right on the package.

Mr Roger Clarke: Absolutely. Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Certainly I do look for that when we purchase videos and such for our children—or have; they're a little bit past that stage now. I can understand why parents might look for that, and I guess my question to you is, do you think it would be appropriate for games to be part of the responsibility the Ontario Film Review Board would consider?

Mr Roger Clarke: I'd have to say yes. I think it's certainly worth consideration.

Mrs Dombrowsky: So if an individual or group of individuals were to advocate for that, you think it is something you would be able to support?

Mr Roger Clarke: I think so, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: It is a concern within families, particularly families with younger children. So I'm certainly encouraged to hear you would be open to that.

You know there continues to be a conversation about how effective the Ontario Film Review Board is. As a parent, as a member of the community, do you have an opinion? Obviously you're looking to participate on it, but are you aware of that debate, and how would you defend or support the role of the board in light of the fact that there has been some significant conversation and suggestion that it is not effective in its role?

Mr Roger Clarke: I think that like any body it should be open to evolution and should be prepared to change in some cases as the technology might change or even as community standards might change. I know that when I was a kid, my dad would take me to movies. He wouldn't really have to think about what movie he would take me to; he would just take me to whatever we felt we should see. I think I grew up pretty well as a result of it. However, these days, if I'm going to take my own kids to a movie, I definitely want a rating system. I've seen movies—I have to say I've never taken my kid to a movie that wasn't appropriate, but I've seen lots on television that are not appropriate. We've subscribed to The Movie Network since its inception, which was somewhere in the early 1980s, so we've always sort of had movies in the home. I find it very easy to regulate those. I know there's a different rating system involved there.

I hope I'm answering your question when I say that I think it's an effective board but must keep itself open, so that it is prepared to change as community standards change.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Can I ask you, with regard to community standards and your understanding, they're different from area to area and region to region?

Mr Roger Clarke: Oh, yes. Definitely. I have relatives, both in-laws and otherwise, in various parts of Ontario, and we get together from time to time. We sometimes have differing standards. There's the sort of big-city ethos versus the small-town ethos. Sometimes they're different; sometimes they're not.

The Chair: I think that concludes your questions and your time, Ms Dombrowsky.

We'll move to the third party in rotation, and that will be Mr Martin.

Mr Martin: This is an important piece of public business that you've applied to be part of, and from conversations we've had with others who have come before us appointed to this board, it will probably take up a fair amount of your time. I guess I'm wondering why it is you would want to do this at this particular point in time in your life, given all the other things you could do to serve your community or the province.

Mr Roger Clarke: I'm pretty flexible in terms of my time allocation or time allotment. As I mentioned to Ms Dombrowsky, I feel it's an important function and I think I can bring something of value to the party, so to speak. As I said earlier, I'm speaking as a parent. Quite frankly, I might not be as interested were I not a parent, and a parent of young children.

I think it's important that any consumer, of whatever age, should be able to look at the title of a film advertised in the paper or what have you and figure out approximately whether the content is suitable for them, for their particular standards; disregarding anything to do with the community but for the individual as well. There's an awful lot of product, so to speak, available, and it's difficult to discern that from just reading a review, because a reviewer may like something that you dislike and vice versa. So a rating system, I would hope, is at least somewhat unbiased, or if there is a bias, it's toward protection of the young.

Mr Martin: That whole question of bias becomes a bit of a challenge in this business. As you know, it's a very delicate rope that you walk on this one, because there are people out there who think we're being way too—

Mr Roger Clarke: I'm sure it's from both points of view: too lenient and too restrictive.

Mr Martin: Yes, we're too quick to censor and we don't respect or understand the right that people have to see whatever they want, and they will make all kinds of arguments that that should happen. Then, of course, there are others, particularly people who have children, who are concerned about what they are seeing. For example, I've got four kids. You pick up a movie you think is going to be good for the family, and halfway through it, oops, all of a sudden there's one little piece that just destroys the whole thing for you, and you wish somehow there was some way you could have known about that ahead of time. Certainly I don't want to impose my sense of what's right and wrong on adults in my community who have a right to choose and to watch whatever they want.

Is there anything in your background that would give you any particular qualification or indicate to us or raise a red flag with anybody in terms of bias, other than the fact that you have children?

Mr Roger Clarke: I don't believe so, no. Can you expand on that? Maybe I'm not grasping what you're asking me.

Mr Martin: Do you belong to any particular organizations in your community that would have a particular heavy slant in one direction or another?

Mr Roger Clarke: No, I don't.

Mr Martin: What about in terms of actually doing the job? Is there anything you've done that would prepare you for this, that would give you—

Mr Roger Clarke: The only thing I've done or the most pertinent thing I've done is that last May my wife and I attended what I believe is called a public awareness night at the Ontario Film Review Board and we saw a film. We had no idea what we were going to see in advance; we just went out of interest. We sat with approximately 30 other adults and rated a film and then we all came to a consensus once that was over. It was actually quite interesting.

Mr Martin: Do you watch a lot of movies?

Mr Roger Clarke: Yes, I do, primarily on television. As I mentioned earlier, I subscribe to The Movie Network. I might go to one film a month in terms of an actual theatre, but in terms of the television, I would see a lot more than that.

Mr Martin: Have you read much of the argument out there around the censorship of films and what we're doing and not doing and how we compare with other jurisdictions in the world?

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Mr Roger Clarke: I have some awareness of it. I'm under the impression, I hope a correct impression, that the film review board is not a censorship board but more of a ratings or a classification function, so that nobody is told what they can't see but are told what they're going to see or what their children are going to see, which to me is the most important thing. Adults can make up their own minds, as far as I'm concerned.

Mr Martin: OK. Just to switch gears a little bit, the issue was already raised that we regulate and put labels on movies and, by that, as well on videos that get delivered, although, as we've noted here, there are people who sell videos that aren't rated; they shouldn't be, but they are. But on television there are lots of programs that come on that raise concern, I'm sure, in some people's minds, and we don't regulate that in the same way. I'm thinking of, for example, what's your view of a show like the WWF?

Mr Roger Clarke: To me, it's completely irrelevant—to myself and I think irrelevant to the real world. A long time ago, when I was a kid, my father explained to me that wrestling on television was a sham and a delusion, and that's the way I view it.

Mr Martin: But it's more than that now, eh?

Mr Roger Clarke: Show business is what it is. It's big show business, but it's show business.

Mr Martin: And it's quite brutal, even in the fact that it's not for real. I was saying earlier in an interview with somebody who was being appointed that we don't let our kids watch it. Every now and again, my teenage son sneaks down and watches it. I have to tell you, once I turn it off, that kid becomes a madman. He's running around the house doing this and—

Mr Roger Clarke: I'm not laughing.

Mr Martin: Well, it's funny, but it's not funny. They're affected by this. It's a violent thing going on there and it affects our children, I think, in a very real way. Yet we have, for example, the Premier of the province and the mayor of Toronto announcing the coming of a big WWF performance at the—I think it's the SkyDome or something. It's difficult for a parent to tell your kid that this is not something that's appropriate for you to be watching while at the same time the leadership in the province is promoting it as a big tourism attraction for the city of Toronto. Is there anything we can do about that?

Mr Roger Clarke: I view it as promotion of tourism and probably more the purview of the gentleman who was here before me. But in terms of creating standards or not, it's not a standard that I would adhere to.

Mr Martin: In terms of priority for you in reviewing some of these movies, what would be the biggest priority: sexual content or violent content?

Mr Roger Clarke: You can differentiate them, but I don't think you can put two different weights on them. I think they're probably equal. Again, it depends on the impressionability and the age of the mind or the eyes that are viewing it. I admit that I look through the bias of the age of my own children. I would determine what they can see and what they can't see. If I happened to be watching something, let's say on television or something like that, and it was inappropriate, I'd ask them to leave the room or turn the TV off, as simple as that. If it were a movie, I'm just careful about what they see.

The Chair: Mr Martin, just when it's getting interesting, I'm afraid I have to cut you off.

Mr Martin: You always do that.

The Chair: I should warn our guest that I think Vince McMahon monitors this on a province-wide basis. You may be in some trouble for your comments. We'll let Mr Hastings clarify this for us.

Mr Hastings: I'm not going to get too concerned about the WWF. It's an economics thing. If it wants to survive, it'll survive, or die.

I am concerned, though, Mr Clarke, with your views on the classification and rating of videos. The current organization that you want to be a member of does not have that authority, nor a policy-making authority.

Mr Roger Clarke: No.

Mr Hastings: So I'm wondering if you would think an alternative for parents who are concerned about the levels of violence in some video games would be to have some kind of an advisory for the consumer, a caveat emptor approach, and that it be done nationally or through the synergized ratings and classification ap-

proach of the other boards across Canada, because Ontario is maybe 50% of 2% of the world's market when you look at North America or the world. I'm wondering if you would like to reconsider whether the film and classification board ought to be in that area, even if you had the policy purview to do so.

Mr Roger Clarke: With respect, Mr Hastings, you would be asking me to form policy. I don't think that's my role, nor do I think it's appropriate.

Mr Hastings: That's a great relief to hear.

My other question relates to what I consider, I guess, your balanced view as a member of the board in terms of looking at films from the violence-sexual content perspective and also looking at how Ontario is in a very competitive field in terms of its tax credit policy for encouraging digital television and film production. Not just Toronto but other communities across Ontario have become a \$1-billion industry in terms of movie production. There are an awful lot of films made here in Toronto and also in other areas of Ontario. The Legislature in California has adopted a very similar policy to get back a large number of the jobs that we have been able to foster through the tax credits since 1995 for editing and graphics, storyboard, the actual television production, the marketing, the support that goes into these productions. So there are a large number of jobs at stake, and I'm wondering how you view that kind of balance you would play as a member of this board and how you see that set against the context of what has become an enormous industry in Ontario.

Mr Roger Clarke: I'm certainly aware that it's a big industry in Ontario. It's also big on the west coast and I believe Montreal is nipping at our heels as well. With respect, I think it's over \$1 billion; I think it's something like \$1.2 billion. It's a lot of money.

The tax credit thing I believe—correct me if I'm wrong—is a combination of federal and provincial.

Mr Hastings: Mainly provincial.

Mr Roger Clarke: That I think is mainly we've got the currency difference, the value of the Canadian dollar vis-à-vis the American dollar. The Americans in Los Angeles, as I understand, have been complaining, but it's just a vociferous minority. I think Canadian production amounts to something like 10%. It's pretty small. They don't think it is but in reality it is.

Mr Hastings: They don't want us to have any of it.

Mr Roger Clarke: Of course not. Why would you want to give anything away if you don't have to?

Mr Hastings: We are good at this.

Mr Roger Clarke: Yes, I know.

Mr Hastings: It's not just the tax dollars and the credits. We have a very good industry. The Toronto International Film Festival is one of the best in the world.

Mr Roger Clarke: Just from a technical point of view, the crews, if not the best, are among the best in the world. Nobody doubts that. But obviously the Americans would like to see as little as possible outside of their borders.

Mr Hastings: I am also heartened by how you view community standards, that it's not just one homogeneous type of approach around Ontario; that you can have community standards or values that are somewhat different in a large metropolitan area compared to smaller communities. I'm glad you're sensitive to that balance as well.

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Mr Roger Clarke: That's the word I would use, actually: balance.

Mr Hastings: Any other considerations you want to advance in terms of how you see your role as a member of this board?

Mr Roger Clarke: I would have to tell you I have no agenda at this point. I'd have to become much more familiar with what's going on before I can even make what I hope would be useful and helpful suggestions.

Mr Hastings: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, sir, for appearing before the committee. The decision is made in due course at the conclusion of all of our deliberations.

Mr Roger Clarke: Thank you very much.

WINSTON CLARKE

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Winston Clarke, intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board.

The Chair: Our next intended appointee is Winston W. Clarke, intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board. You may come forward, sir. You have an opportunity, should you see fit, to make a statement at the beginning, and then the representatives of the three political parties will have an opportunity to direct questions to you. Welcome to the committee, sir.

Mr Winston Clarke: Thank you, Mr Chair. Firstly, I'd like to give the Almighty Creating Elohim glory and praise for living in a country that believes in freedom of expression and also has a Charter of Rights. As one who came from the ghettos of Kingston, Jamaica, strongly influenced by family values, I've grown to respect studying, to show myself improved and to learn all I can before I grow old, because learning is better than silver and gold. And also, make no judgment call until you can prove something and get the facts.

I have lived in an environment which is stigmatized, and my wife and I—and she's right here with me today—have grown five children in the so-called Jane-Finch corridor. However, we realize it's not where you live, it is how you live that matters.

I've brought with me, for those who want to see, the philosophy that has embodied me all my life, that there is only one race, the human race, and helping one another is no disgrace. In order for you to help, you have to equip yourself, and that I did by studying. By profession, I'm a "drug pusher," a pharmacist. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. We begin this time with the third party.

Mr Martin: Good afternoon and thanks for coming. I just want to know right off the bat why it is that you are seeking appointment to this board.

Mr Winston Clarke: I'm seeking appointment to this board because I received a call from the secretariat indicating that there was an opportunity to be a part of this board.

Mr Martin: So you didn't seek the appointment? This wasn't something that you thought about, that you felt by doing you might have something to contribute to the community of Ontario? You responded to an invitation by the secretariat to do that?

Mr Winston Clarke: Mr Martin, my curriculum vitae, I'm sure, is in your presence, and on my curriculum vitae it indicates my political affiliation. It not only indicates my political affiliation, but also I'm very familiar with past and present parliamentarians and as such I've given my resumé to several people. I just received a call from the secretariat.

Mr Martin: I didn't see your political affiliation in your—

Mr Winston Clarke: Yes, it is on page 6 of my curriculum vitae, sir.

Mr Martin: OK.

Mr Winston Clarke: Do you have it there?

Mr Martin: I do.

Mr Winston Clarke: Take a look.

Mr Martin: So what is your political affiliation?

Mr Winston Clarke: It's there on the paper, sir.

Mr Martin: Could you tell me?

Mr Winston Clarke: Page 6.

Mr Martin: OK. For the record, provincial Progressive Conservative Party, federal Progressive Conservative Party. What's this organization, the Afro-Canadian Progressive—

Mr Winston Clarke: The Afro-Canadian PC Party, as it states there, is an organization that tries its best to get people of African ancestry, African Canadians, involved in the political system, regardless of political affiliation. It's an educational group.

Mr Martin: But it's the Afro-Canadian Progressive Conservative Association?

Mr Winston Clarke: Continue reading it, sir.

Mr Martin: And there's a president.

Mr Winston Clarke: Yes, I'm a former president. I'm no longer the president.

Mr Martin: There's nothing in there to suggest that this is open to—

Mr Winston Clarke: It is, sir, because in actuality it was the Afro-Canadian Progressive Conservative Association that helped Dr McCurdy run for the leadership of the federal party, for your records.

Mr Martin: OK. I wasn't actually going to make an issue of that, but since you brought it up, that's fine and it's no big deal. We're all affiliated. I am proud to be a New Democrat, as you of course are proud to be a Conservative. That's great; that's what makes our political system so rich.

Mr Winston Clarke: As a matter of fact, on September 22 your leader was with me at the function, going back to the Jane and Finch area.

Mr Martin: Yes, excellent.

To go back to the original question, these boards are very important to the public life of this province, and this board in particular, as it reviews the material we all watch. In particular, if you listened to the interviewee before you, we're concerned about what our children get to see, and so we classify movies.

I'm wondering why you would be interested in this particular position, other than an invitation from the secretariat?

Mr Winston Clarke: You see, this board is no different from the profession of pharmacy, which in essence embodies three different categories: over-the-counter prescriptions, regulated prescriptions and non-regulated prescriptions. My day-to-day activity involves that kind of a classification.

One of the things that I respect, after looking at the information on the Web site for the Ontario Film Review Board, is the fact that it's not censorship; it's classification. You can only classify something after the fact. So it's a very objective thing to a large degree, and that was really what got me involved.

Mr Martin: OK. I read your resumé, and you are certainly very involved in your profession as a pharmacist. Is there anything in your background that you think particularly prepares you or sets you aside as somebody who would perform well in this job, that would give you some advantage to do a good job here?

Mr Winston Clarke: As a matter of clarification, sir, I like your word "prepares." That sets me aside, because I am not set aside from anyone. What prepares me for this job is fairness, objectivity, reasonability and self-awareness. That is my experience, in a nutshell.

Mr Martin: Those are all my questions. Thanks.

The Vice-Chair: Mr Mazzilli.

Mr Mazzilli: Thank you for putting your name forward for this appointment, Mr Clarke. As you have said, you want to contribute and this is a board that you feel you can contribute to in Ontario.

Mr Winston Clarke: Most definitely.

Mr Mazzilli: People come before this committee, and political affiliations are always brought forward. It's nothing new, and it doesn't surprise any of us, certainly on this side.

But I do want to say that in the last number of years our party has done a very good job of being a multi-cultural party. I'm of Italian origin. At one time the Liberal Party sort of had a monopoly, if you will, on Italian members. That's not the case any more. If you look at our Legislature, there are more Italians on the Conservative side than on the Liberal side, to no one's surprise. I just wanted to put on the record that political parties have to be multicultural if they're going to be successful, and they have to extend out.

The only thing I do want to say is, are you aware of the time commitment? A board like this will take you

away from your professional life or your family life. Are you aware of the time commitment?

Mr Winston Clarke: Yes, I'm fully aware of that and have had a preliminary discussion with my employees as to what is expected of me, and they are quite flexible in that regard.

Mr Mazzilli: That was my only question. Thank you, sir.

Mr Wood: We'll waive the balance of our time.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you. The official opposition—Ms Dombrowsky, do you have any questions?

1510

Mrs Dombrowsky: Yes, thank you very much.

Good afternoon, Mr Clarke. I noted that you were here when the previous intended appointee was providing answers and you know that I'm particularly interested in the fact that video games are not considered by the Ontario Film Review Board, and I was able to share a couple of instances that had been brought to my attention over the holidays where families were concerned about the content of a particular video that had been purchased for their children.

Do you have an opinion about whether the responsibility of the Ontario Film Review Board should in fact be expanded so that you would also be responsible for providing some direction for parents with regard to the content of video games?

Mr Winston Clarke: Mrs Dombrowsky, one of the most salient points of this board is that it is legislated and, as such, it has an act that governs it. I think the leadership role in regard to the video first should have to come from our legislators or a public awareness educational campaign from, again, our legislators, and from there the board will have given some input in regard to the videos. Because when you look at the facts, 90% of these videos come from the United States. That is a reality. When you look at the facts, as a parent and as a grandparent, regardless of what we try to legislate, we cannot legislate attitude. I don't know about you, but I am a father and I cannot keep up with my children on the Internet. So what I do is educate them as to the negatives and positives of things and allow things to have their way.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Yes, I couldn't agree with you more. I also agree that it is the responsibility of legislators to introduce legislation that gives direction to bodies like the Ontario Film Review Board.

Mr Winston Clarke: Precisely.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I guess I'm just asking you today for your opinion. Do you think it would be appropriate for a board such as the Ontario Film Review Board to assist consumers of Ontario, particularly parents of young children, so that when they purchase video games they might have some understanding about the content of the game they're buying for their children?

Mr Winston Clarke: Mrs Dombrowsky, in fairness to you, I don't really have an opinion on the matter. I believe in the educational aspect and that's all I've been

doing and that's the approach I've always taken. I don't have an opinion on it.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I don't disagree that certainly parents have a responsibility to educate their children about the appropriateness of violent behaviour and the consequences that would bring, but what I am suggesting is that we have a responsibility to assist parents who might want to have some control about the product that they buy for their children. They'd simply like to know, and you indicated in your opening comments that this is not about censorship. I'm not suggesting that in any way the government would introduce legislation that would dictate to families what they could or could not purchase for their children. I was simply wondering if you had an opinion about how appropriate it would be for parents to have that information when they buy video game products, as opposed to when they buy video movie products where they do have the benefit of that rating system having been applied, to assist them to make an informed purchase.

I was simply asking if you had an opinion about whether it's time now to consider that as our times change. Perhaps when the act was contemplated and written, video games were not of the nature or the sophistication that they are now. Do you have an opinion on that?

Mr Winston Clarke: Very good food for thought for the future. If you elected me to be part of this board, I'd definitely do research on it and by then I'll formulate an opinion. But right now I don't.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I do appreciate the candidness of your answer. Also you probably heard me ask the previous intended appointee about the debate that there is within the province among some about the relevancy of the review board. First of all, have you heard about the debate? Have you had an opportunity to participate in any of those conversations? Maybe you could just give us some comment. You obviously would be an advocate of the board or you would not seek to have a role on it. Maybe you could share with me why you would be able to defend the role the board plays within the province at this time.

Mr Winston Clarke: In order to defend something, you have to know the facts. I am not familiar—I am not on the board, so I cannot defend a position that I don't have any facts about. I don't know if you want to reword your question, but I hear the word "defending." If I'm nominated and appointed to this board, what I'll ensure, with my fairness, objectivity and reasonableness, is that the interpretation of the Theatres Act be implemented, because that is one of my primary functions, to interpret and apply. The policies and directives of the board are different from the actual legislation.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Forgive me, Mr Clarke, for not being clear. I will try one more time, then. There are those who would say that the Ontario Film Review Board really is meaningless, that it has no business placing standards on any artistic work, that that should be up to individuals. Then there is another school of thought that

in fact the film review board is quite lax in its responsibility and is presenting or indicating material that would be suitable for viewing by younger people that is totally inappropriate.

You are here today because you want to be a member of that board. I'm sure if you heard either of those conversations, you would want to give some defence of the role of the board, because you want to be on the board. So that's what I was hoping to hear from you.

Mr Winston Clarke: OK, but you see, this is why you legislators made the community standards world so broad-based. In a democracy, you have opinions and you will always have a positive and a negative side to give a balance.

Mrs Dombrowsky: That would conclude my questions.

Mr Gravelle: Do I have time here?

The Chair: Yes, you have until 20 after.

Mr Gravelle: Good afternoon, Mr Clarke. You made reference to the legislation and the Theatres Act, but I think one thing that's very interesting about the Ontario Film Review Board is that you're asked to interpret community standards. You're asked to define community standards, in that sense. Perhaps it would be fair to say that's a movable sort of area, depending what community you're from.

The question I would have is, are you comfortable with the fact that the role of the board is to define what are community standards? Because there are certainly people who have said the board is letting films go out there and be seen by people they shouldn't and there are others—there was a very recent film from France called *Fat Girl* which was praised by the critics but did not get the approval of the film review board because the director was told to make a certain cut, which the director would not make. Many people felt, "Gee, this has been approved in Quebec and other provinces," so it was a whole definition of community standards. That particular film got a lot of publicity, in fact, because it was not shown. It was a big favourite at film festivals. Are you comfortable with the whole role, which is to, in a way, define community standards, outside the legislative framework—just define them yourself as a member of the board?

Mr Winston Clarke: Most definitely, because it allows me a certain level of flexibility, and I can apply fairness to that flexibility after seeing something. The community that I'm from is very close to Mr Mazzilli's community. Why? Because the Italians and African Canadians live close, especially in the neighbourhood where I live. So my community might be different than somebody living up north. When a northern person comes on that board, along with somebody from the Jane and Finch area, it gives a certain level of balance, and then we can take it from there.

Mr Gravelle: But is it your sense, if I may ask you as well, that the standards expressed so far by the films out there, with whatever ratings, have been standards you approve of? Have you had an opportunity to draw an

opinion as to whether or not the work the board is doing now is being done well? Perhaps you haven't had that opportunity yet, but—

Mr Winston Clarke: Not really, Mr Gravelle, but there's always room for improvement. In everything we do there is always room for improvement.

The Chair: That concludes the questioning and comments by the three political parties. Therefore, I will say, sir, that you may step down.

Mr Winston Clarke: Thank you all for allowing me the privilege.

1520

GORDON CHONG

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Gordon Chong, intended appointee as member, GO Transit board of directors.

The Chair: I'm trying to think whether I should leave the chair or not. I wanted to ask a question of Mr Chong about GO Transit going to St Catharines and Niagara Falls, but maybe one of the other members will ask that question.

Mr Hastings: I'd be happy to do that.

The Chair: Mr Hastings will help me out by asking that question. Good.

Mr Chong, you may come forward, please. Mr Chong is the intended appointee as a member of the GO Transit board of directors. Welcome to the committee, sir. I believe you know the procedure we follow, that you may make an initial statement and then members of the committee direct questions to you after. Welcome to the committee, Mr Chong.

Dr Gordon Chong: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity of appearing this afternoon in seeking the chairmanship of the new GO Transit board. You've got my CV, and what I'll do is hit the highlights as to why I think I'd make a good chairman of the new board.

I was a member of Metro council for two terms, the new city of Toronto council, and served on the TTC for four years, one of them as the vice-chair. In the last year, as you all know, I was chairman of the Greater Toronto Services Board. One of the unfortunate things is that in the last several years, each institution I've belonged to has disappeared from the face of the earth. I'm hoping that if I'm fortunate enough to be made chair of GO Transit, that's not an indication of things to come.

I think this is a great opportunity for myself and the new board to continue the work that was initiated at the Greater Toronto Services Board by the previous chairman, Alan Tonks. I was just fortunate enough to pick up where he left off.

I would say that in the last 10 years, both at a municipal level and a provincial level, initiated by all three parties of the province, transit in the greater Toronto area and in Ontario has been studied to death. I would hope that we can finally do something to solve the transit

problems that the greater Toronto area is facing and, by extension, into Hamilton and Niagara, and probably St Catharines as well.

You no doubt are also familiar with Removing Road-blocks, the document that was put forward by the Greater Toronto Services Board. Subsequently, Entra Consultants did a study that indicated how we could proceed to relieve some of the congestion in the greater Toronto area and Hamilton. After Entra, we have finished the first part of the third phase, a study by McCormick Rankin Corp that has indicated bus rapid transit is the way to go in terms of dealing with some of the transportation problems in the greater Toronto area because it would give us the biggest bang for our buck in terms of getting commuters onto the GO system as feeders, and across the 905 area between Durham and Halton in the GTA and Hamilton further west.

I would hope that the committee would concur with the recommendation from the minister so I would have an opportunity to finish off some of the work that was initiated at the Greater Toronto Services Board. I would be happy to answer questions.

The Chair: We begin with the government party.

Mr Hastings: Dr Chong, it's good to see you here again. I'm sure that you'll be successful. Thanks for coming. I have a couple of questions for you. One, how do you see your role in terms of developing a very creative, continuously innovative strategy involving the federal government in terms of financing rapid transit and the connects between in urban areas such as the greater Toronto region? And would you seek to get some monies for the expansion of the transit from, say, Hamilton to St Catharines? I did promise my friend here that I'd ask that question. Would you be interested in trying to involve and get transit expansion to St Catharines, with the caveat that we can get some real federal dollars on a continuing basis in this drama?

The Chair: I don't think that's exactly the way I would have asked that.

Dr Chong: No, I didn't think you would have asked it that way, either.

I think all three levels of government have got to be in the funding game—the federal and provincial governments. But I think there's also an opportunity for the private sector to play a role as well. I don't believe the private sector is a panacea, any more than I believe government funding is a panacea, but it's pretty clear over the past little while that federal and provincial governments either don't have the wherewithal or are unwilling to finance as much as they could. So I think the private sector, being driven by the public sector and monitored and controlled by the public sector, has a role. If I'm fortunate enough to be chairman of GO Transit, one of the things I would do is to make sure that we have as much government funding as we can possibly get, act as an advocate for that, but at the same time involve the private sector, because it's becoming pretty clear that we're not going to function without a private sector role.

Mr Hastings: My next question relates to the role of alternate fuel technologies in rapid transit. Do you see a

role for alternative fuels, whatever might be the most convenient and have the most impact? If you look at Australian cities right now, it seems to be natural gas, CNG, and some hydrogen is being used in demonstration projects in Chicago and California. Do you see, with private sector involvement, good opportunities here, and would you provide leadership in trying to make some changeovers in transit using new technologies, given the type of challenges we have with air pollution etc?

Dr Chong: I think alternative fuels need to be explored, but the reality, from the information I've gotten from engineers, notwithstanding the project that was launched in the United States just recently that may or may not benefit Ballard and Hydrogenics in Mississauga, is that the alternative fuels that are being researched are probably quite far off down the road before they're going to be of sufficient importance that they can be used in mass transit.

Mr Hastings: Even natural gas?

Dr Chong: No, no, natural gas is being used, but with the low sulphur and the diesel that is being used now, the emissions compare very favourably to natural gas. From my understanding, the alternative fuels are so far off that, for the very near future anyway, we're still looking at improved diesel fuel, but obviously low sulphur and low emissions. In fact, GO Transit has voluntarily paid for the more expensive low-sulphur fuel.

In the bus technology, the hybrid technology that's available now in the advanced bus systems clearly is the way to go. I'm hoping that bus rapid transit will be the technology that's finally chosen to be used in the greater Toronto area, especially along the 905 corridors.

Mr Hastings: Well, Dr Chong, I think you will be pleasantly surprised—at least I'm hoping so—by some very interesting research and recommendations coming from the alternative fuels committee that will help you along the way in your job in this area.

Dr Chong: I hope so, as long as it's—

Mr Hastings: It's coming out in May.

Mr Johnson: One of my hang-ups, I guess, is that when I think of transportation, I think of ridership. Yes, we have three gauges of rails around and things to go on. On the chairman's behalf, I wouldn't want to eliminate the possibility of these fast boats that would come from St Catharines to Toronto and so on. GO can do that, or anybody else. But it seems to me that it's ridership, and I don't know that we have his promise to ride rapid transit from St Catharines to Toronto if it were there. I know that now he must use the bus, public transportation sort of thing.

But seriously, my question is, what's your vision on ridership? It seems to me that we need people, we need more of them, to make those alternative transportation systems work, because, yes, we can push government money into them, but they need ridership to carry on in the future.

1530

Dr Chong: The ridership is there for GO. Even though some of the service isn't as good as we'd like it—

because if peak-hour service is not great, they lose a lot of customers—there are enough people coming on to the system that ridership has increased in the last several years. It's over 40 million annually now.

If GO can expand its service, expand not only its train service but its bus service, and deal with the GTA problem, if public transit provides service that is faster, more convenient and reasonably priced, we can get people out of their cars. If we have a bus service along the 407 or anywhere else, and the buses are zipping past cars that are stationary, it won't take long before the people who are sitting in their cars will decide, "We're going to give it a try." I think that with the bus rapid transit concept that has been put forward, and if GO Transit can expand its service as well, the people who are frustrated on our expressways and freeways now, who take a couple of hours to get to work and a couple of hours to come home, if the alternative is there for them to move to and from work more quickly, I'm positive the ridership will go up, notwithstanding sometimes a downturn in the economy. The TTC has found it the same way, and I'm sure GO will as well.

Mr Mazzilli: I have just one quick question. You alluded to the fact that, with everything, peak hours is the issue. In this case, how do you move a large number of people between 7 and 9 in the morning and then back between 4 and 6? What sort of initiatives do you see GO taking to focus in on its key times?

Dr Chong: GO is going to have to make sure that it gets co-operation from the local transit authorities as well, for instance, TTC in the city of Toronto. If we can build a bus rapid transit system across the 905, if we extend the service north of Finch, and we build the extension of the Spadina to York University and to the Vaughan Corporate Centre to hook up with the 905 service, then the people who don't have the opportunity, the choice, to ride public transit now will, I believe, be induced to use it and get out of their cars. I think co-operation between GO and local transit authorities like TTC—and GO does have a relationship with Mississauga Transit now that provides feeder service into the GO service. The more that we can get all the local authorities working together with GO, with a view to solving the big-picture problem, rather than having it fractured, as it appears may happen if we don't get hold of it now—last week, you'll probably recall that there was a meeting in the GTA west. GTA west mayors are forming a transit group. York region has a plan that has come forward. So we need to get hold of this as quickly as possible to regain some of the momentum that has been lost with the dissolution of the GTSB.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I regret that the time has actually more than passed. We must move to the official opposition.

Mr Gravelle: Good afternoon, Dr Chong. You made reference at the very end of your remarks to momentum that was lost. It brings to mind the fact that the province withdrew from funding public transit, I guess, back in 1996. There was a real gap when they went through the

realignment of services, or the downloading, as we more commonly call it.

Could you tell me what the impact of that was? It was certainly a great challenge, and obviously, with your experience with the TTC, that would be interesting. I presume you fell behind further, and that itself is difficult to make up. Is that a fair statement?

Dr Chong: The devolution of the responsibility of funding public transit to the municipalities clearly made it impossible for some municipalities to do any expansion. It was also difficult, as many previous chief general managers of the TTC have indicated, to even maintain a state of good repair.

Not being in the provincial government, it's very difficult for me to comment on whether it was a decision they made, having thought through it and reflected on it carefully, or whether it was for some other reason. Nevertheless, now that the province has seen fit to take back GO Transit funding, there may have been a year or two where we didn't move ahead in public transit as quickly and effectively as we could have. But if the political will is there, meaning the co-operation of municipalities as well, to fit into a comprehensive, holistic scheme to deal with transportation problems in the GTA, I think the time can be made up. They had 10 years prior to that, prior to the provincial government downloading transit funding to the municipalities. The previous governments as well—there was no expansion. There was study. There was study after study, and notwithstanding the fact that I have some friends who are in the consulting business, the only people who really got much out of it were consultants, because each successive study that came along basically rejigged or updated numbers that had been used in previous studies. So I think it's time to stop studying and get something done.

Mr Gravelle: Certainly I can tell you that in opposition I was the transportation critic for a while and we were trying very hard to get the government to return to support of public transit. May I tell you, even as a member from Thunder Bay, a smaller community than Toronto and the GTA, that the impact of the loss of capital funds of 75% was enormous on that community as well.

I noted that the Greater Toronto Services Board, in I think June 2000, put forward a 10-year capital plan of around \$983 million, close to \$1 billion. Even that was basically kind of a hold-the-line maintenance budget. It wasn't factoring in the expansion that we expected or perhaps want. This puts even more pressure on to receive support, I presume, by all levels of government then.

Dr Chong: I agree. The only way we're going to move ahead is twofold: a recognition that funding is required irrespective of which level it comes from, plus the private sector, and the political will. The parochialism that has at times dominated the municipal level clearly is going to have to be set aside. We were moving that way with the Greater Toronto Services Board in the transportation area especially because (1) the GTSB was mandated to deal with transportation and had GO Transit

as its only real authority, but (2) because there was a recognition by local governments and regional governments that the state of affairs in the GTA and Hamilton area had reached a stage where something had to be done because the public was getting fed up with spending the amount of time on the roads that they were. So the public outcry started to pressure politicians at all levels.

Mr Gravelle: Do you think it's realistic to expect the municipalities to find \$3 billion over the period of time that is expected? When the Premier made the announcement in September about the \$9-billion public transit plan, I remember being somewhat taken aback because it was clear that there hadn't been the discussion with or agreement with the federal government, and I didn't know whether or not the municipal governments had also done so. So I must admit I thought at the time that the Premier should be a little more straightforward about it. He was announcing presumably \$3 billion over 10 years for the province's commitment, not \$9 billion. That led me to wonder, certainly, how the municipalities should respond to that—whether you think it's realistic for them to do so. Nobody argues with the need, that's for sure, and I certainly am one who believes that the province should never have stopped supporting public transit. Do you think that's realistic?

Dr Chong: Municipalities don't have the wherewithal to raise that kind of money, which is why I think the private sector is going to have to play a role. But where municipalities can make a contribution: let's just take Toronto and the greater Toronto area. Each municipality, whether lower-tier or upper-tier, is going to have to set aside their personal parochial interests and look at the greater good in the greater Toronto area and beyond.

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As I said, the people at the GTSB, in that one issue with respect to public transit and transportation, were moving in that direction. We have to make sure we capitalize on the momentum that was built up there, and municipalities have to make that commitment. What I see since the announcement was made back in September is that there's a gradual sort of splintering, where people are starting to go their own way again. What we have to make sure of is that we bring them back together so that they will in fact regain or recapture the mindset they had at the GTSB and say, "Hey, you know what is going to be good for Markham or York region or Halton is in fact going to be good for the GTA, is going to be good for the Golden Horseshoe, is good for Ontario."

The fact of the matter is, and I'm not telling any of you anything you don't know, because the Toronto area is the economic engine, people are going to have to realize—and the federal government as well is going to have to stop saying, "Well, if we give Toronto this, what are we going to do elsewhere?" If you can make a rational argument for giving the economic engine of the province and the country that funding, well, if it's a rational argument, people will have to accept it. If Toronto goes down the tubes, if the GTA goes down the tubes, what's going to happen to the rest of the country? It's the biggest urban area we have.

Mrs Dombrowsky: To follow up on that point if I might, Dr Chong, I couldn't agree with you more. You've indicated that in order for this initiative—and I agree with you as well when you've indicated that this has been studied to death. Also, for me as a relatively new member of the Legislature it's been sort of like watching a game of tennis or ping-pong. First it's the province's and then it's the municipalities' and now it's the province's again.

You've already indicated that obviously the political will, the designated funding—but I think what we need as well, and perhaps that's what you referred to in your closing statements to Mr Gravelle, is a concerted effort, not simply someone saying, "And the federal government will put in this much," or the provincial government saying, "And the municipalities will contribute 30%," but rather that those figures are arrived at after there's been some good discussion and understanding about who has what resources and what's more reasonable for each partner to bring to that table, and also considering the private sector interests.

Would you say your role as chair is largely to effect this kind of dialogue among all the partners to make sure that you move forward? I get a little concerned when I hear about the splintering that you speak about. I think it's time to leave the studies on the shelf and move forward together. But that's not just one small group saying, "Oh, and we'll get this from them and this from them." You have to go to them and say, "How can you help us and work with us?"

Dr Chong: I agree. I think that one of the most important things I could do if I become the chairman of GO Transit is to continue the dialogue that was set up. I had had numerous conversations with Minister Collenette and with people at the province.

Once we get past the turf battles, I think there is clearly a recognition that we have to come to the rescue of our urban areas. I think, rather than having constitutional fights, we're going to have to make some institutional adjustments, some institutional accommodations so that the federal government, once it can rationalize what it wants to do in terms of the urban agenda, can get back in and the province as well puts its appropriate funding in. Once we've figured out what a master transportation strategy should be and have it costed out, we can say that the federal government is in for this, the provincial government is in for this, and we can go to the private sector as well. But the only caveat is that the private sector and public sector arrangements have to be a win-win; it cannot be driven solely by the private sector. The public sector has to retain control.

The Chair: That concludes the amount of time allocated to the official opposition. We move to the third party.

Mr Martin: This is all a very interesting exercise and obviously very complicated. The challenge before us here this afternoon is to consider your appointment as chair of this very important organization.

You were the chair of the Greater Toronto Services Board—and correct me if I'm wrong—that, for various

reasons, failed in its attempt to pull everybody together and make this thing a reality. The provincial government, I'm guessing, thought that the involvement of the municipalities was problematic; they weren't able to get them all around the table moving in the same direction. There was a concern about funding and I would guess that the funding is probably the wild card in all of this all the way through. You said a few minutes ago that if you could get everybody to agree and stop the sort of turf war here, we might be able to move forward.

What is there in the new formula to convince us here today, given that you weren't able to do it under the old formula, that you're going to be successful now and that we won't be sitting here in two or three years or even a year from now under a new government considering a whole new scenario with perhaps another chair or yourself again being appointed to chair yet another attempt to make this happen? How can you give us the comfort here that you're going to be able to do that job?

Mr Chong: I'll go in reverse order. I don't think I'm going to be sitting here in a year or two or three years auditioning for another job. I'm not looking to be the chairman of GO Transit; I'm looking to do something for the GTA. I disagree that the GTSB failed in the transportation area. The GTSB probably failed because it took too long to start to bring people together and there was so much resistance from various parties with respect to the GTSB gaining additional authority that if there was a failure, that's where the failure was.

With respect to transportation and transit, there was a coming together in the last two years prior to my arrival at the GTSB, and all I did was pick it up from where Alan Tonks had left off, and in the last year we had approved a general strategy for bus rapid transit, and we had done the first part of the final phase of the study that would implement bus rapid transit across the GTA. So to characterize the transportation side of it as a failure I think is wrong and is unfair.

Funding is clearly an issue, but where we were coming together, either with federal-provincial funding and/or the private sector, we would have ultimately put a master plan on the table to be considered. So had the GTSB continued, say, for another six months to a year, that would have been on the table. It was clearly curtailed in its efforts to do that, but now that the new board has been expanded—and I have no insight to know precisely what the provincial government is thinking, but I would suspect that there is a will and if I'm on the board, as long as I'm on that board, I will try to pick up where the GTSB left off and solve the transportation problem that's affecting the GTA and into the Hamilton-Niagara area.

Believe me, whoever is sitting around this table in two or three years will not see me auditioning for another job.

Mr Martin: The issue still exists though that there is a turf war going on between the various jurisdictions and who's going to pay for what. You've mentioned today that the introduction of the private sector to the formula might be helpful.

What's to convince us here today that, given a new board and another attempt at this and the fact that you

were chair of the last attempt, you're going to be able to give the leadership that's required to resolve the turf wars that are happening so that we can get this done? It may not have been a failure, but it didn't happen. I don't think there's anybody who experiences the GTA today who doesn't understand the need to be moving yesterday on solving some of our transportation problems. I come in every Monday morning from the airport to get downtown. Depending on when I get there and what the weather's like, I could be in traffic anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour and a half. That's a problem; it's a problem for people wanting to do business in Toronto from other jurisdictions.

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We need to get this done. There's a turf war on, obviously, between different levels of government. You're suggesting the private sector may be a card thrown in that might solve some of the difficulty we're experiencing. My sense of it is that until we get perhaps new leadership in the present provincial government with a different attitude toward the federal government, and a federal government that really believes that Toronto is the engine that drives the Canadian economy, we won't get anything constructive or positive out of this.

I guess the question again is, what is it that you now will be able to do or want to do to solve some of those difficulties and that turf war to get us where we need to be?

Dr Chong: I think you've probably been in politics long enough to realize that it's the nature of politics to have conflict from time to time within a level of government and between levels of government. If I'm not mistaken, the NDP were in power for a number of years, did not solve any of the transportation problems either and basically commissioned studies that have been studied and studied. So I will bring as much enthusiasm and energy to it to try and bring people together that I can possibly do, but to try and characterize it all as a failure I think is extremely unfair, for you to put it that way.

All I can do is say that I'm going to put forward my best effort. I think I have the energy to do the job; I think I have the knowledge and experience to do the job; and based on the conversations I've had with the federal government and the provincial government and the private sector, I think we can make it happen. But it isn't going to happen because one person, whether it's me in the chair or someone else, has decided that they're going to try and make it happen; it's going to require co-operation from all levels of government. But I believe that the greatest co-operation that's going to be required is within the municipal sector. If we can get the municipal sector and the GTA to start to come back together and work the way they started to work and come together with the GTSB, I think we can solve it.

Mr Martin: So what are you going to bring to the table now that you weren't able to bring to the table when all of those players were around the table in the GTSB, that will make that happen at this particular point in time, given that you're going to be in a role of leading this exercise?

Dr Chong: OK, I'll recap. The GTSB was on its way to success, I believe, in the transportation area. If we had had the opportunity to finish off the final phase of the study to bring a master plan into being, that would be there. So I believe that's a success. The second thing I think we have to do is to negotiate with the federal government and advocate on behalf of the GTA and the urban areas in Canada, but in my role specifically in the GTA in Ontario, that they have to come back to the table. There has to be funding and they're going to have to start to work with the provinces, including Ontario.

I don't know what more you think I can bring to the table; I don't know what more you think you might bring to the table in trying to solve this, but that's my answer. I've answered the same question several times with the same information.

Mr Martin: I'm not seeking this job, so I'm not suggesting I can bring anything to the table. But I am suggesting that at some point the provincial government decided the GTSB approach wasn't going to work, because they pulled the plug on it.

Dr Chong: Then you should ask them. That's not a decision I made.

Mr Martin: In turn then, in doing that, they're taking some of the previous leadership and applying it to this round of activity and expecting that they're going to get something different from that.

Dr Chong: You play until you can't play.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your questions, Mr Martin. Mr Chong, that concludes the questions from the members of the committee. Thank you very much for being with us today.

We will now move to the consideration of the appointments, and I'll do them one by one this afternoon, of course, as we usually do.

The first is the intended appointment as a member of the City of Kenora Police Services Board, Mr Mark Duggan.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Any discussion of Mr Duggan's selection? If not, I'll call the vote.

All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next one is Mr John R. Williams, intended appointee as chair, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp board. Any discussion?

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Oh, sorry. First of all, concurrence has been moved by Mr Wood. Thank you, Mr Wood, for your kind assistance.

Any discussion? If not, we will vote. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next is the intended appointee as member, Child and Family Services Review Board, Shirley Fahlgren.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Any discussion of this appointment? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next is the selection for the intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board, Roger N. Clarke.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Concurrence has been moved by Mr Wood. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next is the intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board, Winston Clarke.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The final one is the intended appointee—I should clarify this, by the way, for members of the committee. The certificate reads “Intended appointee as member, GO Transit board of directors.” It’s my understanding that the minister makes the decision as to whom the chair will be. So if we agree, we’re appointing him as a member of the GO Transit Board of Directors, Mr Gordon Chong.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Concurrence has been moved by Mr Wood. Any discussion?

Mr Martin: I make the case in this very important initiative and work that if you’re going to take a fresh run at a problem that has presented as almost insurmountable, given, as the intended appointee presented, the turf war that is going on, and there is nothing new being brought to the table by way of strategy or approach by the intended appointee, then my question is, why are we doing that and why wouldn’t we perhaps be considering somebody else who has some new strategy or thought or obvious ability to bring the players to the table in a way that will see them commit to actually seeing this thing done? So I’ll be voting against this appointment.

Mr Hastings: I would just like to comment, in response to Mr Martin’s comments, that I’ve known Dr Chong for a good number of years, and when Mr Martin says there won’t be anything new accomplished, let me tell you that if you know this gentleman at all, assuming he gets appointed, assuming he becomes chairman if the minister decides, he will do an excellent job in terms of providing effective leadership for advancing integrated public transit across the GTA and other areas in Ontario. He worked very effectively as a member of the board of the TTC and as a member of council in Metropolitan Toronto for many years. He is a respected member of the dental profession and he is also a respected professional in terms of being able to see other people’s viewpoints, and they see his. There is a strong degree of mutual respect there. He has the experience and he will provide vigorous leadership in getting some of these problems dealt with.

Mrs Dombrowsky: With regard to the intended appointment, I would offer these thoughts on some of the points that have been made with regard to the appointment of Dr Chong. I would suggest that because the Premier has abolished an entity, in my mind, does not necessarily confirm that the board, the commission or whatever was not doing its job. I would offer as an example the community care access centres that were disbanded. I think they were working very effectively.

I believe that Dr Chong and representatives from the greater Toronto area would agree that while the work of the previous board was perhaps not moving along at a pace others had hoped or anticipated, in fact it was moving in a direction.

I am also of the mind, when dealing with an issue that is of such great importance, that while certainly looking for experts in the area, there’s great value in engaging people who have some significant background and connection to the issue that is going to be managed. For that reason, I will be able to support Dr Chong.

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Mr Gravelle: Let me just add, if I may, that like so many others, I thought it was very wrong for the province to pull out of support for public transit. I do think that Dr Chong, even in his discussions with us today, probably understands better than most the impact that had. I do think his experience and leadership will probably be very useful in trying to guide this process forward. It’s going to be an extraordinary challenge from the provincial point of view. He was certainly clear about the challenges to the municipalities as well. I also feel quite comfortable in supporting him for this position.

The Chair: Any further comment? If not, I will call the vote.

All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Mr Martin: Just a further piece of business, if I might, before we wind down for the day.

It’s been brought to my attention that the government, in reconstituting the community care access centres, is going to make appointments to those access centres for a year at a time in order to bypass the possibility of those appointments being brought before this committee. That may turn out not to be the case, but I have it on good advice that that is what is happening and going to happen.

I would suggest, out of respect for the work this committee does and the importance in the whole process of this place of ensuring that everything this government does under the aegis of the Legislative Assembly is above-board, is accountable and responsible and that we’re doing our job here in making sure that those who are appointed to these boards and commissions, and those boards in particular, are the best quality possible, I’d like to put a motion on the table this afternoon for consideration of the members. Maybe the clerk could distribute the motion to folks so they can read it.

I move that the standing committee on government agencies insist that appointments to community care access centres be subject to review by this committee of the Legislative Assembly, whatever the length of time of the appointment.

Mr Wood: Mr Chair, I don’t think this motion is in order. We can only deal with matters that are referred to us by the standing orders. I don’t think this motion is in order, and I would ask that it be ruled out of order.

The Chair: I will consider that. In fact, I have had an opportunity to look at the motion. Mr Martin was kind enough to share it with the table, as I guess we would call

ourselves, or the Chair up here. I have had a chance to review the standing orders as they relate to the specific motion Mr Martin makes.

The standing committee on government agencies is empowered to meet for the purpose of considering intended appointments pursuant to the procedures set out in standing order 106(e). The procedures specify, as a starting point, the tabling of a certificate listing the name of the intended appointee; the related agency, board or commission; the position description; and the person's qualifications. The procedures specifically exclude from committee review both reappointments and appointments for a term of one year or less. The committee does not have the power to amend the standing orders that set out the procedures nor does the committee have the authority to insist that certain appointments be referred to the committee if the ministry has not proposed them by way of a tabled certificate.

Therefore, considering the rules that govern this committee—the standing orders of the Ontario Legislature—I have to rule the motion out of order.

Mr Wood: I wonder if I might, however, offer a comment. The Legislative Assembly committee is considering the question of how to enhance the role of the private members, and Mr Martin may well want to make this suggestion to the Legislative Assembly committee, who do indeed have jurisdiction to consider that, and recommend changes to the standing orders where they deem it's appropriate. So you might want to take that up with the committee and seek their support because they indeed are empowered to consider the issue that you've raised.

Mr Martin: Could I, in turn, Mr Chair, because this is really—

The Chair: It can't be on this motion, but on this matter. You're not on this motion.

Mr Martin: OK. Thank you for the suggestion. I will follow up on that. I think it's important, though, that this committee understands what's going on here, that the government has found a way to not bring those appointments before this committee, boards that will be very important in the delivery of long-term care and home care.

Is there no way I can ask for unanimous consent of the committee to actually table this motion or to ask for unanimous consent to send a message of this nature to the government?

The Chair: It would be my guess, with the help of the clerk, that the committee may express an opinion on any matter it wishes to express an opinion on. This specific motion which gives direction would not be in order. However, it would be my understanding that if the committee wishes to pass any motion that is within the rules of the Ontario Legislature and expresses an opinion to another part of the government or to the Legislature, it may express that opinion.

Mr Gravelle: I just want to make sure what has just happened, Mr Chair. Because the appointments, I understand, are going to be for a year or less, they therefore are

not appointments that have a requirement to come before us. Is that the essence of this?

The Chair: That is what the standing orders say.

Mr Gravelle: Right. In other words, then, the government has managed to avoid having these members of the CCAC, the ones they will recommend, brought forward. They quite deliberately then made appointments—

Mr Johnson: That's a stretch. That's only according to him.

Mr Gravelle: No. It seems to be actually pretty clear that they've obviously taken advantage of the standing orders, in other words, in making appointments that would not be required to come before us.

The Chair: That is correct. I was looking at Mr Johnson as one of the—

Mr Gravelle: I think, that being the case, we should make some—clearly, these—

The Chair: Order, for a second. I just want to clarify that we are dealing with section 106, which deals with committees specifically, and the relevant part that is found in it is in brackets on page 76: "excluding reappointments and appointments for a term of one year or less." That's pretty clear. However, we can express whatever view we wish.

Mr Mazzilli, I'm interested in your comment, and Mr Hastings, I think you had a comment, did you?

Mr Mazzilli: Certainly, Mr Chair, the only thing I want to say is that the point Mr Martin has raised is strictly hypothetical at this point. Why would we not wait to see if in fact what he's raising fits the criteria and then deal with it in due course under whatever standing orders or whatever mechanism there is to object to certain things?

The Chair: Any other committee members have a comment? Mr Gravelle? Again, just to clarify, the motion has been ruled out of order. We're now into an interesting general discussion.

Mr Gravelle: I take it that Mr Martin must have received the information from somewhere. That's certainly an expectation. But I have been operating with the expectation that indeed we would have an opportunity. This committee is formed in the Legislature to deal with appointments, and under the piece of legislation that was forced through the Legislature before Christmas, I was making the assumption that we would have the opportunity to interview those appointees. So I would think we would want to make a request. I don't think it would be inappropriate for us to make a request to the government that we be given an opportunity, that we would be pleased if we were given an opportunity, to interview those people who are appointed to those positions.

I don't think that's out of line. Again, there's an expectation, I think, from the public that we would have that opportunity in order for this committee to be able to do its work.

The Chair: Subject to contrary information from the learned clerk of this committee, however, I must say that if the government chooses to have the term for one year or less, this committee cannot at this present time deal

with those appointments. It would seem to me, and I stand to be corrected, that the only way this could be avoided is if the government made a choice to have the term limit over one year, rather than one year or less—in other words, two, three years or whatever it happens to be. Otherwise, it would not fall under the purview of this committee, as I read the standing orders. I do not think the government or this committee or anybody else can, unless the rules specific to this standing committee, or to this committee's standing orders, are changed, or unless the government chooses to make an appointment in excess of one year. It would be impossible for this committee to deal with it. Would I be correct, Mr Clerk?

Clerk Pro Tem (Mr Douglas Arnott): Yes.

Mr Hastings: I'd just like to say that I appreciate the concern Mr Martin has raised, but I think it's premature, to say the least. I think you've ruled correctly in terms of what the committee can and cannot do and I think we should wait. If you want to use a quick analogy, the hitter can't hit the ball till the bowler has bowled the ball. So I would say let's wait and see what occurs.

In the meantime, I think Mr Wood has made an excellent suggestion to Mr Martin that he pursue this matter, not just for CCACs; it could be for any matter regarding the purview of how committees operate. Perhaps members might like to make submissions either formally or informally. I'm not sure how the Legislative

Assembly committee is meeting, but certainly this is an issue that should be dealt with there because this would affect more than just this committee in terms of the standing orders. So I think we're sort of poking at thin air here and making a calculation based on—perhaps he has some information we don't have. Let's see what the information is. Let's see what the folks come up with before we make a premature judgment.

Mr Martin: Yes, I accept that advice and will look into that and see what it would take, etc. But I would also, in keeping with, I believe, the spirit of Mr Wood's comments that we protect the rights of individual members here to participate in a fulsome way in the legislative process—members of government might want to look into this as well to see what's going on and perhaps bring it back to next Wednesday's meeting when we will gather again. I certainly will bring back whatever I can find that is of a more concrete nature so that we can perhaps have another discussion about it. OK?

The Chair: OK, that concludes our discussion. Is there any other business before the committee? If not, I'll entertain a motion of adjournment.

Mr Wood: So moved.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved adjournment. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The committee adjourned at 1613.

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