

MINUTES

FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 12, 2015

3:30 p.m.

Birch Room, Room 339

Parliament Buildings, Victoria



Members Present: Hon. Linda Reid, Speaker and Chair; Jackie Tegart, 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; Mike Farnworth, MLA and Opposition House Leader; Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees; Gary Lenz, Sergeant-at-Arms; Hilary Woodward, Executive Financial Officer; Jon Harding, Director, Financial Services; Bruce Perry, Office of the Auditor General; Bill Cassels, Ernst and Young

1. The Chair called the Committee to order at 3:32 p.m.
2. **Resolved**, that the Committee adopt the agenda as presented. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)
3. **Resolved**, that the Committee adopt the minutes of February 26, 2015 as circulated. (Shane Simpson, MLA)
4. Under consideration of the Health, Safety and Accessibility of the Parliamentary Precinct, the Speaker noted that handrails continue to be installed on various stairwells. The Legislative Assembly Management Committee has not yet approved the proposal to install automated door opening devices on 38 doors at a projected cost of up to \$146,000 prior to fiscal year-end. However, the 2015/16 budget provides for some automated door opening devices to be installed, including the Chamber doors and Committee room doors.
5. The Speaker distributed a copy of a draft respectful workplace policy, proposed to apply to Members and caucus staff. The Committee briefly discussed the draft policy, and agreed to defer a decision to the next Finance and Audit Committee meeting in order to provide time to allow for Caucus review and discussion. The draft policy will be emailed to all Members.
6. The Executive Financial Officer provided the Committee with an update on the Members 2014/15 Q3 travel and constituency office expense disclosures, including the release of related receipts. Additional quality assurance reviews on the first disclosure batches have been done. The Committee noted that the duties of constituency assistants have been significantly impacted by requirements to prepare and review receipts in support of expanded disclosure.
7. The Sergeant-at-Arms and the Deputy Clerk answered questions related to the document entitled *Front Entrance Security Project: Planning Costs and Public Accessibility*.
Resolved, that the project proposal be referred to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)

8. The Director, Financial Services, provided the Committee with a briefing regarding a proposal to enhance the constituency office allowance payment process. The Committee considered the benefits of the proposal, including the streamlining of accounting processes, improved reporting and front loaded funding to ensure sufficient funds to offices during the transition period.

Resolved, that the Committee recommend adoption of the constituency office allowance payment process for report to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee as an information item. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)

9. The Executive Financial Officer distributed a copy of the Office of the Auditor General audit engagement letter for the 2014/15 Financial Statement Audit. Bruce Perry, Office of the Auditor General, provided the Committee with an overview of the engagement letter and the terms and conditions regarding the planned audit work. The audit plan will be presented to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee in April. The 2014/15 Financial Statement Audit is expected to be finalized by September 2015.
10. The Executive Financial Officer distributed a copy of the Finance and Audit Committee's terms of reference. The Committee considered the benefits of clarifying of the decision making role of the Finance and Audit Committee with respect to administrative decisions without cost implications. The Committee agreed to review a revised terms of reference at a subsequent meeting.
11. The Executive Financial Officer distributed a copy of the Finance and Audit Committee's 2015 Work Plan; Committee Members reviewed the document.
12. The Speaker and the Deputy Clerk provided the Committee with a brief update regarding the status of available space at the Queen's Printer building. The Speaker will provide an update on further details relating to available space options at a subsequent meeting.
13. The Clerk provided the Committee with an update on a variety of Assembly initiatives including: participation by Assembly Executive at the recent government constituency assistant seminar; planned testing of the business continuity plan and upcoming security training sessions for Members and staff.
14. The Finance and Audit Committee will meet next on Thursday, April 23, 2015.
15. The Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair at 4:32 p.m.

Hon. Linda Reid, MLA
Speaker and Chair

Kate Ryan-Lloyd
Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees