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Jeudi 16 février 2006

**Standing committee on
the Legislative Assembly**

Use of technology

**Comité permanent de
l'Assemblée législative**

Utilisation de la technologie

Chair: Bob Delaney
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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 16 February 2006

Jeudi 16 février 2006

The committee met at 1540 in committee room 1.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Chair (Mr. Bob Delaney): Good afternoon, everyone. We are convening here on this occasion to complete, I trust, our deliberations on the use of technology in the chamber and in the precinct.

We've had before us for some time the Proposed Outline of a Report by the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly on MPPs' Use of Portable Technology in the Chamber, but it should probably read "in the Precinct." It may be expeditious for us to let Peter Sibenik, our intrepid researcher who actually did—and let me say this on the record—stellar work on putting together this outline.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford): But no raise.

The Chair: No. We have to go to the Board of Internal Economy on a raise. Let's be clear: We're giving Peter a pat on the back and not on the wallet.

We'll let Peter walk us through, and let us see if we can come to a consensus on this and, as members, make our committee's material contributions to the advancement of life for members in the assembly.

Mr. Peter Sibenik: Before I go through the document, if I could refer you to another document that is at your place. It's called A Survey on the Use of Technology in Legislative Chambers in Other Parliamentary Jurisdictions. This is an updated version of a document that was left with the committee, I believe, in November. All that I've done in this document is added four more jurisdictions. Four more jurisdictions have responded to the survey, so that makes a total of 16 jurisdictions that have responded. Most allow some kind of portable technology, if only BlackBerries and PDAs, in the chamber. Most also allow notebooks. In fact, there would be 11 Canadian jurisdictions that allow notebooks. Nunavut is the only one that explicitly prevents members from using notebooks in their legislative chamber. So I just thought I'd preface my remarks with that particular document.

To the proposed outline, when I was drafting a document, I thought that, in view of the discussions the committee had the last time that the committee met, it might be helpful to put together a more fulsome document that sets out what a report by this committee could look like, so it is a more fulsome kind of a document, a more fulsome outline. As I go through this, perhaps if the

committee wants a more stripped-down version of its ultimate report, I'm sure it will let me know. This is a more structured document.

The first part of it, on page 1, is the introduction, which just sets out the fact that the committee has terms of reference from the Speaker. It considered the issues, it had meetings, it received input from the caucuses, and the committee is prepared to now report back to the Speaker.

I note that at the outset of the last meeting in November, the committee said that it thought it might be useful not just to focus on the chamber but also the wider precincts. I think there was a motion that carried at the outset of the previous meeting. So the reference to "chamber" in the actual title at the very top of the page could be changed to "precinct" if that's the wish of the committee, because that is what the committee decided the last time.

The second page of the document, if there's nothing on page 1, refers to the background, the problem why the issue is before the committee in the first place, namely the fact that, of course, the Speaker has referred the issue to the committee, but more broadly, because there have been incidents that have occurred in the chamber and in committee rooms in the past.

The Chair: If members have a question or a comment—and I know Mr. Sergio does—I think we can probably be fairly relaxed in the manner in which we contribute them. With the indulgence of the committee, if I have a few myself, which I do, if the committee doesn't mind, as none of this is particularly partisan, I can throw them in as well. Okay? Mr. Sergio had one comment.

Mr. Mario Sergio (York West): Maybe we should let the presentation be finished first, and then we can go to some questions. I have a couple of questions.

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): Actually, if there are questions as we go, it would be better. I'm assuming, at the end of it, once we've done that, there's no more reason to debate it, right?

The Chair: You've got it.

Mr. Marchese: Yes. Go ahead, Mario.

Mr. Sergio: While I was going to the additional members who have already responded to this already, I see the amount of money that they have spent to provide the wiring for each member is exorbitant. What would it cost to service each individual desk here in Ontario? Do

we have any idea? It goes from \$40,000 to \$90,000 service to each desk. That's a lot of money.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes. One of the recommendations of the committee the last time that it met was that it go with wireless access. It sort of forgoes the need for there to be a power outlet. There are some jurisdictions that do have power outlets at each member's desk. The House of Commons is a prime example of that. You can just plug in there. But it is a more expensive solution to a problem. I'm not sure what the thinking of the committee was with respect to going with the recommendation of wireless, Wi-Fi access, but it is a less expensive solution.

If the committee is interested, it could request the attendance of a staff member at the office of the assembly who has expertise in drafting an estimate for the more expensive solution of having an actual power outlet at members' desks.

Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka): Power and the connection for the Internet are two different things, are they not?

Mr. Sibenik: Yes.

The Chair: I would assume that what we're discussing here is network wiring and that the network cable, which runs about \$1 a foot, wouldn't be necessary if we're running a wireless access point. But should we choose to, running an electrical outlet is inexpensive.

Mr. Sergio: Mr. Chair, just to complete, in answer to Peter's remarks, I think it would help me if we could have a staffer here who could answer those questions, either wireless or wired. I would have difficulty if, at the end, we were to find out that, either way, to service each desk or person is around \$30,000 or \$40,000 each. I would have difficulty with that.

The Chair: This is all you need right here.

Mr. Sergio: I'm not sure about that.

Mr. Miller: It is my understanding that the committee had already decided—I missed the meeting—to go the wireless route. It would seem to me that that would be much cheaper and simpler.

The Chair: Yes. At our previous discussion we had in fact concurred that we would be going wireless and we had resolved the wireless route.

Mr. Marchese: Therefore, there is very little cost, right?

The Chair: Correct.

Mr. Sergio: Very little cost?

Interjection: Yes.

Mr. Marchese: Being on the list to speak, I just wanted to say that once we determine that this is an important function or a function that we want to get into, I think that's basically what we should be agreeing to, because as soon as you talk about attaching money to different things, that would be a reason why you publicly may want to do something or may not. I think we should stick to the point of saying, "Is it an important thing that is good for Legislative Assembly members to be able to do?" That would be the principle that I think we should be supporting, rather than the other way around.

The Chair: Mr. Hardeman.

Mr. Hardeman: Mr. Chair, I agree. We had our discussion when we started about the type of hookup we would have, which would be whether we would install all the cabling or go to the wireless. Everyone conceded to the fact that, of the two options, wireless would be considerably cheaper, but neither did we get any figures on what it would cost for either one. But I find that somewhat irrelevant. I think our committee's discussion is about whether we're going to move forward into the technological age. The actual money that it's going to cost, I would suggest, is the obligation of the Board of Internal Economy as to whether they think that at this point in time the money allows us to go into that age of technology.

We've been asked to deal with what the position should be on technology and whether it should or should not be allowed in the chamber, or outside the chamber, for that matter. I think we should be working on the process.

If anybody knew my background, you'd be the first to say that I'd never want to approve anything that we don't know the cost of, but I think really what we're asking for here is whether, as a function, we want to go into the technology age, and I think we should move forward on that, even though we don't have a cost. The best time to find the cost is once you've decided what it is you're looking for. There could be great variances in the type of equipment or the approach of hookup, so I think we should proceed with the equipment part of it and the direction and let the Board of Internal Economy decide how we pay for it.

1550

Mr. Bas Balkissoon (Scarborough–Rouge River): I just wanted to ask the question, because we went through a similar process at the city of Toronto. We hard-wired the council chamber, because upfront wireless may be cheaper, but as you change your laptops, you've got to make sure you buy that wireless modem and you have the equipment to work.

The other thing is, if you have wireless in one location for your computer, does it also work when you take it to your office and you hook directly into the network? To look at the added costs in the laptop versus a hard-wired system, the concern was also security. I know there's encryption today, but I've heard that people have been able to break into wireless systems a lot more easily than if they're hard-wired. I'm just asking; I'm not a technology expert.

The Chair: Thank you. Much of the discussion occurred before you were appointed to the committee. By the way, officially, welcome.

Mr. Balkissoon: Thank you.

The Chair: To very quickly synopsise: Prior to when you came on—members can correct me if I'm wrong—we had this discussion over the span of three or four meetings. We were sufficiently impressed with the security of WPA or even WEP wireless protocols. I remind you, of course, that the wired outlets in our building are completely unsecured; everything is transmitted in the

clear. For the last several years, every laptop and tablet made by every reputable manufacturer has wireless capability built into the motherboard, so certainly from the standpoint of implementation, it should be trivially easy. The only reason that a member might conceivably run into a problem is because they're still using an old computer which perhaps they may wish to think of an upgrade to.

Mr. Marchese: I do want to say, however, that if some of the members feel very strongly about something, we can delay the process and we can wait for the information and ask for it. If Bas has other concerns based on his experience that he wants a report on, we can delay this for as long as need be. I don't think we want to put anybody off, right?

The Chair: Of course, the usage of the technology is entirely at the discretion of the member anyway.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, but I didn't want our opinions to be able to override, one way or the other, any concern that members have.

The Chair: Agreed. Should we let Peter continue through the draft report?

Mr. Marchese: I'm not sure whether the other two members who have spoken have any other concerns based on what they've heard. Then we can move on.

Mr. Balkissoon: Carry on.

Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot): I just want to make a generic comment. Maybe it's product of age or maybe it's a product of experience. I worked here back in the mid-1970s. We didn't have cellphones, we didn't have computers and we didn't have the Internet. You actually did your research in the library, and you even played cards together on Friday nights. As one who was here then and is here now, I have a very real sense that the quality of the debate, the quality of the decision-making and the quality of the attention in the chamber was much higher then than it is today.

It's difficult. We had a meeting recently on a health care issue involving some seniors and there were some health care people who came—

Interjection.

Mr. McMeekin: I just want to say, we were having this meeting, and everyone at the meeting was playing with their BlackBerry. The only time the most senior person looked up at all was to say, "We can't do that." I've got to tell you, as an elected person, to actually have come to the meeting with the hope that we might get something done—and I know I'm a Luddite or whatever they're called. I use technology in my office. My real worry would be—and this happened in British Columbia, as I understand it—that it becomes code for, "Let's get the bullet points for debate into the House."

In British Columbia, they were actually asking questions, and the staffers were answering the questions. One was coming in on the computer. They were reading the answers off the computer screen. That is not what—I say this respectfully—we were elected to do. I think too many of our democratic functions have already been

turned over to the bureaucrats and the technology that they use. So I just want to flag that. That's a real concern for me as a member of the Legislative Assembly, that that kind of use of technology not interfere with the primary function. I want to just put that principle on the table.

I admit. I've been up front. I'm a Luddite on this. I'm on the information highway looking for the off-ramp.

The Chair: Thank you. The bad news, I'm afraid, is that you won't be allowed to bring your portable Underwood into the House. If you may recall from the debate, the committee actually agreed with you on the use of technology in situations where it may interfere, and when we go back to Peter, who has summarized the committee's recommendations, I think you will find that your concerns have been addressed.

I think Mr. Marchese has to make a comment, and then Mr. Hardeman.

Mr. Marchese: I agree with Ted, generally speaking, but I also know that we are in the minority. Part of what we're doing is recognizing the fact that other people love to use technology almost all the time. I know my buddy Gilles Bisson constantly has the BlackBerry with him, and I find it disconcerting. I really do. We're talking, and he's constantly using it. I'm certain other members do that all the time.

I think what we're doing is allowing members who feel that way and want to do it to be able to do that, but there is another part where we speak about where some of this technology should not be used, and question period is one of them. I agree with that. I think people there are forced, and should be forced, to listen to the debate and not play with any gadgets.

Mr. Hardeman: I'm having a little concern now as we're hearing the speakers, and we keep saying, "I know I'm in the minority," but if one more person speaks after me with the same opinion, it's going to be the majority of this committee. I agree, and I have a personal problem with some of the technology. A lot of times, I don't see a great use for it. The only computer I use is the one that hangs on my belt: the BlackBerry. I don't even have a computer, laptop or otherwise, in my own office.

If I could ask the researcher to do a report, I expect that somewhere back in history a discussion happened, something like what is happening right now, when they decided to bring the telephone line into Queen's Park: "Why would you need that? You don't want information from the outside coming in. You're bringing the people in to make the laws here, not to hear about them." So they had no need for telephones. As you think back on it, I expect it's likely a good thing that the minority was over—

Mr. McMeekin: For the record, I have no trouble with the telephone.

Mr. Hardeman: I think the other thing—and I point out the challenge if we say, "Well, there are certain times in the Legislature"—and I agree with that, too—"where they should not be using the laptop." The minister should not be answering the question by reading it off the

screen, but I'm willing to bet that as we proceed 10 years from now, if we approve it this year, no one will be wondering when these computers can and can't be used, because it will be the common thing, as the telephone is today. So I think we should work towards that and carry on with the report as to the decision we are making here as to whether we should allow technology into the chamber as we move into the technology age.

The Chair: In turning the floor back to our researcher, the Chair notes that, as old as the telephone is, its use is prohibited in the chamber.

Mr. Hardeman: They use it at the table.

Mr. Marchese: But he raises a good point.

Mr. Sibenik: Dealing with section B of the report again, I've prepared a six-page background paper on how the history of this issue has been handled at the Legislature, different committee reports and incidents that have occurred in the chamber. I can write about a half a page on the background. The question becomes whether the committee wants me to include the research paper as an appendix to the report.

The same thing goes for the discussion in section C, other jurisdictions, where I could summarize in half a page what the situation is in other jurisdictions. The 16-page survey that I prepared could be attached to the report too. Is it the wish of the committee that the appendices be attached to the report or left out?

1600

Mr. Miller: My vote is yes. I think other members would find them interesting.

Mr. Marchese: Mr. Chair, I don't know if you missed the question, but he's asking whether the research officer's background note on the subject could be attached as an appendix. I have no problem attaching it as an appendix, and neither does Norm Miller.

The Chair: Nor does the Chair.

Mr. Marchese: Bob, I don't know whether the other members have any comment on it. Do you guys agree that we should be attaching it as an appendix?

The Chair: The Chair has no trouble with that. Seeing no response, I think—

Mr. Sergio: Yes.

The Chair: Okay, there we go. Peter, continue.

Mr. Sibenik: Section B of the report, the middle of page 2: This is the discussion and recommendations part of the proposed report. Initially, there would be a discussion perhaps of the overarching principles that guided the committee in its deliberations, things like the importance of vindicating parliamentary democracy, order and decorum, and equipping MPPs to carry out their responsibilities in a modern information age. I would amplify each of those points, if necessary.

Mr. Marchese: Peter, the word "vindicating" parliamentary democracy, could you speak to that?

Mr. Sibenik: "Upholding" parliamentary democracy. How does it look when members are using these pieces of portable technology in the legislative chamber? If people are watching—

Mr. Marchese: But "vindicating" indicates something, right? It speaks to the idea that somehow there was an egregious error or some abuse before or some problem, and we are now vindicating it. Do you know what I mean?

Mr. Sibenik: Yes. How about "upholding"?

Mr. Marchese: "Upholding"? Okay. Do people agree that "vindicating" indicates some problem? "Upholding" is fine for me, unless others have any other—

Mr. McMeekin: "Vindicating" sounds too theological to me.

Mr. Marchese: "Upholding."

Mr. Balkissoon: "Preserving."

Mr. Marchese: You could preserve too. It's the same idea.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay, "upholding and preserving."

The next section discusses the advantages, pro and con, of portable technology. This appeared in a previous outline that I prepared. It discusses in a straightforward way what the advantages and disadvantages are of having portable technology in the chamber. At this point in the report, I think that there should be some expression of the view of the committee. There are the pros and the cons, and now the committee has to decide. Are the advantages more important than the disadvantages? It seems to me that the committee is moving in a direction in favour of more portable technology. It's in favour, in principle; however, it has to work on the details, on the actual implementation, and that's what the rest of the report is dealing with. But I think that there should be some kind of statement of principle coming from the committee at this particular point before it goes into the actual details of the guidelines. That's what I'm looking for: direction from the committee.

Mr. Marchese: I agree with what Peter is saying, but I would include the potential disadvantages in the affirmation of why we're doing it. We should also say that we are interested in making sure that there is order and decorum. Rather than introducing them as disadvantages, we should include them as part of what we're doing. We don't want to introduce new technology with the implication that order and decorum are out the window; we want to introduce new technology while still maintaining order and decorum. Do you know what I mean, Peter?

Mr. Sibenik: Yes, I do.

Mr. Marchese: That might apply to the other bullets. So we want to introduce new technology without detracting from debate functions. They're not there as disadvantages, but they become points of strength as we introduce new technology. We introduce new technology while at the same time making sure it's not obtrusive and noisy. I'm just going on and on, but you understand what I'm saying.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes.

Mr. Sergio: But at the same time, Peter speaks as well of those acceptable and not acceptable, which I agree addresses decorum in the House: What would be acceptable and what would not be acceptable, and what would

infringe on decorum in the House? I think in practically almost every guideline, Peter is repeating the same thing: Because of their presence in the chamber, is it inherently obtrusive? Not in those words, Rosario, but I think Peter is saying that in the various guidelines.

Mr. Marchese: Yes. I understand. I just thought that stating it is a good thing, but we don't have to state it.

Mr. Sergio: If you want to make it more explicit.

Mr. Sibenik: Then we head into the technology guidelines. I thought I'd explain the preface to this part of the section by giving the example of a BlackBerry or a Treo, which have these many functions. They can do telephone calls, voice mail, e-mail, Internet; they can take pictures. To my way of thinking, some of those uses that you can make of BlackBerries and PDAs would be acceptable; others would not. Instead of trying to identify acceptable or unacceptable—

Mr. Marchese: Peter, can I ask you—

Mr. Sibenik: Yes.

Mr. Marchese: I'm sorry; it seems that you're talking to one or two people, Mr. Chair. We're all in this together, right?

The Chair: Mr. Marchese.

Mr. Marchese: I think we should all be listening.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Sibenik: Instead of trying to identify acceptable versus unacceptable technologies, I think the committee might want to take what I call a more nuanced approach based on the five guidelines that follow. This is the heart of your report. These five guidelines would be the key thing that the Speaker, for example, would be looking to.

The very first one there is that some of the technologies should be completely banned from the chamber because they are inherently obtrusive. I give a list, at the top of page 4, of the kinds of things that qualify as being inherently obtrusive. The first one there is the large technologies. You wouldn't want a member to be walking into the chamber with a hard drive in one hand, the keyboard in another, and taking it to his or her desk and snaking an extension cord from the equipment over to the table or into the opposition or government lobbies. That's not on. That's my sense of things.

The question then becomes—and I indicate that at the end of the first bullet points—how compact or how large does the technology have to be before it becomes acceptable versus unacceptable? The committee went around the table, around the horn on this issue the last time it met in November. I noticed that a lot of members, for example, were impressed by the tablet computer that the Chair was demonstrating. But the issue became things like notebooks, flip-up things. Are they acceptable or unacceptable under the first guideline? That's the first really big decision I think the committee has to—

The Chair: In our discussions, we resolved that, if I recall, by saying that given that we would ban the technology until after routine proceedings, where there is minimal opportunity—for example, a clamshell computer that would flip the top up—to disturb the House, we said, “What difference does it make?”

Mr. Marchese: Peter, I don't know that we need to necessarily specify the size, other than referring to the tablet. Can I ask you, Bob, “tablet” means just that, right?

The Chair: Yes. If you use the words “tablet PC” or “notebook” or “laptop,” those are industry standard definitions that would elicit a generally accepted range of devices.

Mr. Marchese: “Accepted range” meaning what you have in your—

The Chair: What I have here, you could say, “This is a tablet PC,” period.

Mr. Sergio: Or whatever the industry may offer. If you say just a plain laptop, I may go and buy the largest one on the market.

The Chair: The Speaker, I think, would have the flexibility to rule whether or not it does or doesn't fit on your desk.

1610

Mr. Miller: That would be part of my question: Would the Speaker have some discretion? I'm sure the great majority of people are going to bring your typical, normal laptop computer, but would the Speaker have some discretion if—

Mr. Marchese: There is a section—

The Chair: Yes, farther down in the report we put—

Mr. Miller: I think I missed the meeting where you came to the decision that any kind would be acceptable. Basically you're saying that any kind—a tablet, a laptop—would be fine as long as it's not used in question period.

The Chair: After routine proceedings.

Mr. Marchese: Sorry, I thought we agreed to the little tablet you've got—

Mr. Miller: No, that's why I was clarifying it, whether the flip-up normal laptop is acceptable as well, not just a tablet.

Mr. Marchese: I see. I thought you were just talking about that little piece. The other one can be how big?

The Chair: They're all kind of tiny, Rosario.

Mr. Marchese: They're all kind of tiny or—

The Chair: None of them exceeds a package about the size of the unit I'm holding.

Mr. Marchese: That's the question I want to ask, because Mario said, “Could someone be bringing in one the size of a metre, for example?” Do they exist?

Mr. Miller: I'd say the Speaker should have some discretion on that. Without saying a physical size, you give the Speaker some discretion so that if something is obviously obtrusive, the Speaker has the right to say that isn't acceptable.

The Chair: Sit tight. Peter's already thought of that.

Mr. Balkissoon has a comment.

Mr. Balkissoon: “Laptop” and “tablet”—those are industry standards or marketing names. If you're creating a policy, you should probably use words that could last for a long time. My suggestion would be that it has to be portable and that it's a singular unit without AC power.

The Chair: I have no trouble with that.

Mr. Balkissoon: That way, if industry comes up with something new next year—

Mr. Miller: You can say that, but then you can, as well, use both names.

The Chair: A term which includes notebooks, laptops and tablets? Would that be acceptable?

Mr. Balkissoon: Or you could say, "Example: notebooks, laptops, whatever," but that term will always remain.

Mr. Marchese: Yes. The reason I like that kind of language is because it makes it much more specific. The only danger I have with just leaving it to the Speaker is that, depending on the Speaker, he or she might rule that one metre is acceptable, and another Speaker might rule at another time that something is unacceptable. That's the only problem of leaving it to the Speaker. I like the idea of limiting it to what you, Bob and Bas, are specifying.

The Chair: Mr. Sibenik.

Mr. Sibenik: So the second bullet point—outboard peripherals—I think is pretty straightforward: no outboard peripherals because it looks too cumbersome on a member's desk to have all these separate pieces of equipment.

The next bullet item is earphones and earpieces used for—

Mr. Marchese: Agreed.

Mr. Sibenik: The only thing I want to draw to your attention is that it's not just for electronic communication; it's also for listening to pre-recorded information. Perhaps that should be added to the list as well. I'm talking about—

Mr. Balkissoon: Are you saying that we disallow—

Mr. Marchese: Disallow.

Mr. Sibenik: Disallow.

The Chair: In practical purposes, Mr. Sibenik is saying the following, if I understand it correctly: You may not bring in your earpiece, however unobtrusive, to sit there and listen to your MP3s.

Mr. Balkissoon: That's right.

The Chair: Correct. Agreed.

Mr. Sibenik: I would also add to that list, perhaps, headphones, in case it's not obvious.

The Chair: Headphones, right.

Mr. Marchese: Agreed.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay.

The next item: noise-emitting technologies. The only word that I would add there is "words." There are certain pieces of technology that might speak back to you, perhaps, instead of buzzing, ringing or music, whatever the case may be. I don't know if the state—

The Chair: You may wish to add a clarification comment to read something like the following: "Sound on the computer must be turned off or muted."

Mr. Miller: What about technology that assists someone who's disabled? Obviously, you want an exclusion for that if you happen to have an MPP who had some sort of disability who needed technology to do their job. I think that should be an exception.

Mr. Marchese: That's a good point.

The Chair: In fact, the report covers that specifically. I think this is the third bullet point at the top of page 4.

Mr. Marchese: The third bullet point at the top of page 4.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes, it refers to members—

Mr. Marchese: It would not apply to hearing aids.

Mr. Sibenik: There would be members with other kinds of disabilities who might need technology. Perhaps that is your point—perhaps somebody who uses a wheelchair. In the past, what has happened, I can think of a member having a disability and there was a special order of the House that was passed that allowed the member to have, for example, attendants on the floor of the chamber to deal with a hearing disability.

Mr. Miller: What about the case of a blind MPP who uses a computer system that actually talks? I've witnessed those before.

The Chair: Good point. I detect in this no prohibition for that.

Mr. Balkissoon: What you should do is, exceptional cases by approval of the Speaker.

Mr. Marchese: I actually was thinking of much more proactive language that speaks to what Norm was getting at. I don't know what that language would be. The point is, rather than having to move a motion that permits this, it would be good to be proactively saying that, should there be such a member, all accommodation—sorry?

Mr. Balkissoon: For a member who has extenuating circumstances, it's to be approved, something to that effect, and the Speaker is allowed to approve it.

Mr. Marchese: You could work on that, Peter, based on the idea of people with disabilities, right?

Mr. Sibenik: Yes.

Mr. McMeekin: Couldn't we just say that this restriction—hearing aids or other devices used by MPPs with disabilities; why would you even say "hearing disabilities"?

Mr. Marchese: Something like that.

Mr. McMeekin: Just generalize it: The whole policy doesn't apply to people with disabilities.

The Chair: Peter?

Mr. Sibenik: Let me see here. The last bullet point: "Technologies that interfere with the assembly's existing or future audio/visual/broadcast technologies." I would add interpretation technologies to that list as well. The difficulty that has happened in some of the other jurisdictions is that some of the BlackBerries, or PDAs, have interfered with the pre-existing sound system in the chamber. This has been a problem in the Senate. I'm trying to elicit the views of the committee. I think perhaps it might be wise for the committee to say that the technology that is already here in the assembly to broadcast for interpretation is perhaps more important than the right of the individual member.

Mr. Marchese: That is true; they're having problems in the Senate. The use of BlackBerries has caused problems in the Senate in terms of broadcasting.

Mr. Sibenik: Non-Bell Mobility devices have been a problem in the Senate and they're considering what to do there. In the case of—

The Chair: Let's give the Speaker the ability to declare technology out of order in the same way that he declares a member out of order if his or her behaviour interferes with the orderly operation of the House.

Mr. Balkissoon: But if this wireless device interferes with the sound, who is to say your wireless laptop in the future wouldn't interfere with it? That's the question I raised with you in the beginning, that we went through and we hardwired Toronto.

Mr. Sibenik: I think the answer would be that the people who would be installing the wireless access would do their testing to make sure that kind of situation did not occur. I can only assume that—

Mr. Balkissoon: You can't guarantee that.

Mr. Sibenik: No.

Mr. Marchese: But if it interferes with, then we don't have it. That would be the result. That's okay, I suppose, if that is true. If we end up with a situation where some technology interferes with the functioning of the House, then either we stop that technology or we have to come back to this committee again and redo our work.

The Chair: The basis of our discussion thus far has been that if technology interferes with any ability by the House to use its native technology for interpretation, broadcast or recording, then the interfering technology is the one that's removed. We've already defined that, if I understand the wishes of the committee correctly. Does that satisfy your comment, Bas?

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Mr. Balkissoon: Well, it does, but what do you do with the person who went out and bought something to use and now can't use it?

Mr. Marchese: Too bad, so sad.

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: Well, that's another problemo.

Mr. Sergio: Can we get some expert to come and talk to us to see what's available?

Interjection.

Mr. Sergio: You're the expert.

Mr. Marchese: Go ahead, Bob.

The Chair: We can if you want, Mario, but I've sat down with the people in LIS in many areas of technology and I found that my own knowledge has been more than competitive.

Mr. Marchese: We trust in the neutrality of the Chair and the expertise of the Chair.

Mr. Sergio: Mr. Chair, let us get serious. We're going wireless, and then we have a problem. Where do we go from there? Where's the notwithstanding clause here?

The Chair: To address Mr. Sergio's question, in the challenge of wireless, the standards for the wireless protocols already exist. Indeed, signals from those wireless devices, be they wide-area network signals such as those you'll see advertised on billboards by, among other vendors, Telus, already exist in the chamber now. Hypothetically, if a member had a laptop with a wireless card and a subscription to the Telus network, for example, he or she could today bring that device into the chamber. No one has proposed implementing a pro-

prietary wireless protocol, which would give rise to the comments that you've made. The proposals made before the committee have been to implement existing Wi-Fi, which is to say 802.11 wireless technology. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Sergio: No, it doesn't. My point is this: In the worst-case scenario, when you have 25 or 40 technologies being used at the same time in the chamber, how might that affect the sound in the House? Can you imagine? I mean, while somebody's speaking, stuff like that, and something happens in the House?

The Chair: Could the Chair ask your indulgence to hold that point until we've reached the point in the report that deals with the times during the day when technology is allowed? In other words, later in Mr. Sibenik's report, his proposals basically say that all technologies, save and except that for which we're now familiar, which is to say your BlackBerry, are out, except at specific, approved times when, as we all know, we don't have 103 members in the House.

Mr. Sergio: We'll trust in your guidance.

The Chair: Any other comments before we go back to Peter? Okay.

Mr. Sibenik: We're on to the second guideline now, and this guideline says that MPPs' use of certain technological functions in the chamber is generally acceptable, while their use of others is not. There's a list, then, of acceptable functions and unacceptable functions. Let me just say that I think doing lists of things that are acceptable and unacceptable is, at best, a hazardous proposition. I'm reflecting on this, and I'm almost thinking that there are other things under "acceptable functions" that are probably not listed here and that might be created down the road, but because of the fact that it's not included in this list may be problematical down the road.

Mr. Marchese: We offer examples, which means it's not exhaustive, right?

Mr. Sibenik: Or what the guideline could say is, "The following functions are unacceptable," and go with the unacceptable list, and everything else is okay. Or you can have a mix of the two, as you have in this particular guideline.

The Chair: The Chair suggests that we may have among our guidelines "any other function that would contravene the standing orders of the House."

Mr. Marchese: So you're accepting both bullets?

The Chair: I'm accepting both bullets and I'm adding "any other function that would contravene the standing orders of the House."

Mr. Sergio: It shouldn't be in any case.

The Chair: That's correct, but it's stated for purposes of clarity.

Mr. Miller: Mr. Chair, could you give an example of what you're speaking about? "Any other function that would contravene the standing orders"—what sort of standing order are you speaking of?

The Chair: I can't give you a specific example because I can't think of one. For instance, those reasons for which we often call "On a point of order," when a

member is doing something that would contravene the standing orders, would apply similarly to a function that would be technology-assisted.

Mr. Marchese: Can I ask you: if the Speaker has latitude in terms of what is acceptable and not acceptable, is what you're adding necessary?

Mr. Sergio: Yes.

The Chair: In your opinion? Mr. Sergio says yes.

Mr. Sergio: I think the Speaker should have the final decision.

Mr. Marchese: Peter was talking about acceptable and unacceptable. The way they're written, that means what is listed is acceptable and what is not listed is unacceptable, and that's it. Do we leave it like that or do we offer them examples of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable?

The Chair: I take your point. Would it be helpful to offer those two bullet lists as examples of what is and isn't acceptable, more to be generic than to be specific given the evolving nature of technology?

Mr. Marchese: That's right.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Sibenik: The third guideline: A member "should not use otherwise acceptable technology or technological functions during certain periods." There's a list there. I heard a lot of discussion in the previous committee meeting about the fact that it should only be after orders of the day. Is that the view of the committee, that it should be only after orders of the day?

Mr. Marchese: Yes, Peter.

Mr. Sibenik: Can I ask for some clarification? On Thursday mornings, private members' hour is technically orders of the day. Do you want that included as—

Mr. Miller: Yes.

Mr. Sergio: Sure.

Mr. Sibenik: You do want that included?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay, including Thursday mornings. In orders of the day, let's say there's a division. Let's say the Lieutenant Governor gives royal assent—ceremonial occasions—should members not be allowed to use during those times?

Mr. Marchese: Yes, I think that makes sense.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay. What about the throne speech?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Sibenik: Budget speech?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Marchese: It's in keeping with other jurisdictions.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes. Many jurisdictions have that.

Mr. Marchese: I agree.

Mr. Miller: A question for the committee, if I can. That would mean, in members' statements you wouldn't be able to use it. Is that the intention of the committee?

Mr. Sibenik: That's right. That's before orders of the day.

Mr. Miller: That's why I'm asking the question.

Mr. Marchese: That's fine with me.

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: That's right, yes.

The Chair: And in the evening.

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

Mr. McMeekin: During those really exciting things.

Mr. Sergio: After question period.

The Chair: Actually, after the last petition has been read.

Mr. Sergio: Yes, the petitions.

Mr. McMeekin: I want anything that interferes with Rosie.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you very much, Ted. Did you catch that on the record?

Mr. Miller: I personally wouldn't have a problem with members' statements and petitions, for example, but I'm not sure how you would frame that. It's cleaner and simpler to just say "orders of the day" and put a few other exceptions, but maybe it's easier to say when you can't use it, like question period and on special occasions, like the throne speech and the budget speech.

The Chair: In most of our discussion, we came up with the orders of the day suggestion based upon the two criteria you mentioned: cleanliness and simplicity.

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Mr. Miller: That's fine.

Mr. Sibenik: At the very bottom of page 4, there's an important point that the committee will need to turn its mind to: "Should an MPP who has the floor, and an MPP who is adjacent to the MPP who has the floor, be allowed to use portable technology?" So if you're in the middle of making a speech, should you hold it up and quote from whatever? It's also an issue—

Mr. Balkissoon: But that raises the issue that Ted raised at the beginning, that somebody could be sending them an e-mail to give them the answer they were looking for. Are you protecting democracy?

The Chair: Just as a point of clarification for Mr. Balkissoon, if what you're suggesting has to do with question period, question period occurs before orders of the day.

Mr. Balkissoon: But even a person standing up for a 30-minute speech, they're running out of info and somebody sends them more, or they said something wrong and the guy across the hall says, "Correct your statement."

Mr. McMeekin: He says, "You voted for this the other day in committee." "No, that's not true. Here's the answer."

The Chair: Any further comment?

Mr. Marchese: It's a tough one in terms of how you start regulating this whole matter. All of a sudden you say we should have this technology and then you're saying, "These are the conditions under which you will use them, and by the way, if you're making a speech, your neighbour can't be using any technology." I think it becomes complicated. I understand the concerns but I'm not that worried about it. I personally wouldn't be using any technology, even though I would love to do it, if I knew it was on camera. I would never want to be caught on camera while somebody is speaking and me playing

either with a Blackberry or with a tablet. I just would never do it, because it looks bad.

Mr. McMeekin: Like reading the newspaper.

Mr. Marchese: Like reading the newspaper—equally offensive. I absolutely agree. In that regard, while it brings disrepute to the House, I think it brings more disrepute to the member, should that individual be seen on television doing that. But to then start talking about under what conditions you limit it, I think it's a bit complicated. So I don't think we should put in those kinds of restrictions.

Mr. Sergio: For the benefit of the members, instead of a very strict direction, a good line would be “not to be used while your next mate is addressing the House or speaking” or whatever.

The Chair: Mr. Sergio suggests that we not have a strict policy but more a series of suggestions or guidelines.

Mr. Marchese: You could.

Mr. Miller: Just for clarification, I gather it's the agreement of the committee that someone who was delivering a speech in the Legislature would be able to have their laptop open within the orders of the day time period and use the laptop—either have the text of the speech on the laptop or points, whatever they might have on a sheet of paper.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, they could if they wanted.

The Chair: Yes, you could.

Mr. Miller: I guess we'd save some trees, because what's the difference if it's on paper versus being on a laptop?

Mr. Marchese: It looks just as bad to be reading from paper as it is a tablet, in my view.

Mr. Sibenik: Does the committee want to have a restriction as to whether the member should be allowed to raise it off the desk or not, or should it stay on the desk when the member has the floor?

Mr. Marchese: On the desk, absolutely. You shouldn't be lifting it.

Mr. Sibenik: It stays on the desk?

Mr. Marchese: Absolutely.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay.

Mr. Marchese: Sorry, I think it looks dumb to be actually lifting a tablet. To me, I think it really looks bad.

Mr. Sergio: Notwithstanding whatever direction we finally give the Speaker and whatever the Speaker may say, the bottom line is that whatever we do has to be within certain parameters, that nothing is going to be done by any member that would take away from the decorum of the House, even though we have received approval to use technologies. It's going to happen. Somebody maybe is going to prop it up and say, “Look, you want the information, you want the answer, Mr. Speaker? Here it is,” and turn around the computer or whatever. It's going to happen. Are we really going to be that respectful of one another in the House and of the House itself in conducting ourselves, regardless of what the strict directions may be? Regardless of what the directions may be strictly, and enforceable—it has to be

up to each member to use discretion in every case, because the Speaker cannot control members, and once something is said or done, that's going to take it away.

The Chair: Let's see if I can encapsulate this, then. Our consensus is that after orders of the day the approved technology can be used by the member, including if he or she is speaking, including if he or she is adjacent to the Speaker. Mr. Sergio has essentially said that once the genie is out of the bottle, then it's your judgment as an adult that determines the use. Mr. Marchese has said that perhaps we should say that the technology has to sit on the desk and be in contact with the desk.

Mr. Marchese: I would say that, personally; I would want us to say that. I have no—

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: Yes?

Mr. Sergio: And not to be used as a prop.

Mr. Marchese: That's fine. The point was that lifting the tablet up looks stupid, in my view. I'm assuming you all agree. Rather than having the Speaker determine that, we could say that. Rather than having the Speaker say, “You shouldn't be lifting it and showing it,” I think we should simply state it: It should stay on the table. Do you have a problem with that, Bob?

The Chair: No. It would in fact be within the standing orders of the Speaker to declare the usage to be a prop.

Mr. Marchese: I was about to say that earlier. In the same way that the Speaker has ruled on props where they show things, that would probably be what the Speaker would say. My view is that if we say it, it's much clearer, and then we don't have to worry about it.

Mr. Sergio: What I'm afraid is going to happen, during a very heated debate—and there is one going on now—is that a member who wants to make a particular point says, “Mr. Speaker, this is what the Premier said when he was in opposition. It's right here.” He can't say that if the computer is sitting on the desk. He will have to lift the computer and say, “Mr. Speaker, this is exactly what the Premier said when he was in opposition. Now that he is Premier, he is telling a different story. This is what he said” on such and such a date. This is going to happen. Now, we're not supposed to do that, but once it happens, the Speaker's going to say, “Order.” Well, that's too bad. It's too late; it's already done. The member has already made his point; he has already propped.

Mr. Marchese: But it's the same way that we use props and they get removed.

Mr. Sergio: As I said, even though we have these very strict directions, if you will, from the Speaker, it has to be incumbent upon each member—

The Chair: Can the Chair try a suggestion on you? If, in the opinion of the Speaker, portable technology is used as a prop rather than a speaking aid, the Speaker may request the Sergeant at Arms to confiscate that portable technology for the balance of—you know, in the same manner that your BlackBerry is gone if it rings.

Mr. Sergio: That's okay. It opens up another can of worms, but that's okay.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, I agree.

The Chair: All right? Okay. Interesting points.

Mr. Sibenik: Was that a yes to that suggestion?

Interjection.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. Peter, I think we're on page 6 now.

Mr. Sibenik: Five.

The Chair: Sorry, the bottom of page 5?

Mr. Sibenik: The top; we're on the fourth guideline: "Should there be restrictions on the purpose for which MPPs can use technology and technological functions?" This assumes that you're allowed to bring in a piece of technology or you're allowed to use a technological function. But should there be restrictions on the purpose for which you can use these technologies or functions? Should you be allowed to do your personal banking?

If you ask me that question, I'm subject to the Office of the Assembly acceptable use policies. My account can be pulled if I make unacceptable use of my computer; it's owned by the Office of the Assembly. Those guidelines do not cover members and caucuses. Maybe you have your own caucus guidelines, your own internal ones that I'm not aware of; I'm not sure.

This is a difficult issue. It may not be necessary to discuss this in this particular report, because if you don't have the guidelines for other pieces of technology, why would you need them if you're in the chamber?

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Mr. Marchese: That would be my sense, Peter. I don't know that we need this guideline.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes.

Mr. McMeekin: Unless we've got high-tech cops.

Mr. Marchese: I think we should eliminate this guideline altogether. I don't think it's useful.

Mr. Sergio: If somebody wants to snoop, they still can snoop. You can look at choosing your wallpaper underneath your desk and there is a camera peeking through. If you want to do that—either we do it or we don't. We have no control over that.

The Chair: Fifth guideline.

Mr. Sibenik: It's almost like a catch-all guideline. This is the one where the Speaker has the authority to exercise the Speaker's traditional authority, especially dealing with order and decorum. I think many members were addressing this particular issue in earlier comments this afternoon. This would allow the Speaker to rule that a certain piece of technology is being used as a prop instead of as a piece of equipment needed—

Mr. Marchese: I agree with this, even though from time to time I've disagreed with what various Speakers have done in relation to some things. There is such a disparity in terms of what some Speakers think is acceptable by way of use of language and unacceptable, but I don't know how you deal with that; I really don't. So you have to keep this fifth guideline because I think it's helpful and important to have.

Mr. Sergio: You cannot challenge the Speaker, Rosario. You know that.

Mr. Marchese: And you can't challenge the Speaker. That's right.

The Chair: Is the fifth guideline okay? Good.

Mr. Sibenik: The next one is on wireless access points. There is a bit of a discussion about the fact that members are at work in many different places, in the precincts and outside of the precincts. It would be helpful if they had access to electronic resources in the many different places that they work.

There are a series of five bullet points about where wireless access points should be located. I think that was the subject of a previous motion by this committee.

There was some question as to whether the wireless access points should also be located in the legislative chamber. I'm not sure—

The Chair: We just discussed that.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay. I think the letter that went to the Speaker may not have explicitly indicated that. It did indicate all those other places, but I'll make an explicit—

Mr. Marchese: Yes. I think so.

Mr. Sibenik: —mention of this.

The last point was raised earlier. In light of the committee's views on wireless access points, what about electrical outlets and network drops at members' desks? I don't know if the committee has gone around that issue sufficiently, but I've raised that at this particular point here. Are there any further thoughts on that issue? Okay.

The next issue is installation costs, training and technical support. Does the committee have any recommendations to make on that particular issue? This deals with wireless access points.

Mr. Sergio: We said there was no cost.

Mr. Marchese: That's right.

Peter, on the issue of training and technical support, is there something we need to say, or doesn't this happen automatically?

Mr. Sibenik: I'm not sure how you get wireless access. I'm a bit of a Luddite myself on that. I'm sure the Chair has—

The Chair: With regard to installation, looking at, for example, this committee room, assuming that a single wired cable is available anywhere in this room, one could pick just about any place on the wall and install a single access point. The retail value of those has now fallen well below \$200, and that doesn't include the Legislature's buying power as well as any inventory of such Cisco devices that may be here.

Mr. Marchese: And technical support?

The Chair: Tech support: LIS is already able to provide support for Legislature-approved applications.

Mr. Marchese: And that will continue?

The Chair: There is no reason to feel, as this is a hardware function and as LIS already supports hardware functions, that there is anything insurmountable, because, indeed, were we to have that here now, to take my computer, all I have to do is open it up and turn it on.

Mr. Marchese: Bob, do we need to mention it as a way of indicating that perhaps LIS needs extra resources

or might need extra resources, if any, on this issue, one way or the other?

The Chair: It might be helpful to be specific that we may wish to ask LIS to be prepared to do the function of training. There isn't much training required, but as far as doing your first log-on on a wireless access point and understanding that once you're logged in, it's exactly the same as being on a wired point—

Mr. Marchese: The point I make is, do they have an existing budget that would deal with that, or is there an extra cost? The point of mentioning it is a way of supporting needed resources that LIS might require. That's the only point I make.

The Chair: We will definitely ask our researcher to undertake that with LIS.

Mr. Marchese: In which case, we would point that out in the report.

The Chair: Yes. Thank you.

Mr. Sibenik: That leads us to section 5, privacy and security. Wireless access points should be secure. There should be passwords that can be changed periodically.

In the second bullet point, I've indicated a list of difficult scenarios, for want of a better expression, that the Speaker would probably have to address. The Speaker has sent the committee a letter of reference. I'm not sure whether the committee wants to get into any level of detail in addressing these kinds of difficult scenarios.

Mr. Sergio: The media is going to love this.

Mr. Marchese: I know. This wouldn't be helpful in terms of putting it out, because that would only engender various comic kinds of comments that I don't think would be appreciated. I'm not sure we need to deal with that, unless there's somebody else like Bob who has—

The Chair: I'm with Rosario on this one, absolutely. We've earlier defined a sufficiently broad degree of authority for the Speaker on this, and in terms of technical aspects of it, we've defined LIS as our support resource. I think this may be redundant.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, and if there's any matter that comes up, the Speaker will always deal with it, as he does.

Mr. Sibenik: So there will be no mention of the second bullet point and items (a) to (g) in the report.

Mr. Marchese: That's right.

Mr. Sibenik: Okay.

Mr. Miller: That's under privacy and security?

Mr. Sibenik: That's right.

Section 6, on enforcement—

Mr. Sergio: It's always the Speaker.

Mr. Sibenik: The Speaker should enforce.

Mr. Sergio: Yes.

Mr. Sibenik: The upgrade and the review of the guidelines and standards: There might be other bodies. Is it necessary to go into this? I guess I should ask that question.

Mr. Sergio: Not at this stage.

The Chair: The upgrade and the review falls very squarely within the mandate of this committee.

Mr. Miller: So that's what it should be then?

The Chair: There's no need to change it.

Mr. Miller: It doesn't have to be specified?

The Chair: Right.

Mr. Marchese: I don't think it needs to be specified.

Mr. Sibenik: We don't need to indicate that in the report.

Mr. Sergio: Number 7.

Mr. Sibenik: Implementation: I'm not sure what the committee wants. Is the committee happy with the word "guidelines"?

Mr. Marchese: Sorry, Peter; I'm not sure it's understood that the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly—

The Chair: Its terms of reference are specific enough—

Mr. Miller: Just restate that.

The Chair: Yes. Let's restate it then.

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Sibenik: That the committee has jurisdiction to revisit the issue?

The Chair: Or that jurisdiction remains within the terms of reference of the standing committee, or words to this effect.

Mr. Sergio: And there is still a final report, I believe, forthcoming from staff, isn't there, Mr. Chairman?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Sibenik: The actual implementation: I'm not sure the committee is happy with the word that I use here: "guidelines." If the committee is happy with that, I'm quite content to call it "guidelines" as opposed to "recommendations" or "reviews." Does the committee have any views?

Mr. Marchese: I think "recommendations" is fine, and if "guidelines" appears in the report from time to time, it falls within the rubric of "recommendation."

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The Chair: I detect a consensus on the word "recommendation."

Mr. Sibenik: "Recommendation," and I've got a list of options there for the committee, whether it wants to recommend that they be hard-wired into an order or just simply send a report on to the Speaker.

Mr. Miller: Would that suffice to implement it? Would the Speaker's acceptance of the report result in—

The Chair: A note that I made on this is to ask for clarification by legislative counsel whether the Speaker's acceptance of the final report is sufficient to implement it.

Mr. Marchese: My sense is that the assembly has to approve it; no?

Mr. Sergio: It has to go to the Speaker first.

Mr. Sibenik: The Speaker has jurisdiction over the matter of order and decorum. That's hard-wired right into the standing orders. So if there was an all-party report that came from this particular committee that was addressed to the Speaker, it would be within the provenance of the Speaker to implement the guidelines or the recommendations in the course of exercising his jurisdiction over order and decorum.

Mr. Marchese: The problem, Peter, is that we haven't necessarily gone back to our caucuses with the final recommendations we're making. So if we send this to the Speaker with the understanding that all three parties have agreed to it, it could produce a problem for some of our members. Maybe we should bring it back to our caucuses and show them before we send it forward.

Mr. Sergio: Why don't we get the final report from Peter before we take it to our caucuses?

Mr. Marchese: And then we send it to our caucuses so that we don't get into trouble.

Mr. Sibenik: I should indicate that it was the Speaker who requested the report of the committee.

Mr. Marchese: I agree.

Mr. Sergio: And it has to go back to the Speaker.

Mr. Marchese: My point is that as long as the caucuses agree, and then it goes to the Speaker and he says, "This is great," then we have no more problems.

Mr. Sibenik: Yes. What I'm going to be coming back to the committee with is draft 1 of the report. This is not draft 1, this particular document here; it's the proposed outline.

Mr. Marchese: That's fine.

Mr. Sergio: Based on that, I'm ready to make a motion.

The Chair: Motion by Mr. Sergio.

Mr. Sergio: I'll try that: That the first draft of the final report, or the final report—I have no idea where we stand, but I'll leave that to Peter if it's going to be final or first draft of the report—be drafted by the researcher and approval be given by the subcommittee prior to the submission on behalf of the committee to the Speaker.

The Chair: Mr. Sergio has moved that—

Mr. Sergio: The final report or the first draft report be drafted by the researcher, by staff and the final or first report be approved, the approval be given to the subcommittee prior to submission on behalf of the committee to the Speaker.

The Chair: Clear, or should it be read again?

Mr. Miller: I think it should be read again. Did he say "approval of the subcommittee" or "approval of the committee"?

Mr. Sergio: No, "approval of the first report"—

The Chair: My understanding of the motion is that the draft report by our researcher be submitted to the subcommittee prior to being sent to the Speaker. Mr. Marchese had made the point that—did you want to run it by your caucus prior to submission to the Speaker?

Mr. Marchese: Yes. I have no problem with it going to a subcommittee, but then that report should come here, which allows us time to go to our caucuses for approval. Otherwise, the way it's written, it's the subcommittee that approves it, and I want to make sure that we have time to be able to—

Mr. Sergio: Yes, yes. We discussed that before, that we'd take it to our caucuses.

The Chair: Just for clarity, then, the order is as follows: draft by Peter, approval by subcommittee, run it by the caucuses, submission to the Speaker, implementation.

Mr. Miller: You missed the committee.

The Chair: I'm sorry. Discussion in caucus, back to committee, submission to the Speaker.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, that's the motion.

Mr. Miller: Yes.

Mr. Marchese: And the point is that once we have that agreement, then we might only need five minutes to expedite it out.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Sergio: Fair enough.

The Chair: Fair enough?

Mr. Sergio: Yes.

The Chair: Is it the pleasure of the committee that the recommendation carry? Carried.

Mr. Marchese: Mr. Chair, there's an item on our table. Is that something we need to deal with?

Interjection.

Mr. Marchese: You can speak to all of us, Doug.

The Chair: The item on your desk is an e-mail sent to the clerk from an individual named John Dunn, who makes a suggestion that over and above the matters we have just discussed—

Mr. Marchese: Live webcams be allowed to broadcast.

The Chair:—the proceedings of the House be webcast.

Mr. Marchese: Is that something for us to approve or is that something—

Mr. Sergio: That's not within our mandate.

The Chair: Well, it is within our mandate. It isn't the reason that we convened this meeting. If the committee wishes to discuss it, the committee can discuss it. If the committee wishes to defer this for another time, we—

Mr. Marchese: It doesn't seem complicated to me. We already broadcast. So it is available to people who obviously watch and people can record it. It's not a big deal.

The Chair: I remember bringing the question up in at least one of our meetings with one of the people from LIS and asking whether sufficient bandwidth was available to broadcast proceedings of the House, and I was told yes.

Mr. Marchese: If that is so, then we could do this.

The Chair: Would it be the pleasure of the committee to clarify whether sufficient bandwidth exists to webcast proceedings of the House and whether any technological obstacles exist to doing that and to undertake our researcher to provide us a report on the feasibility of webcasting House proceedings, to be considered at a future meeting?

Mr. Marchese: That's a very useful suggestion.

Mr. Miller: And if there's a rough estimate of cost, as well, just to know whether it's something that's expensive. Perhaps you know from your technological expertise whether this is an expensive proposition or whether it's relatively simple, if the bandwidth exists.

The Chair: The Chair knows enough about technology not to speculate on something like this off the cuff.

Is there any further business? This meeting is adjourned. Thank you, one and all.

The committee adjourned at 1700.

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