

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
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## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

A-11

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

A-11

**Standing Committee on  
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des  
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
44<sup>th</sup> Parliament  
Thursday 11 December 2025

1<sup>re</sup> session  
44<sup>e</sup> législature  
Jeudi 11 décembre 2025

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Chair: Mary-Margaret McMahon  
Clerk: Vanessa Kattar

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Thursday 11 December 2025

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Jeudi 11 décembre 2025

*The committee met at 0900 in room 151.*

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the friendliest and most sensational standing committee in the Pink Palace, in Queen's Park. The Standing Committee on Government Agencies will now come to order. As always, all comments by members and witnesses will go through the Chair.

We're going to move straight away to our interviews. Unfortunately, they're virtual today—both of them.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Sorry; I have a motion.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** MPP Gilmour.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to move a motion. I move that pursuant to standing order 110(f)—

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Sorry. Can I do motions after?

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Oh. Okay.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** That's what I like to do. Thanks.

## INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

## MS. JANICE MCGURRAN

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Janice McGurran, intended appointee as member, Council of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** We will now move to the intended appointees. Our first one is Janice McGurran, nominated as member of the Council of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. She will be appearing virtually, hopefully. Can we see her? We'll just wait and see if Janice will pop up.

We will recess for five minutes until we sort this out.

*The committee recessed from 0902 to 0904.*

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much. Now, round 2: The Standing Committee on Government Agencies will now come to order. Our first intended appointee is Janice McGurran. I've already stated what you're applying for, Janice. Welcome. You have an initial statement you can make. They will deduct the time that you use to present from the government—which they're fine with, so take your time—and then we will have the third party and the opposition. Each have 10 minutes to question you. The floor is yours.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Good morning, everyone. First of all, thank you very much for having me. I really appreciate the opportunity to be here.

First of all, Chair and members of the standing committee, my name is Janice McGurran. Once again, I'm happy to be here to discuss my experience and qualifications for appointment as a part-time member of the council. My interest and my desire to serve the community has brought me here today.

I'm going to briefly talk about my academic background, my professional career, what experience that has included, and my experience in volunteering, committee work and boards. So, first of all, in terms of academics, I graduated from the University of Toronto with a BSc in psychology. I later returned to the University of Toronto for industrial relations. I did a couple of stints at Queen's University for executive development in corporate social responsibility, and then it was on to York University for their executive leadership program. I believe in lifelong learning. I hope I learn something every day.

In between, there were numerous courses, including a couple on Indigenous awareness and issues, teaching adults, interest-based bargaining, dispute resolution, mediated solutions, conducting workplace investigations, and employer responsibilities dealing with harassment and bullying. I still take legal update seminars two times a year, sometimes three times a year, to keep up to date on legislative changes in common law.

In terms of my professional career, my experience, with the exception of a very short few months at the beginning, has always been in human resources. I've been a human resources professional, including director level. My background includes private, broader public sector, public sector and not-for-profit workplaces—everything from Canadian Thermos Products, hydro and municipal and provincial, including Management Board Secretariat. My last position before I retired was just down the street at Kids Help Phone.

In terms of experience, I believe my competency gained through the years of dealing with issues and complaints—including doing something I call fair adjudication—has prepared me for this role. A big part of this is a focus on relationship issues, fairness and equitable treatment, managing performance while treating complainants and respondents with the dignity and respect they deserve.

I have dealt with numerous labour relations contracts, from CUPE, IBEW, PEGO, OPSEU, LIUNA; grievances—many, many grievances; human rights complaints—I've

conducted numerous investigations, dealt with evidentiary assessment. I've prepared reports and recommendations on these investigations. I've also designed and implemented successful human rights harassment policies and delivered numerous leadership training sessions. As well, in that background is significant experience dealing with modified work issues, accommodation issues and hiring staff to deal with vulnerable clients. If my career, or maybe life, has taught me anything, it's the importance of dealing with mental health issues in a timely and professional manner.

In terms of issues like volunteers, committees and board experience, I'll just list them. I'll enumerate them: everything from Alzheimer's—this is volunteer work, obviously—heart and stroke, and then on to committees like WSIB; HRPA, which is human resources; AODA—accommodation—I was on the committee for York region; the CWL, where I was vice-president in charge of legislation and regulations; IAPA, which is health and safety. I was also on the allied manufacturers of Ontario when I worked for Canadian Thermos Products. As well, I was appointed to the citizen council with respect to the Ontario Drug Benefit Act, 1998. I've been on the board of the local hospital—that's Mackenzie Health in Richmond Hill—and on the board of a women's shelter called My Sister's Place. I chaired a committee on the Municipal Electric Association, and I represented Ontario a number of times at conferences in the United States. I have been on the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant review team.

**0910**

Another thing that I like to do is help people, whether it's recent immigrants, professionals or our vets, in terms of résumé preparation and interview coaching. This is something that they don't really teach in school—and I've been on the other side of the desk, so I'm happy to do that.

In terms of mental health issues, there is a great concern about mental health issues in our province today. Long gone are the old days—for example, World War I when we treated what we now call PTSD with a very negative stigma and we relied on people like Jung and Freud, their modalities. Today's issues are much more complex, the stigma is not as bad and people are talking more openly.

The treatment modalities such as cognitive behavioural therapy have improved, but we still need to safeguard the well-being of Ontarians who put their trust in social workers and social service workers who serve them. If we think of the client list that our people deal with, from dealing with clients who are neurodivergent, who have oppositional defiance disorder or who have suicidal ideation, we have to understand it's probably not really easy to go home after a shift of dealing with that all day.

Why am I here? To help ensure all of the clients are safe and their issues are resolved competently.

A little bit about me personally: I'm a voracious reader; I do crafts, really anything from making jewellery to trapunto to ceramics; and I am a very big Maple Leafs fan. They're going to win the Stanley Cup someday.

In any case, I want to thank you for your attention, thank you for listening and I would be happy to address any questions that you have.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, Janice, for sharing your story with us. Can you just do us a favour—well, now it looks good—just tip your computer a bit so we can see beautiful you. Thank you; that's perfect.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Is that better?

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Yes, that is terrific.

Now we will go to the government side for questions. You have one minute, 51 seconds. Make it last. MPP Riddell.

**Mr. Brian Riddell:** In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing the social work sector and how will your membership on the board create a positive impact?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** In terms of challenges, I think right now one of the challenges is the sheer number of mental health cases and issues and dealing with the complexity. In Ontario, looking at how I can contribute, my background has been dealing with things like the relationship issues, the investigative process and discipline, and creating policies that are readable, that are concise and understandable. When I think of my ability to deal with that, to listen to concerns, to be able to help create policies, my ability to work on a team and focus on a team—because we all help to contribute, we work as a group—I think that would benefit the council.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** There are 45 seconds. MPP Dixon.

**Ms. Jess Dixon:** Thank you so much for coming and presenting. You talked about your role as a leader in HR operations and transformation. Can you explain a little bit about an example you faced during that role that would translate into valuable experience towards the effective governance of the council?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** One of the things that I did investigate on a regular basis was harassment and bullying—right from the beginning of writing a policy, training on the policy and then enforcing it. In terms of the cases, one of the—

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, Janice. We now have run out of time for the government.

We will move on to the official opposition. Who would like to go first? MPP Gilmour.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you so much, Ms. McGurran, for being here today. I'm very happy to hear you put your name forward and your extensive experience. It's wonderful to see your commitment in your volunteer life, in your work life, to the common good, so thank you.

I'm going to ask a couple questions that we almost ask every time, and then I'll move more specifically into this position. I'm just wondering if you're a member of any political party.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** I'm not.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** And have you ever donated to a political party?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Oh, at one point I think I joined the Liberal Party for something. But no, I have not donated.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Great. You've expanded a little bit on your extensive experience in human resources, including teaching. Can you speak a little bit more about what you imagine the responsibilities will be as a member of the college?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** When I look at the goal of the college to protect the public interest, this is regulating social work and social service work, so looking at certificates, looking at professional standards, looking at competency. I'll give you an example. For example, somebody can set up their shingle and say they're competent in something, calling themselves a clinician. The public will look at the word "clinician" and say, "Oh, they must be really good."

If I understand my reading and dealing with the situation, I understand approximately 25% only of the people we're talking about are trained in suicide prevention. If somebody's in the middle of counselling and that comes up, how do we deal with that? Those are some of the issues that come up. Having been aware of what's going on in the field, I believe I would be very able to work on a team to help deal with those kinds of things as they come up.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you. I'm wondering: Are you aware that the college is currently implementing an action plan to improve and modernize its governance processes that came recommended after a 2022 review?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Yes, I am. I've read that.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** I'm wondering if you could speak about any of the recommendations that you thought were most important and that you might be sort of championing or holding up, paying attention to on the board there.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Actually, one of the things I'm thinking about is competencies, qualifications and naming. This, actually, is in conjunction with some of my colleagues. We discussed this sort of thing: what you call yourself, how you advertise yourself, how you present in terms of competencies. This is something that is really of interest.

The other thing is, if you look at the council, in terms of, "Are they giving information or are they engaging?" This has been a topic that has come up as well.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you. And yes, I misspoke: I said "board" when I meant "council."

One of those recommendations was around the need to promote dialogue and engagement with the users of social work and social work services, so that they can help develop those policies. If you were appointed to the council, what strategies might you propose to ensure that there's meaningful engagement?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** One of the first things is in terms of consent—that you need to get that information out there—and confidentiality. I think you have to ensure those things are in place first. I think you would need to have a public campaign to make sure the public knew that the confidentiality would be safeguarded and that there would be no evaluation if you came forward. I think that's really important.

Going back to the word I used earlier, "stigma": Yes, there is not a bad stigma anymore, but there's still a stigma. So a public policy to ensure that people are informed, that it would be safe and that their opinions and their experience would be valued—I think that's important.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you for your answer and for your thoughtfulness around this.

One of the other things I've been wondering about the college is their strategic plan, which is from 2024 to 2029. They reinforce the college's commitment to First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, as well as to equity, diversity and inclusion. In that strategic plan, they acknowledge the work that social work and social work services professions have played in perpetuating harm to Indigenous people, including the residential school system, the Sixties Scoop, the ongoing overrepresentation in both child welfare and the judicial system.

**0920**

I'm wondering if you might speak to how, as a council member, you would ensure that the college honours its commitment to truth and reconciliation, to First Nations, to Inuit and Métis people.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** This is an interesting conversation that I have with my colleagues, friends, in private practice and public. One of the statements I use is, "Meet people where they are." That involves looking at how you present, the words you use and the very careful consideration not to dismiss any concerns that people have because you have never experienced, you have never understood that.

If you have people that understand the background, the words, the experience, I think that will be really important. Again, you treat people where they are. I think that's extremely, extremely important, because the other thing that we talk about is that behind every assessment there is a person. That's so important.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you. I just want to give you a chance, if there's anything further that you want to sort of expand on when it comes to a similar commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion that recognizes the disproportionate overrepresentation of Black individuals and communities within child welfare and judicial systems. If appointed to the council, how might you work with the college's commitment to combat anti-Black racism and other acute forms of systemic racism—whether that's similar to your other answer or if there's something you'd want to expand on there.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Well, there is a similarity in how we treat people, but I think there needs to be an understanding that the background is, in fact, different.

If you look at many Indigenous—because I've dealt with situations where people are in fly-in communities or isolation. It's very different—that setting—between that and a city, even whether it's Thunder Bay, Windsor or Toronto—understanding the background and where people came from. If it was Caribbean or African nations, what they came from is different than our Indigenous background. And I think there needs to be an understanding and a recognition of that. When going forward with recom-

mendations, policy, wording or actions, that difference needs to be thoroughly understood.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you. Just a couple of final questions: Do you have any other current government appointments at the moment?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** I'm on the grant review team for the Ontario Trillium Foundation and absolutely glad to be what—I hope—is a positive ambassador for the province, and I love to go to the events.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** And just a question about how you'll balance your appointment to the council with your role on the Trillium grant review team.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** The grant review team has Zoom meetings just a few times a year. They're not long. They're under a couple of hours, actually. Although they're important, it's not a significant time—

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you. Those are my questions.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** I love it.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Yes, thank you so much.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, MPP Gilmour.

And now we will go over to the third party.

Welcome, MPP Collard. You have the floor.

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** Thank you kindly, Chair, and good morning, Ms. McGurran. I'm very happy to get a chance to meet you, even if it's electronically. I have to say that I'm pretty impressed with your profile. It's quite rich, and you have extensive training.

I have more of a general question for you, because I feel and I read some passion into the work you've been doing, and I'm curious as to where that interest comes from. It looks like your whole career was very oriented towards dispute resolution and helping vulnerable people. I don't know how you came about to enter that field and what is it that really appeals to you, because it's got to be challenging.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** It is challenging when you have people who are fighting; you have families who are fighting. It's an interesting question. I think it may have started when I was initially at the University of Toronto—in terms of psychology—and some of the profs there were absolutely fabulous. And then when I got into HR and I saw what it involves—and I was more the “people” person, not the payroll, not some of that other stuff. I was involved in dispute resolution, mediation and performances. That's what I think drives me.

In terms of serving the public and the community, I like to be involved. I like to get out there, be involved and be with people. I think that's important. I think one of the best things that we can do is communicate. If you look at dispute resolution, it can be very simple—I have a simple example if you want—or it can be very complex.

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** Yes, your experience in dispute resolution is quite extensive. I wanted to ask you about the mediation process, if you've used it and what you find the benefits might be—or the challenges. I'm a trained mediator. I've never really quite used it—I'm a lawyer by trade—but I always found that that training was helpful

when you're trying to find a resolution or help people come together and find common ground.

So, have you used mediation, to what extent and what is your experience?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Well, I've used it both in terms of groups in the workplace, departments, between people, between unions and management. One of the helpful books, for example, is *Getting to Yes* by Fisher and Ury. And you talk about—you're nodding—interest-based bargaining.

I have used interest-based bargaining and had a situation where I would sit at the table beside the union president, some of my team would be on the other side of the table with some union people, and if we wanted to get a clause that worked, we would say, “Okay, so-and-so from the union, so-and-so from management, would you go in the breakout room and come up with a policy that will work for everyone?” So that both parties—and they can be in mediation, but—they can see that we will work together and that we will create a win-win.

Whenever I've done that, whether it's grievances or complaints—if you can establish the idea that somebody is not going to be a loser out of this, the mediation will be a success. I've brought lots of groups together like that. I hope that answers your question.

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** Yes, it's helpful. I just wanted to better understand your experience with mediation. So maybe, in relation to dispute resolution and maybe to go back to the questions that MPP Dixon had for you, can you talk about a specific case that you had to deal with that was specifically challenging and how you dealt with it?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** One of the cases that I dealt with was a case of harassment and discrimination. It was against women in the workplace, it was long-standing and no one came forward for a few years—two or three years—because they were afraid. So, the difficulty was in getting the rest of the witnesses to come forward and the absolute initial refusal of the respondent to take any authority or to even want to come to a meeting in the face of such voluminous and damning evidence.

And so, in that case, you have to be very sure, to make sure that your evidence or your proof is true, that it's not just emotion and—I don't want to use the word—infated over time, but that it is a fact. If you can use facts—but it was a long-standing case that had a lot of complex parts to it and numerous complainants to deal with.

And then what do you do with this person who was a member of management and a long-standing employee of the company? Some of the other people would say, “Oh, he never would do anything like that.”

**0930**

It's dealing with those issues and making sure you have all your ducks in order before you do recommendations—most important.

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** Very good. Thank you for sharing that. A more technical question, maybe: What is your knowledge and understanding of the Social Work and Social Service Work Act, and how will your experience assist you in interpreting that legislation and its regulations during hearings?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Well, if I look at the council and its work to protect the public interest in terms of things like standards, titles, dealing with complaints and discipline, I think in particular dealing with complaints and discipline and maybe helping with policy would be my strong points, quite frankly.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Very good. Just one last question: You might have to handle conflicts and high-volume casework. What is your approach to dealing with that and the stress that comes with it?

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** In terms of stress, I work out five times a week. I do meditation and mindfulness and I make sure to connect with people of all ages. Despite whatever workload I've always had, I drive seniors around. I have friends my age. I love to get involved with little kids as well or indulge in my hobbies that I've said, arts and so on.

I believe very seriously in taking good self-care. You can't help anybody else if you're not fit yourself, and that's what I've done for, I'm going to say, over 40 years.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Thank you very much for answering those questions. I don't have any more questions for you.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thanks, Janice—good words for all of us to live by. I think we will heed your advice as we break. Today is our last day. Thank you very much for giving your time, energy, thoughtfulness and willingness to serve the public.

You can stay on the line if you like. We are interviewing our next person, and then we will deal with the appointments afterwards—it's entirely up to you—or you can go about your day and find out. It will be a surprise later.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** I'll stay on the line.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Okay. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Janice McGurran:** Thank you once again for listening.

#### MR. PETER JELLEY

Review of intended appointment, selected by third party: Peter Jelley, intended appointee as chair, Venture Ontario board of directors.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Now we will move to the review of the second intended appointee, Peter Jelley, who is nominated as the chair of the Venture Ontario board of directors. Peter is with us, obviously, virtually as well.

Welcome, Peter. We're thrilled to have you here, and we're eager to hear from you. You will be able to take some time to share your story with us, and then each party has 10 minutes to ask you questions, but whatever time you use will be withdrawn from the government side, and they don't mind.

We're all ears. Thank you.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Thank you for having me. I apologize for not being there in person. My father-in-law passed away this week, so it's been quite an unpredictable week.

I might indulge the committee at the very end to say a moment about Dr. McMillin.

My name is Peter Jelley. I'm very pleased to be here. I live in Toronto, East York specifically, with my wife, Allison, and our four children, two boys and two girls. My children are everything to me.

I was born on Prince Edward Island as the son of schoolteachers, with three younger brothers. My broader family are largely educators or teachers and farmers.

I've been an investor since about the age of 10 years old, when I would take the change that would be left over from my newspaper route, deposit it at the local credit union and get my book updated, which was something I really enjoyed.

In my twenties, while attending graduate school in the US, I was very fortunate to have many opportunities, many of which seemed very exciting for a young man from Prince Edward Island, but I decided at that point in time that I was a Canadian and that I wanted to live in Canada and that I might as well get on with my life and my career in Canada immediately. So, in 1998, I made the decision to seek opportunity in Ontario. In fact, I moved to the greater Toronto area and started a career in investment banking in 1998, as I mentioned.

I'm interested in contributing to Ontario by way of appointment today for two primary reasons: I believe I can make a substantial contribution to Ontario through public service. I believe in public service; I always have. I would like to thank each of you here today for your own public service. It's a formidable commitment to make for the province, and I'm willing to make my contribution because I do indeed believe that I can be effective and play a meaningful part in this role.

I want to do this to be a further example to my children. My children are at an important age where they begin to form opinions about how they will contribute in our communities, about what will be valued with respect to how they spend their time, and I want them to be imbued with a desire to make a difference and to take pride in whatever they do.

The second reason I'm interested in committing to this role is to do everything I can to help Ontario and, indeed, Canada excel economically. I would like there to be opportunity for my children to raise families, own homes, choose to live and contribute in Ontario and to be able to make the same sorts of choices that I made many, many years ago.

When I came to Toronto in 1998 and began my career in investment banking, I had the pleasure of advising corporations and entrepreneurs on growth and investment. I've advised boards of directors on matters of governance. I've been fortunate to work and advise many successful individuals and companies, and I've been fortunate in many ways in that the success of those companies and those individuals that I encountered along the way have become some of my success as well.

Several years ago, I founded my own investment firm with a partner. We have now expanded our partnership. We have a small but dedicated team. We are primarily interested in investing in growing businesses along with

Canadian entrepreneurs, and we have been pleased to already partner with several significant success stories. I think the role itself is probably well understood to the committee, and so at that point, I would like to turn it over to questions.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much. I'm sorry about the passing.

We have five minutes and 54 seconds for the government side, and we will start with MPP Smith.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to begin by saying how sorry I am for your loss. We really appreciate you being here, albeit virtually, given the circumstances of your week. So, I truly hope that things pan out for you as positively as possible, given the circumstances.

But moving forward, you painted quite a picture of your life in Canada, moving back after Harvard. What can you talk about specifically in your professional experience that will provide you with, let's say, a base or a well-suited position in this present opportunity?

**Mr. Peter Jolley:** Well, I think it breaks down on two planes. One is the investment experience, and then I think the second set, because we're talking specifically about a chair of a board, it would go to board leadership and governance dynamics. Specifically on investing, this role is to lead a group and an organization that has a dedicated team today.

*Failure of sound system.*

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** He's frozen.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** He's frozen.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Laura Smith:** Can we hear him?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Peter Jolley:** Can you hear me now?

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Yes.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** Yes.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Go ahead. You're finishing up or—

**Mr. Peter Jolley:** [Inaudible] I'm not frozen today, I hope. I will turn my video off if it happens again and will rely on the audio. Can you hear me now?

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Yes, we can. Were you finished with your statement—your answer?

**0940**

**Mr. Peter Jolley:** I was finished with my statement. I was responding to the question around my experiences. I will try to shorten it.

One goes to the specific investment knowledge and the background. I have extensive experience, totalling almost—well, more than 30 years as an investor now. I think I have a good measure of risk. I'm particularly focused on risk management activities, and that should give people comfort as we look to be good caretakers for the people of Ontario.

The second measure is around governance. I have, myself, chaired a successful board of directors. I have been on a number of boards and have seen many different board dynamics. I've seen what works well; what doesn't work

well. I've seen how to get robust discussion in a boardroom, and where that fails, I think I have a reasonable perspective on how to do that.

Appropriately, through advising boards of directors over the years, I've seen boards acting at the moment of most heightened anxiety; at points of inflection where companies frankly live or die. I have seen how pressure impacts on board performance. I think I have quite a lot of experience through that.

Hopefully, most of those most acute moments will not be realized in this particular role, but I think that that forms quite a reserve of experience that will be useful in this role.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, MPP Smith.

**MPP Sabawy:**

**Mr. Sheref Sabawy:** Thank you very much, Mr. Peter, for having the time to present for us today—very impressive past experiences. Out of these many boards which you might have served on, what kind of experience have you gained? Do you think it will help you succeed in this chair role?

**Mr. Peter Jolley:** Well, I have been around many successful and growing boards. I'm optimistic that we will be able to continue to recruit and build a strong investment team at Venture Ontario.

Of course, it starts with the leadership team that we have in place. They are, in fact, the ones that will be tasked with building this portfolio for the people of Ontario. So I think I will look for the appropriate leadership qualities in our team and make sure that they are mandated appropriately, and then we will look for a good execution from the existing team that we have.

**Mr. Sheref Sabawy:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** MPP Firin, one minute and 21 seconds.

**MPP Mohamed Firin:** Thank you, Peter, and condolences to you and your family for your loss.

With your extensive leadership across capital markets and private investment, how do you envision contributing to the strategic direction of Venture Ontario?

**Mr. Peter Jolley:** Well, I will, in the first instance, take my direction from the ministry with respect to the mandate that attaches to this particular role. Within that, we are tasked with ensuring that there's a vibrant and sustainable ecosystem for venture capital investment in Ontario. We will look to deploy funding to ensure that we are contributing to that ecosystem, adding to the robustness of it; that we are allowing local companies to find funding in our own jurisdiction in ways that will be sustainable over time. That will ultimately create jobs and economic activity for the people of the province.

And we will do that within the framework, because we are very well set up today to make money doing that. So this is, in fact, where we hope to not just create—

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much. Sorry to cut you off. We're on a tight timeline.

Now we will move to the official opposition. MPP Gates has the floor.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Good morning, sir. I offer my condolence to your family as well. I saw that one of your volunteering roles is house league hockey, which I really enjoy hearing because a lot of times the kids that aren't playing travelling hockey don't get the same ice time. The one thing I found with hockey is that it's getting very, very expensive for families in the province of Ontario.

I'm going to ask you a question that I ask everybody. Have you ever belonged to a riding association?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** I have not. Have I ever belonged to a riding association? I don't think so, but I believe I have been a party member before. I have never been active in a riding association.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Have you ever donated to a political party?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** I have, yes.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** And what party would that be?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** I've donated to at least two. I would more frequently be likely to be someone who would be donating to the Progressive Conservative Party, probably in the most specific instance here. But I have also been to a number of leader's dinners and other fundraisers where I've written cheques for the Liberal Party during the McGuinty and Wynne governments as well.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Would you know how much you have donated to the PC party?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** I can't tell you, but I am not a contributor every year, and it has never been anything like a maximum contribution. I have made contributions, though.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Do you remember one in 2025?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** I did make a contribution, I believe in 2025, yes.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** Point of order.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** In 2022, 2019?

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Sorry. Point of order: MPP Smith.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** If we could just keep the questions consistent with asking about the applicant's qualifications.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, MPP Smith. We have established that historically these questions have been allowed, and they will be today.

Continue, MPP Gates.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Thank you, Chair. I appreciate that.

You've led a private equity firm. What would you say to workers who worry that people from finance don't understand or represent them?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** What would I say to them? I would say that people in different walks of life have different perspectives, and I would pose that some people may not and some people may. I don't find that a particularly informative view as to whether I might understand the perspective of a working person or not. My parents were both union members. My grandparents and great relatives all grew up on farms. I have very clear relations with working people. I've worked on companies that have hired thousands of employees, most that would be considered working people, and we've always had excellent labour relations. We typically know many of those employees on

a first name basis. I don't think that my background would in any way suggest that I might not have an understanding of the situation of many people in this province.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I appreciate that. I guess my concern is when we have 800,000 people unemployed in Ontario—and you mentioned you have kids. I have three daughters, five grandkids. Two of my family members are teachers, one works with special-needs kids. Employment is a big issue in the province of Ontario right now, particularly with young people. I also have five grandkids, and I'm concerned about where they're going in the province of Ontario. People like yourself, when you get appointed to the board—you will, because that's how it works here—are a concern for me, and that's why I asked the question.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Can I make a further comment?

**MPP Wayne Gates:** You can do whatever you like.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Thanks. Well, we'll see. Look, we create these businesses and we work to build them, in part, to create employment. The Andlauer Healthcare Group, where I was chair of the board most recently, actually went public six years ago today on December 11. We had about 1,200 employees at that time. We have about 2,400 employees today. Those are all privately funded jobs; those are all high-paying jobs. All of those employees are very happy to come to work every day.

The first private equity investment we made at my current firm was in MDA Space, buying that from a US company and re-Canadianizing it. They had, I think, 1,800 employees in 2020 when we made that investment—we were one of several investors; I'm not suggesting we were the only ones—but that company has 3,800 employees today. Those are all good, high-paying, Canadian jobs. Those are people who work hourly wages, those are people who are scientists and those are people that contribute to the economic activity in the province and create spin-off jobs.

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That 800,000 is not for us or any one enterprise to crack, but as we build these businesses, we're making a contribution across the provinces, and the people that work in these businesses come from all walks of life.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I can appreciate that, because I know our party is a big supporter, and I've personally been a big supporter, being a union leader for close to 40 years—I believe we should buy local and buy Canadian. It kind of falls into where my next question is.

What's your plan to make sure Ontario money doesn't just create companies that end up getting bought out by foreign nationals?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Yes, that's a big challenge. What we need to do is we need to scale companies that become the ones that are buying foreign nationals in other places in the world. Do I have a plan? Our plan is to put capital to work at entities that can be growth champions in this country. Where they scale and where they up going ultimately will have much to do about government policy and many other things that will be out of my hands.

If we can get many offshoots growing, then some of them will rise and grow tall. How tall they grow and how robust they can be will depend on many things, including

a national ecosystem that I, in my current role, have little to do with.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I appreciate that.

I'm going to ask you another question—and this has been a debate that's been going on right here in the House the last little while: Do you believe that we should be using our taxpayer dollars—which work into around, I think, \$41 billion; it may even be higher than that—that are taken from the public and reinvest it back into infrastructure that creates good-paying jobs right here in Ontario?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** That sounds good to me. Yes, look, we have—

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I'll take that as a "yes?"

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Yes, we have infrastructure—I'm looking for the trick—to build in Ontario. Let's build it.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Oh, I agree with that. We could do that with our schools too. I mean, they have got a \$37-billion deficit there that we should be fixing.

Venture Ontario has eight full-time employees and relies heavily on outside consultants—which drives me nuts, by the way. How will you ensure public money isn't wasted on expensive consultants instead of supporting Ontario companies directly?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Well, I don't hire consultants myself for really anything, so that will be foreign to me. And so, I will ask intelligent questions about whether or not that's the right use of taxpayer money. That's pretty simple.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I appreciate that.

This is one that's interesting to me as well: Board members only meet a few times a year, which is also concerning to me when you're dealing with the amount of money that they deal with every day here. How would you guarantee real oversight and accountability when taxpayers are on the hook for over half a billion dollars and you're only meeting a couple of times a year? Doesn't make sense to me.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** I would not necessarily correlate too closely good governance with the number of meetings. If the structures are put in place appropriately, if the team is well mandated, well managed and well led, then the number of board meetings will, in my opinion, matter less.

There's a governance slate and there are appropriate governance committees with this board. I'm not inside yet, but from what I've reviewed, it's not atypical.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** There are 54 seconds.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Some of the largest and most successful corporations in the world don't have a governance slate that would be that different from this. I would focus on how we're mandating the team and leading the team more than the number of meetings.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Yes, well, the government actually has that same theory. We don't meet enough here at Queen's Park either, so maybe that comes out of the finance and the business community. The less meetings, the better it is; I don't know. But thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Over to the final round: last, but never least, the third party. MPP Collard, you have the floor for 10 minutes.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Thank you kindly, Chair, and welcome to the committee, Mr. Jelley. Thank you for making time despite the situation you find yourself in, and I extend my sincere condolences as well. It can't be easy just before Christmas, so I wish you the best with that, especially—it must affect the kids. I'm thinking of them right now.

I'm going to ask you just a few questions to get a better understanding of your fit for this role. At the outset of your remarks, you kind of assumed that we knew about what Venture Ontario was. Actually, I'm not that familiar with it, so can you just give me what is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of Venture Ontario and how you heard about the opening?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Venture Ontario is a funding source of several hundred million dollars that is meant to reinforce, establish and build the venture capital ecosystem in Ontario. Venture capital is typically earlier stage companies trying to get to a certain scale, often growing quickly and hiring a lot of employees. That ecosystem in Canada is typically seen as being less developed than in the United States, for instance. There's a lot of academic activity on that topic, but we'll pause that for today.

Venture Ontario itself is meant to be an investor in that ecosystem, to reinforce it and to invest in leading existing funds largely to help them scale up and have greater reach. I think that that makes a lot of sense. So, in that scenario, rather than Venture Ontario picking individual companies to invest in, they're in fact investing in asset managers that themselves have certain expertise that are themselves raising funds, and so then you are able to contribute to a larger pool of capital with professionalized management in each of those entities.

What you're doing then, on behalf of the taxpayer of Ontario is, one, bolstering the venture ecosystem and helping grow new companies in Ontario; and, two, you are doing that through established, experienced and successful venture capital providers, and with that outlet, you have a good probability of actually making money on behalf of the taxpayers of Ontario. So, this pool of capital is meant to catalyze but also to provide a return.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** And how did you hear about the opening for the chair position?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** A former colleague/friendly competitor, I suppose, is the current chair in that role. He told me that he was in fact coming to the end of a term, told me a little bit about the job. I expressed some interest, but in fact, the minister's staff thereafter reached out to me and we have had a number of discussions really going back to the summer or to the late summer. In fact, I went so far as to attend a strategy session of the group to understand what they were trying to do, the quality of people and to get a little better feel for the board.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** And how do people access that money? Do they have to apply? What's the system for people to obtain funding?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** The funding envelope, in the first instance, comes through the Legislature. The organization itself then manages the allocations that have been granted by making discreet investments. Typically, the venture capital fundraising happens in discreet funds. So you will get ABC raising a limited partnership and they will be seeking to raise \$100 million. That money will be deployed over a number of years in 10 to 20 discreet investments. So, the board of Venture Ontario, as I understand it, will periodically—a small number, it's three, four or five investments per year—invest in individual funds. Then those funds themselves, which are managed by outside parties, will invest in companies.

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Companies that are looking for funding—which is where it gets interesting—are of all sizes across the province and, in fact, across Canada. They are then meeting with each of these individual fund managers regularly, updating them on the plans. As they grow, their company needs will vary. Some entities will raise capital in five rounds over five years; some entities will raise capital less frequently. All of that becomes very idiosyncratic.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Okay. Thank you. When it comes to allocating public funds, we know that there are high expectations of the public regarding transparency, accountability and responsible spending. How will you ensure that those expectations are met in your role?

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** There are two planes, I think. One is around administration and governance. I was very clear with the minister and the minister's staff: My whole background is in the private sector. I take a lot of pride in good governance.

If I look at the track record of the Andlauer Healthcare Group, where I was the chair of the board, we would routinely have shareholder approvals at our annual meetings approaching 100%. I don't think we got 100%, but we got 96% or 97% approvals, and that was around good governance. We didn't waste money. In that instance, it was shareholder money, but an analogy to taxpayer money is not lost on me. With money, we focused on good governance. We focused on good outcomes. It probably wasn't good news for [*inaudible*] commentary from earlier on. So I think around administration and cost, we'll be very focused.

The second is around good investment. It's going to be a diversified portfolio of investments with experienced fund managers in Ontario, so we will be prudent and thoughtful in placing that portfolio, just as the group has, frankly, done a pretty good job today.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Do we have time? There's more time?

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Two minutes and 21 seconds.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Thank you.

I'm interested in what steps you would take as a chair to avoid any perceived or real conflicts of interest when reviewing investment opportunities or partnerships.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** It is definitely something that could happen. Most of my existing role today is focused on more

concentrated investments in more established companies, so I don't think it will be likely or frequent that I will have conflicts, but it is certainly possible.

For the last several years, I was at a large Canadian bank. I ran the investment banking group. In that role, I had conflicts every day. We used to say that you weren't doing a good job if you didn't have conflicts, because that meant you didn't have clients. In that role, you simply were very mindful of established protocols through legal blinds, if you will, in circumstances where that was required, and, most importantly, disclosed any conflicts.

I don't foresee a lot of circumstance where I will have conflicts, but full, true and plain disclosure—sunlight, if you will—will be the clearest way to expose any conflicts and then allow thinking parties to make appropriate determinations.

**Mme Lucille Collard:** Last question: How will you promote equitable access for under-represented founders? I'm thinking about women, newcomers or Indigenous entrepreneurs.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Look, that ecosystem is continuing to grow. There are funds that are more dedicated to those sorts of opportunities. Most of the venture ecosystem is focused on doing anything they can to identify growth companies that have good prospects, so there's a lot of, for better or worse, colour-blindness, if you will, towards—

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much. Sorry once again. I'm cutting you off a lot. But thank you very much, Peter, for sharing your background with us, for your willingness to serve and for actually going through with the interview today, considering the devastating loss for your family. Condolences from the whole committee.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** Can I very quickly read about Dr. McMillin, like one minute?

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Is the committee in agreement, one minute? Yes, sure.

**Mr. Peter Jelley:** He's a great Ontarian. I would just like to acknowledge my father-in-law, Dr. Robert McMillin. He passed away peacefully on Saturday at his home in Etobicoke.

He was born in 1927 and helped build this province. He grew up in the Beach, where his family had a hardware store at Main and Gerrard. In 1954, he graduated from University of Toronto medical school. He set up a family practice in the west end of Toronto. He held that practice for 64 years, only retiring in his nineties. He was chief of staff of Humber Memorial Hospital, beginning in 1965, for 26 years. He leaves many children, grandchildren, great grandchildren—he's everyone's papa. This is an individual who was quiet, humble [*inaudible*] helped build this province, Dr. Robert McMillin. Thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much. I like him even, especially, more because he's a Beacher—up the Beach.

Thank you very much.

So now we will consider the intended appointment of Janice McGurran. Can I have a motion? MPP Smith.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Janice McGurran, nominated as member of the council of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Any discussion? Are the members ready to vote?

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Recorded vote.

**Ayes**

Collard, Dixon, Dowie, Firin, Gates, Gilmour, Riddell, Sabawy, Laura Smith.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Seeing none opposed, that carries. Thank you.

Are we now ready to consider the appointment of Peter Jelley? Can I have a motion?

**Ms. Laura Smith:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Peter Jelley, nominated as chair of the Venture Ontario board of directors.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by MPP Smith. Any discussion?

**MPP Wayne Gates:** Recorded vote.

**Ayes**

Collard, Dixon, Dowie, Firin, Riddell, Sabawy, Laura Smith.

**Nays**

Gates, Gilmour.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** That carries.

All right. We are now ready to consider the extension of certificates. The deadline to review the intended appointments selected from November 14, 2025, certificate is set to expire on December 14, 2025. Is there unanimous consent to extend the certificate by 30 days? I hear a no.

So we will now move on to the consideration of the motion filed by MPP Gates. I'm mindful of the time, so we are going to have to do this lickety-split.

I look to MPP Gates to move his motion.

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I move my motion that the committee meet to review intended appointments during the winter adjournment on the following dates:

—Thursday, December 18, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.;  
 —Thursday, January 15, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.;  
 —Thursday, January 22, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.;  
 —Thursday, January 29, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.;  
 —Thursday, February 5, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.;  
 and

—Thursday, February 12, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** All right, a motion has been moved by MPP Gates. Is there any debate?

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I just want to say the reason why I'm bringing this forward is when we didn't sit the last time they had 108 total appointees; 43 of them were known political donors totalling \$139,000. A lot of them either ran for the Conservatives as MP or MPP, including Ruth-Ann Nieuwesteeg, who was appointed to Destination Ontario, who also ran against myself. I believe that they should come to this committee and we should have the opportunity to question them, just like this morning.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, MPP Gates.

Are the members ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? I'm sorry; that loses.

I think we have another motion. MPP Gilmour.

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** Thank you very much, Chair.

I move that, pursuant to standing order 110(f), the committee conduct a review of Metrolinx's operations, project planning and project delivery; and

That the committee meet for public hearings by January 30, 2026; and

That the Minister of Transportation be invited to appear as the first witness before the committee, and that the witness shall have one hour to make an opening statement, followed by three hours of questions and answers divided into three rounds of 20 minutes for the government members, three rounds of 20 minutes for the official opposition members, and three rounds of 20 minutes for the third party member of the committee; and

That the president of Metrolinx be invited to appear as the second witness before the committee, and that the witness shall have one hour to make an opening statement, followed by three hours of questions and answers divided into three rounds of 20 minutes for the government members, three rounds of 20 minutes for the official opposition members, and three rounds of 20 minutes for the third party member of the committee; and

That following the public hearings, legislative research provide the committee members with a summary of the hearings; and

That the committee meet for report-writing no later than 10 sessional days following the hearings; and

That the subcommittee on the committee business be authorized to revise hearing dates, report-writing dates and deadlines if necessary.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Thank you very much, MPP Gilmour.

A motion has been moved by MPP Gilmour. Is there any debate? Okay. Are the members ready—oh, sorry. MPP Dowie, a debate in minimal time.

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I'm just wondering if this motion is in scope of this committee, given that it's not the chair of the board particularly and it's typically our appointees that are being summoned.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Committee is allowed to do agency reviews.

Are the members ready to vote? Oh, MPP Begum.

**Ms. Doly Begum:** I hope that the members of the government will understand and look back at why they ran for office. You represent your communities. Metrolinx right now believes that they have complete impunity—they're

arrogant—and that the public does not deserve to know what Metrolinx is doing with the public's money, with your constituents' money. It is high time that we all say it is unacceptable.

We need Metrolinx to come here, sit down and answer all of our questions. This is a very important motion. It covers all of our bases. You get a chance to ask questions, and they will answer. It's unacceptable, what Metrolinx's board has been doing. They do not meet for months and then they come out and give us vague answers or just say, "You know what? Just chill. Don't worry about it; whatever. We don't have to answer." They don't give two hoots.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** We have two minutes, so—

**Ms. Doly Begum:** Just 30 seconds.

It's very important that we understand what is going on inside Metrolinx. It is unacceptable for my constituents in Scarborough Southwest, because what's happening with the Scarborough subway extension is probably costing billions of dollars that the people will be on the hook for.

So I really hope that people will take this into consideration, bring the agency to this committee and make them accountable. I really hope you'll take the time to consider and make sure that this committee is doing its job.

**The Chair (Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon):** Are the members ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? Unfortunately, that loses.

Thank you, everyone, for attending today's meeting. The committee now stands adjourned. Merry Christmas. Happy holidays.

*The committee adjourned at 1014.*

## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

### **Chair / Présidente**

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon (Beaches–East York L)

### **First Vice-Chair / Premier Vice-Président**

Mr. Robert Bailey (Sarnia–Lambton PC)

### **Second Vice-Chair / Deuxième Vice-Président**

MPP Wayne Gates (Niagara Falls ND)

Mr. Robert Bailey (Sarnia–Lambton PC)

MPP Billy Denault (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke PC)

Mr. Andrew Dowie (Windsor–Tecumseh PC)

MPP Mohamed Firin (York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston PC)

MPP Wayne Gates (Niagara Falls ND)

MPP Alexa Gilmour (Parkdale–High Park ND)

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon (Beaches–East York L)

Mr. Matthew Rae (Perth–Wellington PC)

Mr. Sheref Sabawy (Mississauga–Erin Mills PC)

Ms. Laura Smith (Thornhill PC)

MPP Stephanie Smyth (Toronto–St. Paul’s L)

### **Substitutions / Membres remplaçants**

M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard (Ottawa–Vanier L)

Ms. Jess Dixon (Kitchener South–Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud–Hespeler PC)

Mr. Brian Riddell (Cambridge PC)

### **Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes**

Ms. Doly Begum (Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest ND)

### **Clerk / Greffière**

Ms. Vanessa Kattar

### **Staff / Personnel**

Ms. Lauren Warner, research officer,

Research Services