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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE
CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON
ELECTORAL REFORM

Vancouver

Friday, July 4, 2003

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE
CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM**

Vancouver
Friday, July 4, 2003

Chair: * John Les (Chilliwack-Sumas L)

Deputy Chair: * Jeff Bray (Victoria-Beacon Hill L)

Members: * Ida Chong (Oak Bay-Gordon Head L)
Kevin Krueger (Kamloops-North Thompson L)
* Blair Lekstrom (Peace River South L)
* Rob Nijjar (Vancouver-Kingsway L)
* Joy MacPhail (Vancouver-Hastings NDP)

** denotes member present*

Clerk: Craig James

Witnesses: Dr. Jack Blaney (Chair, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform)
Susanna Haas (Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform)
Dr. Leo Perra (Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform)

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Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform

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MINUTES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM



Friday, July 4, 2003
10 a.m.

HSBC Executive Meeting Room #370
Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue
520 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, British Columbia

Present: John Les, MLA (Chair); Jeff Bray, MLA (Deputy Chair); Ida Chong, MLA; Blair Lekstrom, MLA;
Joy MacPhail, MLA; Rob Nijjar, MLA

Unavoidably Absent: Kevin Krueger, MLA

1. The Committee received a briefing from Dr. Jack Blaney regarding the status of the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform
2. The Committee reviewed an application for the position of Director of Operations, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
Witness
Dr. Jack Blaney
3. The Committee met in camera regarding the recruitment process and the application for the Director of Operations, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
4. The Committee met in public session.
5. **Resolved**, that the Committee endorse the appointment of Dr. Leo Perra as Director of Operations, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
6. The Committee adjourned at 10:59 a.m. to the call of the Chair.

John Les, MLA
Chair

Craig James
Clerk Assistant and
Clerk of Committees

FRIDAY, JULY 4, 2003

The committee met at 10:05 a.m.

[J. Les in the chair.]

J. Les (Chair): Good morning, everyone. I will call the meeting to order and welcome everyone to the meeting. I will, at this point, turn the floor over to Dr. Blaney to bring us up to date on his work in the last number of weeks and on what we're here to do this morning.

Citizens' Assembly Staff Selection Process and Progress Report

J. Blaney: Thank you very much. I really appreciate this opportunity to give you an update and to present to you a nomination for the director of operations for the Citizens' Assembly.

I'm very pleased, by the way, that you're meeting in the Wosk Centre, because the Wosk Centre will be the venue for the weekend meetings of the Citizens' Assembly. I know that all MLAs have met there, because you hold meetings from time to time. Indeed, next to the government of Canada, the government of B.C. is probably our biggest client. So I'm pleased to have you here. The Chair and I were talking about the appropriateness of the Wosk Centre. There probably is not another place in all of North America that is as suited for the Citizens' Assembly as the main hall in the Wosk Centre.

The person sitting on my right is Leo Perra, whom I'll introduce later at greater length, and you will be interviewing him. I also want to introduce two of our staff members. We always will have a very small staff, but two of our staff members are here today. Christina Wong, who is my administrative assistant, is here with us today, and Susanna Haas, who is a staff associate, is with us today. I'm pleased that they're here.

In regard to that, we have now settled on facilities — the place that we'll call home for 18 months. Thankfully, it's right across the street. We had very, very good service from the Attorney General's department and BCBC. They got us in there pretty quickly. If at the end of this meeting, by the way, you'd like to come and see our facilities, we'd be delighted to show you. They have this beautiful view, of course, of the mountains and everything else of that sort.

Things are moving along reasonably well. My major activity and focus has been to find the right persons who would be director of operations, director of communications and director of research and education. I will present to you today my nominee for director of operations.

You have now a CV for a person who is my nominee for director of research and education. This person is considered right across the country to be perhaps the most qualified person for this position. We were fortunate, indeed, to be able to persuade that person to be a nominee, who wishes to have his name kept confidential until we come to the nomination process which we hope will be some time during the last two weeks of July. We hope that will be the case. We're very pleased

with that nomination. Of course, I hope that two weeks from now you're very pleased with it too.

We're having much more difficulty with the director of communications. We have over 150 applications, and Susanna Haas has been helping me a lot with this and has been screening them and looking at them. We've interviewed a few people, and I have to tell you that we're not even close yet, I don't think, to finding a director of communications. Now, this is quite critical for a number of reasons. There are a number of communication tasks right now that should be done, and we don't have an officer to do it. Indeed, if the situation continues for a little while, we may employ an agency to help us out in the short term prior to hiring a director of communications.

[1010]

Secondly, as I was chatting with the Chair, we, of course, expect to do that as soon as possible. The nominee may not be ready until August, and we know that most members of the Legislature are gone in August. Sometimes they're on motorcycles and such things. So I might indeed go to the Chair sometime in August and say, "We have a strong nominee; here's the CV," and perhaps ask for some in-principle kind of support to get that person going and hold a nomination process in September. You may or may not want to think about that and discuss that with the Chair at some time, but I would like to be able to have that option rather than waiting until September to move if we have the right person. I will take your advice through the Chair later on that matter.

Citizens' Assembly Selection Process

J. Blaney: I guess the other thing that I'll bring you up to date on is the whole matter of the selection process for the fall. The Gordon Gibson report was a very good report and lays out in general terms the steps that have to be undertaken. However, when you start looking at that report in detail and thinking about the process of selecting two persons per constituency by going from 16,000 names initially to 200 per constituency, getting that down to two per constituency for 79 constituencies is an enormous amount of work. We're glad that we will soon have a few more staff to start laying the plans, booking the rooms and finding the means by which we get down to two names — one man, one woman per constituency so that we will have gender balance in the assembly.

A step that we're taking right now with Elections B.C. is a sign-up campaign. The government has agreed to do a householder, and I'm pleased about that. There will be an 8½-by-11 householder that will go to every house and apartment in British Columbia. This will talk a little bit about what the Citizens' Assembly is, will encourage them to see if they are on the voters list or if they have moved and get that information so that we hope to sign up some new people. There will also be some ads directed at aboriginals and at youth to try a little bit of further encouragement to get them to sign up on the voters list, because they are certainly underrepresented now.

We are undertaking this campaign. It will start in August and will conclude by August 22. By September

1, B.C. Stats, at the request of Elections Canada, will give us 16,000 names, and 16,000 letters will go across B.C. asking people if they are interested. From that initial 16,000 names, we will end up with 158 by December 5.

Those are my general kinds of comments and updates to bring you. I'd be delighted to have any questions, comments or advice.

J. Les (Chair): Any questions at this point?

R. Nijjar: We were sent by Mr. James the calendar of events for the education phase and the deliberation phase. I understand that a lot of factors come into play when you're trying to figure out a calendar, but the education phase ends around the end of March. Then there are public hearings they have to make. Then the deliberations start in September, which gives quite a bit of a gap there. I'm just wondering about.... When we're educating those participants — the 175 or so — and then we have a large gap, and then we resume, how much...? The information is so detailed and so new that sometimes I'm concerned about the loss of information.

J. Blaney: It's a good point, and we have discussed this in a preliminary sort of way with the understanding that it could be a problem if we don't worry about it, and we are going to worry about it. They have the education phase, which takes them into mid-March, and then we have to organize the hearings, which will probably take them into the latter part of March, April or May, so they'll be engaged with the public about what the public thinks about the various options they will present.

It was recommended in the Gibson report that the summer be a time off, because a lot of people with children are having holidays and things of this sort. We probably took that advice. It wasn't mandatory that we did. But we will keep in touch. It is very important that we keep in touch with all members of the Citizens' Assembly and engage them. Indeed, quite frankly, I see my major job as Chair.... Being the chief operations officer, I see that my main job is to keep in touch with all members of the assembly. During that period we will maintain contact through e-mail, phone calls and whatever. Hopefully, they'll do that among themselves as well. We're quite sensitive to that, and we will ensure we have a more thorough response to that question when you ask it next time we meet. We'll have considered it more.

[1015]

J. MacPhail: Dr. Blaney, have you had a chance to consider an issue that we addressed last time, which is underrepresentation even when the selection process is random? This voter registration is going to.... It's not actually even voter registration. The information campaign is going to take place in exactly the same months that we just talked about being the summer doldrums for political activity. What if there is gross underrepre-

sentation? I'm thinking particularly about young people.

J. Blaney: Actually, Elections Canada and Stats B.C. have been working on that. As you know, the sample is going to be stratified for gender and age, because that's all we have on the voters list. That's what we know about people — their age. The gender, by the way.... One assumes from a name that Joy is female. We're going to do that.

The good thing is that they're going to stratify against the 2001 census, not the names on the voters list. What they're going to give us is a sample of names on the basis of age and gender — age is of particular importance here — on the basis of the 2001 census and not the representation on the voters list. That's going to give us a much clearer and truer reflection of, let's say, the age distribution in Fort St. John, Vancouver East and whatever. We will find far more younger people in that group than would be if they had used the voters list.

I wonder if I've made myself clear.

J. MacPhail: Yes, absolutely.

J. Blaney: Okay. Then we have a second stage. We have 200 names per constituency. We write them letters, and we ask them.... It's going to be several pages long, because we're going to talk about the eligibility requirements and that they ought to be able to understand English. We're going to pass them the schedule so that they know the meeting requirements and they can do some expenses. Then we ask them to let us know whether they want to take it one step further.

Let's assume 80 people — maybe 100 — will respond and say yes, they would like to go to the regional meeting. Well, we only want 20. We will still use....

I don't know how, technically, this is going to work. I'm sure Leo probably understands. He's much better at these kinds of things than I am.

We will take that 100 and go down to 20, but we'll still use the list of random numbers that Stats B.C. will give us so that we will still stratify by age and gender to get down to that 20. That final 20 will be reflective of that age distribution within the constituency when we get down to 20.

We finally get down to 20, by the way — just to let you know how this is going to happen in the end.... We did make one decision that wasn't in the Gibson report. We're going to then have a Q and A. We'll talk about what the Citizens' Assembly means, what the obligations are and, of course, what enormous public service you're going to do. It's kind of a selling job too. We'll ask the people then who still wants to remain for selection. Maybe out of 20, five will step aside. We are then going to put them in groups of male and female, and we're going to choose one male and one female. At the end, it will just be names out of a hat. Hopefully, after we do 79 constituencies, we'll have a reasonably good representation of British Columbia.

J. MacPhail: What's the final cutoff for voter registration in order to meet the selection process?

J. Blaney: I think it's August 22.

J. MacPhail: Although using post-secondary institutions skews the result as well, certainly in terms of economic status, is there any ability to use what happens on campus in the last two weeks of the summer around the province in order to encourage voter registration?

J. Blaney: Actually, I should have also introduced Linda Johnson, who is here today and who is deputy chief electoral officer. Sorry.

You can answer many of these questions better than I. Please, Linda, come in when you think I haven't quite done it right.

We are going to do some radio ads and, I believe, some newspaper ads, as well, for youth and aboriginal to try to get them now. Of course, student newspapers — forget it. They're not even functioning in the summer-time. But there are certain stations they listen to that I don't listen to, and we will try to get them interested.

Joy, I'm not as concerned now that I've learned we're going to stratify age groupings using the data from the 2001 census and not the voters list. It doesn't concern me as much.

J. Les (Chair): Any other questions?

Maybe a small question but probably of interest to folks: are you setting up a website of any kind?

[1020]

J. Blaney: Yes, and it's now running. It's ready.

S. Haas: No. We have registered the domain name, which is www.citizensassembly.bc.ca, and what we'll....

A Voice: You need to get to the microphone.

J. Les (Chair): Pull up a chair here a minute, Susanna, if you could. Otherwise, we can't record what you've said.

J. Blaney: This is for *Hansard*.

S. Haas: Thank you, Jack.

We've registered a domain name, which is www.citizensassembly.bc.ca. That will be on the voters list registration drive pamphlet that gets distributed to all households. When people go there, initially there'll be just very simple information about what the Citizens' Assembly is, how you register, a general time line of what will be happening — very, very simple stuff — and how to contact us, also quite important.

Then through the summer, as we get the communications director, as we're waiting for the appropriate candidate, we'll do a broader website that will offer people, hopefully, the opportunity to watch live

streaming of the proceedings happening downstairs. If they're in Fort St. John, they'll be able to watch it and see what other people are commenting on in these ideas that are coming up. Currently, the domain name has nothing on it, but when the registration folder goes out, we will have information there.

I'd be interested if any of you folks have any ideas about something that would be really important to be on the website right away for those member of the public that come.

J. MacPhail: Voter registration.

S. Haas: How to do that. Yes, thank you.

J. Les (Chair): Thank you, Susanna.
Any other questions? Okay.

Citizens' Assembly Director of Operations Nominee

J. Blaney: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Well, it certainly is my pleasure to present my nominee, our nominee, the Citizens' Assembly nominee, for the director of operations or chief operations officer for the Citizens' Assembly, Dr. Leo Perra. I'm very happy to present Leo, for a whole number of reasons. I believe that when I first met you and talked about qualifications, I said that the assembly must fundamentally be independent, fair and competent. We look for the three in all officers, but the three major senior officers at least — that they come with a reputation of integrity and fairness and that they are highly competent for the task that they are about to undertake.

I have known Mr. Perra for 30-some years but have not known him well. Both of us have been in post-secondary education. Mr. Perra — Dr. Perra, actually — has been president of Selkirk College for 20 years and for about 35 years has spent all his professional life in the interior of the province — in the Kootenay area, in the Kamloops-Cariboo area and then in Williams Lake. That, too, I'm pleased about in terms of the balance and the understanding of the province and, of course, understanding of the peoples and the industry and the business and the social problems of the province. He has more latterly, of course, worked with our aboriginals in terms of their post-secondary education.

I'm very pleased to present him, and I think I should now turn the microphone over to Dr. Perra and your questions to him.

J. Les (Chair): Sure. Thank you.

What I would suggest, Dr. Perra, is that perhaps you would like to tell us a little bit about yourself and how you arrived here today and maybe flesh out some of the things in your CV. After that, I would encourage committee members to ask any questions that they might have of you.

L. Perra: Thank you. It's certainly a pleasure to be here to be considered for the position of director with

the Citizens' Assembly. I became aware of the possibility, I guess, during the last electoral campaign that this is an activity that might develop and certainly saw that as an interesting process to provide for the people in the province to have a say. The way the Citizens' Assembly has developed through the work of Gordon Gibson and the report that he produced certainly outlined a very interesting process.

[1025]

When I saw the ad in the *Vancouver Sun*, I decided that I would be interested in participating in the process. Then after Jack gave me a call, I decided I'd better read the full report. I found it to be a very interesting report.

I also had the opportunity to listen to Gordon on one of the Shaw network shows where he was talking about the work that he had done leading up to his report. He started talking about a variety of options that seemed to exist in different parts of the world — things I was not aware of — and it intrigued me even more to participate in this process.

One of the areas of expertise or area of interest, if I can say it in those terms, in my recent or declining years as a college president was working in the area of governance, particularly in terms of organizational governance or board governance, and developing some understanding of those processes. I see the Citizens' Assembly as another element in the governance process at a much broader level than organizational governance, but it's that kind of thing that has certainly caught my attention in the last four or five years. I have done a number of workshops for organizations with respect to governance and how they may improve their own internal governance within their organizations. Being able to participate in this process, to me, provides an opportunity to continue to expand in that area of interest.

The other area that I think provides some benefit to this process — and Jack has alluded to this in part — is the fact that I am fairly knowledgeable about the province of British Columbia. While I wasn't born in B.C. — I was born next door, very close to the border, and even while I was growing up, we used to cross the border into B.C. on a regular basis — I have lived or worked in most of the province except for possibly the northwest. I have visited extensively throughout the province, and I have a network of people that I have developed over the years throughout the province, who I think can provide help and assistance to the process of the Citizens' Assembly.

I think it's an opportunity, a rare opportunity, to be able to participate in this process, and it's one that I believe aligns itself very clearly with my own administrative style in terms of trying to include people in the decision-making process. I'm really looking forward to being able to participate and certainly hope that as a result of today's session, I will gain your confidence.

J. Les (Chair): Thank you very much. Any questions of my committee members?

J. Bray (Deputy Chair): Thank you very much for putting your name forward. It's certainly a daunting task that you're applying for.

Hearing Dr. Blaney talk earlier about the importance of these director positions, in your review of the potential process and what you've learned so far from Dr. Blaney and reading the Gibson report, etc., what do you see are the three major challenges the director of operations is going to be faced with in the initial stages of coming on board for the Citizens' Assembly?

L. Perra: I think the first major task is one of developing provincial awareness very, very quickly so that the voter process is successful. I see that as a very critical and urgent task, and work is underway. But developing awareness is a challenge, and I think we'll have to spend a fair amount of time initially to make that happen while we're waiting for a director of communications to show up at the institution.

[1030]

The second one I see is developing the logistics for making the selection process a success in terms of providing the Citizens' Assembly with the type of stratification that the Legislature is looking for and that will have a group of people who will be able to work together through the tough and good times — because I suspect there will be strong positions that will develop as time goes on — but just developing a logistical plan in the next six to eight weeks so that everything flows smoothly and so that by the end of November or early December we do have a citizens' assembly in place.

The next part will be to start thinking about the procedures or the processes that we need to have in place so that when the assembly does begin its initiatives, it has a template or some kind of a blueprint it can think about in terms of how it's going to conduct its business. I would see the next four months as being fairly intensive in terms of achieving those three objectives.

J. Bray (Deputy Chair): Just a second question. When we went to this process with the Chair, in his opening remarks he talked about not having given thought to electoral reform to the position where he actually had a particular system in place, so very clearly that impartiality was key. Have you got an electoral system in mind that you think is the best? Or are you somebody who's prepared to be absolutely neutral on that as director of operations?

L. Perra: I haven't given it very much thought over the.... I mean, I'm aware of things like proportional representation because I read about it in the paper, and the system we have here and the run-off system, but those are about the only things I really know about. I don't have any propensity for one or the other, not having looked at the implications of one system versus another. I think the fact that there are other systems in the world that work, as Gordon talked about, certainly means that there's a lot to learn. I don't have any propensity one way or another.

J. MacPhail: Thank you, Dr. Perra. I'm very well aware of your excellent record with Selkirk College, but I note from your employment history that you do have a job now as vice-chair of employment and assistance appeal tribunal. I think they're the administrative tribunal hearings for people who are appealing decisions made around human resources benefits. How will that impact on this role with the Citizens' Assembly?

L. Perra: The vice-chair's position is something that's mentioned in legislation. The role of the vice-chair is not clearly defined in the legislation, and the amount of work that has been involved in being the vice-chair has been pretty marginal. I think I've done approximately three days of work for the tribunal since the end of March. Prior to that I was doing technical work for them, helping them develop their website, doing the content work and stuff like that. So I was doing a fair amount of work, but actual involvement in appeal processes has been pretty minimal.

I was involved in training sessions in the early part of the tribunal's development, and I have served on one appeal panel since I've been appointed. But I have indicated to the chair that I am in this process and that I would be willing to step down if he saw that the work is going to go beyond that or if this committee feels that it would be best all round to pull back. I don't have any difficulty with that because, as I say, it's a very small part of my work life.

The other area of interest, of course, is governance training. Every now and again I get a call, maybe half a dozen times a year, to do a workshop. Those are usually done on a weekend. Clearly, I see the Citizens' Assembly having a lot of weekend work between January and May of 2004, and that, typically, is not a time when governance work would be an issue. I have one session that I'm tentatively scheduled for on a Saturday in September, but whether that happens or not, time will tell.

J. MacPhail: For me it's encouraging to note that you'd be willing to step aside from this, for this reason only. I assume there will be people on the Citizens' Assembly who rely on social assistance, and therefore there should be a clear separation of roles between the two.

L. Perra: That's a good point. I hadn't thought of that.

[1035]

I. Chong: Dr. Perra, I note in looking at your résumé — and you've already alluded to it in your opening remarks and again in response to Ms. MacPhail's questions about your expertise in board governance processes and things of that nature.... I'm just wondering how you see that fits in with your role as a director of operations once the framework term is set up. Dr. Blaney, as chair, will be helping members in the delib-

erations, etc. Where do you feel your expertise in that area is going to be of greatest benefit to this assembly?

L. Perra: I think it's probably my administrative expertise overall that's going to be the greatest benefit to the assembly. From a government perspective, when you bring a group of 158 people together, they will need to develop some kind of framework by which they're going to conduct their business. I think you can slide into certain kinds of governance models. I mean, any group that develops a process by which they're governing their affairs is getting into governance. I think, because this is not a traditional kind of governance structure in that we don't have a legal status in terms of being a board or an organization, we need to develop a governance structure for them that will suit the Citizens' Assembly.

I think I can provide a contribution in that respect. My governance expertise is not directly something that will have great benefit to the assembly, but certainly being able to articulate a governance process that will suit the structure we're dealing with will be of some value. I hope it will be.

I. Chong: So more in the initial time leading up to the time before the deliberations of the assembly start?

L. Perra: Helping to develop the structure by which the assembly is going to function.

I. Chong: Thank you.

J. Les (Chair): Anyone else? It looks like we're all questioned out. Ida has one further.

I. Chong: Just a follow-up. Again, I was looking at your résumé, and I know you have tremendous experience in working with people in the community and first nations leaders in particular. Can you elaborate on what other segments of the communities you've had any substantive or significant work with — other groups — whether it be the disadvantaged, whether it be other visible minorities, whether it be people with language issues? Can you give me any idea?

L. Perra: I guess in part it's situational. When I worked in adult education.... That's about the time I first met Jack, which would be in the mid-sixties. I worked in Williams Lake, and there was a large East Asian, East Indian population, and so we worked with that group of people. That was in the mid-sixties. I think there was a White Paper on immigration that came up at that time, so there were a number of issues that were of concern to those people, as well as ESL services.

When I was in Williams Lake, we developed a working relationship with the community leaders in the East Indian community. When I was in the Kootenays — a very large Doukhobor community — I developed a relationship working with that particular group in trying to open or make the institution more

transparent to their needs and their place in that local society. As well, in Williams Lake, as you noted, I spent time working with first nations people all the way up to Bella Coola, Bella Bella and again, when I took on a contract after I had stepped out of Selkirk College, here in the lower mainland.

I. Chong: One final. You also mentioned, in terms of geography, that you know the interior of B.C. quite well. Do you know Vancouver Island at all?

L. Perra: Oh, a little bit. My wife is from Victoria, and my travels have taken me up not all the way to Port Hardy but certainly into Comox and Campbell River and so on. So I have at least been there.

I. Chong: Just wanting to be sure. Thank you.

L. Perra: The only place I haven't really been is the northwest. I've been to the Queen Charlottes because I did a workshop there with a board, but I haven't been into Prince Rupert, Terrace — didn't quite make it. I've been as far as Burns Lake.

B. Lekstrom: Just a question, Dr. Perra. With what we're going through — I think it's very unique for British Columbia and our country — we're leading the way here, when people are watching what we're doing, and we're asking the people of British Columbia to give us their views on this. You have quite an extensive background, and I know that you're involved in many things. Joy touched on it earlier — your priority when it comes to the Citizens' Assembly. Would this be your top priority during the time frame that it takes to get this job done?

[1040]

L. Perra: Absolutely. But I mean, if there's a conflict on, let's say, a governance training session and the Citizens' Assembly, this will take priority. This is it for 18 months.

B. Lekstrom: Just maybe one follow-up. With your background and everything you've been involved in — certainly, it's extensive and quite impressive when I look through your résumé — do you see yourself having held any positions that would create a bit of a concern for you, whether it be a conflict or a feeling of conflict, in taking this position on now?

L. Perra: Nothing. I mean, the only time I've ever had any kind of political activity, I guess, was in the mid-sixties. Once I moved into senior management, I became apolitical, simply because I have been a senior manager for 30-some-odd years, and I always thought I would serve my organization better by being neutral. I think that has served me well in the long run. I haven't changed from that yet.

B. Lekstrom: Thank you.

J. Les (Chair): Any concluding remarks before we deliberate?

L. Perra: I just want to thank you for the opportunity. As I indicated at the outset, I am very interested in serving for the Citizens' Assembly through to its conclusion. I think it's a great learning opportunity for myself, and I look forward to being able to serve the assembly for the next 18 months.

J. Les (Chair): Thank you very much.

I expect you'll be excused while we consider the matter.

J. Blaney: Do you wish me to stay, Mr. Chair, or would you like me to leave?

J. Les (Chair): You can stay, Jack.

Interjection.

J. Les (Chair): No, the cameras should be shut off.

Interjection.

J. Les (Chair): Don't go for coffee too long, because you might come back and not find us here anymore.

Motion to move in camera? Ida and Jeff. Everyone is in favour, I'm assuming.

The committee continued in camera at 10:43 a.m.

The committee continued in open session at 10:56 a.m.

[J. Les in the chair.]

J. Les (Chair): Okay, we're back in public session. Just to confirm a motion that was made earlier, is someone prepared to move the confirmation of Dr. Perra as the director of operations?

Motion approved.

J. Les (Chair): Congratulations, Dr. Perra.

L. Perra: Thank you.

Next Committee Meeting

J. Les (Chair): So, Jack, back to you. We have a couple of items to clean up, as near as I can tell. One would be: are we able to set a time and date for the next meeting?

J. Blaney: I've given the Clerk several dates in late July and early August, and I hope that one of those times might be suitable for the committee. This would be for the confirmation of the director of education and research.

J. Les (Chair): Those dates would be July 24 and 25. There's not much religion in this business, but one of the tenets is that August is off limits.

J. Blaney: I would certainly prefer a July date myself, if that were at all possible.

J. Les (Chair): Thursday, July 24. How does that sit with members of the committee? No good?

J. MacPhail: No, but I do understand the difficulty of....

Interjections.

J. MacPhail: I'm not available that week. I'm available the week after, but not that week.

Interjections.

J. Les (Chair): Monday, July 28. Is that okay?

J. Blaney: I can make that work. It wasn't one of my preferred, but I can make that work.

Interjections.

J. Les (Chair): Are you okay with that, Jeff?

J. Bray (Deputy Chair): I don't have all those fancy kinds of software. I would say yes.

J. Les (Chair): Blair?

B. Lekstrom: Yep.

I. Chong: Would that be here?

J. Blaney: So the 28th works?

J. Les (Chair): The 28th seems to work. Yes.

B. Lekstrom: That would be in the morning.

J. Les (Chair): In terms of preference....

A Voice: Well, Blair has got to come a fair distance, though.

B. Lekstrom: The morning works if it could be.... Even an 11 a.m. start gets me down in the morning.

Interjections.

J. Les (Chair): That gets you to Vancouver or Victoria?

Interjections.

B. Lekstrom: To Vancouver. I'd land at 10 a.m.

J. Les (Chair): Vancouver's fine with me.

J. Blaney: So 11 a.m., July 28. I will confirm this, but I'm sure it's fine. I will let you know actually by this afternoon. That would work quite well.

J. Les (Chair): Great. So that's the 28th at 11 a.m.

J. Blaney: And if luck has it, we might also have a director of communications by then. We might not be that lucky.

J. Les (Chair): But in the event that that luck does not prevail, we would then have a further discussion about how we would proceed in the absence of perhaps many of the committee members.

J. Blaney: Actually, Mr. Chair, that would be an important item to have as an agenda item, as to how we would proceed during August should that happen in August.

J. Les (Chair): I think that's the only housekeeping item that I have written down. Is there anything else, Jack?

J. Blaney: The last thing, Mr. Chair, is that any members of the committee who might like to cross the street and go up to the twenty-second floor to see our premises.... They are quite nice, and I think members of the assembly, when they visit us, will feel very comfortable there. They're very airy and light, and we have a special place for them to sit and have coffee. If you'd like to, I'd be happy to be your tour guide to show those to you.

Thank you very much for meeting here.

J. Les (Chair): Any other items from committee members? A motion to adjourn would be nice. We'll see you on the 28th.

The committee adjourned at 10:59 a.m.