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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 27 February 2013

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 27 février 2013

**Standing Committee on
the Legislative Assembly**

Organization

**Comité permanent de
l'Assemblée législative**

Organisation

Chair: Garfield Dunlop
Clerk: Trevor Day

Président : Garfield Dunlop
Greffier : Trevor Day

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLYCOMITÉ PERMANENT DE
L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

Wednesday 27 February 2013

Mercredi 27 février 2013

The committee met at 1303 in room 228.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): Honourable members, it is my duty to call upon you to elect a Chair. Are there any nominations? Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I would be honoured to nominate the member from Simcoe North. He was an outstanding Chair in the last session, so I nominate Garfield Dunlop.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): Mr. Dunlop, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I sure would. Yes, thank you.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): Are there any further nominations? Seeing no further nominations, nominations are closed.

Mr. Dunlop, would you come please take the chair.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Thank you very much, Mr. Clerk, and to everyone else who feels I have the ability to chair this meeting.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): I now would like to call the nominations for the Vice-Chair of this committee. Mr. Clark.

Mr. Steve Clark: Mr. Chair, first of all I want to thank you and congratulate you on your appointment as Chair. I also want to extend belated happy birthday greetings to you for your birthday yesterday.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Thank you.

Mr. Steve Clark: Chair, it gives me great pleasure to nominate Lisa Anne MacLeod, the member for Nepean–Carleton, to the position of Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Ms. MacLeod, do you accept the—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I appreciate him mentioning my middle name. It's also—

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay, Lisa Anne.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you.

Interjection.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's with an E.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Is there any further nomination?

Any discussion on the motion? So carried? Carried.

APPOINTMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEE

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Mr. Mauro, I understand you have a subcommittee motion?

Mr. Bill Mauro: I do, Mr. Chair, thank you very much. A motion to be moved in committee:

I move that a subcommittee on committee business be appointed to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair or at the request of any member thereof to consider and report to the committee on the business of the committee;

That the presence of all members of the subcommittee is necessary to constitute a meeting; and

That the subcommittee be composed of the following members: The Chair as Chair, Ms. MacLeod, Mr. Bisson and Mr. Balkissoon; and

That substitution be permitted on the subcommittee.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Any discussion on the subcommittee motion? No questions? All in favour of the subcommittee motion? That's carried.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Ladies and gentlemen, we have the draft committee report. Would you like to explain that, please?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): Sure. Under standing order 111, the three policy field committees, general government, social and justice, can undertake studies and, in doing so, we direct that certain ministries are assigned to each of these three policy field committees. I think it was last May or so, the last time we did this report, they were assigned. That continues; however, the ministry names have changed so there's a need to actually change our report slightly based on the change in ministry names.

There is an explanation as to how it was done. That's the memo that's upfront. But basically it's a renaming of which ministries are assigned to which. The only committee it affects is general government, and the rationale for why they were assigned to which is on the accompaniment. It's really just a case of, if the committee is okay with it, adopting the report.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Sorry. Can you redo that right from the beginning?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly is responsible for assigning ministries to the three policy field

committees. The last report that the committee did was fine right up until the latest swearing-in, where ministry names were changed. What we've done is we've drafted a new report which basically—the only committee it affects is general government at this point, but it's for the committee to decide if they are okay with the way this is and adopt it, if they see fit.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Mr. Bisson?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I haven't had a chance to look it over. I'd ask that we table that off to the next meeting.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): We can, and that's not a problem. I guess the only place where it would possibly or potentially pose a problem is if the Standing Committee on General Government was looking to do a 111 on one of these and it wasn't appropriately assigned between now and—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That's right, but that gives us a chance, because it's the first I heard of it. It'll allow the House leaders to sit down and have a chat. We'll deal with it on Thursday.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay. Mr. Balkissoon?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Chair, I hear what Mr. Bisson is saying but I think the Clerk is basically saying that if you look at the ministries, they were actually reporting to general government previously but under a different name. All we're doing is adopting—I understand where Mr. Bisson is coming from, because in our review we talked about it. Our review is not completed; we can still do that. But rather than hold this up, I think we should do it because if something comes up between now and next week, it holds up the whole process.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Ms. MacLeod has a question.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The official opposition, in a rare agreement with the government, thinks that we should just proceed and have the vote. I think this is house-keeping. It's nothing new. We're not surprised by this. We've now known for a couple of weeks what the ministries were and where they should be assigned. I think, in terms of every other committee waiting on our time line, it really isn't up to us to delay what they do. Those committees set their agendas. I think we should just give them the tools immediately to do the job.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay. Mr. Bisson again.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: There's a conversation that has started in House leaders in regard to assigning some of this stuff. It's not concluded. So if in the end there is a bill—I'm very doubtful there will be a bill that will pass second reading between now and our next meeting. We should be okay to wait till next week, and if not, we have a magical way of working this out. It's called unanimous consent. I ask that we put this off, because there is a conversation that has started in House leaders in regard to the assignment, and we just need to finish that.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Mr. Balkissoon.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I hear what Mr. Bisson is saying, but all of us, as members, are not part of the

House leaders' discussions. We're here to do committee work. I don't see how adopting this actually holds up anything the House leaders are discussing, so I'm prepared to move the draft report.

1310

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay, if we've got a mover and a seconder, we'll accept the report.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'll second it.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay. Mr. Bisson.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Can we just agree that if there was a change in House leaders, this committee will actually deal with changing the assignment to some of the ministries? I don't understand why there's such a snuggling up of—

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay, hold on.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Let me just finish. I'm interested to see that the Conservatives are snuggling up and going to bed with the Liberals, and I'm glad to see that the Conservatives, at every attempt, are trying to prop up this government, and it's duly noted.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay, we've heard your comments. I have a mover. I'm going to put the question.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We'd just like to get moving on business.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Shall this draft report carry? All in favour?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: We're not finished. I was waiting for Madame MacLeod to—

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay, before I call the vote, another comment.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I was waiting for Madame MacLeod, my learned, esteemed colleague, to see if she decided, in the fullness of time, to change her mind on supporting the government on this particular request.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: This really isn't a recommendation from the government. It is a memo to the Chair and members of the committee, of which I am Vice-Chair. It is from the Clerk of the committee, so it is not a government motion, per se; it is a committee member motion. In the interest of actually trying to get some work done after we've been shut out of this place for five months, I would just like to allow the committees that exist in this assembly to do their job.

If the NDP wants to hold up work in our committees, that is their business. I for one have agreement with my caucus colleagues that we want to pursue committee study in some of our committees, and we want to see action on 111(b). So with that, the official opposition will support the impartial, unbiased Clerk's recommendation. If the government of the day also chooses to support that motion, then I think that the Clerk must have gotten it right. I will be voting to move on, set the agenda moving forward and allow the other committees to do their job.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Mr. Bisson.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: So, two points. The first point is, we just got this from the Clerk, so it's the first that I've

got it. That is one thing. I was hoping that we'd have a little bit of time to look at it.

I want to just say to my honourable colleague: I have taken note of your comments. I will copy that Hansard and remember the words used, because this is definitely a snuggling up on the part of the Conservative Party to support the Liberals yet again—the Conservatives working with the Liberals to prop up this government. I am shocked.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Any other debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes, Mr. Chair. I assume that means the New Democrat member will be voting with the official opposition on confidence measures, whether that is the throne speech or the next budget. Let's be very clear: Propping up a government is when you vote for them on a confidence measure or you sit on your hands during a budget.

If we want to continue this discussion, let's go ahead. But if we want to get back to work, like the taxpayers of this province expect us to be at work, then let's just move forward. Let's actually support the impartial, unbiased Clerk, who provided us with a nice agenda item here. We can support him; he is here for the people of Ontario. He holds no party affiliation, and I am supporting his recommendation.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay. Mr. Balkissoon, you had a question?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I just want to make a comment. I am prepared that if there are any changes that are recommended by the House leaders or even through our review, and we all agree on those changes, we adopt them right away and not delay it.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay. Mr. Bisson?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Balkissoon, as long as we have an understanding, if we have a conversation with House leaders, we'll bring it back and we can do those changes over.

I just want, for the record, to remind the honourable member that she took great delight in holding up the House for how long, ringing bloody bells last spring? Anyway, it's good to see you guys are snuggling up with the Liberals.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Any other comments from anyone?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We had the first vote of the assembly yesterday, and I will remind the member, my honourable colleague from Timmins–James Bay, that when I stood up with the Ontario PC caucus, we were shocked to see that moving forward together was the NDP and the Liberal Party, once again voting together.

I think if we want to talk about where votes lie in this assembly, the record will reflect very accurately what has happened.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): Okay, I'm going to put the question.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I want a recorded vote, Chair.

Ayes

Balkissoon, Clark, Colle, Flynn, MacLeod, Mauro.

Nays

Bisson, Forster.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): The motion carries.

What else have we got, sir?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Trevor Day): There are two Ombudsman's reports for your information, but that's it.

The Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): There are two Ombudsman's reports on your desk in front of you. These were put out in the prorogation period.

Thank you very much, committee. We are now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1316.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 27 February 2013

Election of Chair.....	M-1
Election of Vice-Chair.....	M-1
Appointment of subcommittee	M-1
Committee business.....	M-1

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