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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 23 July 2002

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mardi 23 juillet 2002

**Standing committee on
government agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

Chair: James J. Bradley
Clerk: Tom Prins

Président : James J. Bradley
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 23 July 2002

Mardi 23 juillet 2002

The committee met at 1037 in room 151.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair (Mr James J. Bradley): Good morning, members of the committee. We're going to commence. I expect a member of the third party will arrive with us in some time.

We have three subcommittee reports to go through, and I will ask for a motion on each of them. The first is a report of the subcommittee on business dated Thursday, June 20, 2002.

Mr Wayne Wettlaufer (Kitchener Centre): I move acceptance.

The Chair: All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

The second is the report of the subcommittee on business dated Thursday, June 27, 2002.

Mr Wettlaufer: I move acceptance of the report.

The Chair: Mr Wettlaufer has moved acceptance. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

The third is the report of the subcommittee on business dated Thursday, July 4, 2002.

Mr Wettlaufer: I move acceptance of the report dated July 4.

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

We now move to appointments review.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

BILL DAVERNE

Review of intended appointment, as selected by official opposition party: Bill Daverne, intended appointee as member, Town of Greater Napanee Police Services Board.

The Chair: The first individual before us is Mr Bill Daverne, intended appointee as member, Town of Greater Napanee Police Services Board.

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): On a point of order, Mr Chair: I wanted to register my displeasure and my total disgust with having this committee meeting today. I don't know who decided and when it was decided, but to bring in visitors from outside Toronto on this day in particular, and I would put myself in that category—I think we need to have a look at how we're setting the dates. I assume it was the subcommittee, but if

I'm wrong on that, please correct me. I wanted to register my displeasure and disgust to the committee.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Johnson. Your comments are duly noted and will be shared with members of the subcommittee.

Mr Daverne, as you know, you have the opportunity at the beginning for up to 10 minutes, which is subtracted from the government time—I won't say fortunately, because of course I'm an impartial Chair—to make an initial statement should you see fit. Welcome to the committee, sir.

Mr Bill Daverne: I appreciate this opportunity to speak here today. I live in Napanee ward in the town of Greater Napanee and have lived there for about 30 of my 47 years. I also have custody of the family cottage in Adolphustown ward at the extreme south end of the town. It sits on land that has belonged to our family since 1815, so I have both personal and family roots in the area. Indeed, these roots extend back to the arrival of the United Empire Loyalists in 1784. I care about this area: its past, its present and its future. My mother also lives in Greater Napanee, in a nursing home in Selby. She is 89 and suffers from Alzheimer's.

Every generation of my family has served the community in some fashion, and community is very important to me. Following Mr Steven Pengelly in this position, I have big shoes to fill. I will do my best.

I recall a time not so long ago, in the 1950s, the 1960s and even the 1970s, when area residents left cars unlocked in the driveway and downtown and left houses unlocked except during vacation. Today I know times have changed, from the personal angle—locking cars and homes—from what friends, neighbours and acquaintances tell me and from what downtown merchants fear and experience.

Unfortunately, petty criminals are active in our quiet community. They break into stores, houses, cottages—you name it. Drugs are an issue, parents tell me, and organized crime, mostly in the guise of biker gangs, I have been told, seek to recruit the petty criminals, giving them training, incentive and role models.

Now let me tell you something that was shocking to me. I wrote the foregoing paragraphs about a week ago in preparation for today's appearance and I wrote a little more that I won't be offering here today. The reason is that last Wednesday and Thursday I experienced local crime and police work in person. I am a victim. I will be

careful in providing details so as not to jeopardize the prosecution, but I can tell you that my house was burglarized last Wednesday afternoon in broad daylight. The thief took my notebook computer, my electric guitar and amplifier, a quantity of money in the form of loose change and silver dollars and even beverages from my refrigerator.

I had been gone for less than two and a half hours. I arrived home at suppertime and was stunned. Doors were open, lights were on, drawers rifled and belongings missing. I'm a writer, and my missing notebook computer contained several weeks of writing on a new book I'm working on. Unfortunately it had not yet been backed up.

I called the police. An officer arrived in less than 10 minutes. She immediately comforted me and efficiently established the facts and the timing window of the crime. Questions were asked, detailed notes were made and the professionalism demonstrated was of the highest order. Another officer was called to investigate the physical evidence for fingerprints.

The sense of violation is great when your house is entered and your things stolen. I knew that before, but now I know it from this very personal experience. The next day I did not want to leave home for fear the thief would come back for more, but I did, after securely hiding things and locking everything lockable. When I returned home I found a note from the police constable to call the detachment office. In less than 24 hours an arrest had been made and my property had been recovered.

I wish I could tell you more about the happy ending, but I can tell you why I believe it happened: excellent police work, which means many things—hunches, training, experience, understanding how the criminal element ticks in a particular community, professionalism and dedication. Our police and emergency services mean so much to us so often, and since September 11 we've learned even more just how much we depend on them.

Let me talk about why I wish to serve on the Town of Greater Napanee Police Services Board. First, our environment is very important to me. In 1972, 14 prisoners escaped from Millhaven maximum security prison, which sits less than five miles east of the town of Greater Napanee. Several of the prisoners were recaptured quickly, both by residents—one woman used a pitchfork—and by local police and military personnel. But others weren't, and one was apprehended many years later in Europe. This is an environmental issue for the town of Greater Napanee. Millhaven is only one of a handful of federal prisons in the area, housing many of Canada's most hardened criminals, including Paul Bernardo.

Right now in our municipality we have the Quinte Regional Detention Centre, which serves as the jail for Belleville and Kingston, the two large cities on either side of us. We don't want any more escapes, but when there are, we want to ensure we have the trained police force we need to protect our citizens.

Secondly, we have a growing population of senior citizens in our community and moving into our community. These people have worked hard in their lives and

should not have to spend their retirement years terrorized by criminals, whether they be break-and-enter scum or common scam artists.

Thirdly, crime has victims, and we must never forget that. It must drive us to strategies that prevent crime, protect our citizens, enable effective emergency responses and, in general, provide the law-and-order part of the social fabric which former Napanee resident Sir John A. Macdonald endorsed when the words "peace, order and good government" were imbedded as animating principles in the preamble to the British North America Act, which created the Dominion of Canada.

I want to do what I can to help our police protect our community's social fabric. My qualifications for this position are based on more than my age, residency and historical ties to the Greater Napanee community. I have some perspective. I have lived for a time in Ontario's four largest cities: Hamilton, London, Ottawa and Toronto. Indeed, I lived in London and Toronto for a combined total of over 15 years. I was even temporarily detained in London on December 7, 1975, as a police dragnet surrounded a car in which my friends and I were returning from a concert in Michigan. Police were on the lookout for a similar car full of perpetrators, and efficiently caught us without missing a step or squealing a tire. We were detained for only 10 minutes or so until our stories checked out, but it taught me lessons about how a police force does its job well. Let me tell you, when you're surrounded by five police cars and two paddy wagons, you want the police to be good at their jobs.

I have experience in covering Greater Napanee policing as a journalist. As a community reporter for the daily Kingston Whig-Standard in 1973-74, I regularly dealt with the local OPP detachment and the then Napanee Police Department. I witnessed their efforts at accidents big and small, serving and investigating with fire officials at fatal fires and working at various public events. I understand the way the media deals with the local police and the need for effective media liaison in the face of a strong and vibrant local grapevine.

I have served the community in a variety of organizations over the years. I was a Cub and Boy Scout, founding president of the Napanee Leo Club, which is a junior Lions club, and I've served as director of the Lennox and Addington Historical Society, vice-president of the Bay of Quinte branch of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada, on the executives of two local political associations at the provincial and federal levels, and was founding chair of the Loyalist Landing Festival, which annually honours the arrival of the first pioneers who founded what is now the town of Greater Napanee back in June 1784.

My late father was a long-time local and area teacher, a town councillor in Napanee after retiring and served his community in a variety of other ways. It is in that spirit that I wish to serve my community on the Town of Greater Napanee Police Services Board.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I should note that Napanee will be hosting a national fastball championship

this summer—that's a little commercial for Napanee at this time. Since I do attend those from time to time, I'm sure that everyone will want to go to Napanee to view that event.

Anyway, be that as it may, the clerk tells me we now start with the NDP, the third party, and Mr Martin. What's going on in Sault Ste Marie?

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): No fastball tournaments, anyway. But there is a soccer tournament happening this weekend.

You're obviously a fairly busy and talented person. Why would you want to serve in this capacity? I know you laid out some of your experience and understanding of policing, but at this point in time in Napanee, why the police services board?

Mr Daverne: I think it's important that we offer ourselves for public service at a variety of levels and in a variety of ways, and I think I've finally reached an age where I can actually provide some perspective and help the community that way. I know a lot of people, I hear a lot of things and I think I can effectively represent what the public is thinking, as well as what is required for peace and security in the community.

Mr Martin: I know that when you become a victim yourself, your sensitivities are sharpened somewhat, and I appreciate that.

Outside of that, are there big issues in Napanee at this particular point in time where policing is concerned that you have an interest in or that you think you can contribute in some way to resolving?

Mr Daverne: Well, I think the police are doing a pretty good job. As I talk to them and members of the board in the future, I'm sure I'll have a better perspective on it. But if now is OK, I want OK to continue. If we can do better, I want things to be better.

We have the main transportation corridors of Canada passing through our town: the CNR, the CPR, the 401 and Highway 2. That means that if we have a little idyllic community, we can have bad things coming in from outside. So I would like to see, to a certain extent, that our community is protected.

1050

Mr Martin: What's your perspective on policing? There are certainly different views out there as to how you make a community more secure. There are those who would suggest we need more police and we need to get tougher, and there are those on the other side—and they're not always in conflict with each other—who suggest that if we deal with some of the more fundamental underpinnings of a community where the security of the community is concerned, things like people having adequate income and being able to participate in the everyday life of the community, we reduce policing. What would your approach be? What attitude would you bring to the police commission in terms of the long term and making our communities more secure?

Mr Daverne: I think there's a balanced approach. Certainly I think that if everyone had a job and was working, there would be less crime. I think we are exper-

encing less crime now than we would have, had employment not gone up in the last number of years. In our community we are seeing new businesses open, and that does enhance the environment within which people can work and live. I think it's a combination of things. You can't stop crime by police action alone. It takes more than that.

Mr Martin: What's your view on the concept of community policing?

Mr Daverne: I think it's not an "us and them" thing; I think it's an "us" thing. The police are part of the fabric of the community, and the neighbours who watch each other's property are very much a part of that whole process. Maybe I was spoiled growing up in Napanee, but the police in Napanee have always been role models and have always been people to look up to, and that's something I want to see continue.

Mr Martin: The role and the approach of community policing in my own community has added a new element of positive relationships. The police are involved in a number of different ways in community life on the streets, walking and talking and that kind of thing, knowing the community.

I understand from the notes that were prepared for us that the town of Greater Napanee contracts with the OPP. Will that in any way affect the ability of the police in that area to be part of the community, to do what we have come to understand as community policing? Does it take away from the familiarity of an area? I'm just thinking about a lot of small communities that have had their own police services and that are now contracting out to a police service that moves their people around quite readily and regularly. Will that present more problems than it will solve?

Mr Daverne: I don't think so. The OPP have been a very distinct part of Napanee culture from my earliest memory. When I was a youngster, which was before the 401 was built, the OPP station was on East Street in Napanee, just around the corner, and the OPP cars were always around town. The detachment office now is between the built-up part of the town proper and the 401, and there is a major presence in all cases. In my experience, the members of the OPP have always been part of the community, have been members of the Lions Club and things like that. I haven't seen an alienation.

Something that I think is an advantage is that we get highly trained, very professional officers. I think we can't underestimate the value of that.

Mr Martin: Thank you very much.

The Chair: We now move to the government.

Mr Johnson: We'd like to waive our time.

The Chair: The government has waived its time. We go to the official opposition.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Good morning, Mr Daverne. I appreciated your opening comments very much. Obviously, given the experience you had, yourself being a victim of crime, it's had an impact on you, and you went into some length about your reasons for being interested in this. The one

thing you didn't mention, which I'm curious about and want to ask you about too, is your interest in politics, because we're always interested in how people get appointed to these positions.

Certainly in your resumé there are a couple of interesting things. One, you make reference to the fact that one of your interests is politics. I notice in your resumé too that, at least for a period of time, you were the editor and publisher of *Bluelink News*. I'm guessing that might be "Bluelink" as in "Conservative," but I don't want to make that assumption. There are also some other things. So I just wanted to ask, are you a member of a political party or have you been a member of a political party?

Mr Daverne: Yes, I am a member of both the federal and provincial PC parties.

Mr Gravelle: So you've been involved in elections at various levels, too?

Mr Daverne: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: Have you ever been a candidate?

Mr Daverne: No, I haven't.

Mr Gravelle: May I go from there to ask you how this appointment came about? Were you approached by a member of the government? In terms of the Napanee Police Services Board, it's the only appointment by cabinet. It's a three-person services board.

Mr Daverne: That's right.

Mr Gravelle: There's the mayor or reeve and a councillor, so it's the only position by cabinet. Were you approached, or could you tell us how the appointment itself came about? Did you express interest in it?

Mr Daverne: Well, when there was a change of leadership and Steven Pengelly joined Premier Eves here in Toronto—let me put it that way—his position became open and that was fairly public knowledge in all the papers. So I made some inquiries and applied for the position and was interviewed by the ministry, and that's—

Mr Gravelle: There was a level of comfort with that.

Thank you. I did want to ask those questions. I'd ask Mrs Dombrowsky if she has some questions as well.

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Good morning, Mr Daverne. It's always very nice to welcome a constituent to Queen's Park. I'm sure you were heartened to understand that Mr Bradley will be visiting our riding for the softball championship that is going to be held there. I certainly intend to participate in that event.

Perhaps just to follow up a bit on the question Mr Gravelle has posed, am I clear in understanding that you initiated a contact to pursue this position?

Mr Daverne: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You were not called. Reading your background—and it's a very impressive background—there has been no past involvement with any kind of law enforcement activity. Is it an area that's sort of a new-found interest, or is it just an area where you thought, "Well, this is something new that I'd like to learn more about"? Have you had conversations with

individuals around law enforcement? Maybe you could expand on that a bit, please.

Mr Daverne: Sure. I studied Canadian politics at Western, and certainly law and order studies were part of that. But I guess what isn't in my resumé is that when I served for the government House leader, the Honourable Doug Lewis, in Ottawa in 1993, he was the minister of public security in the Kim Campbell government. It was a large ministry, and I was in on some of the conversations that were going on in terms of public security planning and that kind of thing. So that certainly was one of the first times I sort of saw it from that perspective and how it doesn't just happen; policing is something that a lot of people carefully think about. So from that perspective, that was one of the things that made me interested in it. When I heard there was going to be an opening, I thought, "Maybe I'll look at that."

Mrs Dombrowsky: As you know, my office is in Napanee, and I think it's a wonderful community. I certainly agree with you that the Ontario Provincial Police do a very fine job. But you know, like every government agency that does its very best, in spite of their best efforts there are those people who have other opinions. People have complained to me about the services they receive from this fine force. How would you respond if someone came to you with a complaint around the service?

1100

Mr Daverne: If somebody came to me and complained, I would listen. I think that's a really big part of this job, especially at the start: to listen to everybody. I have been talking to a lot of people and getting their opinions over the last two or three months. I think that's the only way.

I can't tell you how it works from the inside now because I don't know, so I am very interested in finding out. No service organization has a 100% record, but they all strive to.

Every time I have been pulled over by RIDE or have seen cause to have any interaction with the police at all, especially in our community, I have been very impressed. So I think there's good leadership at the top. I guess I'll soon be meeting that leadership, or I hope to.

I think that in anything you do you can always strive to do better and I'm sure that good leadership is pursuing that.

Mrs Dombrowsky: In preparing for this role, have you met with the staff sergeant, for example, or members of council to indicate your interest in pursuing this role?

Mr Daverne: No, I have not.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Finally, with regard to the community: I live in a community where community policing has been a program under way for a number of years and I know that it's so very well received within the community and is, I think, effective.

With regard to policing issues in the town of greater Napanee, which is quite an area now, could you list what you might understand today to be two areas of concern or areas where improvements can be made?

Mr Daverne: I think until you have all the drinking drivers off the road, that's always something where you have to come up with new strategies. When I go out to get gas from where I live on Graham Street in Napanee, there's typically a RIDE stop underneath the railway tracks. Personally, I think that has done a lot to change the way people drink and drive. I think it made people think twice about it. There are probably bars and hotels in Napanee that have noticed a change in their clientele because of that. So I think that's very positive.

The issue of breaking and entering, and it was a concern of mine before last week, is huge and will continue to be for every victim until there's only one victim. It doesn't matter. The sense of violation that I felt was tremendous. It went beyond what I expected, to be quite honest. I thought I could handle it. So I hate to think that people can live in fear, whether it's a house invasion or that kind of thing.

I think the visibility the police have in Napanee is very important in showing that they're something to be reckoned with. There are things being done right now that are very good.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You made a statement that there's less crime now. Did you get that from research you did?

Mr Daverne: No. It's totally instinct. I would say there's less crime now because more people are working.

Mrs Dombrowsky: That's purely your opinion, though. That's not a statistical fact.

Mr Daverne: Absolutely. That's my opinion.

Mrs Dombrowsky: OK, because I would be really curious to know if that in fact is the case. It would be great if it is.

Mr Daverne: It's hard to prove.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I'm sure that the OPP do keep those statistics, so it would be interesting to see if that is the case.

Just one other comment: crime has victims; it certainly does. Do you ever think criminals are victims? Would that be possible?

Mr Daverne: If criminals can be victims of society? Is that the kind of thing—

Mrs Dombrowsky: Yes.

Mr Daverne: I think one would have to stretch it to say that criminals are always victims. Some criminals have been victims when they were young, if they were abused in one way or another, whether physical abuse or sexual abuse. Then they pass on the victimization in some cases. These things are well documented. So a healthy functioning society needs to look at all its citizens and what we can do for everybody.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I agree.

The Chair: That is all of your time.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Thanks very much.

The Chair: Your time has expired, in other words, right now. That completes the questioning by the committee.

Thank you very much, Mr Daverne, for appearing before the committee. You may now step down.

Mr Daverne: Thank you very much.

PINA SAURO

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Pina Sauro, intended appointee as member, Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

The Chair: The next intended appointee is Pina Sauro, intended appointee as member, Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

Welcome to the committee, Ms Sauro. You have the opportunity, as you probably know, to make an initial statement should you see fit. Subsequent to that, there will be questioning from the members of the committee.

Ms Pina Sauro: Thank you, Mr Chair and committee members, for this chance to appear before you today. I want to start off by telling you why I have pursued this opportunity of being a member of the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

As you can see by the resumé that's been provided to you, my educational background and my work experience as a civil servant have been in the area of community and social services. I see this opportunity with the rental housing tribunal as an extension of this and also as a way to continue to serve the community, a community that includes tenants and landlords, both of whom have rights and responsibilities under the Tenant Protection Act.

I would like to have the opportunity to serve as a member of the rental housing tribunal and to adjudicate on matters of dispute between landlords and tenants because I believe I have the skills to be able to do this well. My educational background includes a degree in social work and a certificate in human psychology. Through professional development opportunities, I have taken numerous training courses which have included areas such as conflict resolution, mediation, customer service, facilitation, interviewing techniques, leadership and coaching, workplace harassment and human rights, as well as inclusion and diversity.

I'd like to highlight aspects of my work experience that I think are relevant to the appointment I am seeking with the tribunal. As a front-line caseworker with the community services department of the city of London, my job was to administer the General Welfare Assistance Act, later becoming the Ontario Works Act, and its relevant guidelines and policies, and to render eligibility decisions that were accurate, fair and impartial. I had the privilege of gaining the trust and respect of the customers I served, and I gained this trust and respect because clients knew I recognized that they were coming to our office to request assistance at very difficult times in their lives and that I would do the best I could within my authority and within the legislation to help them. I understood as a caseworker that I had a responsibility to be accountable to the clients I served, to the province on whose behalf I was hired to administer the legislation and policies, and to the taxpayer who contributed financially to the programs I delivered.

Subsequently, as a manager of a team of front-line staff in the community services department, my respon-

sibility was to ensure that in each and every one of the 2,500 cases my particular team handled on a monthly basis, which translated into approximately \$18 million a year, the proper eligibility decisions were made and clients received the benefits to which they were legislatively entitled.

I was able to foster important principles such as fairness, accountability and excellent customer service within the resources that we had available. As part of this position, I was responsible to conduct internal reviews of appealed decisions and to assess cases on the merit of the information that was presented. I was required to communicate with third parties pertaining to the clients' situations, including landlords, utility companies, employers and advocates, as well as with MPs and MPPs who were representing their constituents. During this time I also participated in policy development where the legislation provided us the discretion to do so.

Following that, as a manager of staff training and development I implemented an intensive six-week training program for new recruits. One important part of the rigorous training involved teaching staff how to effectively interpret and apply the legislation and its corresponding guidelines and policies. During this segment of the training program, I spent considerable time challenging new staff to recognize their personal views and opinions, especially where those views might conflict with the legislation that they were responsible to apply and uphold in an impartial way.

1110

Without fail, at the end of each training program graduates of the program came up to me to tell me that the legislation part of their training was the most difficult and challenging, but at the same time it was the most rewarding because it solidified in them a strong sense of professional ethics. Years later, people still come to me to tell me how important that part of the training was as they've continued successfully in their careers as administrators of the legislation.

In my more recent positions with the community services department I've been involved in policy and program development as well as communications. These positions have allowed me to further develop the ability to understand changing trends in legislation and to be able to assist in the development and implementation of new programs and services. The positions have required that I maintain regular contact with representatives of regional ministry offices, both the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services as well as the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

I've written and presented countless reports to various audiences, ranging from neighbourhood and community groups and steering committees to standing committees of municipal council, from front-line staff to senior managers as well as politicians at all levels of government. In each case the communication style and the approach had to be tailored to the audience, often requiring the ability to explain complex concepts in a straightforward way and in plain and clear language.

When I was selected to be interviewed by the chair and two vice-chairs of the rental housing tribunal, I was sent a large volume of information, including the relevant acts, the guidelines and the rules, to review prior to the interview. Also included in this package was a description of the position and the key skills and attributes required to be a member of the tribunal. I'm not sure if you have that in front of you, but I thought I would highlight some of those today.

The position requires the ability to interpret, explain and apply legislation in a fair, impartial and consistent manner. It requires the ability to deal with various clients in emotional and sensitive situations; it requires the ability to exercise tact and discretion when managing volatile and confrontational situations; it requires excellent oral and written communications skills to explain the relevant legislation in rendering decisions; it requires the ability to apply strong analytical skills to objectively assess cases involving issues, often with conflicting information; it requires the ability to make calm, impartial and fair decisions; and it requires the ability to exercise a high level of judgment. I'm absolutely confident that I have all these skills and that I can live up to the expectations of this position.

As a caseworker and as a manager in the community services department in London, the eligibility decisions that I made were rarely appealed. If one of my decisions was appealed, it was often appealed on the basis of a challenge to the legislation or the policy as opposed to the decision I had made.

In both the personal and professional aspects of my life, I've built a reputation of being a person of integrity, fairness, maturity, sensitivity and common sense. I'm analytical. I make sound decisions that are based on careful consideration of the facts in front of me.

As I'm sure I'll be asked, I will tell you that I'm a cardholding member of the provincial Conservatives. If you're wondering whether that might impact on the way I would carry out my role as a member of the rental housing tribunal, I can assure you that it will not. I clearly understand the role of the tribunal: to render orders on disputes between tenants and landlords in accordance with the Tenant Protection Act and the rules and guidelines. I will remind you that I have extensive experience in applying legislation in an impartial way.

As you can see from the dates on my resumé, I've been a civil servant for the past 17 years—most of my adult life, in fact. Throughout this time I have successfully and impartially applied the policies of a Liberal government, an NDP government and now the Conservative government.

In closing, I want to again express my thanks to the committee for the opportunity to be here today. I must tell you that the whole process has been an interesting one, and I'm glad to see the scrutiny that is involved in appointing someone to a government agency such as the rental housing tribunal. It's an important role and it's not one that I've entered into lightly. I look forward to any questions.

The Chair: Thank you. We move to the government.

Mr Wettlaufer: We'll waive our time.

The Chair: The government has waived its time. We now move to the official opposition.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good morning, Ms Sauro. Thank you very much for coming to Toronto today. I think it is important, and I'm happy to hear that you understand that. Because of the significance of the role, I think it's important for the people of Ontario to understand that we take that very seriously here and we want to ensure that when individuals are appointed to such a role, we've had an opportunity to confirm that they have the related experience that would and should enable them to perform well in the intended role.

You indicated, and I appreciate your candour, that you are a member of the Progressive Conservative Party. I am interested when I see that someone has been a civil servant for 17 years, and now you're going to leave that role and all the security it would have for you, to assume a full-time position on the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal. How is it that you came to be aware of this opening? Were you approached? Did someone suggest that you would consider this, and if so, who might that have been?

Ms Sauro: I was aware of the tribunal and other committees as well, like the Ontario Municipal Board and so on, through my work and past experience.

I pursued the position. What you've just described is what I've been thinking about for the last couple of years, because at this stage of my life and after 17 years of being involved with one employer—and I started with the city actually right after I graduated from university—I was at a point of my life where I needed to decide whether I should branch out to something else or whether I would stay with the city. I knew that I wanted to stay in London. I knew that I wanted to stay in a position that would allow me to continue in the same vein as what I had already done in community services. So I sent a resumé in to the appointments office, and that's how it started.

Mrs Dombrowsky: How was it you were aware that there was a vacancy?

Ms Sauro: I wasn't aware at the time that there was a vacancy. I sent my resumé in a while ago. Actually, when I first sent my resumé in, I believe my cover letter spoke about the Ontario Municipal Board at the time. I indicated at that time that if there was a position with the rental housing tribunal, I would be interested in that.

Mrs Dombrowsky: So initially your interest was with the OMB.

Ms Sauro: It's where I started, yes. The OMB, because of my municipal experience, was also sort of an extension of that as well.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I understand. You've indicated you're a card-carrying member of a political party. There are various levels of participation in political parties. Have you had any other role? Are you a member of the executive? Have you participated in any campaigns?

Ms Sauro: I participated in a limited way in campaigns in the past; in one campaign, actually, in the past.

Mrs Dombrowsky: What campaign, please?

Ms Sauro: Frank Mazzilli's campaign. And I have contributed financially, and basically that's it.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Are you in any way connected to Mr Mazzilli?

Ms Sauro: Yes, he's my brother-in-law.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Your brother-in-law. Thank you very much.

With regard to the Tenant Protection Act, you indicate that you've had an opportunity to review the related acts that you would be dealing with. Are you familiar with problems that people encounter with this act?

Ms Sauro: I'm familiar with what's been discussed in the media and reports and studies that have been done. I know that there are concerns that have been raised, but as an adjudicator my role would be to adjudicate the decisions—

Mrs Dombrowsky: I'm aware of what your role will be, but in your previous role in the community services department at the city of London, I'm sure you would be aware that there are many people who are experiencing problems with the act as tenants try to deal and manage with timelines and so on.

Ms Sauro: I'm aware, not from personal experience, but from studies that have been written and from media reports as well. Yes, I am aware.

Mr Gravelle: If I could just get back to your connections in terms of the position you'll be taking over, and I acknowledge very much so that with your background you would seem to be someone who would be very sensitive to the needs of the position, although I have some questions about the rental housing tribunal I'd like to ask you as well. But I hope you appreciate and don't find it upsetting when we ask questions that are political in nature, because I think people want to be assured that political connections are not being used inappropriately or whatever. I guess then the question would be, in that you have some relationship with a sitting member, whether or not he was able to help you through this process at all in terms of getting to this place.

1120

Ms Sauro: Initially I contacted Frank's office here in Toronto to find out where I would send the resumé, to whom specifically I should address it. That was the extent.

Mr Gravelle: But did he shepherd this through in any fashion at all in terms of the process? I just think it's important for people to understand how appointments are made—

Ms Sauro: Sure.

Mr Gravelle: —and obviously that's one thing we need to be sensitive to. So there's no other—

Ms Sauro: No. Like I said, I submitted my resumé, and then the contact I had was through the appointments office, asking initially whether I would be interested in a part-time position. Because of my employment with the

city, I thought it would be a conflict to be employed with the city and be a part-time member of the rental housing tribunal.

Mr Gravelle: Will you be taking a leave from the city? As Mrs Dombrowsky was pointing out, this is kind of a big step. This is not a lifetime appointment—at least I don't believe it is—so it is quite a decision to make.

Ms Sauro: I would be leaving the city; I would not be taking a leave. Yes, it is a big step, and as I said in my opening comments, it's not one that I've entered into lightly; it's only after a lot of thought. I think it's something that I can do well, and hopefully at the end of three years I'll be able to explore other opportunities. But I just felt that it was a point in my life where I wanted to make this decision.

Mr Gravelle: Certainly the tribunal has become very much more active, or very active, since the Tenant Protection Act was put in place. I'm curious as to your thoughts on what impact the Tenant Protection Act has had. Basically I think what has happened with vacancy decontrol or whatever, really the loss of rent control in essence, is that with the movement of tenants in our province, over a five-year period about 70% of tenants move. That means landlords are obviously in a position to raise rents to whatever level they are able once the person vacates the apartment. I'd love to have your thoughts on that particular act. We consider it a bit of a misnomer, may I say, calling it the Tenant Protection Act, but I'd love to have your thoughts on that, because clearly it has impacted on the number of cases that the rental housing tribunal has had in place.

Ms Sauro: In entering into something like this, it's like I said earlier: my position as an adjudicator would be to adjudicate on the information as it's presented, looking at the legislation as it's written.

Mr Gravelle: I appreciate that answer. It's an answer, of course, that we get frequently from people who are being appointed to positions not unlike yours, other positions in other agencies, boards or commissions, which is that they have to simply follow the legislation. But do you not think it's a responsibility as well of the people who are assuming these positions to look at what they see in place and make recommendations at least internally if they think there are some changes needed, or try to find some flexibility?

Obviously, if you are simply following the legislation, that can be—does it need to be interpreted totally restrictively, or do you feel it can be interpreted in a more humane manner at times? That's what always interests me when people say that. Again, I understand why they say it. It's just that you would think, being in that position, that much as I'm sure you've got a lot of thoughts about the social service field based on your years of experience—I guess my question is, do you think it's appropriate or something you should be thinking of in terms of looking at what you are asked to do and seeing perhaps the flaws in the system and seeing some changes, or perhaps even saying you think it's working very well?

Ms Sauro: I understood from my interview with the chair and vice-chairs that there are regular meetings with the members of the tribunal. I'm not sure what the opportunities are in that forum to bring forward any opportunities I might see for improvement, but whatever I could do within my authority, whatever I would be allowed to do, that would be the opportunity I would take.

In response to your question about applying the legislation strictly or humanely, as I described earlier, when I was a caseworker and a manager dealing with people in very difficult situations—and I can equate those situations, very much so, to the situations that I think would come before me with the rental housing tribunal—I always did my best to make sure I treated people with respect, sensitively and humanely, and fairly and equitably. Sometimes a piece of legislation allows for some flexibility and judgment. I think it's inappropriate for the legislation to be applied in the same way in different cases. It needs to be applied equitably, so that its intent and its policies are applied to those particular circumstances.

Mr Gravelle: I think it's very important too.

The Chair: This is your last question.

Mr Gravelle: The former Minister of Community and Social Services is here too. I know that when you look at people in the ministry working in municipalities, certainly the way they treat people can have an extraordinary impact on the decisions they make. There is that kind of flexibility, and I think that needs to be in place. But of course it comes with a certain attitude, and based on what you said, you seem to have very strong feelings about treating people with dignity and respect, so I trust that's how things will end up.

The Chair: Thank you very much. Before I move to the third party, I want to note that Mr Mazzilli, who is a member of this committee, has absented himself during consideration of this appointment and will absent himself from voting on this appointment.

The third party.

Mr Martin: I don't think that anybody who is in any way tuned in to the public life of this province doesn't understand that one of the huge issues facing us at the moment is the question of homelessness and finding proper and affordable homes for families and other people. Any of the studies that have been done over the last three or four years—and there have been many—have indicated there are a number of reasons for the difficulty we're seeing, one being that the senior levels of government have gotten out of the business of building affordable social housing. The other is that the rules surrounding the rights of tenants versus landlords have changed significantly and the pendulum has swung.

It would seem to me that in a regime where we're not building social housing any more, we need to be ever more vigilant to make sure the rules guiding the relationship between landlord and tenant need to be fair, and in administering those guidelines at the very mini-

mum we need to have impartial, objective overseers, which is what you're being appointed to here.

The concern I have is that all this difficulty experienced by people trying to find homes in Ontario is driven by a very right-wing Conservative regime or approach, and now we're about to appoint somebody who belongs to that political party to the very body that is supposed to, at the very least, objectively oversee this. Should I have a difficulty there? Does it not run up a red flag or present a challenge to a person elected to give leadership, to be responsible for the public life of this province? Shouldn't I be concerned about that?

Ms Sauro: As I said in my opening comments, I don't think there is any reason for you to be concerned. I have a long history of working as a civil servant. Throughout that time I administered legislation and policies of the Liberal government, the NDP government and now the Conservative government, and I've always done that in an impartial and fair way to the best of my ability. So I don't think there's any reason for you to be concerned.

I agree with you that homelessness and affordable housing are an issue in London, Toronto and in many urban centres in Ontario and across the country as well. I think it's a very complex one that involves many issues, including physical and mental health, finances and so on.

As a member of the tribunal I would do my best to make sure I apply the legislation and the guidelines as they're written, and I would trust political leaders, community advocates and community organizations to bring forward concerns, as they have—I'm very aware of the reports that have been written—to bring those issues forward. Then I would trust the democratic system we have to make sure there is a forum that allows healthy and informed discussion that would result in adequate policies.

1130

Mr Martin: So what you're telling me is that if there was an issue before you and you had to make a decision, you would be able to set aside your political affiliation and make that decision in a fair and equitable fashion for everybody concerned.

Ms Sauro: Absolutely. Without question.

Mr Martin: Would you agree with me, in a position such as this, that it not only be important that we hear from you that that would be your intention but that in some way it would be important that we feel so comfortable about this that you might want to consider dropping your affiliation politically in order to be as objective as possible? Is that something you've thought about?

Ms Sauro: It is something I've thought about. When I received the package prior to my interview with the Chair, there was a conflict-of-interest guideline and code of conduct. The conflict-of-interest guidelines don't require me to withdraw, but if I ever felt there would be a conflict, I would.

It's just like being an employee of a municipality. The conflict of guidelines allow that with the approval of the Chair you may still be employed by a municipality, but

I've chosen not to take that route because I don't want there to be any conflict whatsoever.

Mr Martin: OK. Thank you very much.

The Chair: That will complete the questions.

There's been a request to call consideration of this appointment at this time. The reason for that is that Mr Mazzilli could return to the committee. Mr Baird is here for that consideration.

Do we have the permission of the committee to do so? Agreed.

I will now call for the consideration of Pina Sauro, intended appointee as member, Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal.

Mr Johnson: Mr Chair, I'd like to move concurrence.

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

Mr Martin: I have some real serious reservations about this appointment. It is no reflection whatsoever on the track record of the applicant. I have no reason not to believe what she has shared with us and what is in her resumé in terms of her contribution over the years and her ability to adjudicate. But she's now entering into a realm, the provincial realm, where politics plays a very important role. I don't think there's anybody who would deny that. Our approach to various public policy issues is very much driven by where we come from and our political affiliation.

We have in front of us in Ontario, and across Canada, actually, but Ontario in particular, and in this city, a problem of very serious proportion where housing and homelessness are concerned. We need to get our heads around it. We need, instead of studying and reviewing and setting up boards and commissions to give advice, to actually be taking some action.

But short of us not doing that, at the very least we need to be able to offer people in a circumstance where they're being evicted—and I'm told that on average there are about 100 people a day evicted in the city of Toronto right now. We need to make sure that people who are appointed to the various tribunals are as objective and nonaligned as possible so that we, all of us who have been given responsibility and leadership at the provincial level to deliver housing to people, can at least be comfortable that the laws, even though they've been changed—again, study has been done to indicate that that change has tilted the table significantly in the direction of the landlord. We're losing subsidized housing units in a major way, every day that goes by, as people are evicted or leave their accommodation. Given that change and the fact that we haven't had any social housing or affordable housing built in this province in probably close to 10 years now, the very least we can do is do everything in our power to make sure that those who are appointed are as objective as possible.

We have before us today somebody who very honestly has proffered that she's a member of the Conservative Party and as such is not at this point considering tendering that or turning it over or leaving that connection behind in moving forward to participate at

this level. So I have some very serious concerns that this job, which is so important at this particular point in our history, will not be done in a way that is as completely objective, both in fact and in perception, as is absolutely possible. So I will be voting against it.

The Chair: Thank you for the comments. Any other comments or discussion on the appointment?

Mr Wettlaufer: I'm a little bit taken aback by the opposition of Mr Martin. I think we all know that while well-intentioned he may be, he is a left-wing socialistic idealist, and left-wing socialistic idealists are usually not realistic. I think this is evident in his comments today. I think it's pretty evident to all of us that the only one who would meet his satisfaction is someone who shares his left-wing idealist views. That's all, Chair.

The Chair: Mr Johnson, you had your hand up.

Mr Johnson: I'll try to be brief but I did want to put on record my comments, and that is that the only decision I have to make is whether or not this applicant should be held back and discarded because she's known and related to a member of this committee.

Frank Mazzilli is a well-known, well-liked and well-respected member of the provincial Legislature and of this committee. When I first became aware of this applicant's relationship, my only decision was whether or not that should disentitle her to make a contribution to this very important committee. Yes, there may be those who have problems with the act that she will be asked to rule under, but I wouldn't want to think that we in our own partisan positions, as members of provincial parties and of the Legislature, would feel that should disenfranchise her from making a contribution to the committee. Those are the comments I wanted to make.

The Chair: Any further comments before the vote?

Hon John R. Baird (Associate Minister of Franco-phone Affairs): I had the opportunity to review the intended appointee's resumé. I think it shows a huge amount of background in the sector at the public service level. I thought her presentation today was thoughtful. She demonstrates a lot of knowledge of the issues. After seeing her speak, I would hardly label her a carping right-wing ideologue with an axe to grind. I think she'd serve the province well.

The Chair: Anything further?

Mr Martin: A recorded vote.

The Chair: A recorded vote has been requested by Mr Martin. If there is no further discussion, I will call the vote now.

Ayes

Baird, Hardeman, Johnson, Wettlaufer.

Nays

Dombrowsky, Gravelle, Martin.

The Chair: The motion is carried.

We now move to Vickie Campbell, intended appointee as member, Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.

Interjection.

The Chair: She's been delayed in traffic, so we will move to the next one.

1140

RAMONA PANG

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

The Chair: I understand our next intended appointee is here. We will move to our next intended appointee, then: Ramona Pang, intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board. Welcome to the committee, Ms Pang. As you probably know by now, you have the opportunity to make an initial statement for up to 10 minutes and then you will be questioned by members of the committee if they have any questions for you. So I will allow you to begin.

Ms Ramona Pang: Good afternoon, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. It is with great pleasure that I present myself to you this afternoon for your consideration for the Ontario Film Review Board. I'm Ramona Pang, a registered nurse, doctor's office manager, wife, and mother of four children ranging in age from 14 to 22.

My family immigrated to Canada from Taiwan, my birthplace, in 1968, when I was 13 years old. Therefore, I came to Canada well grounded in Asian culture and speak fluent Mandarin, the official Chinese language, and the Cantonese dialect. In addition, I frequently speak both Mandarin and Cantonese and regularly watch Chinese movies and programs and read Chinese newspapers. Thus, my command of these two languages continues to be strong, while the programs and literature I enjoy keep me abreast of new vocabulary.

My varied work experience has broadened my outlook by bringing me into contact with people from a wide range of different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

As a registered nurse in Toronto, I saw people's strengths and weaknesses as well as their tragedies and triumphs. My relatively sheltered little world expanded immeasurably as I learned life's lessons through my patients.

Then later I operated a fine china shop in the heart of the tourist area of Niagara Falls. There I dealt with a broad spectrum of people from a commercial point of view and learned a great deal about human nature and other societies.

For the past several years I have been the manager of a busy doctor's office. In this capacity I meet individuals of all types and backgrounds from the community and therefore have gained a valuable understanding of human needs and concerns.

As a result of my work, I feel that I am perceptive, empathetic, and welcoming toward differences.

In my personal life I am a very busy and involved wife and mother of four children. My daughters are 14 and 16, and my sons are 20 and 22. My husband and I encourage our children to become the best they can be. Therefore, we encourage them to be productive, responsible, moral and involved. We want them to balance duty with relaxation through sports, music, and fun with good friends.

To juggle everything and meet everyone's needs, I have had to become a good problem-solver with good organization and time management skills. People tell me that I'm a fair-minded person who can be objective. They like what they call my common sense, dependability and sense of humour. I find all this praise rather embarrassing because I'm basically a very modest person.

Finally, I do have broad interests that include the arts and tennis.

Certainly here the key point about my interests is that I enjoy movies both as entertainment and as an art form. I would therefore consider it a pleasure to be on the Ontario Film Review Board. It is an organization to which I would bring all my knowledge, skills, experience and interests. Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr Michael Gravelle): Thank you very much, Ms Pang. We begin with the official opposition: Mrs Dombrowsky, if you have any questions.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good morning, Ms Pang. Thank you very much for taking the time to be with us this morning. I think this is a very important appointment that you would be intended for.

Just a couple of general questions. Do you think that the media impact the behaviour of society?

Ms Pang: Yes, I do. Very much so.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You are the mother of four children, and as a mother of four children certainly I've become acquainted with the importance of video games, for example. So when I interview people who are intended to be appointed to the Ontario Film Review Board, I always make a point of asking about video games. You are probably aware that at the present time they are not subject to any rating. I've had conversations with parents of children the ages of my children who are concerned about the violent content of video games. As technology advances and as video games become more graphic and more realistic, this is a very serious issue, particularly for parents who have younger children. From time to time they send them off to the video store and they assume, "Well, I know that they can't buy a restricted movie," if they're a certain age. But they can basically rent a video game that would be as violent and as graphic as a restricted movie. At the present time, there isn't any regulation in the province of Ontario around that.

Do you have an opinion about that? Is it an area that you think probably should be regulated?

Ms Pang: I agree 100% with what you have mentioned. I do find that because a lot of the families today are two-income families, a lot of times the parents

allow these video games to take place as babysitting tools. What you say is so true. We have to be so careful with video games, as much as we are putting a lot of input into the classification of films. I do agree that the video games should perhaps in the future have the same type of rating to allow the general public, children and families, to make their choices more wisely.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You probably are aware, because I'm sure you've received the same background that we have, that in other jurisdictions it has been argued that the video game industry should be encouraged to self-regulate in this particular area. Do you believe that would be effective in assisting families to ensure that their children would not have access to inappropriately violent or graphic video games?

Ms Pang: Are you saying that maybe the regulations should come from the—

Mrs Dombrowsky: From the industry. That has been offered in other jurisdictions. Do you have an opinion on that?

Ms Pang: I think that would be something that would be moving in a positive direction. That would certainly be something that is a good direction to go with.

Mrs Dombrowsky: But, Ms Pang, I think you either have to be in favour of regulating it legislatively or allowing the industry to regulate it. I guess what I'm trying to understand from you this morning is, do you have a particular bias in either direction? Is it something that you think should be regulated by government legislation and regulation, or is it something that you think the industry itself should be looking after?

Ms Pang: I don't know if—I'm actually very new in this whole area.

Mrs Dombrowsky: That's fair.

Ms Pang: So I really don't want to make any comment as to something that I have basically very little knowledge of. But I certainly think it would be a good idea. To a certain extent, I guess, it might be helpful.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I certainly have received a sense from your comments that it's an area that you think needs some attention and that you can appreciate why there are families in the province—certainly I have spoken with families in my community who are concerned about video games particularly. You know, now is the summer-time. Now is the time when kids have some time at home and they can spend a good deal of time in front of the television on a rainy day. Parents that I talk to are really disturbed by the fact that their youngsters can just go to the store and rent some games, and they are surprised by the level of violence and the kind of graphic—it's almost lifelike. You have to really look very carefully to distinguish that it's not a real human being that has had their head cut off, with all the disturbing graphics that that has. So I guess I am satisfied that you see this as an area of concern.

1150

In terms of the Ontario Film Review Board itself, you know that there are two schools of thought or camps out there. There are those folks who say, "You're not

being”—I don’t want to say “tough enough,” but that there are a lot of videos and other visual media being allowed that shouldn’t be. “That’s too graphic; that’s too inappropriate.” Then there are those on the other side who are saying, “We shouldn’t even have this. We live in a country where we are guaranteed freedom of expression under the constitution.” You probably are aware of some of the judicial issues around that whole argument. Given that there are those two camps out there, maybe you could talk to me about why you think it is important to have an Ontario Film Review Board and exactly what you see its role being.

Ms Pang: I understand the role of the Ontario Film Review Board is to classify, thereby allowing the viewer to choose the types of movies or films they would like to see, because everyone has different interests and tastes. So I do see that the immediate and important role of the film review board is not so much on the censorship side but on the classification side of it. I understand that the board also has public evenings. They bring out the public to have them voice their input—I thought that was very, very good—perhaps twice a month instead of once a month, that type of thing. Because we live in a society with different cultural backgrounds, a multicultural society, especially in Toronto alone, you try to please everybody, and that’s just not possible. So I think they try to do their best by having different members from varied communities and cultural backgrounds sit on the board and thereby do their best to accommodate the community.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Thanks very much.

Mr Martin: Thanks for coming today. Just the fact that you’ve got four children means that you’re very, very busy. Why would you want to spend the kind of time that’s going to be required? We’ve had people before us who talked about the commitment that’s necessary to really do this job effectively. Why would you want this appointment?

Ms Pang: I see the importance of the Ontario Film Review Board. Bringing up four children, I go through this almost every day, making sure the kids are not into movies that they’re not supposed to be into. So I really think it’s very important that the board see an importance in this area. Particularly, I love watching movies. I was told that they have been increasing foreign films, particularly from Asia, so they require someone like myself with the language skills and the background who might help to classify the films.

Mr Martin: How did you find out about this appointment?

Ms Pang: Mr Bart Maves. Our local MPP’s office called my husband’s office and asked him if he knows of someone who has an Asian background and the language skills to sit on the board. He mentioned it to me, and I thought, “Well, you know, I think I qualify,” for one thing, and I’m interested because of the importance of the film review board’s job, and I thought I’d give it a try.

Mr Martin: Are you a member of the Conservative Party?

Ms Pang: I do have a membership with our local Progressive Conservative Party riding.

Mr Martin: The focus of the board is on community standards and trying to have what’s offered by way of film etc reflect in some way—or at least be categorized so we can apply some community standards. What’s your view or understanding of community standards?

Ms Pang: We have varied community standards, because someone from Toronto has a different community standard as opposed to someone from Niagara Falls, such as myself. Again, it differs with their background, their culture and their beliefs. So I think for community standards, the film review board has tried to recruit members from different communities to sit on the board and therefore give their own input from each community. What I think “community standard” would be is individuals with different backgrounds.

Mr Martin: Are you aware of any of the decisions that have been made by the board over the last couple of years that have created some controversy?

Ms Pang: Somewhat.

Mr Martin: What is your perspective of what community standard they were trying to apply there that came into effect? Can you comment on that?

Ms Pang: I read about it in the paper, but I haven’t really looked into the different issues. I do understand there are going to be decisions made by the board that are not going to be agreeable to other communities or different areas. So I think the fact that the board is trying to get different members from different communities is the right direction in trying to determine community standards.

As far as controversy, I think that’s going to happen everywhere. It doesn’t matter what you do, there’s not going to be one set of policies that is going to be right or agreeable to everybody.

Mr Martin: You said you like to watch movies and you have four children who like to watch movies. What would your biggest concern be? Would it be in the area of too much graphic sexual portrayal or would it be the violence that’s often seen in movies these days? Where would you come down on that? What would be the biggest concern for you?

Ms Pang: Like I say, I really don’t have experience in that field, but my own personal concern would be everything you have mentioned: the violence, the sexual content. I think that’s a big concern because we need to be able to make the classifications so the children are protected from watching these films, sometimes unnecessarily or by mistake.

Mr Martin: OK. Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair: Members of the government?

Mr Johnston: We’ll waive our time.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much, Ms Pang. That completes the interview process. We will proceed to our next appointment and we’ll be voting on your appointment at the end of our appointments review.

Ms Pang: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair: I guess we should probably check: has Ms Campbell arrived yet? No. Is Mr Lamont here? No. What's the best thing to do? Should we take a little recess? It's just noon.

Mr Johnson: A 10-minute recess.

Interjection.

The Vice-Chair: Mr Lamont is here? Let's proceed then.

1200

PAUL LAMONT

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Paul Lamont, intended appointee as member, Ontario Northland Transportation Commission.

The Vice-Chair: Good morning, Mr Lamont. We're delighted you arrived.

Mr Paul Lamont: Am I a little late?

The Vice-Chair: You're early. We appreciate your being here. There have been problems with other people getting here because of traffic concerns. So it's just great that you're here.

Mr Lamont: I drove from North Bay today, so I was a little late. Sorry about that.

The Vice-Chair: Mr Paul Lamont is an intended appointee as member of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission. Welcome, Mr Lamont. We will certainly give you an opportunity to say a few words, if you wish, before we have questioning. The questioning will begin with the third party, I believe. Do you want to make a few remarks?

Mr Lamont: Sure. I'd like to take this opportunity just to highlight some of the areas of my background, which you'll find in my resumé.

I was born and raised in Willowdale, Ontario. I'm married and the proud father of two teenaged daughters. As a Canadian Tire dealer, I own and operate the store in North Bay.

I began my career at Canadian Tire 30 years ago this October as a part-time student. I was called the cardboard man. Each and every day my duty was to bail all the cardboard for the day in the store. So you can see I started at the very bottom. Through the next 16 years I worked in nearly every position available in the store, right up to the title of general manager. During this period I also spent some time at home office here in Toronto in various management positions.

In 1989 I began my career as a Canadian Tire dealer in Vegreville, Alberta, which is a small town outside Edmonton. From there I moved to Estevan, Saskatchewan. While operating the store, despite a slow economy, I opened a second store in Weyburn, Saskatchewan. At the time, this made me just one of a handful of dealers who owned and operated two stores at the same time.

After about two or three years of successfully operating these two stores, I was offered, and accepted, a very exciting and challenging opportunity to own and operate a new, large, big-box format Canadian Tire store. This was the first of its kind. We opened our doors in 1994.

Because of the success of my store and others that opened that year, it has become the model for over 200 new-format stores across Canada.

Since arriving in North Bay, I have expanded my horizons and background. I believe that my experiences have prepared me to be here today. Some examples are: I have served two terms as a national director on the board of the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association in various roles and responsibilities, representing my peers in dealings with the Canadian Tire Corp's management.

I have also been a very active member in the North Bay Kiwanis service club. I have also served two terms in the office of director of that club.

I have received the following awards: the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association presented me with the Above and Beyond the Call of Duty award, which was one of only two that have ever been given out; also, the Kiwanis Club presented me with the Mel Osborne Good Fellow award.

I have also been on both the Canadore College and Nipissing University business review committees, which provide these schools, from a business leader's perspective, with a review of their business curriculum.

Most recently I developed a community-based program which involves all the elementary schools in North Bay and the surrounding area. It's known as the Canadian Tire Junior Citizenship awards program. It's a program which encourages our youth to perform acts of volunteerism and community service. It also helps build teamwork and self-pride among our youth. For their efforts they receive acknowledgement and rewards. After just completing the first year, I'm proud to say that 34 of the 38 schools performed 175 acts of citizenship in our community that they have benefited from.

I believe that my background has helped me prepare to be an involved and community-minded asset to the ONTC. I'm pleased to be here today to answer any questions you may have for me.

The Chair: We commence this time with the New Democratic Party.

Mr Martin: I'm from Sault Ste Marie, so I understand the ONTC very well. We lost one of our more important corporate citizens when norOntair was wound down by the present government five or six years ago, and we have gone on to experience some of the downside of that in a pretty major way. What's your understanding of the role of the ONTC, the history, the background, why it was put in place in the first place, and its present role?

Mr Lamont: Since finding out about the ONTC, the research that I've seen is that the primary focus was to open the north and provide an opportunity for economic growth in northeastern Ontario. That was the original focus of the ONTC.

Mr Martin: And what's the focus today?

Mr Lamont: Pretty well the same: to provide quality service in transportation and telecommunications and to provide to the public in northeastern Ontario a viable transportation and telecommunications network.

Mr Martin: In your view, is it doing that?

Mr Lamont: From everything I've read, I don't think anyone has the view that it's providing the service that they intend it to be, and that's probably why there has been such controversy and why there have been studies on what's the best approach to take with the ONTC. From what I've seen, even the management and the union reps are supportive that the service needs to be improved. I think that's the number one focus.

Mr Martin: What would you bring to the table in terms of direction, ideas and what you think should be done?

Mr Lamont: First, I don't have a strong opinion yet because I haven't got enough background, and I believe the only way I can really add value to any commission or board is, first, to get informed. Once I'm informed, then I'm going to bring a business perspective. Being a business operator and living in North Bay, the primary focus I'm going to have is on what's good for the economy of North Bay and area and what makes sense from a business perspective. I'm not a telecommunications expert or a transportation expert, but I am a local businessman who has been involved in various committees, and I do contribute when I'm on committees. I think I would support that the service has to be improved. That would be the number one focus, as well as maintaining jobs.

Mr Martin: Certainly I don't think anybody up there doesn't agree with that. I guess I was hoping you'd be a bit more specific in that this issue has been front and centre, certainly in North Bay, but across the north for quite some time now. Your mayor has been quite vocal and clear on where he stands, I would think, on where this needs to go. You're absolutely right: the unions have banded together with many local businesspeople to come up with an alternative to simply privatizing the thing or winding it down. The fears over the last number of years have gone from one extreme to another in terms of what might happen—you're a business person in North Bay—the impact on the north of that vehicle not being there.

We in the north, as you know, have experienced a shrinkage in our economy over the last five or six years. The population in my own town dropped from 81,000 to now below 75,000 since 1996—serious, serious economic problems in my own community, in Algoma and across the north. When the northern transportation commission was first put in place, it was envisioned at the time by some of the people who had a hand in it that it would be an economic engine, a driver, a vehicle, to look at economic diversification and one of those things that would take some of the cyclical nature out of the northern economy.

Have you put your mind to any of that at all in coming forward and offering yourself and taking on this challenge?

Mr Lamont: Actually, when I first looked at the ONTC, I did try to get as much background as I could. But, as you're probably aware, there's not a lot that has been said about the proposals that have been put forward. I know there are two at least that the commission has

looked at. I know they haven't rushed through this, because I think the issue has been around since 1999, when they first started to investigate what was right to improve the service and the situation with the ONTC. I know that the ONTC has been made privy to both sides, or three sides, of this argument and, as far as I understand, they've put forth to the government their recommendation. I don't know what that recommendation is, but I believe it has gone forward to the government and they're just waiting to see whether what they put forward has been accepted.

1210

I would think that the people who are on the commission have looked at all the options, whether it's right to privatize or not, and anything else that has been brought forward to them, from either the study that was done by KPMG or from, I think, the internal business group or solutions group from the management in the union, that they're considering all the options and putting forth their best recommendation.

I think that until you're on the commission, you really don't get the background and the information that can help you determine which way is the right way to take this. This is a big step, whatever is decided, and it's something they haven't moved on quickly and are taking their time doing due diligence to look at all the options. That's what I support. I think you've got to look at all the options when you're going to make this kind of decision.

Mr Martin: I am very concerned about the economy of the north and anything that would be done to take another vehicle away that we need. We need all the help we can get and all the vehicles we can get, and we need everybody on board as we try to turn this thing around. I guess, in making an appointment as important as an appointment to the transportation commission, I need to know and I need to feel comfortable that that person understands the very critical nature of the work that is to be done.

The decision to wind down norOntair some five or six years ago was made with the premise that once they shut down norOntair—I think you understand that norOntair connected every major community in the north in a way that was coordinated and left everybody feeling confident that safety and all of the things that you want to have in place when you're looking at air service were there.

Given the nature of the economy that we're in today, I think you would understand as well as I do that transportation, particularly for northern Ontario, is essential—all forms of transportation. We need to be part of the global economy and we need to be there today, not tomorrow, if we're going to be able to take advantage.

We were told by the government—I wasn't convinced—that the private sector would simply come in and pick up the slack once norOntair disappeared. Well, it hasn't and now airports like Kirkland Lake—I was there a year and half ago—have virtually shut down, for all intents and purposes, and Wawa is struggling to stay alive. Once those airports lose their commercial activity,

they also lose their accreditation and so they lose their air ambulance capacity as well.

That was a decision that was made rather lightly and to the detriment of the north. Given what's happened and the \$5 million a year that was being spent by government, which in my view isn't a lot when you consider the importance, the contribution and the investment it made in the northern economy, what would your advice at this point be to the government if that decision were back on the table again?

Mr Lamont: That's something that I haven't really researched, to be able to give it a proper decision. Obviously, my biggest focus as a local businessman is to make sure that the north is economically viable and it's got growth and that any decision that's made is going to support jobs and economic growth. As far as the airline, I'm sorry, I haven't got background even to comment on that. I wasn't privy to the decision there or fully understand the implications of either doing it or not doing it. All I can tell you is that, for the ONTC, I would become involved and I would become educated as to both the pros and the cons. But as far as I know, the decision has already been put forward to the government for its ruling on that.

Mr Martin: And you would just roll with whatever came down, no matter what the impact or the effect on North Bay or the rest of the north?

Mr Lamont: Whatever the decision is, I'm going to work the best I can to make sure that it has the most positive impact on North Bay and the north. That's the only thing I can do, coming in at this stage.

Mr Martin: One of the options is that they just simply close it down and return to relying on bus service up and down that Highway 11 corridor. Would that be acceptable to you?

Mr Lamont: Until I saw the studies, I couldn't comment.

Mr Martin: That doesn't give me much confidence, then, that you really understand the importance of that facility to the north or the very difficult, difficult circumstances that every one of those communities along that Highway 11 corridor is experiencing at the moment. I mean, Kirkland Lake is damned near on its deathbed right now, and to in any way, shape or form diminish the little bit of service they now have by way of that railroad seems to me to be of critical importance. I guess it surprises me that you don't have a view, in front of this appointment that's probably going to be made here today.

Mr Lamont: No, I think what I said is that any decision that's made has to improve the service. I think I've heard that from both the government side and from the management and union sides. So any decision that's made isn't going to hurt the north; it's going to help the north.

Mr Martin: But we heard from this government back five or six years ago when they wiped out and closed down norOntair that it was actually going to improve service. Our experience is that it hasn't.

Mr Lamont: Well, if you're asking me what I would do, I would make sure that I could do everything I can to make sure that didn't happen, that the service was improved, which is the ultimate goal of any change that's going to be made here.

The Chair: That concludes your time, Mr Martin, just when you were on a roll, unfortunately. We now move to the government caucus.

Mr Johnson: We'll waive our time.

The Chair: The government caucus has waived its time. We'll move to the official opposition.

Mr Gravelle: Good afternoon, Mr Lamont. I'm going to try to pin you down as well, if I can, in terms of the line of questioning that Mr Martin was asking, because it is very important to us. I'm a member from northwestern Ontario, but I can tell you this is an issue for all northerners in terms of us finding a way to keep those jobs in North Bay and to keep the ONTC going and, particularly, the Ontario Northland railway.

What I guess I want to ask you is, you are coming in at a peculiar time, there's no question. The internal solutions group has put its position forward. Its position still isn't public in terms of what they are recommending precisely, and it's gone to cabinet. But I do think it's fair to ask you, as a member of the business community and obviously as a prominent member of the business community in North Bay, were you part of the group that is trying to save the ONTC and trying to save Ontario Northland? Had you been involved in it previously, at least as part of the process, before this position came open?

Mr Lamont: No, I was not involved, either pro or negative.

Mr Gravelle: So how would it have come about that you were invited—were you invited to fill this position? This is truly a sensitive position, and I trust you understand our probing on this.

Mr Lamont: Sure.

Mr Gravelle: You're going to be in a position of some influence, and we're making a decision that clearly could impact the north from an economic point of view in a profound way. So we're obviously very curious: how did you come to be sitting before us today?

Mr Lamont: I guess it started about six months ago. When I got off the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association board, I looked at what I could do in lieu of being on that committee. I voiced an interest to local businessmen in town and also to my local MPP that one thing I enjoyed about being on other boards was being involved in helping form strategic and tactical directions on boards. I put my name out, saying that this is something I was looking to expand my horizons into. Obviously, half of the horizons would be through either the public sector or the private sector. When I put my name up, it wasn't for the ONTC board, because I didn't know there was an opening, to be quite honest with you. When an opening became available, our local MPP knew of my wishes to get involved in service, either a public company or private. He thought this would be a good fit for me and

suggested that I take a look at the ONTC board as an option to get into, albeit very controversial. Because most of the employees of ONTC are from North Bay and I'm from North Bay, I think it is a very good fit from a business perspective for me to be there.

Mr Gravelle: I would certainly agree, presuming of course that your goals are to try and keep the operation running, with the employees staying there.

You say your MPP—are you talking about Mr Harris or Mr McDonald.

Mr Lamont: Mr McDonald.

Mr Gravelle: So this would have been just a couple of months ago, then?

Mr Lamont: Very recent, yes.

Mr Gravelle: So that's how that happened. Were you a supporter of Mr McDonald?

Mr Lamont: Yes.

1220

Mr Gravelle: Are you member of the Conservative Party, then?

Mr Lamont: Actually, I don't know if you'd call me a member of the Conservative Party. I bought a membership at his—

The Chair: Nomination.

Mr Lamont: Nomination, yes.

Mr Gravelle: Thank you, Mr Chair.

What this leads me to, obviously, is that—and I think it's a fair question; the ONTC position is a very sensitive one. It's really important what positions you're going to take on this, and I would think Mr McDonald, as a new member, would very much be conscious of that as well. Have you discussed this with him? Once it was determined you would be pursuing this agency position, did you discuss the ONTC, and does Mr McDonald express a position himself? Obviously, as a local member, it's pretty important that he is strongly supportive of what we're trying to achieve here as well. I would presume you've had some discussions with him about the ONTC; at least I would hope you have.

Mr Lamont: Oh yes, for him to have asked me if I would be interested in sitting on that board. He has told me a little bit about what is currently going on but, truly, after I agreed to go on, I got most of the information from someone here at the Legislative Assembly. That's where I got most of my information.

Mr Gravelle: But Mr McDonald offered this particular position to you, I guess?

Mr Lamont: He suggested that this might be a good fit for me and asked me if I would consider looking at it, and that's what I did. I considered looking at it and, because of the importance to North Bay, I think it's one that I can show great interest in and have first-hand knowledge of.

Mr Gravelle: How do you feel about the fact that with the Ontario Northland, the railway in particular, there's a long history and I think it's an important operation—I think we've got about 600 jobs in North Bay in terms of ONTC altogether. What is your position on the fact that railways frequently do need a certain

subsidy? Do you view that subsidy as something that—I'd like your thoughts on how you view whatever form of funding is needed to keep it going.

I think you're quite right. We need to have some improvements in the service in order to attract more people to the service itself. One, how do you feel about that, and two, how important do you think it is to maintain the railway?

Mr Martin did bring up an interesting point. I mean, we certainly remember norOntair. A lot of us as members fought hard to keep it going in our communities and were told, the way it ended up, "Don't worry, the private sector will come on in," and they just didn't and they just don't. But we still think it's the service that's extremely important and we feel the same thing about the ONR. So I'm very curious as to how important you think it is as well.

Mr Lamont: From what I've read, from the two studies that were done—the little bit that has been made public—the thinking is that the service has to be improved, and whether that be through coach or through rail is up for debate, I guess. But the bottom line is that the service to the north has to be improved from what it is today because the customer base is declining with the current system they have today. I think it went from 95,000 users to 75,000 or something like that, and when that happens that means something has to change. From what the reports are saying, the studies that have been done, the little bit I have seen on it, it's due to service.

Mr Gravelle: When you say "coach," you mean bus, don't you?

Mr Lamont: Yes.

Mr Gravelle: I think it's important for people to understand that. But how strongly do you feel about the railway itself and the actual passenger rail service? Would you be prone to saying you think there should be some government support to make sure that service is improved? I am trying to pin you down specifically in terms of your thoughts on the passenger rail service, which I think is pretty vital to maintain in order to keep those jobs there. I really am curious about your position on this.

Mr Lamont: I really have no solid position on whether or not subsidies are necessary. From what I understand, most railways do get a subsidy because they can't operate without one. But as far as whether it's the right amount, needs more, needs less, I think until I get made more informed, it would inaccurate for me to make a comment.

Mr Gravelle: Have you spoken to anyone who is involved with the ISG, the internal solutions group, which is the management of the ONTC and ONR and the unions, and of course many business communities? Certainly the municipalities are hoping that we can—whether it's the northeastern phenom or the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, we're all supporting and trying to keep this going. So have you spoken to anybody who's involved with the ISG? I'd be surprised if you hadn't, I guess.

Mr Lamont: No, I have not.

Mr Gravelle: You haven't?

Mr Lamont: No.

Mr Gravelle: OK. Well, it does seem odd. Yeah, well it's—

Mr Lamont: As you pointed out, it's been very recent since this was brought to my attention to be involved in the ONTC—a matter of weeks, actually. I thought, with the fact that there have already been two studies done, the best thing I could do as a contributor would be first to get informed before I made any solid decisions on positions that I would be taking. So I'm going in there with an open mind. I'm not going in there with a solid view. I think the one thing that's worse than having no opinion is having one that's ill-informed, and I don't want to have an ill-informed opinion. I don't think you would want me to have that, sitting on this commission.

Mr Gravelle: I appreciate that, but I must say I think it's rather unusual that somebody would be appointed to a position as clearly sensitive as this one—a lot is going on, and to have a person not particularly informed, not having a position, leads me to believe that there is a position out there that Mr McDonald or somebody has expressed to you from a government perspective—at least a prejudice, shall I say, without being the least bit rude—that somehow there has been an indication to you from those who put you forward that there is a sort of position that they're moving toward. Obviously, if that's the case, I'd like to know that. But it seems hard to believe that there isn't, in that you continually say, "I'm not particularly informed about it." It seems odd that they would be putting you in that position without having some kind of thought as to which direction they were going in.

Mr Lamont: No. That is definitely not what has happened here. I've looked at the press clippings on only the two positions that are out there and there's not a lot of information. I guess it's behind closed doors that this decision has been made and it will be made public once the government has had a chance to look at the option put forward to them from the ONTC. The ONTC, as far as I know, is the only one that has been made fully versed to the internal solutions group, what their recommendation is. I haven't seen anything on that.

Mr Gravelle: I know that's true.

Mr Lamont: I don't know what they're recommending, so it's unfair to comment. What management and the union have put forward, is it completely different from what the KPMG study is? I don't know.

Mr Gravelle: As one of the leaders in the business community, as you clearly are with the Canadian Tire franchise, you must have heard from your customers—let alone that the business community itself has taken a position very strongly in support of keeping the ONTC in public hands and not privatizing it. Can you tell us what your position is related to that? In precise terms—I'm running out of time and I apologize—in terms of the business community, have you been involved with the

business community and their fight to basically keep the jobs in the north?

Mr Lamont: What I've said is that I support the initiative to improve the service and maintain or enhance jobs. Whatever solution gives us that is what I'm going to be supporting.

Mr Gravelle: OK. Thank you.

The Chair: That completes the questioning of this witness. Thank you very much, Mr Lamont.

VICKIE CAMPBELL

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Vickie Campbell, intended appointee as member, Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.

The Chair: Our final intended appointee today is Vickie Campbell, intended appointee as member, Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Welcome to the committee, Ms Campbell. You have an opportunity, should you see fit, to make an initial statement to the committee and then there will be questions from members of the committee.

Ms Vickie Campbell: Thank you, Mr Chair. I would like to take this opportunity to first say that I'm honoured to have been asked to serve on the Ontario Council of Regents. I'm thankful to the executive director, Ian McArdle, for asking me to participate.

At this time I'd like to add a few points about my background. I was raised in St Thomas, Ontario, and graduated as an average student from high school. I turned down a US athletic scholarship in equestrian riding and the opportunity to attend university. I ended up on the steps of Humber College with the only skill I had, which was riding. The equestrian course proved unsuitable but the alternatives available in general business courses provided me with choices, with the end result of a marketing diploma. I am a product of the college system and believe that my education assisted in opening doors to employment that gave me a future to build skills for success from my first position to my present one.

In 1998 I was bestowed with the humbling experience of becoming a nominee for the Premier's Award for Business. It is an honour to have your community recognize your success. This experience has given me the opportunity to give back and I am very keen to participate. The position I have been given at the hall of fame at Humber College has most recently given me the responsibility of providing advice to students. An opportunity to be a mentor is another honour.

1230

My business experience brings a hard-working individual who likes to succeed. My career has been full of being on top of my game, a leader in sales and sales management, and advancing into starting a business from the simple beginning of me and an answering machine to president of a leading company in the moving industry.

My experience includes negotiating contracts with a newly purchased company that had a 20-year tie with the Teamsters union. I served as chair for the York Business Alliance at York University for three years, with two main goals: to build a partnership between business and the university, and to raise scholarship funds.

I have been successful at buying and selling small to medium-sized businesses, acted as director on the board of our movers' association, and I am presently president of several related companies, some of which provide the challenge of being in a situation where they are shrinking and seasonal markets and still maintaining profits. In addition, I take an active role in volunteering with charitable organizations. These are some of my strengths.

My company is a leading member of Canada's largest van line, United Van Lines. United has been earmarked by a number of magazines as a top privately owned Canadian company. My company has been featured on shows such as Silverman Helps as an example of the quality that consumers should expect, as well as being nominated for a gold Consumer's Choice Award for several years running. All of my companies are ISO-certified, making the group the most unique group of companies in the Canadian moving industry.

I believe I have been approached to participate for my success in my business practices in difficult situations and my genuine interest in the continued efforts of the education system.

On a personal note, I am a mother of two fine boys coming into the new system. This is enough of a reason, as far as I'm concerned, to be giving back to the community.

In closing, I would work diligently on this council to see that the community college system continues to find success with the new challenges ahead. I appreciate your time and the opportunity to be before this committee.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We now move to questioning, and it will be the government party.

Mr Wettlaufer: Ms Campbell, welcome to the committee today. I note that you were chair of the board at York University from 1998 to 2000. I would think this has given you more than ample insight into post-secondary education in Ontario. I wonder if this was perhaps what prompted your interest in the council of regents.

Ms Campbell: You're right; it has given me some insight. I know how hard it is to work with business and to create the funds. There's never enough money. So yes, I know, I guess, what is involved in getting involved in this particular committee.

Mr Wettlaufer: I would be interested in your feeling about university versus colleges of applied arts and technology. There's no real reason for this; I'm just interested in your present understanding of the two.

Ms Campbell: Well, I guess from my own experience I would have to speak to the fact that community college was the right thing for me. I declined university because I didn't know what I wanted to do. Community college gave me a direction and I guess an opportunity to find

what I wanted and what I liked to do, which created my success. So for me, community college was the right choice. But I think university as well for some people is also the right thing. It's a very hard thing to direct youth as to which one is the best one for you, but certainly I think community college, when you're still questioning where you might want to go, is a direction that I would say you should try first. University can always come after.

Mr Wettlaufer: And certainly from your point of view, operating the type of business that you do, a college of applied arts and technology was probably very appropriate.

Ms Campbell: It was, I guess, from a practical—when I look at some of the professors I had, it certainly helped me gain the knowledge I needed to do what I did in life.

Mr Wettlaufer: Your company not only is recognized as being one of the largest but also one of the finest companies, and I compliment you on that. It has an excellent reputation, and I would say that you're probably a reason for that, the position you hold. You direct it; you direct its management. What kind of insight do you think that would give you on the council of regents?

Ms Campbell: The business I'm in is very high in capital and very low in profits. So every day you're looking for money to make it go further and to do a better job. I don't see the college system as being much different. They always need more money in order to make the services better. It's our future, it's our children, so it's a very important issue. You've got to find a way to find that money to improve upon the services. I think I have that experience in my business, but when you have children, you become even more passionate.

Mr Wettlaufer: One of the college presidents, John Tibbits at Conestoga, is a very close personal friend of mine. He's quite an entrepreneur. Do you know any of the other presidents? Would you describe them as being entrepreneurial as well?

Ms Campbell: I couldn't tell you that I really know anyone personally. I think that's one of the drawbacks. I probably have been available to the college and not used as effectively as I could. I guess I've noticed that from this particular issue, being in this hall of fame at Humber College. Students are now reaching out, looking for advice and calling me. I think that's certainly a way that colleges could better utilize the community and bring business closer to the colleges, to want them to not only help financially but on a personal basis as well.

Mr Wettlaufer: Thank you.

The Chair: That completes the questions. I will then move to the official opposition.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good morning, Ms Campbell. You have probably been told that you might expect a question about your political affiliation, so perhaps we can get that out of the way. First, are you a member of a political party?

Ms Campbell: No, I'm not.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You indicated in your comments earlier that you were asked to serve. Can you repeat the name of the individual who suggested you might consider this position?

Ms Campbell: That was Ian McArdle. He's the executive director of the council.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Do you know him personally?

Ms Campbell: No, I don't.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I see. I would like to ask, do you think that colleges in Ontario are underfunded?

Ms Campbell: There's never enough money. There are always things that you can enhance, as far as I'm concerned, when it comes to education. Yes, I do believe that the colleges are going to be short on funds, especially with what they're going to be facing, not next year but the following year, with two groups of students graduating and going there. They don't know what they're facing.

Mrs Dombrowsky: The double cohort—

Ms Campbell: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: —when we will experience two graduating classes entering the college facilities. Are you aware that in the most recent budget—and one would expect that a responsible government would begin to prepare for the double cohort—the Minister of Finance did allocate additional monies for post-secondary?

Ms Campbell: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You're familiar with that. You would be familiar with the \$75-million figure that was announced in the June 2002 budget. Are you aware that, of the additional \$75 million, only \$5 million went to colleges?

Ms Campbell: Yes, I'm aware of that.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Are you aware that 40% of high school students who go to post-secondary go to colleges? So while they receive 40% of the students, they have only received 5% of the additional resources that the government has allocated for operating funds.

Ms Campbell: I have read that, I guess, on some of those materials. I wouldn't be able to tell you and quote all of those percentages, but I guess I am aware that the colleges don't get as much money as universities.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Does that surprise you, shock you, disappoint you? Do you have a particular reaction about that, as a college graduate?

Ms Campbell: Yes. Even as an individual, you question where those funds go and why and you never really seem to get to the bottom of why that is. I'm hoping that, being on this council, I will be able to get to the bottom of why that happens. Where does the money go? Those are answers I think the public wants as well. It is. Why is it that way?

Mrs Dombrowsky: And I don't disagree that it certainly does deserve an answer, but just as a college graduate, do you have a personal reaction to the fact that colleges only received \$5 million of a \$75-million increase in allocation?

1240

Ms Campbell: I guess I know that it's not going to be enough money. I know that for sure. I also believe that they still don't know what they're facing. So even with the money that has been allocated to education, I still feel there will be a major problem with that.

I have a son who will be facing that. He will be graduating at that time.

Mrs Dombrowsky: The Globe and Mail has reported that over the past decade, college enrolment has increased by 34%. Over that same period of time, government financing for those students has dropped by 40%. Do you have any comment to make about the challenge you believe that then presents for students?

Ms Campbell: Again, it comes back to being able to pay their tuition, and that becomes more difficult for them. I believe the figures were that it went from \$5,000 to \$2,300, and I believe it's \$3,200 now, back up to that figure. Obviously that's going to be more challenging. They're going to have to depend more on jobs, parents, scholarships. Certainly there are areas that I believe the business community can help in.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Are you aware that the government has provided no additional resources for colleges to double the number of scholarships or bursaries that will be offered in the double-cohort year?

Ms Campbell: Yes, I am aware of that.

Mrs Dombrowsky: It is obvious, then, that for students who would want to be enrolled in a college and who might see as a means necessary to do that applying for a scholarship or bursary that that option is significantly reduced at the time of the double cohort.

I'm sure, given your experience in the field of business, you are aware of the crisis in many trade sectors right now in the province of Ontario in terms of shortage of skilled workers.

Ms Campbell: Yes. I feel that daily.

Mrs Dombrowsky: We're entering a period where the baby boomers are retiring, where we need more skilled workers in the workforce, and in my opinion we have put some significant roadblocks in the way of young people who would want to be trained in those trades by reducing the support and not appropriately supporting students who want to enter college.

I make these points for you today not that you've had anything to say about these realities, but when I review the mandate, the role, of the council of regents, you are an advisory body to the minister and you advise on policy. Do you think that as part of an advisory body where you advise the minister on policy affecting colleges and you monitor post-secondary educational institutions in other jurisdictions, it would be important to remind the minister, for example, that in Ontario we have already the lowest per capita funding for college students in Canada? Do you think it would be important to remind the minister of that?

Ms Campbell: From the heart, my immediate reaction would be to say yes, but from a point of view of sitting on a board that is offering advice, I think you have to

have all the facts in front of you as to what's taking place before you're giving any advice.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I agree, but I guess that's my question to you: do you think that would be an important fact to remind the minister and to advise the minister of? You have a responsibility to monitor developments in post-secondary institutions in other jurisdictions. When we consider that we are the economic engine of Canada and we have experienced a period of strong economic growth, do you not think it's really important to remind the minister of the value of investing in training our workforce? Do you not think our very poor showing in terms of per capita funding for students, given the fact that we have a crisis in the trades sector, is an important issue to remind the minister about, and that while it's not described in your role, Ms Campbell, you have a responsibility to advocate for more resources and for fair resources for students in colleges? That's what I need to understand today from you. Is that something you think you would be prepared to do as an appointed member to this council?

First of all, do you recognize there is a school of thought out there that would say that colleges are not getting a fair shake, and that you have a responsibility to be a cheerleader for the students who want to access the colleges and say they are not getting the financial support they need and deserve and that our province needs?

Ms Campbell: Having I guess been given all the information, I certainly would be an advocate for the students getting their fair share, and it should be a fair share. We talked about some of the funding earlier. It's an important issue to me. Why did only that little part of money go to the colleges? I need to know why to be able to really dig in. But you're right that I would be an advocate of the students, by all means.

The Chair: Your time has expired. We now move to the third party.

Mr Martin: I'm interested in how you came to entertain this appointment if you don't know the person who invited you to the position. How did you find out about it? I note, as did Mr Wettlaufer, that you're serving on the board of governors at York University. Was that actually the board of governors itself? There is a little asterisk—

Ms Campbell: No. It was called the York Business and Professional Alliance. I am no longer on the board. I was a chair for them. It was a board set up to build York University's strength with business and also to build scholarship funds. They found they didn't have the ability themselves to build on business, so they started this board. I was in on the implementation period of that and virtually was on the board for about three years. I have resigned. I felt that new blood was in order. We set our goals and we met our goals of building on business as well as building their scholarship funds. We met all those financial goals. But I'm no longer on that board.

Mr Martin: How did the connection with the ACAATO come about then?

Ms Campbell: You're asking about how I was asked to serve on this board?

Mr Martin: Yes.

Ms Campbell: It was Ian McArdle who called me. He told me he had seen my name on the Premier's Award for Business, and because of the fact that I was a product, obviously, of the community college, he felt that would be valuable to the board. I think it was pretty straightforward. The fact of my success in business through the community college could be advantageous to the board itself.

Mr Martin: It certainly will be, in my view. What else do you think you will bring to the job, to the position?

Ms Campbell: I think I'm a very fair individual. I'm honest. I will treat things that way, as I have in the past. I have negotiated contracts with Teamsters. That in itself is a gruelling and sometimes harsh thing to do, but I believe in treating people fairly. I think, with the passion I have about giving back to the community, that in this stage of my life the community college is a place where I have value.

Mr Martin: What role do you see the community colleges playing in the evolution of our communities and of the province? When they were first put in place in 1965, there was obviously a challenge there to provide better and more training of a more technical nature to young people as we looked at the challenges facing us. At this point, in 2002, what are the big challenges?

Ms Campbell: From an employer's standpoint, I know that we often use the community college as a place to find students coming out into the workforce. I certainly would maintain doing that. It's one of the first places we go. We help in some of their programs when they have their work—I forget what they call them now. They have certain times when they work and then they go back to school and we certainly place students and do that sort of thing. I'd like to see that grow. I think that's an area that could certainly help the community college to get practical people. I think that's one of the things that is very important coming out of community college that maybe a lot of employers don't realize. You get a very practical person who can do the job because they've been, I think, somewhat closer to how it works rather than the theory. As you know, universities are more theory than practical types of study.

1250

Mr Martin: Basically, colleges are about students. What are some of the bigger challenges for students, as you have children and you anticipate the future? How do you think community colleges might readjust to deal with them?

Ms Campbell: I'm not sure I have all the answers to that, but I guess from my own personal experience—I have two sons who are going to come into the post-secondary system very soon. They are unsure of what they really want to do in life, and I understand that. When you're 18, I don't know how people really know what

they want to do in life. I think the community college helps students do that.

I think there's a lot of fear from students when they're going to be facing competition to get in, and that's a challenge in itself. The fact that I don't know whether someone has—and I guess this is something I'd like to know more of. Have they planned for what they're facing well enough, because they're going to have this influx of students they have never had before? I've seen that they're going to build facilities, new equipment, but again, I don't see what I would consider to be the business aspect of bringing more employers closer to that to assist in those things.

I would say, even in the small communities where you have a college, there are probably businesses all the way around those colleges that are not having their resources used well enough to help that college. It doesn't have to be a big part of someone's business to help out their own community college that's around the street from them; they can help out in many ways. I think that's an area that could certainly work for community colleges, because community colleges in themselves have their own unique little worlds wherever they might be, having to do with whatever part of Ontario they're in. They're very unique in themselves.

Possibly looking at different courses being placed and done in different colleges is another avenue that I guess I would open up as a discussion—solutions like that.

Mr Martin: What's your view on the impact of the ever-increasing level of tuition on students? Will that be a detriment, or how do we deal with that? We hear, certainly from student groups particularly, of the tremendous challenge that presents and the level of debt that students are coming out of college and university with now.

Ms Campbell: I guess I can speak about a program I worked on at York. It was a program where we developed the ability for a small business to be able to produce scholarship money. It wasn't huge amounts of money, so one of the things I said was, "Let's get more of it from more people, because a small business can afford \$2,500 as a scholarship in their name." We worked on some of those areas and it was very successful. We had a plan on how we went out and did that, and that worked for York University. I would certainly say that, for the community colleges, that should be able to work too.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That completes your questions, Mr Martin, and that completes all the questions. You may step down at this time.

Ms Campbell: Thank you.

The Chair: We have three items to deal with. The first item is going to be the consideration of the appointments; the second will be a couple of extensions we will require for people who understandably were unable to make it today; and the third will be the next date, which the committee will likely leave to the sub-committee, and I will remind them of the chastisement by our friend Mr Johnson.

First of all, we will go to Bill Daverne, intended appointee as member, Town of Greater Napanee Police Services Board. Any discussion—sorry, a motion?

Mr Johnson: I move concurrence on Bill Daverne.

The Chair: Concurrence has been moved by Mr Johnson. Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next appointee we have already handled and that vote has taken place. That was Pina Sauro.

We will then move to Vickie Campbell, intended appointee as member, Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.

Mr Johnson: I move concurrence on Vickie Campbell.

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

The next intended appointee is Ramona Pang, intended appointee as member, Ontario Film Review Board.

Mr Johnson: I move concurrence on Ms Pang.

The Chair: Mr Johnson has moved concurrence. Any discussion? If not, I'll call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

The last one is the intended appointee as member, Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, Mr Paul Lamont.

Mr Johnson: I move concurrence on Paul Lamont.

The Chair: Mr Johnson has moved concurrence. Any discussion of this?

Mr Gravelle: I just want to say that I do not feel comfortable supporting Mr Lamont. This is a very important position, particularly at this time. There are some crucial decisions to be made related to the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, particularly as it relates to jobs and the economy in northern Ontario and in North Bay specifically.

I was somewhat taken aback by Mr Lamont's inability to be more specific in precisely how he felt about it. I also thought it was peculiar that even though he has been living in North Bay since 1994 and is therefore quite familiar with the issue, and has talked to his member, Mr McDonald, about the position—in fact, Mr McDonald invited him to do it—it seemed odd to me that they hadn't had some discussions—at least he wouldn't acknowledge having discussions—that would have indicated which way he was going on the issue. So I have some concerns about that. As much as I think he did try to say he was going to do what was best for the community, it disturbed me that he wasn't able to be more specific in terms of how he felt about this. As a result, I don't feel comfortable supporting him.

Mr Martin: This is a really important appointment, and I think Mr Gravelle and I probably feel it most directly because of the constituencies we represent.

The economy of northern Ontario, at a time when the Ontario economy as a whole has been growing, has shrunk, and it has shrunk significantly, to the point where we're all losing our youngest and brightest to other

places. They are leaving. In Sault Ste Marie, our population, from 1996 to 2001, has dropped by about 6,000 people, from 81,000 down to under 75,000, and that's troubling.

I think when you consider both the lack of attention to the north by this government and the vehicles it has taken away from us, that the Northern Ontario Development Corp, norOntair, which is really important in the global economy we live in today in terms of our ability to move and to have people come in and visit with us and talk about new opportunities, should go—the private sector sort of filling the void scenario that was painted didn't happen—the one vehicle left now that was put in place, interestingly enough, by a Conservative government in years past that understood the cyclical nature of the northern economy and knew that in order for it to be stable and to be able to attract the kind of investment we need to grow that economy, which continues to drive the provincial economy in some very significant way, was right then and is right now.

For the present appointee to come forward not really understanding any of that, the importance of that, the very critical nature of the decisions that are being made as we speak about the future of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, is troubling. So, like Mr Gravelle, I won't be supporting this appointment either and will be asking for a recorded vote.

1300

The Chair: Any further comment?

Mr Johnson: I'm thrilled and excited to be able to support the appointment of Paul Lamont. He belongs to a very progressive organization. The Canadian Tire Corp in my hometown is a valued and thriving business.

The Chair: Mr Gilchrist would agree with you.

Mr Johnson: Yes, I'm sure he would.

I think his background, his experience, his business acumen and so on will stand us in good stead because, as the members for Thunder Bay-Superior North and Sault Ste Marie have pointed out, this is an important position on a very important board.

I have listened to the member for Sault Ste Marie bring up the example of norOntair. I'm not sure that particular body needed all the financial support it did when it was dismantled, but if it did, it would need a heck of a lot more now. I'm not convinced that the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission should look at ways they can keep giving that body more grants and more support in view of the lack of public support for it.

I would like to point out two things: one is that I think they have to get out and look for opportunities to create more business for themselves. I think the members from Thunder Bay-Superior North and Sault Ste Marie can look to themselves. If I had a question to ask Mr Lamont, I would say, "What would it take for Canadian Tire Corp in the city of North Bay to use Ontario Northland Transportation to supply their store and the transportation needs they have?" I would put that challenge to those two northern members. Do you use the facilities of the

Ontario Northland Transportation Commission? They have passenger service.

Mr Martin: I used to use norOntair all the time, Bert.

Mr Johnson: I'm talking about the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission. They have a transportation system.

Mr Martin: It was part of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission.

Mr Johnson: What I'm getting to is that as a member of this committee and the Legislature, yes, it's an institution that deserves our support, but I also think we can't just let it accumulate support and give it more support and keep giving. I think what it needs is an entrepreneurial spirit that a man like this will bring to it, who can go out and say, "What can we do to make it attractive to Canadian Tire Corp"—and I'm just using that as an example, but other places—"to use that system, rather than whatever they're using now, so that it can support itself?"

I'm very pleased and excited to be able to support Mr Lamont to this commission.

The Chair: Any further discussion? If not, we've had a request for a recorded vote from Mr Martin. I will now call the vote on the intended appointee, Paul Lamont.

Ayes

Hardeman, Johnson, Mazzilli, Wettlaufer.

Nays

Dombrowsky, Gravelle, Martin.

The Chair: The motion is carried. The appointment is concurred in.

The next issue I have is a matter of a couple of extensions for people who were unable to be with us today. I'll ask our clerk to read those to us.

Clerk of the Committee (Mr Tom Prins): First we have Yvonne Weir, who is an intended appointee for the Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound and Timiskaming District Health Council. Originally, the appointment was for the meeting which should have taken place by July 7, but she was given a 30-day extension, which would expire August 6.

The second one is Graham Coveney, intended appointee for the Council of Colleges of Optometrists of Ontario. His time frame would expire July 28.

The Chair: Can I have motion in this regard?

Mr Johnson: Those can be extended a maximum of 30 days? That is my understanding.

The Chair: That's my understanding, a 30-day extension, yes.

Mr Johnson: Then I would move that they be extended 30 days.

The Chair: Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

The next date of the committee is probably best handled by the subcommittee. We would hope the sub-

committee will consult, as they are wont to do, with all members of the committee to see if they are available. And if we can avoid any special circumstances such as are existing today, that would be good. Even though this is the fastest I've ever gotten into Toronto, I think, it was a day of challenge for us, so we'll ask the subcommittee to do so. Mr Johnson, do you have a comment?

Mr Johnson: I was just going to say that in spite of the past performance, I'm willing to give the subcommittee one more chance.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Johnson.

Any further business to come before the committee? If not, I'll ask for a motion of adjournment.

Mr Gravelle has moved a motion of adjournment. All in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Thank you, members of the committee.

The committee adjourned at 1306.

CONTENTS

Tuesday 23 July 2002

Subcommittee reports	A-13
Intended appointments	A-13
Mr Bill Daverne	A-13
Ms Pina Sauro	A-17
Ms Ramona Pang	A-22
Mr Paul Lamont	A-25
Ms Vickie Campbell	A-29

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