

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

A-6

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

A-6

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Tuesday 30 November 2021

2^e session
42^e législature

Mardi 30 novembre 2021

Chair: Gilles Bisson
Clerk: Tanzima Khan

Président : Gilles Bisson
Greffière : Tanzima Khan

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<https://www.ola.org/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7400.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7400.

House Publications and Language Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service linguistique et des publications parlementaires
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

CONTENTS

Tuesday 30 November 2021

Subcommittee report	A-53
Intended appointments.....	A-53
Ms. Ivana Vaccaro	A-53
Ms. Karen Dumoulin.....	A-57

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 30 November 2021

Mardi 30 novembre 2021

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

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): The meeting will come to order. This is our regular meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Today, we have two appointments that we're going to be going over. One is for the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, the other for St. Lawrence College.

Before we go to that, I know that Mr. Yakabuski wants to move a motion of the subcommittee. Sir, would you like to move your motion?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I do, Chair. I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, November 25, 2021, on the order-in-council certificate dated November 19, 2021.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): With that, is there any discussion in regard to the subcommittee report? Seeing no discussion, all those in favour, please signify by raising your right hand. All those opposed? Carried.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MS. IVANA VACCARO

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Ivana Vaccaro, intended appointee as member, Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): With that, we're going to move to our first intended appointment, a selection of the official opposition: Ivana Vaccaro—I hope I got that right—who is applying to be on the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

You can start by saying a few words. Whatever time you take is fine; it will be from the government time. Please, go ahead. Introduce yourself.

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairperson and members of the standing committee. My name is Ivana Vaccaro, and I am both honoured and humbled by the opportunity to speak to you this morning about my qualifications for the intended appointment to the Human Rights Tribunal.

As a first-generation Canadian, I watched my mother struggle to make a better life for herself and her children in Canada. My mother was widowed 10 years after arriving in Canada, leaving her with three children under the

age of nine. Notwithstanding her limited command of the English language and minimal work skills, my mother decided to stay in Canada to provide a better future for her children.

She worked for minimum wage most of her life and went to night school to learn how to read and write in English. It was not easy for her. She consistently faced language, educational and gender barriers along the way, but she persevered. Struggles such as these still hold true for many people who come to Canada today to create a better life for themselves and their children.

You can imagine the joy my mother felt when I became a lawyer. In fact, I'm the only lawyer in our family. The choices I have made, the responsibilities I've assumed in both my personal and professional life have all been borne out of a distinct sense of humility and gratitude for the opportunities my mother's choice afforded me and a genuine desire to serve the diverse and vulnerable members of our community.

I have always had an affinity for human rights issues. Throughout my undergraduate and post-graduate studies, even after I became a lawyer, my interest in human rights never waned. I have been a lawyer in private practice for nearly 18 years. I've practised exclusively in the area of family law and I've dealt with a wide range of family law issues. I'm on the family law and domestic violence panels for Legal Aid Ontario and have represented many women and children fleeing abuse to ensure that their rights are protected and that they receive the support, resources and services they're entitled to.

I've appeared regularly before the Ontario Court of Justice and the Ontario Superior Court of Justice to advocate on behalf of my clients. I am adept at written and oral advocacy, ascertaining the legal issues, analyzing the facts, understanding, interpreting and applying the law to the facts and doing so on a case-by-case basis. These are all skills that would surely benefit the Human Rights Tribunal.

This past March, I was appointed to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board as a part-time adjudicator. My experience with the board has been invaluable. I received rigorous training and mentorship and worked alongside highly seasoned adjudicators.

I joined the board while it was in the process of winding down, so there was a backlog of cases to deal with, all of which were complex, both from a factual and a legal perspective, and demanded a high level of competency in

analyzing and weighing the evidence, understanding and applying the law and delivering cogent, well-reasoned decisions in a timely fashion, all of which I can and did deliver.

Before my appointment to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and while I was still practising law, I became an accredited family mediator, parenting coordinator and arbitrator, all to further my commitment to increasing access to justice for Ontarians. Over the past four years, I've mediated many family disputes, both privately and on-site at the Ontario Court of Justice. I have assisted families in negotiating and reaching agreements through alternative dispute resolutions. In conducting mediations, I screened for power imbalances and levelled the playing field to ensure that the process is fair, transparent and safe for each party.

Immediately after being called to the bar in 2004, I and my partner founded the law firm in which I continue to practise today. I manage all aspects of the firm, both from a business and a legal perspective, including human resources, compliance and risk management. In fulfillment of my obligations as an employer, I'm responsible for drafting and implementing the firm's policies on accessibility, discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Apart from my professional qualifications, my personal experience and volunteer work demonstrate my commitment to serving the community. For as long as I can remember, I volunteered my time to stand in solidarity with those who face barriers at all levels of society, cognizant of my own privileges in doing so. As a student, I wrote letters to foreign governments on behalf of Amnesty International for the release persons in prison in gross violation of their human rights. I have served food to the homeless in Toronto at St. Francis of Assisi Church. I have mentored lawyers in the area of family law with the Coach and Advisor Network through the law society. Together with my firm, I have partnered with charitable organizations such as Nonnina's Table, Smiles of Innocence, Fight to End Cancer, the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer to raise much-needed funds for community meals, treatment, medical equipment and research.

For more than three years now, I have been a member of the board for the Redwood, a shelter which has been providing a safe haven for women and children fleeing abuse for more than 30 years. As a board member and a governance lead, I have been instrumental in amending the organization's bylaws and policies to ensure that they promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the recruitment of new board members, specifically amongst Black and Indigenous members of the community, and in the implementation of the its vision, mission and values within an anti-racism, anti-oppression framework.

I hope to continue to serve the people of Ontario as an adjudicator with the Human Rights Tribunal now that my tenure with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board is coming to an end. I know that the people of Ontario depend on Tribunals Ontario, and specifically its adjudicators, to be fair and impartial decision-makers, to ensure

procedural fairness, to be accountable and transparent, to be accessible and responsive, to render timely decisions and reasonable outcomes, and to ensure that the rule of law and the principles of natural justice are not only upheld in the administration of justice, but in protecting their dignity, self-respect and human rights, and ensuring that any violation is immediately and appropriately remedied. I am certainly prepared and able to continue meeting the high standard of adjudication that the people of Ontario demand and deserve, and to continue to do so with integrity and humility.

I thank you for your time, and I do look forward to your questions this morning.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Thank you very much for that.

We will start with the official opposition. Mr. Gates, you have the floor.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning. How are you today?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: I'm well, thank you. And yourself?

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's actually quite nice to—you don't know this, but we've been having a discussion with the PC Party about actually bringing in candidates who have qualifications that aren't tied to the PC Party. I took some great pleasure last night when I was reading over what was provided for me. With the talent that you have, obviously you are well-qualified for this position, so it's quite nice as an opposition to ask some questions. I will ask one that we ask everybody, but when I look at your resumé, it's quite impressive.

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The family mediator, obviously, is one that's interesting to me as somebody who has come through family law and had a really tough time with it. Going back to when I was first divorced—I shouldn't say "first divorced"; "divorced," right? Yes, I guess I got that right. I haven't been divorced twice. But if they had had family mediators back then, I think a lot of the problems that we had—because it should always be about the kids and what's fair.

0910

Maybe you could explain what a family mediator would do if you're involved with a dispute, so people can understand that.

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: As a family mediator, we are, first and foremost, impartial. We are there to facilitate communication and negotiations, and we're there to do so in a manner that is fair to each of the parties and that creates a safe space for the parties. Our focus is not on positions. That's what we do in an adversarial system. Our focus is on interests and keeping the parties focused on their interests.

It's also a space where we can be creative as mediators and we can think outside of the box, and that's very important. For families that turn to mediation, oftentimes, they don't want to have a long, drawn-out process to resolve their family law issues. They don't want to engage in a protracted litigation. They do want to have some sort of a resolution within a foreseeable future, in a cost-

effective and time-efficient manner. With mediation, we can provide that, and in doing so, not only are we helping families to move on with their lives in a way that will assist them, hopefully, to work co-operatively in the future, but also, we're alleviating the pressure on the Family Court system, which is inundated with cases.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes. It's one that I've followed very closely since the early 1990s, when I had my marriage split up. I've always thought that the only ones who got rich during a split-up were the lawyers—with no disrespect to you being a lawyer—and I always thought there had to be a better way. Mediation was one, and quite frankly, joint custody was one that I think California brought in in the early 1980s that has worked very, very well for them.

But mediation, I think, is a great way to go about and certainly save a lot of money in the process, because you have X number of dollars, and if it's all eaten up in the courts, the kids suffer as well. So I congratulate you on that. It's not easy, because a lot of times, going into those, they're mad at each other, right? So you've got to go through that as well. You get them on the same board and say, "Look, how do we do this?"

I want to thank you for doing that, because I've gone through that system, and it wasn't fun. I didn't have a lot of fun with it. I obviously survived it, but I wish I would have had mediation going back then, or some form of law on joint physical custody—equal responsibility for both parents is the way to go as well.

I know it doesn't have a lot to do with the Human Rights Tribunal, but I'm glad that you explained what you did, because it was very, very important work. I would congratulate you on that.

Can you spend some time discussing your decision to apply for this position and how you believe your legal background will assist you in this position?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Well, I've always been interested in human rights issues. In fact, I applied for the Human Rights Tribunal and the human rights legal services support branch early as well. When I was made aware that there was an opportunity for a cross-appointment and that a part-time position with the Human Rights Tribunal had opened up, I absolutely pursued it, given my interest in social justice issues and specifically the Human Rights Tribunal.

Given the training and the experience that I have as a lawyer, as a mediator and as an arbitrator, and having adjudicated with the CICB, I absolutely believe—and I hope this committee does as well—that I am qualified for this position and that I can bring to this position and I will bring to this position all of the training and the experience I've received over my 18 years in practice, a practice that has been quite versatile—that I will bring that to the Human Rights Tribunal. And that can only be a value-add.

I know that I can bring my ability to deal with cases on a case-by-case basis, to ascertain the legal issues, to analyze the facts, to understand and apply the law to those facts and to do so in an impartial fashion, with an open mind and a keen awareness of the importance of procedural fairness, of rendering decisions that are fair and

reasonable, that are well-thought-out and that are plain and easy to understand in a very timely fashion would be an incredible benefit to the Human Rights Tribunal and to the people of Ontario, who are relying on Tribunals Ontario to put forward candidates based on their qualifications and their merits.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you very much for that. I don't want you to feel special on the next question; I do this with everybody who comes to the committee. We ask all those who appear before this committee, because the government has a habit of appointing their friends and donors to the lucrative positions of the government. Have you ever donated to the PC Party or been a member of the PC Party?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: No.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That was a wise choice. Thank you for your answer. I appreciate it. I do ask everybody that. When I read over all your documents, I didn't see it, but I think it's fair that I'm consistent in asking that question.

The Human Rights Tribunal has a significant caseload and backlog right now. The province invested \$28.5 million to address this backlog through an expansion of the online court system, but it's our understanding there are still delays. What do you think should be done to address this?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: That's a difficult question, because I'm not an adjudicator with the Human Rights Tribunal yet. However, I think we can all appreciate that justice delayed is justice denied, and so it's very important that we hone in our skills, our time and our energy on ensuring that we can work collaboratively with each other to work through this backlog.

Now, as a lawyer and as a mediator, I have been able to pivot and work through the backlog faced by the Family Court system, and I am quite confident that as an adjudicator I can assist in doing so as well.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you for that. "Justice delayed is justice denied": Is that what you said?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I wrote it down. I might be able to use that in one of my many speeches here.

The delay is one of the effects of COVID-19 on the tribunal. Are there any other issues you think might come up for the tribunal related to COVID-19?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: COVID-19 has certainly caused a delay in services. I think that everyone will agree that it was certainly something that we didn't expect to happen, but when it did, we needed to pivot and we needed to change the way that we did the things that we did, including access to services. While at this point I'm not familiar with any other challenges or issues that may be faced with the Human Rights Tribunal, as I'm not yet a member of the tribunal, I imagine that as issues present themselves that Tribunals Ontario will continue to be able to respond to those issues and address those issues as they arise.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, thank you very much for your time this morning. You are certainly qualified for this position, and I will certainly be supporting you when the

vote comes up shortly. Thank you very much and good luck.

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): There being no further questions from the official opposition, we're going to go over to Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Ms. Vaccaro, for joining us today and for putting your name forward.

I'm just going to touch a little bit on the bugaboo of the opposition that they seem to be fixated on. I just want to point out that we as a government bring forward appointments and recommend appointments of the best people for the job. Some of them happen to be supporters of the Conservative Party, but that's not why we bring those intended appointments to this committee. We bring them because we believe they're the right people for the job, just as your appointment has been recommended by cabinet to this committee for this job.

I wanted to say that incidentally, when I was the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, I brought forth an intended appointment for this purpose, and the only political connection the person had was donations to the NDP. So when we see somebody that we think is the best person for the job, we certainly bring that forward, and we appreciate you being willing to put your name forward.

0920

I listened to your speech, and there's no question about your qualifications. You're also a very busy person, not only in your professional life but in your volunteer life as well. You've given a lot of your time. I did want to ask: The Human Rights Tribunal has a tremendously high caseload. Can you tell us about your experience in dealing with heavy caseloads in your 18-year legal career, as well as your personal commitments?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Dealing with a heavy caseload is nothing new to me. I've done so even as a mother to three children myself and while running a practice. Running a practice, as you can imagine, entails more than simply client management; there's this business aspect to it as well. But time management is the most important, and prioritizing. You need to understand from the very get-go what needs to be dealt with right away, what cannot wait and what can. That's very important. I think that if you take on any heavy caseload with the approach that "I'm going to tackle it all at the same time," you're going to overwhelm yourself.

I'm very much a steady-paced person and very even-keeled, but I do prioritize, and that has made me successful at managing not only my heavy caseloads as a lawyer, but my practice as a mediator, my role with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board as an adjudicator and my volunteer work. I've been able to do it all through the pandemic without pulling the plug on any of my responsibilities. That is what I hope to bring to whatever caseload that might await me with the Human Rights Tribunal: the ability to deal with and prioritize my caseload and to do so in a way that will not have Ontarians waiting any inordinate amount of time for their decisions.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I will respond with two words: admirable and amazing.

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Thank you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'll pass this on to my colleague MPP Anand.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Anand, you have the floor.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, MPP Yakabuski. I just want to quickly ask a question. Please don't take much time, because it does not reflect our decisions. Have you ever volunteered for any party, whether it is PC, NDP or Liberal, ever?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Actually, back in 2003, I believe it would have been, when I was articling in Ottawa, I assisted with the Liberal campaign for the then-Premier, Dalton McGuinty. This would not have been campaign experience, but I believe that perhaps when I was in—I think it was in undergrad; I summered for our MPP for York West, and he was a Liberal too.

Mr. Deepak Anand: [*Inaudible*] the last four years?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Absolutely not.

Mr. Deepak Anand: The reason I ask this question is I want to tell you it does not matter whether you volunteered or were a member of any of the parties, because at the end of the day, we all have to have a thought process. All parties need people. That makes our world [*inaudible*]. Actually, I always encourage: It doesn't matter, you should join based on your thought process.

The reason I ask this question is to put on the record that again, most often, we hear these questions from the opposition: "Are you a PC? Did you donate to the PCs? Did you volunteer for the PCs?" I always say, at the end of the day, I'd rather prefer people having a thought process and exercising it, rather than not exercising it. But I just want to leave that question right there.

My actual question is with respect to the human rights: (1) What do you think is deliverable in terms of the timeline—how important the timeline is, meeting those deadlines? (2) If there is an occasion when you meet somebody and you know they don't have the proof, but your heart somewhere says that they are right, in that situation, what do you do? How do you explain that, the result, whatever it is, to that person?

Ms. Ivana Vaccaro: Okay, so I think that there are two questions there. In terms of the first question and the timelines, I think it's very important to render timely decisions. At the same time, you do have to give each and every case the attention that it deserves. You do have to take the time to review the facts, weigh the evidence, apply the law, and that is not something that you simply fast-forward through to get to a decision, because you want to ensure that that decision is fair and that it's reasonable. So it's important to render timely decisions, but it's also important to give each case its due time.

Now, with respect to your second question in terms of whether—and I think you're asking, if I'm not mistaken, my instinct is telling me that a violation has taken place. What the people of Ontario are relying on me to do is to be able to apply all of the principles that are required to

reach a decision. In doing so, and when you look at the totality of the evidence and you apply the law, you should be able to render a decision that either confirms that a violation has taken place or not. If it has and there's not an exception for it, then you need to determine the appropriate remedy.

And so, oftentimes, while the people of Ontario may feel as though there should be something more in that decision, and perhaps this is what you're referring to, something coming from the heart, the reality is that my role as an adjudicator is to be an independent assessor and a trier of facts and to render an impartial decision, but a decision that is based on the merits of the case.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Seven seconds, Mr. Pang.

Mr. Billy Pang: Thank you, Mr. Chair—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Actually, we're out of time. Sorry.

Mr. Billy Pang: I appreciate Ms. Vaccaro's time management—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Very good, just as I'm trying to time-manage this committee. Okay, all right, any further—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Ms. Stiles, if you can identify yourself for the committee and the record.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Hi, I'm MPP Marit Stiles from Davenport, and I'm here at Queen's Park, but in my office.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay, very good. So you are dismissed for the time being, Madame Vaccaro. Thank you very much for appearing before our committee.

MS. KAREN DUMOULIN

Review of intended appointment, selected by government party: Karen Dumoulin, intended appointee as member, St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology—board of governors.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Next, we're going to deal with the St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology, an appointment to the board of governors in the name of Karen Dumoulin.

Madame Dumoulin, je ne sais pas si tu parles français, mais si tu veux t'exprimer en français, vous avez le droit. On a des traductions, puis la plupart ici comprennent le français assez bien.

So with that, you have an opportunity to say who you are and why you want to apply. Any time you take will be taken from the government side.

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: All right, thank you very much. I want to first thank the committee for the chance to help you do your due diligence to ensure that your LGIC representative is worthy of nomination by getting to know me a little better.

My name is Karen Dumoulin. I am bilingual. I am a graduate of St. Lawrence College, with two business diplomas, both with distinction, one in accounting and the other in data processing. Upon graduation, I won the

certified general accountants award and subsequently obtained my CGA designation in 1990, which in 2016 became CPA. As a CPA, I do have a code of professional conduct and my most important personal value is integrity, which I strongly uphold.

My work experience includes six years at Hotel Dieu Hospital; six years with the Roman Catholic Separate School Board, which became the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario; and the last 22 years, I've been with the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp., ending as CFO with my retirement in April of this year. With most of my experience in the public sector, I really believe it would be great use of my accounting and management experience to be able to give back to my community.

0930

Skills I would bring to the role include influencing people. I believe you have to influence people by building relationships. This was demonstrated through my experience in leading the negotiations for the last two five-year business plans and the extension of the agreement between the seaway and Transport Canada.

As CFO, I was responsible for developing business plans, operational plans, budgets, enterprise risk management, pension management and board orientation, and I had significant input into the strategic plan. I attended and presented at every board meeting, which has provided me, I believe, with the experience that I need to sit on the board of governors. I was the management lead for the audit committee and liaised directly with the chair of the committee, reporting back on internal controls, risk management, internal audit, external audit, financial statements and special examinations.

As chair of the pension management committee, which is a fiduciary role, I developed the governance manual on pensions, which was approved by the board of directors. It set out the responsibilities and the schedule of reviews, ensured risks were identified and reviewed regularly. Everything was done with diligence and on time and reported back to the appropriate committees. We set and tracked appropriate targets and implemented self-assessment for the various committees involved in pensions.

My previous board experience includes volunteer boards, so the Cornwell chapter of the Canadian Liver Foundation and the Cornwall Figure Skating Club. At the Canadian Liver Foundation, I was a volunteer at the beginning and took over the presidency. At the Cornwall Figure Skating Club, I was treasurer for two years and then became president.

I am married. I am the mother of two children and one stepson. Both my children are also St. Lawrence College alumni, and I'm very proud to say they have wonderful careers today. My stepson is also doing very well. I have two granddaughters. In my spare time, I enjoy travelling, reading and learning new things. I'm fully vaccinated, therefore I will be able to attend any in-person meetings.

Although I'm retired, I still feel I have a lot to give, and I would like to do so through board service. As I've worked in senior management for many years, I'm well-equipped to work with the other board members to provide

strategic direction, including review of business plans, finances and overall stewardship. I believe I could be of benefit to the board of governors of St. Lawrence College, which played a big part in shaping who I am today and provided me with the foundation for a very rewarding career, and I look forward to providing my contribution to the team.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Well, thank you very much, Madame Dumoulin. We're going to go first to the government side. Who would like to go first? Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Ms. Dumoulin, for joining us this morning and for offering your services to the board of St. Lawrence College.

I'm going to start by saving the opposition some of their trouble. They continuously, inaccurately, wrongfully accuse us of only bringing forward prospective appointees who have significant ties to the PC Party. We have demonstrated repeatedly that that's not the case. Now, from time to time, an appointee does come forward who has ties to the PC Party, but according to the opposition, they should never be appointed and we should only appoint those who are against us.

But the reality is that in a general population, we have people who are members of various political parties and we want to ensure that everyone, regardless of their political party, has an opportunity to serve on the many boards that serve the people of Ontario.

So I will ask you this first question quickly: Are you a member of the PC Party and have you made any donations to the PC Party of Ontario?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I am not a member, nor have I made donations.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Ms. Dumoulin. Now we'll get to the business of the day, and I'll put on my glasses for this one.

The idea of bridging the gap between education and career skills is something often talked about within the post-secondary sector. As you mentioned in your opening remarks about the need to rethink the ways that many modern societies view education and hiring, what are some of the gaps you have seen, and what steps do you believe are necessary to better prepare our young people for meaningful careers? You've talked about your own children as well.

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I do believe that you have to know the basics. That's what you learn in school. They are absolutely essential and you need to know them. But then you need to be able to tie them to the real world. Theoretical is great, but you have to have some real-world experience. Therefore, I think that there is a place in the post-secondary institutions where we need to be able to give them some real-world examples and some real-world experience, so getting them involved in either a short co-op or some projects that maybe the industries can provide.

We had a great project at the seaway. We just, in the last 10 years, went from tying up ships the way we used to 50 years ago by putting wires over a bollard to having hands-free mooring with suction cups and nobody having to actually be in the way of wires under pressure. College

students, university students would have enjoyed, I believe, that project and that challenge of, "How do you do that?" Because there's not just the technology. The technology was great and was a huge part of it, but there are all of the processes that have to change, there's all of the risk management that has to be done. There are all of those other sides that every student could have seen parts of.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much for that answer. I will pass the mic over to my colleague MPP Norm Miller.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Miller, you have the floor.

Mr. Norman Miller: Thank you, Ms. Dumoulin, for putting your name forward for the St. Lawrence College board of governors. It's obvious that you have a real family connection with this college.

As I'm sure you're aware, a college's board of governors is responsible for making important decisions on behalf of 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 success of St. Lawrence College?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I've already looked at their strategic plan in quite a lot of detail. I've looked at their financial statements. They are very stable. They are doing quite well. So I'd be looking to stay that course—of course, looking for where we could make improvements. Where are there improvements that could be made? How could we be tied, perhaps more so, to the communities?

Because it's a community college and we really are expanded right from Cornwall all the way through to Kingston, we have to look at those communities. A lot of those communities are rural and serve a big population, so we have to take a look at that and really tie to the communities and to the industries within those communities. That's how you know what you're going to need for the future: You have to be out in the community asking, "What are we looking at? What's coming our way?" and really understanding what's going to be happening in the future around us to know what we need to offer.

Everything is being governed by technology these days. We have to look at, how do we get there? What can we put in place today and how do we train students today? Obviously, they train students today very differently than they trained me 40 years ago, and that's okay. That's what you need. You need to be keeping up with the times. If we just look at this pandemic and look at how fast everybody had to pivot to working from home and teaching students who were not sitting in front of you, but sitting at home in front of a computer, and giving them the skills and the confidence to be able to do that.

0940

Mr. Norman Miller: Great. Well, thanks for putting your name forward. I'll pass it over to MPP Robin Martin.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You have about three and a half minutes.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you, Madame Dumoulin. It's great to have you here. I have to profess a connection to St. Lawrence College myself. My brother went there, so I've only heard good things about it. Apparently, it has

been much better since he went there, at least the way he told it. I'm delighted to entertain your application here to be on the board, and hopefully you will be there. It sounds like you'll make great contributions.

One of the interesting areas that we're hearing a lot about is this concept of lifelong learning and upskilling our workforce. Especially in the digital age, as you were just saying, this can be very important, and we can come up with really creative and new and innovative ways to deliver, really, a better product for people.

I'm wondering what sort of role you see for micro-credentials in the future of education, or if you know much about that whole micro-credentialing thing.

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: Unfortunately, I don't know an awful lot about it, but like I say, you have to see where things are going, and you have to be able to adapt and adjust and put the programs in place to have people be able to get there. We don't have all of the answers, obviously, but it's being out talking with people and seeing what is being done that will help you see where the future is going and how to get there.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Well, I think that's exactly what it's about. I'm going to pass it over to MPP Deepak Anand.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Anand, you've got about a minute and 40 seconds.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, Chair. That's good enough. A minute and 40 seconds is amazing.

Karen, I just wanted to ask you: You talked about how you're from the same place, and your kids have gone to the same place. What would be the benefit of your lived experience, having been there already? What would you say on that?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: Well, because I'm from the community and I've been in the community my entire life, I know a lot of people in the community and therefore have a lot of ties within industry and within government. So I can make some links and be able to get out there and figure out who—

Mr. Deepak Anand: That's good enough. I'd like to pass it on to the next colleague.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay, and who's next? Mr. Babikian, you've got about 40 seconds.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Thank you very much, Ms. Dumoulin, for your presentation and sharing your experience and your interest to be appointed to this board. Unfortunately, I don't have enough time to ask you the question, so I just wanted to wish you good luck and much success.

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): And if you want to respond to that, you've got 20 seconds.

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: Nothing other than "thank you."

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): All right, then we're going to go over to the official opposition side. Who wants to start?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Marit.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Ms. Stiles, please go ahead. You have 15 minutes.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Hello, and thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning. Welcome, Ms. Dumoulin. It's nice to meet you this morning.

As the other member mentioned in the beginning, we've seen a very large number of government appointees to boards and agencies that have been donors to the Conservative Party or are failed candidates for the Conservative Party. Unfortunately, we aren't actually able to get as many of them before this committee as we would like, because there really are very limited days, and the government hasn't been really willing to agree to expand the opportunities. So whenever I see an appointee who is called by the government members, I'm pretty sure that means there's probably not a connection to donors.

Anyway, I did want to thank you for volunteering to do this role, and I did want to ask you just a few questions, and then I'm going to pass it to my colleague. You talked a lot about your motivation for wanting to sit on this board. When you were applying, I assume online, did you apply to other agencies or commissions, or for other appointments?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I had applied for a federal one that I was not successful in. It was in marine transportation, where most of my experience is, but I was not successful for it. So yes, I did.

I actually applied for this position through the college. The alumni had put out an announcement that they were looking for someone. Actually, it was at a time when they weren't looking for anybody, but I allowed them to hold my resumé until there was a position open.

Ms. Marit Stiles: That was my next question: Were you contacted by anyone? But the outreach was through the alumni association, was it?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: Correct.

Ms. Marit Stiles: My other question was a pretty general one. Certainly, this COVID pandemic, has had a really significant impact—that's understating it, probably—on the way that post-secondary education is delivered in this province and, really, around the world. We've seen most institutions going back at least partly in-person. We've seen a few institutions choose not to, like Carleton—there's quite a lot of unhappiness around that.

I wondered if you could talk a little bit about where you see the role of the board in how we overcome some of the challenges at St. Lawrence College post-pandemic—or still in the midst of the pandemic, I guess.

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I'm not sure that we'll ever go back to everything being in-person. There are going to always be people who want to learn from a distance. I believe if you stop offering that, you're going to lose people who need that education and will look elsewhere for it. I believe we would want to make sure that we can reach out to as many people as we can, wherever they are, and offer the breadth of education that they're looking for. I think the role is really to take a look at how we can reach out to as many of those people as we can.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I appreciate that. It's interesting. I've always believed that, in post-secondary institutions, certainly there has always been a role for online education. I guess where we start to see students in some institutions saying that they're unhappy is with these hybrid models or the universities, for example, like Carleton, that are simply

not returning at all, which is—I think people are starting to say, “This is not what we envisioned.”

But thinking a little more broadly, one of the things that I’ve been thinking a lot about and researching in the last couple of years is the impact of the pandemic particularly on young adults, because internationally, what we’re seeing is that it has impacted that generation in many different ways and that it will have a generational impact that we’ll feel for some time. I’ve actually proposed some legislation that tries to get the government to focus on particularly youth and young adults specifically in terms of COVID recovery plans, both in terms of the economic recovery, but also in terms of mental health etc.

You mentioned that you had some kids who went all through St. Lawrence. I wondered if you might talk a little bit about what you think some of the other challenges are that that generation—and I know, obviously, not everybody who attends the college is a young adult. But specifically for those folks, what are the challenges that they’re going to experience, and how can the college help them through that?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: My youngest son, who is 28 today, is a mechanic, so he has gone through a trade. He has worked through the pandemic. However, if you want to look at an impact, at least in the shop he’s in, mechanics are paid by the work they do. If there’s no work, there’s no pay. So even though he’s still working 40 hours a week, he may only get paid for 20, depending on how much work there is. So is there an economic impact? There absolutely is an economic impact for the younger generation. But it really depends on, you know, where they are and what they’re doing.

0950

So there’s an instance where, yes, we want all of our people in trades—you know, we’ve been pushing and pushing to get more people in trades, because there are less people wanting to do it—but the structure we have for payment for some of them maybe doesn’t make sense.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Certainly. Thank you. That’s interesting.

Mr. Chair, how many more minutes do we have?

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): We have about seven and a half minutes.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Okay. I’ll ask one more question, and then I’ll pass it to my colleague. There have been generally declining college revenues throughout this pandemic. What do you see as a possible recovery strategy for the colleges and other post-secondary institutions?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I think it’s broadening where we’re offering the offerings to. If things are going to be able to be done remotely for the most part, we could broaden where we’re offering our services to. Canada is well known for our education system, and therefore, let’s take advantage of that and let’s expand where we offer it to.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you. I’m just going to pass it on now to my colleague, MPP Gates.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Gates, you have about seven minutes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you, Marit. Good job.

Good morning. How are you today?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I’m great, thanks.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I was fascinated by your answer—which is a little off the subject, but I’ve been known to do that in my career. You talked about your son being a skilled tradesperson, a mechanic, I would think in a dealership or a shop. Is it a unionized shop?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: No.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, I’ll tell you—and the only reason why I say this is because when I was president of my local union, I bargained probably 30 collective agreements in shops across Niagara. One of the things that we had in the unionized shops was guaranteed pay. When they would be slow—as you’re talking about because of COVID—they wouldn’t get their hours. There was a mechanism in place to even get more than 40 hours of pay, because they were being paid by the job, and then brakes were one where they could really make some pay, as they call it in the mechanical business. But there was a guaranteed pay. It might be something that your son may want to talk to the employer and talk to his other techs about, to say, “You know what? I’m here for 40 hours. I still have to pay my mortgage, my rent, my food, all that stuff. I shouldn’t have to go to work and not be compensated at no rate of pay.” So I thought I’d give you that little advice. I bargained it into collective agreements in every single one that I did while I was president of a local union.

We also bargained the fact that they could actually get more than 40 hours of pay, depending on the work that they were doing. Brakes was a really good one, and transmission. The bigger jobs are a little tougher to get the extra hours for. So maybe talk to your son about that, and if he wants any advice, he can give me a call any time. I certainly would like to talk to him about that, because it’s not fair that anybody goes to work and doesn’t get paid. That’s just my opinion, and I felt that way. Whether I’m a union guy or a non-union guy, nobody should go to work and not get paid. It doesn’t even make sense to me.

I would say that it is nice to have somebody like yourself come and actually be appointed, with qualifications that I think are excellent. Your relationship with the college, I think, probably makes it even a little more fun to go back to the college and watch it grow and watch it expand and have your family go through it. So I’ve got a couple questions, and then I want to finish off and respond to my colleague—which has nothing to do with you—around appointments, so I’m asking the Chair to save me a minute to do that.

This government hasn’t been a big friend of the arts since their election. Do you feel that the province’s previous cuts to arts and culture funding was helpful to the students graduating St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology? Or are you aware of them?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: It’s funny you mention the arts, because I was actually at a presentation of Cats on the weekend, done by St. Lawrence College students, and I’m attending another one that they’re doing next Saturday. So the arts are alive and well at St. Lawrence College, I’m

pleased to say. The students do a wonderful job. Obviously, the teachers prepare them very well to be able to do that.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The students have incredible talent, don't they?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: They certainly do.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Arts and culture are so important, quite frankly, to the overall health of our communities and the health of our economy. I'm always amazed at the talent that young people have when they have the resources and the teachers—what they give back.

This is important. Our post-secondary institutions have been severely impacted by COVID-19, particularly financially. The province offered one-time funding to assist with the shortfall, but do you think it's possible institutions will continue to struggle as the pandemic evolves?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: If they haven't adjusted—any time you're adjusting your revenue, you have to adjust your costs as well. So if they haven't taken the time to downsize their expenses when their revenues dropped, obviously, they're going to need help. Will young people start going back to college right away, or are there still some who are sitting, saying, "No, I'm going to wait another year or two years until this is really all over"?

It's really hard. If they get out and start earning a paycheque, it's really hard to give up that paycheque to go back to school. There may need to be different types of enticements, not just for the college, but also for students to go.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate that response. This is—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Two minutes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: How many? Two? We've got about a minute here to try to do this, so I can at least say something to my colleagues.

Do you think the province, including previous governments, has adequately funded and supported post-secondary education, particularly colleges? I really think the financial burden has fallen on international students. We say we want new people to come into our country, get educated in our country, but they're paying so much more than a domestic student that really, the costs of running colleges now are falling on the backs of international students. Do you think that's a fair statement?

Ms. Karen Dumoulin: I'm not sure that's a fair statement because colleges are subsidized as well by tax dollars. If you put the tax dollars along with the Canadian tuition, I'm not sure how far out of whack they would be. It would be interesting to do that comparison and see if it really is a true statement that it's on the backs of international students.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I certainly know how important they are, that's for sure, because I talk to the colleges and the universities, and it's all about foreign students. They're hurt with foreign students right now.

I will answer my colleague. Listen, I've been on this committee for six and a half years. I was on it for four years, and on for the last two and a half years. I understand that we need qualified people to get on these agencies. It

would be fair to say, in my opinion, that not all of the appointees who have come forward since I got back on this committee a year and a half, two years ago, have had the qualifications they should have. I'm glad today—I think we had one last week. Maybe we're moving in the right direction.

These appointments are so important. And I understand the Liberals did it, the NDP did it, the Conservatives did it. But to say that we don't support people even if they have qualifications is not accurate—

The Chair (Mr. Wayne Gates): Time is up. Time, time—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): All right.

Mr. Wayne Gates: We have the report though—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Yes, when we get to that. First of all, the point of order.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I appreciate the response by MPP Gates. I will say that we had candidates last week who were praised for their qualifications, but they were brought forward, obviously, for these appointments by our government, and when MPP Stiles had a chance to vote, she voted against them. So they praised them, but they still voted against them—

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Yakabuski, you know you can't—Mr. Yakabuski, that's not a point of order. Thank you very much. If you want to raise that in regular debate, you're more than welcome to do so.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'd like a recorded vote, please.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. All right. With that, it moves now to the actual votes on the intended appointments. We're going to start first with the human rights tribunal, and I believe Mr. Yakabuski has the—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Chair. Before I read this motion, I want to wish a happy birthday to Ms. Dumoulin's youngest son, the mechanic. My youngest son is in the skilled trades as well.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Very good.

1000

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Ivana Vaccaro, nominated as member of the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. With that, I think we're being asked for a recorded vote, so what we're going to do is we're going to go around the horn.

Ayes

Anand, Babikian, Coe, Gates, Martin, Norman Miller, Pang, Stiles, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Carried.

All right, now we're going to move to the second appointment, and that is of Karen Dumoulin to the St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors. Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: See, when those votes are recorded, even MPP Stiles votes for them. Look at that.

Chair, I move concurrence in the intended appointment of—

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Pardon me?

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Okay. All right. Hang on. We're moving a motion.

Mr. Wayne Gates: There's no need for that, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): I know, but right now—

Mr. John Yakabuski: There's no need for a lot of stuff here.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Both members, please come to order. If you want to have this under debate, we can do so, but right now we're moving the motion.

Mr. Yakabuski, move your motion.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Karen Dumoulin, nominated as a member of the St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology board of governors.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Very good. Is this also a recorded vote, Mr. Yakabuski?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): It is? All right.

Ayes

Anand, Babikian, Coe, Gates, Martin, Norman Miller, Pang, Stiles, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Carried.

So that concludes the two appointments. Unless somebody wants to bring something up, we can adjourn. Hang on—yes, Mr. Babikian?

Mr. Aris Babikian: I just want to follow up on what transpired at the end of last week's meeting. All of us are elected by the citizens of Ontario to do the best we can on their behalf to protect their interests. Regardless of where we come from, which political party, which ideology, which dogma we follow, when we come here, it is our job to perform civilly, in a manner where we respect each other, even though we will disagree.

I understand that the opposition has a role to play, and I respect their opinion and I respect their approach to certain things. But to start insinuating that members of this committee are not willing to work is a little bit too much, and out of bounds for a member of the committee, to start accusing her colleagues on the committee [*inaudible*]. All of us [*inaudible*] some kind of decorum in this committee, and respect each other and behave in a manner where we put our political ideology and dogma aside when it comes to the performance of the committee members.

It is not up to any committee member to judge any other colleagues. It is up to their constituents to judge their elected representative officials and how they perform or not, and they make the judgment. So to accuse some members of not working is unwarranted. This is uncivil. The member who made the statement last week owes an apology to this committee's members, because we are doing a

disservice to these committee members and to this committee and to this House by making such a frivolous accusation. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Well, you had the ability to say what you say. Anybody else? No other—oh, Ms. Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, I will respond to that. I'm not going to apologize for anything in this committee, Mr. Chair. I've been on this committee now since we were all elected in 2018, and we have repeatedly attempted to get the government to agree to hold committee meetings outside of when the Legislature is sitting, which we have the ability to do. They refuse to do that, which means that we have seen literally hundreds of appointees be basically just stamped and go ahead with approval from this government, without being vetted by this committee and the opposition. That's really unfortunate, and that's the point I made last week.

Honestly, I assume that the government members want to—I always assume we want to do hard work, but we haven't seen that from these government members so far. We are willing to be here all the time, on the breaks—the so-called breaks, when we're all in our constituencies. There's no reason we can't continue to meet to review these appointments. I think it's—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Babikian, we don't have your audio, just so you know. Were you trying to make a point of order, or you just want to be on the list?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm still speaking.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Carry on, Ms. Stiles.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Anyway, I know that some of the members of this committee on the Conservative side are newer to the committee. Some have been around probably as long as I have on this committee. Maybe you weren't here when we made all of those attempts. We've certainly made them since all these folks were appointed. It's really, really frustrating, I've got to say. I hear from my constituents all the time that they don't understand why this government won't meet, when other committees meet when the Legislature isn't sitting. We have the ability to do it; we just have to go through the right procedures to get that done. It's extremely frustrating.

I'm not going to apologize for asking why we can't do that. I have yet to hear any good reason from the members of the Conservative Party and the government members about why they will not meet when the Legislature isn't sitting, which would allow us to simply review at least some more of the government's appointees. That has been extremely frustrating for all of us on the opposition side. I think it's, again, really frustrating for the people of this province, who don't get a chance to see people who are being appointed to really important positions and get to make big decisions.

If the government was so confident in the quality of their appointees, I don't understand why they wouldn't go ahead and allow us to hold more meetings, see more people and hear from more of those appointees. Right now, we average, if we're lucky, two a week, only when the Legislature is in session, and that means that we don't

even see anybody during our constituency week breaks. That is, again, very unfortunate, because we have lots and lots of people being appointed who we don't get a chance to hear from.

The government can say that there's a process in place, but people in this province, I think, have a right. This is why this committee exists: for the opposition to ask questions, for people to actually—frankly, you do a disservice, I would say, as well. The government does a disservice to those appointees by not allowing them to come forward like those two appointees today. Have them come forward. Have them talk about why they're the right candidate. Some people we've seen—MPP Yakabuski hasn't been on this committee for perhaps very long, but we've often voted in favour of some of the appointees. But there are so many that we don't even get to hear from that we know are failed Conservative candidates, are big-time donors to the Conservative Party, and the government doesn't like to have them appear here at this committee, because it's uncomfortable, because it requires them to answer those difficult questions.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Babikian, you were trying to get recognized.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Well, Mr. Chair, it's okay. It's no use talking, because the opposition looks like a broken record. I'm not going to respond, because it's useless.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): You should have been here in the previous terms. It was broken records all the time.

All right. I just want to point out to members that standing order 111, paragraph 13 does allow this committee to meet in between when the House is not sitting, but it's at the request and the vote of the subcommittee. So, if members want to do that, they can.

Yes, Mr. Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: But in fairness—because I disagree with my colleague saying that we're not fair, that we're not balanced—we have asked to meet in between at committee here; it has been turned down every time. In fairness to my colleague who raised this: We said we were prepared to meet. We're prepared to listen. We're prepared to come before the committee. I disagree with some of my colleagues—not all of them, because they all haven't spoken. I am very fair and balanced. I've done this committee for, I believe, about six and a half years. I think my record would speak for itself.

But it was unusual—including in my own area, by the way; you can check my area if you would like—some of the issues that didn't come before the committee. As a matter of fact, I can remember one of them. I'll mention his name: Bart Maves. He came before the committee. He's a friend, actually. I ran against him twice; lucky for me, I beat him twice. He came before the committee, he was treated with respect by the committee, we asked him fair and balanced questions, and he was put on the appointment that he got.

I think all we're saying is that we need to see everybody who's coming, to give us a chance to ask—and I do appreciate you reading that out, because I think there is some

confusion with some of the members. There is a mechanism in place where we can meet and have more opportunity to talk to those that are being appointed, because they are important appointments.

In my area, I've got the parks commission, I've got the border and we've got lots of the greenbelt. There are lots of appointments that need to be made, and I'm fair and I'm balanced when they come to the committee. I don't agree with the statement that was made by one of the colleagues here. I don't think it's accurate. I don't even think it's fair, quite frankly.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: While I have not been long on this committee, I've been around here for 18 years. I do know how this place works and I am aware of the standing order that allows this committee—it has latitude of its own. Not once has this been brought before House leaders. While the committee does have autonomy, we all know that this is something that we work together on. The House leaders have not been approached, and we've made it clear that the committee is going to continue to function as it has. The standing orders provide for the sitting of this committee, and we have the flexibility, but we've answered this question over and over and over again.

To the point of having more people come forward: I can say that the opposition were the ones who called Ms. Vaccaro before this committee. If this is what they're bringing before the committee, you would have to ask yourself—there can't be many out there that they've got problems with, because they brought one who was an absolute perfect candidate for the Human Rights Tribunal, and they were the ones who called her before the committee.

We're not changing this, Chair. I've got a statement to make in the House. It is time for this committee to recess for the day.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Actually, it's not. Ms. Stiles has the floor. We've still got about three minutes.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I certainly appreciate that you're the one who makes those calls.

I just wanted to say, just because it's so absurd: Of course, we call candidates who look like they're interesting candidates, as well. My goodness; that's the point of this committee. I want to hear—as do my colleagues and, I assume, the other members here from the government as well—why people want to be appointed to these agencies and boards. That is what we are here for. We want to ask them the questions. We want to see how they're going to represent the people of this province in those positions. It's absolutely essential. It's all about transparency and accountability.

It would be really wonderful to see the government members agree to meet, just even to have a subcommittee meeting, so that we could actually have a conversation about how we could move forward in a way that we could actually get more of those appointees before this committee.

The Chair (Mr. Gilles Bisson): Anybody else? If not, the committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1014.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Chair / Président

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins ND)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr. Aris Babikian (Scarborough–Agincourt PC)

Mr. Deepak Anand (Mississauga–Malton PC)

Mr. Aris Babikian (Scarborough–Agincourt PC)

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins ND)

Mr. Lorne Coe (Whitby PC)

Mr. Wayne Gates (Niagara Falls ND)

Mrs. Robin Martin (Eglinton–Lawrence PC)

Mr. Norman Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka PC)

Mr. Billy Pang (Markham–Unionville PC)

M^{lle} Amanda Simard (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell L)

Ms. Marit Stiles (Davenport ND)

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke PC)

Clerk / Greffière

Ms. Tanzima Khan

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Lauren Warner, research officer,
Research Services