

MINUTES

FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Thursday, July 10, 2014

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Terrace Room (3rd Floor),

Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, 900 Canada Place, Vancouver BC



Members Present: Hon. Linda Reid, Speaker and Chair; Eric Foster, MLA and Government Whip as substitute for Michelle Stilwell, MLA Government Caucus Chair; Shane Simpson, MLA and Official Opposition Caucus Chair; Craig James, Clerk of the House

Others in attendance: Douglas Horne, MLA and Deputy Speaker; Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees; Gary Lenz, Sergeant-at-Arms; Hilary Woodward, Executive Financial Officer; Russ Jones, Office of the Auditor General, Paul Nyquist, Office of the Auditor General.

1. The Chair called the Committee to order at 10:02 am.
2. Resolved, that the Committee adopt the agenda as circulated. (Shane Simpson, MLA)
3. **Resolved**, that the Committee adopt the minutes of May 27, 2014 as circulated. (Shane Simpson, MLA)
4. In reviewing upgrades relating to the Health, Safety and Accessibility of the Parliamentary Precinct, the Speaker expressed appreciation to the Sergeant-at-Arms for the recent installation of safety hand rails on the stairs leading down to the dining room and suggested that hand rails could also be installed on the stairs to the third floor, leading to the public gallery. The Committee received an update on ongoing related improvements including panic alarm systems, remote access doors and accessible public washrooms.

The Speaker advised that documentation relating to the proposed seismic instrumentation of the Parliament Buildings would be received by July 30.

5. The Clerk and the Executive Financial Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the considerations regarding the preparation of Members' travel and constituency office receipts for disclosure and the centralized processing of receipts by Financial Services or by individual Members' offices. Staff will work on developing a timely and cost-effective process reflecting the need to address appropriate financial, personal and security concerns. A model, consistent with provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, will be presented to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee in September 2014.

Resolved, that following approval of the proposed model by Legislative Assembly Management Committee, Members' travel receipts processed in October – December 2014 will be released in February 2015. (Shane Simpson, MLA)

6. The Executive Financial Officer advised the Committee that on July 21, 2014, Members will receive their travel, compensation and constituency office draft expense reports for the first quarterly release of 2014-15. The 2013-14 fourth quarter release of this information in May 2014 went well.
7. In reviewing the revised draft *Internal Audit Plan – 2014 to 2017*, the Committee recognized that further improvements should be made to strengthen the effectiveness and value of the audit plan. The Committee also agreed to support ongoing training and development of constituency assistants to further enhance constituency office internal controls and financial management practices.
8. With respect to the Office of the Auditor General's 2013-14 financial audit of the Legislative Assembly, it was noted that audit staff are working on site this week. A management letter may accompany the audit opinion on the financial statements in late September. The Financial Statement Sub-committee of the Audit Working Group is progressing well in its work.
9. The Committee reviewed the *2014-15 Capital Project Status Report*.
10. The Committee reviewed the Protective Services Directive regarding constituency office security reviews and security enhancement recommendations. This information will be brought to the attention of both caucuses. It was agreed that the related reference guides to constituency office security information and specifications material be made available via a link the *Members Guide to Policy and Resources* website to secure, network accessible PDF files on the Assembly intranet.
11. The Committee received an update on the Parliamentary Precinct Space Project, led by a working group comprised of the Deputy Speaker, Government Whip, Opposition Whip, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees. The Precinct Space Project group will develop recommendations to assess cost effective use of existing space at the Assembly and also assess future opportunities with respect to new or additional space. A draft report for the Speaker is expected to be produced by September 2014 with recommendations for likely implementation following the 2017 provincial general election.
12. The Clerk provided an update on matters including: considerations regarding a possible Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel position; progress on the Legislative Assembly Program Accountability Review; the Long Term Accessibility Plan for the Parliamentary Precinct and the visual identity project.

The Committee agreed that the visual identity project be implemented with a phased and cost-effective approach, and that Members could utilize the new design at their discretion.
13. It was agreed that, effective July 10, 2014, approved Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee will be regularly disclosed by Legislative Assembly Management Committee in conjunction with routine advance release of LAMC meeting material.

14. The Committee discussed options for the use of the kiosk and will receive additional information, including cost estimates, at the next meeting.
15. The Committee considered the proposed installation of a Paramedics Memorial and requested further information regarding project estimate costs.
16. The Clerk advised that travel expenses for the Assembly Executive would be disclosed in September 2014, in conjunction with the format and timing of Members' travel expense reports.
17. It was agreed that upcoming meetings of the Finance and Audit Committee would include consideration of: the draft *Accountability Report*; a review of a draft procurement policy; 2014-15 first quarterly Financial Report; and the 2013-14 audited financial statements and accompanying auditor's report.
18. The Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair at 12:21 pm.

Hon. Linda Reid, MLA
Speaker and Chair

Kate Ryan-Lloyd
Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees