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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

A-44

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

A-44

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

1st Session
42nd Parliament
Tuesday 13 April 2021

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

1^{re} session
42^e législature
Mardi 13 avril 2021

Chair: Gilles Bisson
Clerk: Julia Douglas

Président : Gilles Bisson
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CONTENTS

Tuesday 13 April 2021

Subcommittee reports	A-407
Intended appointments.....	A-408
Mr. Ian Ball	A-408

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 13 April 2021

Mardi 13 avril 2021

The committee met at 0901 in committee room 2 and by video conference.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Good morning, everyone. I call this meeting to order. We are meeting to conduct a review of intended appointments. We have the following members in the room: MPP Nicholls. The following members are participating remotely: MPP Bouma, MPP Gates, MPP Stiles, MPP Pang, MPP Kusendova and MPP Mitas.

MPP Anand just joined us. MPP Anand, can you confirm your presence and your location?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Good morning, Chair. My name is MPP Deepak Anand, and I am in Mississauga, Ontario.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you.

We are also joined by staff from legislative research, Hansard, and broadcast and recording.

To make sure that everyone can understand what is going on, it is important that all participants speak slowly and clearly. Please wait until I recognize you before starting to speak. Since it could take a little time for your audio and video to come up after I recognize you, please take a brief pause before beginning. As always, all comments by members and witnesses should go through the Chair.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Now, we move to our next item on the agenda: subcommittee reports. Our first item of business is the subcommittee report dated March 31, 2021. We have all seen the report in advance, so could I have a motion? MPP Nicholls.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Wednesday, March 31, 2021, on the order-in-council certificate dated March 26, 2021.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you. Any discussion? Any further discussion? Are the members ready to vote?

Interjection.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): To the members who are participating in this meeting and are not on video, can you turn your video on, so that we can see your voting pattern? If not, in that case, we are going to do it with—

Interjection.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Yes, MPP Stiles? Go ahead. You have a point of order?

Ms. Marit Stiles: Point of order, Mr. Chair: I am looking at this once again long list of intended appointees, and I'm alarmed by the fact that we were seeing so few of these appointees over the last year—well, three years now. I'm wondering if—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Stiles, my apologies for interrupting you. Can I finish my comment about the voting process? After, then I will give you the opportunity to speak, to debate.

I am just going to remind everyone who is participating without video privilege, if you can turn your video on, please go ahead and turn it on. If not, if you cannot turn the video on, in that case, we're going to do the voting by roll call.

I see that we have MPP Mitas and MPP Kusendova. We cannot see their video. Are you able to turn—okay, thank you, MPP Mitas. MPP Kusendova? Okay, so we're going to do it through roll call.

Now, I would like to give the floor to MPP Stiles for further debate. Go ahead, MPP Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Just going over the report again here, I'm reminded that one of the appointees who is appearing before us today is on this list and therefore received cabinet approval. This is a long list of people, again, who have received cabinet approval for appointments who haven't even been seen here before, who the people of Ontario have yet to review or have any accountability for.

I want to also add, Mr. Chair—I repeat again our concern in the official opposition that these meetings are being conducted without any public viewing opportunity, so there is no way for anybody to watch this committee while it's taking place in the public, which really defeats some of the purpose of this process, which is to shed some light and create some transparency and accountability around the public appointments process. I think we can all agree that's a very important role of this committee. It's why we're all here.

I really want to just say once again how alarmed I am that we're continuing to see the government members refuse to provide unanimous consent to allow the extension of some of these opportunities that we have to see these appointees come before this committee, to be able to ask them questions, to be able to hear about their particular skills or how they expect to contribute to various boards, agencies, commissions.

I know I speak for the members of the opposition and I believe I probably speak also for some of the government

members, that we want to see greater transparency and accountability in this process. Once again, here we are, voting on a report that basically just rubber-stamps a large number of potential appointees by this government before anybody has had a chance to see them, talk to them, understand their motivation, ask them questions—sometimes difficult questions, but important questions.

As we've seen in this committee before, sometimes those questions brought to light issues that resulted in overturning that appointment. But also, we've seen some great people apply. So I really question why we continue to see this continue in this way. I'm going to urge again that we really consider that all of the government—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Stiles, the subcommittee report is intended just to bring to the attention of the committee what the committee is going to review.

Any further debate or discussion? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning. I understand what this subcommittee is about, but I think what my colleague is talking about is that the residents of Ontario should have the opportunity to see who is being appointed to these very, very important committees. What we're trying to figure out—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Gates, my apologies. I have to stop you, because the issue here is not the merit of each candidate, examination, testimony or questioning; we are here just to vote on the subcommittee report. If you would like to discuss this issue that MPP Stiles and you, MPP Gates, raised, we can provide you the opportunity another time to debate, to discuss this issue, and we will provide equal opportunity to everyone to discuss it. But our intention here is just to vote on the subcommittee report.

Any further debate? Thank you very much. Are we ready to vote? Okay. We're going to do the voting through a roll call. The Clerk will call each member's name. Please indicate your voting intention.

The subcommittee report is carried.

0910

Now we have another subcommittee report, dated April 8, 2021. We have all seen the report in advance, so could I please have a motion?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I move the adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, April 8, 2021, on the order-in-council certificate dated April 1, 2021.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any discussion? MPP Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: This report contains quite a few selections on behalf of the official opposition party. I don't see any selections from the government party. I know we have six weeks that this House is sitting and I do hope that we'll be able to accommodate and get all of these people before us. We haven't had much luck in the past, so I just wanted to comment on that.

I also want to reiterate the point I made earlier today: that these meetings continue to not be broadcast in any way. There's no way to watch them, so the public can't

watch them online. The only thing they can do is wait until Hansard eventually publishes the transcript.

I want to request again: I know that our opposition House leader has raised this with the House leader of the governing party, but this really continues to be an issue of significant concern for the official opposition, for the public and for the media, that there is no way—I would ask again that we consider whatever can be done to allow for public viewing of these proceedings.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, are we ready to vote? Yes? Okay. We will do it through a roll call again. The Clerk will call your name. Please indicate your intention.

Motion carried. That is the motion of the subcommittee of April 8, 2021. Thank you.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MR. IAN BALL

Review of intended appointment, selected by government party: Ian Ball, intended appointee as member, Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology—Board of Governors.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): We will now move to our review of intended appointments. Today we have Ian Ball, nominated as member of the Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors. As you may be aware, you have the opportunity, should you choose to do so, to make an initial statement. Following this, there will be questions from members of the committee. With the questioning, we will start with the government, followed by the official opposition, with 15 minutes allocated to each recognized party. Any time you take in your statement will be deducted from the time allotted to the government.

Now, Mr. Ball, if you would like to make an opening statement, you're welcome to do so. Thank you very much for being here with us today.

Mr. Ian Ball: Thank you for your time today, and yes, I would like to make an opening statement. I do have it written down, so I apologize if I'm looking down at my notes.

Good morning to everybody on the call. As was stated, my name is Ian Ball. I am 39 years old and I reside in Bowmanville, Ontario, which is a part of Clarington, Durham, and approximately 15 minutes east of Oshawa, where Durham College is located. I grew up in the Durham region, throughout from Pickering to Clarington, and I have lived here all my life. I graduated from Durham College's business program in 2002, and have subsequently graduated from Ryerson University in 2004, also in the business program.

Since graduating, I worked at Goldcorp Inc., which was one of the largest gold producers in the world until it merged with Wheaton River Minerals in 2005. I subsequently worked at McEwan Mining, becoming president of that organization in 2013, where I was responsible for managing 1,800 individuals in Mexico, Argentina,

Nevada and in Toronto, where the headquarters was located. McEwan Mining is a gold and silver producer listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

In 2014, I left McEwan Mining and became CEO of Abitibi Royalties, which is a gold royalty listed on the Toronto Venture and the NASDAQ international exchange, whose primary royalty is in the town of Malartic, which is in Quebec. I'm also an independent director of Brixton Metals Corp., a gold explorer in Canada and the United States.

Lastly, between 2005 and 2015, I had created the Ian Ball scholarship at Durham College, which was designed to award the most improved student in the business program from their first to their last year. I was recognized by Durham College with their Alumni of Distinction Award, and I am a former member of the Young Presidents' Organization.

That concludes my opening remarks.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you, Mr. Ball.

We will go to the government side for questioning. The government side has 13 minutes. MPP Nicholls, please go ahead.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Good morning, Mr. Ball. It's nice to have you with us this morning to review your qualifications.

As I'm sure you're well aware, there's a growing concern regarding both a skills gap and the need for more workers within the skills trades. While there is a surplus of good, well-paying jobs available, many businesses struggle to find people willing to take on these jobs. Seeing as one of the fundamental components of our college system is to train young people to fill local labour market needs, what do you believe we need to do better in order to help close this gap?

Mr. Ian Ball: Yes, that's a very good point. I have experienced that, from my own time at Durham College and entering the workforce to actually hiring university and college grads. You do see that there's a gap between what you are learning in your time at the college level versus what is expected once you enter the workforce.

I think there needs to be a greater communication between the schools that are providing the skills and, ultimately, who are their end customers, which are the employers. There needs to be a greater dialogue, because what I have found is that a lot of the skills that you were learning at the college level were usually outdated and not applicable to the workforce. So I think there needs to be a greater understanding, if you look at Durham College and the Durham region, of what the employers are requiring and what the skills are that are being transferred so the next generation is prepared and they're not having to be retrained during their first three years when they enter the workforce.

0920

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you very much, Mr. Ball. I know that it's very, very important that we do ensure that our curriculums in our colleges meet today's demands, because technology is changing so quickly.

I'd now like to turn the questioning over to MPP Christina Mitas.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Mitas, go ahead.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: Thank you, Ian, for being with us today. The idea of bridging the gap, as MPP Nicholls and you just mentioned, between education and career skills is something that is often talked about within the post-secondary sector, as you brought up. As someone who graduated from Durham and has gone on to have a successful career in an important industry for our province, what are some of the ways that you believe our colleges can better prepare our young people for meaningful careers? You already told us that some of the things they're learning are outdated. Is it just a matter of curriculum? Would it be the college having a greater hand in the transition from college to work? What ideas would you have on assisting with this?

Mr. Ian Ball: When I think back to my time in—sorry; I was muted there.

When I think back to my time at school, you have 13 weeks, generally, within a semester. I would always question, why are we not bringing in industry leaders from the surrounding areas, one speaker every single week, so students are hearing directly from the leaders of these businesses what the expectations are, coming out of the workforce? One hour a week for 13 weeks is something that at least was never done in my program that would have been of tremendous value.

But also, I think there's an onus on the colleges and the employers to get together and to—obviously, it's very hard at the board of directors level, because you have to dive down into the specific programs. But if it's business, marketing or accounting, I think it's up to those programs to meet on a certain schedule and to understand how things are changing.

What I have found is that communication doesn't exist or it's very broken down or it doesn't happen very frequently. I know they try to bridge that gap through internships and having other types of programs where you work with a company during your final year, but usually, that doesn't provide the necessary insight, I've found.

There just needs to be a much deeper relationship between the school and the employers. How you develop that probably goes beyond the scope, but I think that would go a long way.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: Okay. It's like you read my mind on my next question, but during other committee appearances for prospective college board appointees, a lot of candidates have spoken a great deal about the importance of experiential learning and creating partnerships with businesses to help develop students and prepare them for that transition into the labour force. I can say, as a high school teacher, I thought that the young apprenticeship program was incredibly helpful, especially for students who were going into the trades, getting that hands-on experience.

Can you provide us with your perspective on this and highlight any experiences that you have in regard to this

that will be able to allow you to help students after graduation?

Mr. Ian Ball: I think you are right: When you look at the interim programs that exist, from my experience, they can either go very well or very poorly. I would say that when they could go very well is when you have an employer that is championing young students, taking the time to teach them. Where I've seen it go very poorly is when a student goes to a place of business or a trade and is stuck in a back corner of an office and really isn't being given the mentorship possible. So although the program is the exact same for both students, I think there needs to be a very good vetting process of where these students are going to and ensuring that these employers have to be seen as another type of professor, teacher, that is adding to the skill set. Just as there is a great need to vet who a board member is and who a professor is at a university, you have to be very careful where these internships are taking place, because as I said, they can either go very well or very poorly, from my experience.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I agree completely, and I have seen both sides of that coin as well. Thank you.

I will now pass it on to MPP Bouma.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Bouma.

Mr. Will Bouma: Chair, through you: Mr. Ball, thank you so much for joining us today. Your resumé is incredible, and I really appreciate the fact that you're willing to serve your community, the scholarship that you're doing, and to go back to the college that has served you well in order to do that.

I was wondering, and I'm sure you're aware, a college's board of governors is responsible for making large decisions on behalf the institution, including selecting the president, passing budgets, and approving plans for future initiatives. As a potential board member, what would you do to ensure the continued and future success for Durham College, and post-secondary education as a whole?

Mr. Ian Ball: That's a very broad question so I'll try my best. When I look at why I think I would be a valuable member of the Durham College board, I look at my own experiences, having sat on corporate boards and seeing how they function. But my skills are really finance-oriented and operational.

Obviously, funding for the school—I know that I had talked to Durham College in terms of how they manage their endowment, ensuring that there's proper oversight with somebody who has a lot of experience in finance, not just to hand that over and let that be run on its own without having proper oversight. I think it's very important for the funding of that school going forward.

Also, having been a student there, I'm not sure how many board members were actually students at Durham College. Usually, it's a very small number, I have found. So when you say "taking away," what improved the experience for me—because I went from having, I would say, a horrific time at Durham College in my first year to ending up having one of the best experiences of my life—and how do you continually provide that environment for

students? Because what you see in a lot of college programs is a lot of students dropping out in year 1—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Five minutes left.

Mr. Ian Ball: There's not the support mechanism. So I think it would be, for me: How do you create the environment to foster the skills that each of these students have entering into the college system?

Mr. Will Bouma: Thanks for that.

I'll turn it over to MPP Pang, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Pang, the floor is yours.

Mr. Billy Pang: Thank you, Mr. Ball, for putting your name forward to serve your community.

Colleges, of course, are places of higher learning, but they also act as a major local employer and serve as pillars of their communities. As someone who has achieved incredible feats both professionally and charitably, can you tell us some of the thoughts that you have on helping Durham become even more involved in the community, both during and after COVID-19?

Mr. Ian Ball: Okay, I'm unmuted there.

One, I think the college could do a great job getting more involved at the high school level. I think there's a real communication gap, as a student, knowing what are the next steps, what are the programs that are available. I do know that there are open houses at the college, but usually those are very poorly attended. What I have found is that students will go into a program without really fully understanding what they're actually getting into. I think that is one way that the college can help with the students.

Obviously, there are various means of bringing the community together. There are a lots of facilities at the college that go unused a lot of the time. I think Durham College, from my experience, has actually done a very good job integrating itself with the community. How to improve upon that? I think I would have to have a greater understanding of what they are already doing, but from what I've seen, Durham College has been a huge part of Oshawa's success.

Mr. Billy Pang: Thank you, Mr. Ball.

I want to pass the next question to MPP Kusendova.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): I see MPP Anand raised his hand. Go ahead, MPP Anand.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, Chair. How much time do I have?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Three minutes.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you so much.

Mr. Ball, it was a pleasure listening to you. You were talking about the processes, about the internships, and giving back to the college where you came from.

I'm curious to know—you talked about industry and programs based on industry. I want to know about the evolution and innovation in sectors like, for example, mining, that are often viewed as a very hands-on, pencil-and-paper form of work. While many Ontarians still hold jobs that would be viewed as traditional trades work, there have been a number of new and exciting opportunities, we have seen, for people to join the trades. With your

experience, can you tell us a bit more about how you have seen the industry grow over the past few years, and the potential opportunities that could be realized?

0930

Mr. Ian Ball: Thank you. In particular to mining, you've seen a big influx of technology, so even if you are considered a trade or hands-on, what you're looking at is artificial intelligence entering into the mining industry. You're looking at a lot of automation. You're looking at a lot of initiatives on the electric front, so zero emissions coming from the vehicles. Obviously, mining produces a tremendous amount of data, and so you're seeing a lot of number-crunching, which is obviously part and parcel to the artificial intelligence.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): One minute left.

Mr. Ian Ball: But then you're also seeing a lot on the environmental and the reclamation side: How can you leave a mine site more attractive than when you actually started? Whether that's bringing in and creating new infrastructure for the community—you're seeing a lot of disciplines within mining advance well beyond, as you've mentioned, hands-on, because you're seeing it now becoming key to ensure better safety and lower environmental footprints. That's all being driven through innovation.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you so much. I think we have very limited time left, so I just quickly want to understand—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Ten seconds.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Chair, how much time do I have?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Ten seconds, MPP Anand. I think you're probably over—

Mr. Deepak Anand: Ten seconds? I just want to say thank you, Mr. Ball. Thank you for coming. I really appreciate it.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Now we will go to the opposition side. We will start the questioning with MPP Stiles. MPP Stiles, go ahead.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Ball, for joining us here this morning and taking the time to be here. We really appreciate it. As you probably heard in some of our initial discussion before we started to hear from you, we have had a little bit of frustration in getting enough of the appointees before this committee as we would have liked to hear from, so it's good to see you here. Thank you.

I'll just start by saying that we have had a number of very partisan appointments to this committee. Certainly every government, I think, Conservative and Liberal both, has done their part in appointing a lot of former candidates and things like that to these positions. You certainly seem to obviously have some qualifications and connections to Durham College, so I appreciate that, but I do need to ask you some questions related to your connections to the PC Party of Ontario and the current government, just from the perspective of ensuring that there is great transparency and accountability in this process, which is really what we're here for.

I mean, this is why this committee exists. At the end of the day, the government can pretty much approve anyone with their majority, but this is part of the process, to try to kind of understand some of those issues and then ask you some more particular questions around your skills, your vision and your role.

With that, and as we are here to discuss your appointment with the Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology, did anyone approach you to seek this position?

Mr. Ian Ball: Yes, that is correct. I was approached.

Ms. Marit Stiles: And do you mind me asking who approached you?

Mr. Ian Ball: Yes. Initially I applied on my own two years ago and I was denied by the college, and then I was approached by Lindsey Park after she knew about my connection to Durham College, I would say in August or September of last year.

Ms. Marit Stiles: So that's MPP Lindsey Park?

Mr. Ian Ball: That is correct.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay. Just for the record, that's Conservative Party member of provincial Parliament Lindsey Park.

So you were contacted by Lindsey Park. Did you have any connection as well with any of her staff or any other government or political staff in that process?

Mr. Ian Ball: No, I did not.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay. So she just called you and said, "Apply again"? Or how did she frame that?

Mr. Ian Ball: I don't recall the exact conversation, but there was, she believed—I don't have the exact wording, but there was a position on the board coming up. She knew that I had attended Durham College, that I'd given back, that I was from the community. She said, "Would you ever consider being on the board?" and I said that I actually had tried in the past, so yes, it would be of interest.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay, thank you. And do you mind me asking as well: I know a lot of people who apply in that initial process online or whatever apply to a bunch of different options—which is pretty normal, I should say. But was this the only one you applied to, or did you apply to other boards or agencies?

Mr. Ian Ball: No, the Durham College board was the only one I applied to.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I understand. And I guess my next question, then, would be: Have you ever donated to the PC Party or any of their leadership candidates?

Mr. Ian Ball: I have, yes. I've made, I guess, donations to two individuals: Erin O'Toole is essentially my next-door neighbour—we're both from Clarington; he lives around the block—and I've made one contribution to Lindsey Park.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay. Our research showed you may have also given to the leadership campaigns of Patrick Brown and Monte McNaughton. Does that ring true to you?

Mr. Ian Ball: I was persuaded to through a friend, yes. I forgot about that, but yes, you are 100% correct. The second fellow that you mentioned: I would say that I did not know I was donating to him when I made that

donation, but that was the end result. So it was a bit of a bait and switch.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Oh. Okay. Thank you. So you did donate to MPP Lindsey Park's campaign as well. Yes, I understand. I don't know what that means exactly in this case, but I can understand that sometimes, we're buying a ticket to something or whatever and then we find out that it is actually a political donation. Is that along the lines of what you mean?

Mr. Ian Ball: No, not at all. How would I characterize it? She asked me in September. I think I made the donation six months prior to it, I don't know—to be on the day. I want to serve Durham College and I like Lindsey as a person, so that's—

Ms. Marit Stiles: Oh, I understand that. Yes.

Do you believe that—I mean, obviously, you've explained a lot about your connections to Durham College. I understand that. I'm sure I'm not the first person to say this, but I suspect you're one of the golden boys of Durham College. You've had enormous success and you've created a scholarship and everything, so I understand that connection 100%. But do you believe that those donations and connections to the PC Party had any impact on your receiving this offer of a place on the board?

Mr. Ian Ball: I can't really speak to that, because they didn't give me any thought into their thinking. If I were them, I would hope that that would not be the case and that they're looking for somebody who cares about the college, who came from it and feels they have the right skills. But I can't speak on their behalf because I don't know the answer.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm going to leave it to my colleague to ask a few more questions as well, but I was interested in one of the other comments you made previously about students in high schools. One of the things that I've often found in my own community, but also across the province, is that a lot of our high school students are not really understanding or exploring some of the options that are open to them. I wondered if you could expand a little bit more on what you think colleges and, in particular in this case, Durham College could be doing to encourage students to explore some of those opportunities that Durham offers? If you wouldn't mind commenting.

Mr. Ian Ball: I think when you're young, you don't know what a job really is. I think back to my time in high school, when you tended to follow what your parents did without really opening up your eyes to what more is out there. So as much as the colleges and the high schools are designed to give people skill, they need to do a much better job of saying, "Well, did you know that in southern Ontario, in Durham, we're a leader in this industry? We're going to bring in this person who is an expert at it."

As a young person, you want to find role models and say, "Yes, that's an industry that I'm passionate about. I can see myself getting into it." From my experience, that lacks all across the board in our educational system.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I wouldn't disagree with you there.

Mr. Chair, how much time do we have left?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Seven minutes.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay. I'm to pass this on, then, to my colleague MPP Gates. Thank you very much, Mr. Ball.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Gates, go ahead.

Mr. Wayne Gates: How you doing?

Mr. Ian Ball: Good. Yourself?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Mr. Ball, I listened intently to both the questions from the Conservatives and from my colleague. Our questions are a little different than theirs. Ours talk about your relationship with the PC Party; theirs talk about what a wonderful candidate you are. But I will give you a few marks here on the fact that at least you show up and are allowing us to ask you questions. That doesn't happen at this committee very often, so I do appreciate that.

0940

I'd like to talk to you a little bit about the donation side. I understand you donated to, it sounds like, four PCs, either candidates or people running for positions. Do you remember how much you donated?

Mr. Ian Ball: In total?

Mr. Wayne Gates: No, for each one.

Mr. Ian Ball: Generally, for Erin O'Toole I donated the maximum, which I guess has varied during the four or five years he has been an MP, so roughly \$1,600 a year. And then—

Mr. Wayne Gates: Each year, Mr. Ball?

Mr. Ian Ball: Probably each year, yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. All right.

Mr. Ian Ball: Then for Lindsey, I've made one donation for \$500.

Mr. Wayne Gates: And Mr. Patrick Brown?

Mr. Ian Ball: I couldn't tell you. I don't know, \$200? I don't know.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Can I help you out? It's \$500.

Mr. Ian Ball: You certainly can.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Did you donate to Monte McNaughton, as well?

Mr. Ian Ball: As I said, indirectly. I didn't realize at the time that there were leadership debts that were being paid off during that leadership runoff at that point. It was really to Patrick Brown, but it went to Monte's campaign.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. So you didn't support Monte for the leadership.

Mr. Ian Ball: No, I did not.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You supported Patrick Brown?

Mr. Ian Ball: I supported my friend, who knows Patrick.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay, well, it's sort of—

Mr. Ian Ball: Yes, indirectly, but it wasn't direct.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's all good. I'm just going to ask you one more question around donations.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Five minutes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: When I take a look at some of the things that you've done, obviously coming from Durham College and giving back to the college—coming from Niagara, you're probably aware of Niagara College. Durham College and Niagara College are very similar.

Ours is more focused to the tourist sector, the wine industry, the craft brewing industry, where yours is more focused into technology, something that's really, really important now in the province of Ontario and has been for a number of times: the skilled trades.

It was interesting that you applied to get on the board, yet they denied you, which is kind of, when you take a look at everything that you've done, a little surprising. Did they give you any reason why they would have denied you without getting someone from the PC Party to say, "Apply again" and probably make some calls to the college? It sounds to me like you probably could have got on this without the PC Party. I'm just trying to figure out why they would deny you, with your credentials.

Mr. Ian Ball: Yes, the response I received back at the time, which was two or three years ago, was that the preference was to have somebody either that was involved in the health care sector, the automotive sector or the power generation sector, which are the three biggest employers in the Durham region.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, we went through a mess with General Motors, but it looks like we may get back on track there, particularly around electric vehicles and maybe using some of our northern minerals to take care of the batteries. Hopefully General Motors in the Durham region and Oshawa region is on its way back. I know a lot of people in Durham region had supported the General Motors facility for years and years and years. As a matter of fact, I think Erin O'Toole's dad worked at General Motors. I don't know if you know—

Mr. Ian Ball: He did.

Mr. Wayne Gates: He did, eh? Okay.

I wanted to ask you: What role do you believe that the college could play in educating students around a career in skilled trades?

Mr. Ian Ball: I think that beyond the actual skills—and I think a lot of places can provide skills; that's not unique to Durham College or to any college. I think there are a lot of places you can become skilled. Where I think the added value is, in terms of when I look at Durham College, is how you give these students the confidence that when they're going through the program, they're becoming stronger individuals who are curious. They're motivated. They're self-confident that they're going to come out of this program a more mature individual.

I just look at my own experience, thinking that yes, the skills I received at Durham I probably could have got at any college in Canada, but it was really the transformation as an individual, which was the environment that the school put around me, that I would hope to continually foster at the college level.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. I've only got a couple of minutes left. So you're not saying that Durham College—how would you compare the two, compared to the union facility that is also training young people in their union

centres around not only the skilled trades itself, but also around health and safety, which has become a really big issue in the construction trades and with skilled trades? What you might not know is we've had a number of deaths over the last few months in the construction trades.

Mr. Ian Ball: I can't make that comparison. I've never had any experience with—I've never been in a trade myself, so I can't make that comparison to the college level, unfortunately.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate that. How important do you think it will be, getting a message out to young women that the trades are a really good place to go to? Maybe even, because our education critic's on this line as well—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): One minute.

Mr. Wayne Gates: How important would it be to not only have it in the colleges, but—I'm a firm believer. I came out of a four-year tech course, unlike yourself. That's as high as I went, kind of thing, but at the end of the day, through my grade 7, grade 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, I did all shops: I did autobody. I did welding. I did sheet metal. I did woodworking. I knew how to lock out a machine when I left in grade 12 and got hired in General Motors, right out of grade 12. How important do you think it would be that we do that in the lower-tier education as well, moving into the colleges?

Mr. Ian Ball: I think that there's a lot of stuff we should be doing at the high school level or lower that we're currently not doing. But to your specific question, I think there are a lot of very valuable skills that we should be teaching grades 9 to 12 that currently are not being taught, and instead, we're teaching—

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you, Mr. Ball. Unfortunately, the time allocated for this part of the session is over. Thank you very much for coming and sharing your points of view with the committee members.

Now, we will consider the intended appointment of Mr. Ian Ball, nominated as a member of the Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors. We have a motion from MPP Nicholls. Go ahead.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I'm sure, based on the answers that Mr. Ball has submitted, that even the opposition will certainly be in favour of this. Therefore, I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Ian Ball, nominated as member of the Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you. The concurrence in the appointment has been moved by MPP Nicholls. Any further discussion? Are the members ready to vote? Now we will go through the roll call again. The Clerk will call on each member to indicate their intention.

The motion is carried.

That's all we have today. We don't have any other candidates to consider. That brings us to the end of the session. I would like to declare the session closed.

The committee adjourned at 0949.

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