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ISSN 1180-436X

**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

First Session, 38th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 38^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Thursday 4 December 2003

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Jeudi 4 décembre 2003

**Standing committee on
the Legislative Assembly**

Organization

**Comité permanent de
l'Assemblée législative**

Organisation

Chair: Linda Jeffrey
Clerk: Douglas Arnott

Présidente : Linda Jeffrey
Greffier : Douglas Arnott

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DE
L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Thursday 4 December 2003

Jeudi 4 décembre 2003

The committee met at 16:02 in committee room 1.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

Clerk of the Committee (Mr Douglas Arnott): Honourable members, welcome to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly. It is my duty to call upon you to elect a member as Chair of the committee. Are there any nominations, please?

Ms Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West): I'd like to nominate Linda Jeffrey as Chair and Mario Racco as Vice-Chair.

Clerk of the Committee: It would be at this point just one nomination at a time.

Ms Wynne: I'd like to nominate Linda Jeffrey as Chair.

Clerk of the Committee: Are there any further nominations? There being no further nominations, I declare Ms Jeffrey elected Chair.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair (Mrs Linda Jeffrey): Our first order of business is the election of a Vice-Chair. Are there any nominations?

Ms Wynne: I'd like to nominate Mario Racco as Vice-Chair.

The Chair: Any other nominations? I believe, Mr Racco, you are the Vice-Chair. Congratulations.

Mr Mario G. Racco (Thornhill): Thank you.

APPOINTMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEE

The Chair: We need an appointment of a subcommittee as our next item.

Ms Wynne: I'd like to move that a subcommittee on committee business be appointed to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair, or on the request of any member thereof, to consider and report to the committee on the business of the committee; and that the subcommittee be composed of the following members: the Chair as Chair, Mr Mario Sergio and Mr Hardeman; and that the presence of all members of the subcommittee is necessary to constitute a meeting.

The Chair: All those in favour? It's carried.

Committee, we have the offer of Mr Arnott to give us a short briefing. Would you care to have that happen now or would you prefer that at the next meeting?

Mr Mario Sergio (York West): We might as well do it now.

Clerk of the Committee: Members, I've placed before each of you a resource binder, which is a fairly complete overview of the recent work of the committee and the procedures that pertain to its work. I've also put at your place a copy of standing order 106, which is the basic term of reference of the committee, providing its mandate in several areas.

The committee is empowered either on its own initiative or at the request of the Speaker, or the direction of the House, to report to the House its observations on the standing orders and the procedures of the House and its committees. The committee also acts with oversight over the administration of the House and the provision of services to members. It also has a mandate to have oversight over the television broadcast system of the assembly. In addition, in the last Parliament it acquired a mandate, previously given to the standing committee on the Ombudsman, to have some oversight over the Ombudsman.

Over the course of the Parliament, the work of the committee can be considered to fall into four areas:

The committee may receive procedural referrals from the House. In the last Parliament, a major referral was to examine measures that would enhance the role of private members. The committee did produce a major report on that, which I will distribute to your offices.

The second category of business that the committee considers would be bills. That may be bills that would relate either to the Elections Act, or members' expenses or really to any matter that the committee is sent by the House. The last such bill was a private member's public bill: An Act to honour firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

The third area would be members' services. Some of the issues that the committee has looked at over the years: the television broadcast system, decorum in the House, the use of computers in the House, restoration of the Legislative Building and, finally, the committee also hears from time to time from the Speaker or the Clerk of the House with respect to the administration of the House.

Lastly, there is the additional mandate the committee was given with respect to the Ombudsman. It has been the case that the committee has met with the Ombudsman after the tabling of his or her annual report.

With the committee today are two other staff members who assist the committee: Andrew McNaught, immediately to the left of the Chair, is from the legislative research service. He does much of the research for the committee. Peter Sibenik, who is procedural clerk, research, from the journals and procedural research branch, is assigned to the committee whenever it is dealing with procedural issues. He assists the committee at that time. If either Andrew or Peter has anything to add to the briefing, I'm sure we would all be prepared to answer members' questions as well.

The Chair: Any questions?

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Can this committee change the standing orders?

Clerk of the Committee: The committee is an advisory committee in that it can consider those areas and then report to the House its recommendations. It's always the House that makes decisions on its governance, including its standing orders.

Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): If it's a 30-minute bell, we can finish what we need to do here today before we go.

Mr Sergio: If I may, have the times that the committee will meet on a regular basis already been established, or will this be decided later on by the subcommittee?

The Chair: I believe it has been established that it's Thursday afternoons.

Mr Hardeman: It has already been established?

The Chair: Would the subcommittee meet at different times outside the Thursday afternoons?

Clerk of the Committee: Yes, subcommittees can meet at whatever time the Chair calls it.

Mr Sergio: At the call of the Chair.

Mr Hardeman: The clerk mentioned the fact that there was a report prepared on the role of the Legislative Assembly and the members. That was done, obviously, prior to the election and it will come to the committee, as you mentioned. I wonder, for the benefit of all those who were not on the Legislative Assembly committee, which I believe would be the whole committee, if we could redo the research to make sure we can justify, or that the conclusions reached in the report are in fact justified by, the things they saw when they visited those places they went to in order to get this information for the report.

Interjection.

The Chair: Are you having difficulty answering that question, Mr Hardeman?

Clerk of the Committee: The last committee was given a special mandate to undertake its research toward its report and it would require permission of the House to duplicate that itinerary.

Mr Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr Clerk. I would suggest that that permission is likely not forthcoming.

The Chair: I think it would make for interesting reading. It's quite thick. I've already had a chance to start it.

Any other questions of staff? I have one question. It appears in past minutes that there has been an annual review of the broadcast services. Would that be something that this committee would do at the next meeting or something early in our mandate?

Clerk of the Committee: Certainly the committee could plan to do that perhaps through the recommendation of the subcommittee.

Mr Sergio: Is that something that this committee can initiate?

Clerk of the Committee: Yes.

The Chair: Any other questions? Would somebody move adjournment? We're adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1613.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Chair / Présidente

Mrs Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre / -Centre L)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr Mario G. Racco (Thornhill L)

Mrs Donna H. Cansfield (Etobicoke Centre / -Centre L)

Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford PC)

Mrs Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre / -Centre L)

Mr Jeff Leal (Peterborough PC)

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina ND)

Mr Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay-Atikokan L)

Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka PC)

Mr David Oraziotti (Sault Ste Marie L)

Mr Mario G. Racco (Thornhill L)

Mr Mario Sergio (York West / -Ouest L)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Ms Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West / -Ouest L)

Mr David Zimmer (Willowdale L)

Clerk / Greffier

Mr Douglas Arnott

Staff / Personnel

Mr Andrew McNaught, research officer
Research and Information Services