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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 10 May 2016

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mardi 10 mai 2016

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 10 May 2016

Mardi 10 mai 2016

The committee met at 0901 in committee room 2.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Good morning, everyone, and welcome. We will now move to the appointments review. We have two intended appointees this morning to hear from, and we will consider the concurrences following the interviews.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MS. BRENDA LUCAS

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Brenda Lucas, intended appointee as member, Ontario Clean Water Agency.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Our first intended appointee today is Ms. Brenda Lucas, nominated as member, Ontario Clean Water Agency.

Please come forward and take a seat at the table. Welcome. Thank you very much for being here. You may begin with a brief statement, if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questions. Thank you.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Great. Thank you, Madam Chair. Members of the committee, good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss my candidacy for the board of the Ontario Clean Water Agency.

To briefly speak to my qualifications for this appointment: I've now worked in various aspects of water policy and management, including water technology development, for over 13 years. For nearly five years, I've been responsible for the management and leadership of the Southern Ontario Water Consortium, which was created to support the development and advancement of innovative technologies and services with Ontario companies and Ontario post-secondary institutions.

Prior to my current role, I was policy adviser to the Minister of the Environment for Ontario for just over three years. Before that, I worked with a private foundation to create a national funding program to support water policy projects and initiatives, largely by non-government organizations. So water protection and management have been the thread through most of my career.

I believe that as a board member, I can specifically contribute an understanding of relevant policy, and knowledge of emerging approaches and innovative technologies to help OCWA inform its municipal clients and work with them to appropriately and effectively partner

with companies to help advance and pilot new technologies. I can support OCWA's effective engagement with other organizations in the water sector.

I believe my experience will allow me to provide a relevant, broader perspective to support OCWA's core mandate of effectively managing water and waste water services in Ontario.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much. We will now begin with the government. Yes, Ms. Vernile?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much for coming and speaking to our committee this morning. I think you're being a little modest about your skill set and your qualifications.

This is a very important board on which to be at this time, as the government is moving forward with a very ambitious plan for addressing the serious issue of climate change. Can you tell us more about your expertise, what you would bring to this board?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Sure. Thank you. Again, I think it's sort of a broader context of how different organizations, municipalities and innovative technology companies, for example, are engaging on those solutions. I see OCWA as a really important asset for the province, and as a service provider that can not only provide those really important day-to-day services but help think about how we deliver those kinds of services in the context of climate change and in the context of the need for resilient municipalities, those kinds of longer-term sustainability perspectives.

I have, like I said, a fair amount of experience understanding that policy context and how organizations engage in it and what cities are trying to accomplish. Maybe more specifically, my relevant experience around bringing new, innovative approaches and technologies to commercialization, to readiness for municipalities, will also help OCWA with that particular and more recent part of their mandate about helping to develop and commercialize new, innovative approaches on behalf of their clients.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Respectfully, I will say to you that my opposition colleagues may ask you about the fact that you have, in the past, contributed to the Liberal Party and that you have worked as a staffer. So I'm going to give you the opportunity now to speak to that and the objectivity that you will bring to this position.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Sure. Thank you. I bring, I think, quite a lot of objectivity. As I said, that was an important

stage in my career, but my focus through that job and my other experience has been water management, and effective water management and improving policies on the ground.

But I will say that was an important role in my career, and it gave me, importantly, a perspective on the Ministry of the Environment, how the ministry functions in the various branches and the policy execution of the Ministry of the Environment.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any other questions? Ms. Mangat.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you, Brenda. Welcome to Queen's Park. As you spoke in your statement about the clean tech sector, can you shed some light about the clean tech sector and how we can tie water into that sector, and what role it can play when it comes to export?

Mr. Brenda Lucas: To export?

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Export.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Oh, interesting. I think the water sector in particular is a really important part of Ontario's overall clean tech capacity. We've got a really robust water sector in this province. We've got globally recognized large firms that have developed technologies that are now in place throughout the world. We've got smaller, emerging technology companies bringing new innovations to the market, and we've got a really robust academic sector. Where I work is in bringing those two things together so that we can actually support the development and adoption of new technologies.

Again, I think that's an important role for OCWA, because if you follow through the development and commercialization of technologies, at the end, you want to have implementation of those technologies, whether they're in Ontario municipalities or internationally. I think OCWA plays an important role in taking that next step, thinking about municipal needs on the ground and matching up innovations with solutions on the ground and helping municipalities think more broadly of that. I think the important step for Ontario is getting some of those solutions on the ground here so that they can be adopted internationally as well.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any further questions? Okay. We will now turn the questions over to the official opposition. Mr. Pettapiece, please.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Good morning.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Good morning.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Ms. Lucas, a memo was written to your former boss, John Wilkinson, who was then the Minister of the Environment. It was obtained by the Toronto Star and referenced in a Trillium Power Wind article. I'm wondering if you know anything about the leak of that document to the media.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I'm not aware of what document you're talking about specifically, so no.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay, I'll help you with that. I'll read what it had in the Star: "The Star has obtained a

previously redacted confidential government memo to Wilkinson"—John Wilkinson—"from policy adviser Brenda Lucas that reveals why the province halted such energy projects."

I'm talking about the Trillium energy project that was slated for out in the Great Lakes.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Okay.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It said, "'It will be clear that we don't have adequate science to build a more specific offshore approvals process,' says the Jan. 6, 2011, document that warns the government would face heat for 'moving forward without full science....'"

Do you remember that?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I remember discussing the scientific basis for regulations for offshore.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Do you remember the—

Ms. Brenda Lucas: That specific memo?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I don't. I'm sorry.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: So you didn't leak that to the press?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: No, I certainly did not.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Are you aware of any opposition to your recommendation that offshore wind would not proceed?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: That wasn't my recommendation. That was the minister's and the government's decision.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm sure he acted on your advice, though.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I was a policy adviser who had some connection to the file at the time.

0910

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Are you aware of any further discussions or emails after this date by anyone in the Premier's office or cabinet office?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Any emails at all?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes. Any further discussions or emails?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: About that memo?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I'm sorry, I'm not quite understanding the line of questioning. Not specifically, no.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Are you aware of any policies on offshore wind brought forward by any senior members of those offices after your email was sent?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Any policies on offshore wind?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Are you aware of any policies on offshore wind brought forward by any senior members of those offices after your email was sent?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: No, I'm not.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: As a potential member of the Ontario Clean Water Agency, you may very well be asked about implications for projects that affect Ontario's water systems. It seems that you have already formed an opinion on offshore wind and the Great Lakes, however. What will you do when the offshore wind studies the government says it's completing come before your agency? Is there a conflict there?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I don't see any conflict there. I'm not sure that offshore wind will have a direct relevance to OCWA's mandate.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Why is that?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Because OCWA operates existing municipal systems.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Certainly it does, but we take water out of the Great Lakes, do we not, in municipalities?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Yes, we do.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: So that should have some effect on your position.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I think OCWA, like the government, would want to be satisfied that any offshore wind policy or approach or project was done in a way that would protect our drinking water sources.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. So you don't see there's any conflict that between what you're applying for and these offshore wind projects?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: No, absolutely not.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: What I'm getting at is, it seems to be a coincidence that you're receiving a government appointment just mere weeks after a very helpful document for the government comes out with your name on it. Can you state to the committee that the two are not tied, unequivocally?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: The two are not tied. It has been five years since I left the minister's office.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. I understand that, but just two weeks after this happens, all of a sudden you're here, so we want to make sure that these two are not tied together. That's why I'm asking the question.

The issue of wind farms has been very controversial throughout Ontario, mostly in rural Ontario, where countless numbers of communities don't want them, and yet the ministry keeps approving these wind farms. Then all of a sudden, we get a cancellation that happens out in the Great Lakes, when you were with the minister's office. I remember when that happened.

I come from rural Ontario. I remember that we had some hope that there was a way of stopping these things if we didn't want them—there are communities that do want wind turbines in the community, and that's fine—and then that didn't happen. So there's some suspicion—I'm sure you can understand that—with the way this was done.

Then when the Star comes out with this article with your name on it, you can understand why I'm asking these questions, I would think, and why there is the coincidence. We're asking questions as to whether this is coincidental, and what influence you may have on some of these projects.

There is quite a big lawsuit going on right now, or a proposed lawsuit on this right now. That's why I'm asking these questions.

You were an adviser to two ministers?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I was.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: That would be John Wilkinson and who else?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Gerretsen, before John Wilkinson.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: John Gerretsen?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Your experiences with these ministers—can you explain how this has helped you in your career?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Like I said, the core thread and focus of my career has been water, and water management and water policy. I think the primary benefit of my time in those offices, because water policy—my primary file in that office—was really an understanding of the suite of legislation in Ontario that applies to water, and an understanding of how the ministry works and engages in implementation of that legislation, and the opportunity to be part of bringing forward new legislation, the Water Opportunities Act, that was related to, again, driving this sector and driving improved water management.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. When these water-based turbines were first approved, you wrote a memo saying that, on scientific reasons, you didn't think that it should go through. Do you know why they approved this thing before they even looked at this evidence?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I really can't speak to that.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You don't know?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: My job was not to make decisions about projects or provide—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: But you were an adviser.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I mean, my job was the liaison with the ministry whose job it was to provide scientific advice. The advice was from the ministry.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: But can you tell us what scientific advice that was? Do you remember why?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: That's going back a long time. There were analyses. There were summaries of the scientific information that were provided to the minister. Decisions were made by government.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Since you were involved with it, you don't remember what the scientific basis was?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Again, I remember some of the questions around the gaps in scientific knowledge. But I think that the government's decision about how to move forward with policies related to wind turbines were about much more than simply that scientific information and analysis.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: But it says that it's clear that they don't have "adequate" scientific evidence "to build a more specific offshore approvals process," with your name on it.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: That's right.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): There's one minute left.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I was reflecting, again, the opinion of the ministry and the concerns of the ministry that wrote that there were gaps in terms of the scientific information and data that would normally go into the development of a regulation for new projects like that.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: But you don't know what that is.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: What the concerns were based on?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Well, I think the primary one—I honestly don't remember exactly, but I know that there were considerations around how sounds travel over water. Some of the projects on water are different than on land, so I think that the ministry was raising questions about how much we know about the science and how water turbines would be different from land turbines.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: And those are the only things that you can remember at the time? Sound travelling over water?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Like I said, I wasn't the expert. I was reflecting the advice of the ministry.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It sounds like you were the expert by this document.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Pettapiece.

We're now going to move on to the third party: Miss—

Miss Monique Taylor: Taylor.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):—Taylor. Sorry about that. I was thinking Forster.

Miss Monique Taylor: Good morning, Brenda.

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Hi.

Miss Monique Taylor: Interesting line of questioning—not at all where I was going to go, but it seems that other members of the committee have enlightened us on several issues this morning, including fundraising and donations made to the Liberal Party. It seems like something that happens quite often around here.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Transparency is a good thing.

Miss Monique Taylor: Transparency is definitely a good thing.

Whether it be appointments or whether it be money being doled out, it seems that there always seems to be a tie, lately, back to the Liberal government.

But that is not where I'm going to go with my questioning today because, regardless of whether I or the other members of this committee support your appointment or not, the government will make the decision of whether you receive the appointment. So I will focus on the job that you're going to be given and go in that direction.

Back in 2001, OCWA identified the water treatment plant at Constance Lake First Nation as high risk. Nearly 10 years later, in July 2010, that same treatment system failed, leading to an emergency declaration being called on the reserve.

Now nearly six years after the emergency was declared and more than 15 years after the treatment plant was identified as high risk, the people of the Constance Lake First Nation are still dealing with issues relating to their drinking water and still have not had their emergency declaration lifted.

As a member of the board of OCWA, what would you do to prevent tragedies like this, knowing that OCWA had this information for years? What changes would you

implement to ensure that no First Nation communities, regardless of how far they are from a city or town, are left waiting years for clean water?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Thank you for the question. I am not familiar with the specifics of Constance Lake and—

Miss Monique Taylor: But it's the scenario, right?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Yes. I guess what I would say to that is there is obviously recognition that provision of water and waste water services on First Nations is critically important.

0920

OCWA does not own the system. OCWA is a service provider and supports First Nations and other communities. I do think that as a credible service provider, OCWA has a role to play in sharing its knowledge based on the support that is provided to First Nations: First Nations operator support, and advice it can provide to First Nations in terms of managing its systems, both operations and investing and planning those systems.

I think OCWA has a lot of important expertise and knowledge to share with governments as they tackle those important questions.

Miss Monique Taylor: Right. It's shameful that we have people in northern Ontario living like they're in Third World countries. Would you not agree?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I would suggest that it's important that everybody in Ontario and Canada have access to clean, safe drinking water.

Miss Monique Taylor: When OCWA was established, part of the act that facilitated its creation was that all activities of OCWA should be carried out in a manner that protects human health and the environment and encourages the conservation of water resources.

As a member of the board, with pretty extensive experience in the water industry, how would you balance the need to clean and dispose of waste water and storm-water with the mandate to protect the environment?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I think those things go hand in hand, as opposed to needing balancing. I think the better we manage our water—and particularly waste water—systems, the better a position we are in to protect the environment as well.

Miss Monique Taylor: As someone who has spent the majority of your career working on water-related issues, both in the public and private sectors, do you have any suggestions for how to immediately improve the function of OCWA?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I'm not going there with a particular immediate mandate. I look forward to understanding better the operational side of OCWA and some of the considerations that board members would make, and learning as I go.

Miss Monique Taylor: What about technologies or strategies that you would encounter as part of your work that would be beneficial for the operations of OCWA?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: In terms of water technologies, emerging approaches and technologies for water and waste water management, I do think that is where I can lend some specific support and expertise around helping

OCWA with its mandate of providing support to enabling the development and commercialization of those technologies, and working with its municipalities to find matches where there are potential solutions for a municipality need that could be served by an innovative technology—again, doing that in an appropriate way so that the needs of their client municipalities are put first. But there is also a conversation about how municipalities can be better clients and hosts of innovative technologies, whether it's piloting or implementation of proven technologies.

Miss Monique Taylor: How would you put the priorities and the needs of First Nations and northern communities first?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: In the context of technology development?

Miss Monique Taylor: Right. When it comes to their needs and—well, quite frankly, just their needs—and the struggles that they're facing, how would you put that first in consideration?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: I think innovative technologies can be an important part of that consideration. I don't think that's where the First Nations conversation starts, because a number of the solutions needed are more operational solutions—efficiency, training and those kinds of things. But certainly, where there are specific kinds of challenges with drinking water treatment or waste water treatment, some new approaches and technologies can be part of that solution.

Miss Monique Taylor: What would your priorities be in taking on this new position? Where is it that you would like to prioritize your time and your energy?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Um—

Miss Monique Taylor: You must be going in there with some sight of what you're going to be doing. To you, what does that look like?

Ms. Brenda Lucas: Again, there are lots of technical experts within OCWA and on the OCWA board. I think for me, it's bringing that broader connection to organizations that are playing a role in bringing forward new solutions and helping OCWA connect with that in relevant ways, and understanding the broader context, and to really execute their role in being part of that active water cluster in Ontario and bringing Ontario solutions to the world.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you. I have no further questions.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Miss Taylor.

You may step down. That concludes the time allocated for this interview. Thank you very much.

MS. ARPANA VORA

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Arpana Vora, intended appointee as member, Council of the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Our next intended appointee today is Arpana Vora. Please come

forward and take a seat. Welcome, and thank you very much for being here.

You may begin with a brief statement, if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you a question. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questions.

You may begin.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee. Thank you for having the time today for me to tell you why I think I will benefit the council of massage therapists of Ontario.

I don't have anything formally planned to say other than that I will give you a little, brief description of my experience. Actually, from my application to now, I have an update: I am currently president of the Jain Society of Toronto again. I was actually elected into that position two weeks ago, so I did not know that at the time. This is in addition to two terms that I also served as president, from 2010 to 2014.

The Jain Society of Toronto is a congregation of approximately 2,500 people. We are a faith-based organization, but we focus on cultural and social activity and the social development of our community. This includes seniors all the way to new immigrants, children and program development.

I'm also a director at India Rainbow Community Services of Peel. That is also undergoing a new identity in that it will not only be seen as something that serves Peel. The social services there also involve seniors, children and women who have been compromised in some way, and also English classes. I'm going into my second term for that position. I'm also the chair of seniors' development of housing and retirement solutions.

I'm often told that my strengths always lie with interpersonal relationships, mediation and practical solutions. I feel that in serving on this particular committee for the massage therapists of Ontario, I will bring a lot of experience in resolution, solving, mediation and understanding complex issues.

I understand that there's a lot of oversight in this particular industry. I'm looking forward to seeing how we can make something that is really well-managed. From my brief research on the website there, I was very impressed with their oversight. I'm looking forward to learning about that, actually developing more programs and possibly bringing the ability to report situations to light in a way that is compassionate and nurtures healing, but also nurtures preventative measures, for preventing abuse or, I'm going to say, to uphold the profession. From what I saw of the turnover numbers in the council, I was very impressed that their turnover is very low.

This is my first entry point into public service. I think I'll be very interested to learn more. I'm interested in being more of a student this time around than a leader, but I am a natural leader.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Ms. Vora. We will now begin questioning with the official opposition. Mr. Bailey.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Ms. Vora, for coming forward.

Just two or three questions: In your view, what are some of the main issues facing the profession of massage therapy?

Ms. Arpana Vora: That's a great question. I was actually giving some thought to that. When I look at the overall perspective of touch—public touch, private touch; I mean physical touch—I look at that as something that we're going to have to face publicly in the media and behind doors when we're dealing with private situations and stories of victims.

0930

I think we're facing this privacy issue—I don't want to call it a "breach," but there could be many breaches. I feel that the process for a victim to come forward has somewhat changed because of the media exposure and social media and all the things that come with that. I know we've had some situations in the past just recently where there were situations of harassment and abuse and how that was managed. I think that we have to be cognizant of different cultures, and also the new way of professionally touching somebody, specifically in the massage profession, in the sense that we have to be cognizant of cultural norms versus professional norms.

I think that massage therapy being such a valid solution to stress management needs to be promoted. I think we're an overstressed and overworked society. I feel that espousing the benefits of massage therapy and the safety that comes with it—and not to be deterred by some stories, perhaps, or possible potential compromising situations in some cultures. I think I'd like to address that and bring my background and diversity training to that, as well, in the sense that we want to make everyone comfortable. I know for a fact that there are some cultures right now that would not participate in massage therapy just because of those potential situations that could arise.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I heard you say this would be your first experience in public service. I was going to ask you about sitting on regulatory or adjudicative bodies, but obviously this would be the first. Anyway, thank you for stepping forward.

You said you'd read the website and I guess you're part of the profession. Is that one of the reasons that you decided to apply to be a member of the college? Because of your background in this work?

Ms. Arpana Vora: I actually applied for three different councils. The other ones were the dietitian council and the respiratory therapists. Again, I feel that there are professions that allow you to deal with patients on a delicate, intimate level. I think the oversight is similar. I think my background in dealing with one-on-one situations, mediation and bringing protocol and precedent into the mix of consideration when we're making decisions spoke to me when I made my application.

In particular, for the massage therapists, I understand—if I recall correctly—there was actually a description in there that said that they'd like somebody to come

forward who was a visible minority, so that spoke very loudly to me. Looking at the website, I was very surprised to see how non-diverse the current board is. I'm looking forward to hopefully being a part of the solution to that.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Sure. Have I got a little more—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Oh, you've got about five and a half minutes, Mr. Bailey.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Good. Okay. I also note from your resume, etc.—your CV—that you are a manager and a part-owner or a business owner of a pharmaceutical company.

Ms. Arpana Vora: That's right.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Do you see that having a positive or a negative or a neutral impact on your position on the college?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Positive, in the sense that I have so much experience dealing with so many staff. My husband and I have grown our business from one small store to a number of stores now—over 15. This is over the last, I'm going to say, 16 years. That requires a lot of planning and a lot of personal relationships.

And things happen. I'm very fortunate that we've never had to deal with a harassment case as such, but we deal with issues. I sometimes do have to find myself pulling staff aside to speak with them one on one and dealing with the matter in a way that is conducive to healing and is solution-oriented. I feel like that's my positive that I bring to this. In terms of conflict of interest or in any other way, I would find it neutral.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Mr. Pettapiece?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You're a busy person.

Ms. Arpana Vora: I am.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: They say if you want to get something done, you get a busy person to do it. I think that's how the term goes, anyway.

Ms. Arpana Vora: You took the words right out of my mouth.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm very impressed.

Can you tell me—it's J-A-I-N Society; is it Jain?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Jain.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Can you tell me what that is?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Sure. It's a faith. It's very similar to what you might know about the Hindu faith. It's a cross between the Hindu and Buddhist faiths. We believe in non-violence. We are all vegetarian. We promote peace.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: They're very nice people.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I can tell; I really can.

I come from rural Ontario, and one thing about being in Toronto and in this place is that you get to meet people of different ethnic backgrounds. It's certainly quite interesting to me.

When it said "Jain Society," I thought it might have been like a service club or something like that.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Yes. The other part of entering into public service is that I get to promote that. I think there's a lot to learn from our philosophy of life. It is more of a way of life, more than a doctrine. It begins

with compassion and it begins with understanding. It promotes understanding from both sides. It's not a decision being handed down, but it's more to promote a decision being shared.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: One thing I've learned here is that we may come from different backgrounds, but we all have a lot of similarities.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It's interesting that way.

You have raised a considerable amount of money for different projects in your area.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm interested in your time allocation and how you perceive doing this, because you're on the Toronto Real Estate Board. You're a real estate agent. You've got pharmacies going etc., plus all your other activities. Certainly, there's going to be a time commitment; it's not going to be an everyday thing.

Ms. Arpana Vora: That's what spoke to me.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm sorry?

Ms. Arpana Vora: That's what spoke to me the most.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay.

Ms. Arpana Vora: When I look at my level of service—I'll start with my family. That's the most important. I have four children.

Then I branched out—

Interjection.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Sorry?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I just was saying, wow, that you have four kids.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Yes, and I'm so blessed to have them involved in everything I do. They are well aware of everything I do. They know the importance of service. It begins at home.

Then I branch out to the Jain Society, which is my next immediate circle of community. Outside of that would be India Rainbow, which is the larger community, and now my city and my province.

I think it's just a natural evolution for me, and I really enjoy bringing my children along for the ride. My son is 16 and he also shows great promise for public service. He's very interested in what I'm doing, specifically today. He was actually a page.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Oh, is that right?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Yes. He actually inspired me to come forward for public service.

What really spoke to me was the flexibility and the amount of time. I did review that very carefully, because if I'm going to do something, I do plan on—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Just under a minute.

Ms. Arpana Vora: —putting my full attention and full heart into it. I would never let any of my commitments be compromised.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thanks, Chair.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We are now going to move on to the third party. Miss Taylor.

Miss Monique Taylor: Good morning. How are you?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Good morning. Great. How are you?

Miss Monique Taylor: I'm good, thank you. Thank you for being here with us today.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Thank you for having me.

Miss Monique Taylor: We seem to be trending lately here at Queen's Park. We heard of previous people who have given donations, worked for the Liberal Party. We see a lot going on here at Queen's Park when it comes to fundraising, donations, companies benefiting after giving political donations. We found that you personally gave \$5,000 to the Simcoe North by-election. You do not live anywhere near—you're looking at me quizzically. Was it not you?

Ms. Arpana Vora: No.

Miss Monique Taylor: Vora, Arpana, Ontario Liberal Party, 2015 by-election, Simcoe North, individual: \$5,000.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Simcoe North?

Miss Monique Taylor: By-election.

Ms. Arpana Vora: We've given to the party, but we've given to the Progressive Conservative Party too. I don't recall Simcoe North, no.

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Miss Monique Taylor: It was \$5,000. That's a large amount.

Ms. Arpana Vora: No, I honestly don't. Can you give me the name of the—

Miss Monique Taylor: Vora, Arpana.

Ms. Arpana Vora: No, to whom?

Miss Monique Taylor: To the Liberal Party.

Ms. Arpana Vora: It was just general Liberal Party?

Miss Monique Taylor: Whoever was the Liberal candidate who ran against Patrick Brown in the last by-election.

Ms. Arpana Vora: This is a surprise to me. If it was allocated to one particular—

Miss Monique Taylor: It's in your name, under "fundraising." Maybe that's something you want to look at also. I'll move on—

Ms. Arpana Vora: I mean, I'm not denying giving the donation. I'm just saying that I don't recall Simcoe North. I don't know what that means.

Miss Monique Taylor: It's in your name, \$5,000. That's a lot of money. That's a lot of money to not recall. But that's fine—

Ms. Arpana Vora: But that's not the only donation. I mean, we give lots of donations to lots of causes. I'm sorry I can't specify on this one, but we do. We give to many parties.

Miss Monique Taylor: I would love to have you on my donation list now, I guess—\$5,000 and you don't even recall it.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Sure.

Miss Monique Taylor: That's a lot of money.

But the thing is that we see big donations going into the Liberal Party, and now we see appointments coming back—and quite frankly for a massage therapy board that you really have no experience in. That's a concern of

ours, as New Democrats, that you have no background whatsoever in massage therapy.

Ms. Arpana Vora: If you'd allow me to speak to that—

Miss Monique Taylor: Of course.

Ms. Arpana Vora: I believed when I was reading that that the entire purpose of the public appointment was to be a layperson and to not have any connection or background in massage therapy, and to speak for the public who would not know anything about massage therapy. I think that the benefit of looking through the lens of the public and bringing that position to the board is what I value. I thought that's what I was doing. I didn't know that I was supposed to have background for massage therapy. That's not the message I got from the description of the job.

Miss Monique Taylor: Okay. Under the regulation by the college, you would “develop, establish and maintain standards of knowledge and skill and programs to promote continuing ... competence” among members. How would you do that?

Ms. Arpana Vora: From my understanding, I would be briefed. There is a brief period in the beginning where all members of the board are briefed for information. I've already begun my research. Like I said, I had already reviewed the website and gone through how they process discipline, what happens afterwards. I've already read pretty much all of the guidelines and policies for the committees on their website to familiarize myself—but not before I applied, after I applied. That's just to give myself a background, but not to overstep my pay grade in the sense that I am here to represent the public. That's what I'm here for. I'm not here for any agenda for massage therapy per se and I have no interest in being a massage therapist. I like massages.

Miss Monique Taylor: We all do.

Many massage therapists will want to or will have studied overseas rather than in Canada. Since many of the techniques they use did not originate as part of our culture, as a member of the regulating body for the profession, you will be required to ensure that anyone educated overseas meets Canadian standards. How will you handle the balance between ensuring practitioners meet Canadian standards and also ensuring that they are able to conduct their practice in the manner that they have been trained to?

Ms. Arpana Vora: That's a great question. I think that touches a little bit on what I meant by the diversity and the different cultures that are involved with massage therapy. You're right; I think that profession is bringing in more and more people from around the world. Every time I have a massage I realize that. I agree with one thing: We do need the standardization and we do need to know that they're bringing the level of professional standards to their practice here.

I have not looked into what qualifies a registrant in the sense that I have not gone through that educational process. My guess is that many people on the board would be able to advise me on that. I'm almost sure that

there would be a process in which they would have to apply and their credentials would be carefully screened. If not, they probably have to actually undergo some new courses and testing, my guess is, to pass here, and not just to be able to walk in from another part of the country and automatically pay a due and be a registrant. My guess is that they would have to be retrained here.

Miss Monique Taylor: That's good, because it is important that we keep to Canadian regulations, right?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Absolutely.

Miss Monique Taylor: One of the important roles as a member of the college is to sit on several committees that deal with complaints and discipline. I know you've touched on this earlier. Have you ever been on any other boards or adjudicating bodies?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Adjudicating, no. Being a president of the Jain Society of Toronto, being a non-profit and a faith-based organization, I'm going to say that, informally, I've had to handle the whole gamut. I've had to handle adjudication, mediation. I've handled conflict. Within our organization, we also have, I'm going to say, four to five different sects of groups, and mediating between them has become something that I feel I've been very productive at. I feel like I can bring that to the board, although I did not formally do that.

Miss Monique Taylor: I don't think I have any further questions.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): No further questions? Thank you, Miss Taylor.

We're now going to move to the government side. You have six minutes and 17 seconds, Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Welcome, Ms. Vora. As a physician, I appreciated your comments about touch. We, of course, use phrases like “therapeutic touch.” I was also intrigued by your comment: public touch, private touch, and of course the therapeutic touch. Tell us a little bit more about your thoughts on how you might use that thinking in your new responsibilities.

Ms. Arpana Vora: Yes. What I meant by “public” is, obviously, you're in a workplace, you're in a grocery store, and somebody brushes you. You're in a workplace and there might be an inappropriate touch here or there. But what determines inappropriate? If we don't have solid codes of conduct and sensitivity training, it's “he said, she said;” “she said, she said;” “he said, he said.”

When I mean “private,” I mean what's acceptable in your own home, in your own culture, versus this private setting in a professional setting, which is behind a closed door in a public setting, for a massage in particular in this case. “Therapeutic touch” is just that: It's meant to be therapeutic, but we do have to be culturally sensitive. We do have to invite more input on that matter, on what's appropriate and what is not appropriate.

Being on the adjudication side of things, I would be able to lend some sensitivity to that, why one person may feel that that's not inappropriate versus somebody feeling that some form of touch was inappropriate. I think that's probably the basis of exactly what the complaint would be in many cases. Diversity and different cultures deter-

mine that level of touch—or I'm going to say the tone of the touch—differently. We need to be more aware of that to allow and welcome and encourage all cultures, all backgrounds equal access and promote the therapeutic end of massage.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I think all of us here on the government side, and perhaps this row of committee members, appreciate the professionalism and not only the cultural but also the professional sensitivity that you've displayed in your answer.

I would turn it over to Ms. Vernile.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: And now for something completely different, I just want to go back to something that my NDP colleague mentioned about the contribution that you made. When you do contribute—and you mentioned that you have made political contributions, both to the Progressive Conservative Party and the Liberals. When you give, you just give generally to a fund.

Ms. Arpana Vora: That's right.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: You're not specifying where it goes; is that correct?

Ms. Arpana Vora: Exactly.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: So you may have given, as you noted, \$5,000 recently, but it wasn't specifically to go to a particular election or by-election?

Ms. Arpana Vora: No. Absolutely not, no.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Ms. Vernile. Any other questions by the government? No?

Thank you, Ms. Vora. I'm going to ask you to step down. This concludes the time allocated for this interview.

We will now consider the concurrence for Brenda Lucas, nominated as member, Ontario Clean Water Agency.

Yes, Mr. Pettapiece?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: May we have a recorded vote on this, please?

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Yes, a recorded vote has been requested.

Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Brenda Lucas, nominated as member, Ontario Clean Water Agency.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any discussion?

Ayes

Kwinter, Mangat, Qaadri, Vernile.

Nays

Bailey, Pettapiece.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): The motion is carried. Congratulations, Ms. Lucas.

We will now consider the concurrence for Arpana Vora, nominated as member, Council of the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario. Would someone please move the concurrence?

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: By the way, it's "Arpana."

I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Arpana Vora, nominated as member, Council of the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Mr. Qaadri, for the phonetic correction of the name. Any discussion?

All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Congratulations, Ms. Vora.

Seeing that there are no other nominees and no other business, the committee is being adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 0951.

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