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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE
CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON
ELECTORAL REFORM

Vancouver
Monday, July 28, 2003
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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE
CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM**

Vancouver
Monday, July 28, 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)
Linda Johnson (Deputy Chief Electoral Officer)
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



Monday, July 28, 2003

11:00 a.m.

Hamber Foundation Boardroom #470

Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

580 West Hastings Street

Vancouver, British Columbia

Present: John Les, MLA (Chair); Jeff Bray, MLA (Deputy Chair); Ida Chong, MLA; Blair Lekstrom, MLA; Kevin Krueger, MLA; Joy MacPhail, MLA; Rob Nijjar, 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 two applications for the positions of Director of Research and the Director of Communications, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
Witnesses
Dr. Jack Blaney
Dr. Leo Perra
3. The Committee met in camera regarding the recruitment process and the applications for the Director of Research and the Director of Communications, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
4. The Committee met in public session.
5. **Resolved**, that the Committee endorse the appointment of Dr. R. Kenneth Carty as Director of Research and Ms. Claire Trevena as Director of Communications for the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
6. The Committee adjourned at 12:31 p.m. to the call of the Chair

John Les, MLA
Chair

Craig James
Clerk Assistant and
Clerk of Committees

MONDAY, JULY 28, 2003

The committee met at 11:05 a.m.

[J. Les in the chair.]

J. Les (Chair): Good morning, everyone. We're to get this meeting underway. Thank you all for coming on this wonderful, warm B.C. summer day.

We have important business to do today. Jack has been very busy working on forming the Citizens' Assembly. He's been a media star all day so far today. Some of us, I'm sure, heard him on the various radio stations and TV stations that he's appeared on so far already.

I'm going to turn the meeting over to Jack at this point to give us a progress report. Then we'll carry on with the staff selection process.

Citizens' Assembly Progress Report and Staff Selection Process

J. Blaney: Thank you very much. I will be very brief, because we do have one of the staff who will be by video. I'm very pleased. Things are going along, I think, reasonably well — I hope my colleagues think exceptionally well.

The first priority we have had is hiring staff. We only have eight or nine staff, and it's very important that we choose well. I hope that when this morning is over, you will concur that we are choosing well. That has taken a lot of time and has been, of course, the highest priority of all: to make sure the right people are in place.

This week begins the week, of course, of a brochure — we have copies for you, if you haven't received them yet — that is to be mailed to every householder in British Columbia.

J. MacPhail: I haven't seen it.

J. Blaney: It is coming. It's on its way. Cathy is bringing it.

It talks about what the Citizens' Assembly is. Essentially, it's encouraging people to make sure that they are on the voters list.

We have liaised with Elections B.C. on this one. Linda Johnson, who is the deputy chief electoral officer, is there. They have been very helpful, a great partner. That brochure now is being passed around. By the end of the week, hopefully, it'll be in every home in B.C.

In regard to that, we have worked the media and press releases. I've done five media interviews this morning: three times on CBC, one on CKNW and Fairchild TV. Last Friday we did Channel M, the multicultural channel. There seems to be a lot of interest in the Citizens' Assembly and a lot of interest, actually, from a good cross-section of the community.

We have secured premises. Some of you have seen our premises on the twenty-second floor. We're finally getting the computers in and everything else of that sort. We have actually done a task list that's five pages long, just listing all the tasks that must be done be-

tween now and the beginning of December. That, in itself, was a great task, and we'll keep on updating that.

We have done some preliminary planning for meeting locations, travel requirements and such for the regional meetings, which we will be having for the selection process this fall. We have already booked a facility for the first phase, the education phase, and the deliberation phase. All those logistics are being kind of taken care of.

We're looking at the budget. By the end of August we'll have a pretty good idea as to how this budget fits the kind of mandate and expectations that this committee and the Legislature have for us.

We have adopted a logo, as you can see in the front page of the brochure. I hope you like it; it's done. That will be our Citizens' Assembly logo. It tries to suggest that we're trying to bring people together and that they'll be in dialogue. We've registered a domain name, and we now have our website. There's not much on the website yet, but it's there.

Very briefly, Mr. Chair, that's an update on what we've been doing over the course of the last six weeks since the last time we met. I'd be very happy to have any questions or comments and advice.

J. Les (Chair): Any questions of Jack?

J. MacPhail: How did this brochure get done? I thought we didn't have a communications person yet. Are you contracting it out?

J. Blaney: This brochure was done by the Attorney General's department, with final say by Elections B.C. and myself. We had final say on wording. They offered to do it, because it needed to get done. We have, by the way, contracted with a communications firm just in the last week to get some press, basically to get some media coverage of this brochure and the importance of people signing up.

J. MacPhail: Who is that? What contractor?

[1110]

J. Blaney: Pace Group, Norman Stowe. I must say, we contacted him last Monday, and we've had enormous response in terms of.... Again, the media response has been very good. Tomorrow at two we meet with the editorial board of the *Vancouver Sun*. We've had pretty good response to our press release.

R. Nijjar: Over what period of time is this going to all the households?

J. Blaney: Mailout has started today.
Linda, do you know any more about it than that?

L. Johnson: No. The last I heard was that the schedule is over four days — so by the end of the week.

J. Blaney: By the end of the week it should be in every household in B.C. Let me know if you didn't get

it. With all the mail that comes in, one has to distinguish it from something else, but hopefully, everybody will get it. There are also going to be some radio spots and some ads in particular papers, particularly for the aboriginal community and the youth community, to see if we can encourage them to sign up and make sure they're on the voters list.

J. Les (Chair): Okay. Any other questions at this point? Is everybody happy?

Great. Shall we move on to the interviews?

J. Blaney: The first interview, the first confirmation hearing, will be in the room across the way, because it'll be done by videotape. The person is not on this continent. If we could move into that room, then I would be happy to make my introduction.

J. Les (Chair): For the purpose of that, I would appreciate a motion to move in camera.

The committee continued in camera from 11:11 a.m. to 12:28 p.m.

[J. Les in the chair.]

Citizens' Assembly Directors of Communications and Research

J. Les (Chair): On behalf of the committee, I'm pleased to report that we've made two decisions this morning. Firstly, the director of communications is going to be Ms. Claire Trevena. Secondly, the director of research for the Citizens' Assembly is going to be Dr. Ken Carty. I'd like to congratulate them both. I look forward to Jack getting his full complement of people

on board here and everything that'll flow as a result of that.

Is there any other business you want us to consider this morning, Jack, or any other comments you might have?

J. Blaney: No, Mr. Chair. I think that's probably it. I hope we are very successful in the couple of weeks coming up in terms of getting citizens interested and making sure they are registered to vote. I would suspect that within about the next two or three weeks, we'll have our full complement of staff and will report to you as to who they are. We'll keep in touch.

[1230]

I hope you have a great summer. We're going to be working our butts off, actually, because that train doesn't stop at all. It just keeps on going. We look forward to keeping you informed and will presumably meet the committee sometime early in the fall and bring you up to date.

I want to thank you again for the questions and suggestions that arose out of our interviews. I have to tell you, Ken — and Claire, if she were here — that most of the discussion we had was about the process and about what we were doing. I had some very, very good suggestions and things to be concerned about. Thank you very much, members and Mr. Chair.

J. Les (Chair): Thank you. We will be in touch as the weeks and months unfold, but I think you've already indicated that our next meeting will be in the early fall. We look forward to receiving an update report from you at that point.

Motion to adjourn?

The committee adjourned at 12:31 p.m.