



3rd Session, 37th Parliament

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
CROWN CORPORATIONS

Victoria

Tuesday, June 25, 2002

Issue No. 5

KEN STEWART, MLA, CHAIR

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**SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
CROWN CORPORATIONS**

Victoria
Tuesday, June 25, 2002

Chair:

* Ken Stewart (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows L)

Deputy Chair:

* Bill Bennett (East Kootenay L)

Members:

* Pat Bell (Prince George North L)

* Ida Chong (Oak Bay-Gordon Head L)

* Dave Hayer (Surrey-Tynehead L)

* Daniel Jarvis (North Vancouver-Seymour L)

Ken Johnston (Vancouver-Fraserview L)

John Nuraney (Burnaby-Willingdon L)

John Wilson (Cariboo North L)

Tony Bhullar (Surrey-Newton Ind L)

Joy MacPhail (Vancouver-Hastings NDP)

* *denotes member present*

Clerk:

Craig James

Committee Staff:

Josie Schofield (Committee Research Analyst)

Audrey Chan (Assistant Researcher)

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MINUTES

SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CROWN CORPORATIONS



Tuesday, June 25, 2002
1:00 p.m.
Douglas Fir Committee Room
Parliament Buildings, Victoria

Present: Ken Stewart, MLA (Convener); Bill Bennett, MLA; Dave Hayer, MLA; Ida Chong, MLA; Pat Bell, MLA; Daniel Jarvis, MLA

Unavoidably Absent: Joy MacPhail, MLA; Tony Bhullar, MLA; Ken Johnston, MLA; John Nuraney, MLA; Dr. John Wilson, MLA

1. **Resolved**, that Mr. Ken Stewart, MLA be elected Chair of the Committee
2. **Resolved**, that Mr. Bill Bennett, MLA be elected Deputy Chair of the Committee.
3. The Chair reviewed the work of the Committee during the previous legislative session and proposals for the year ahead.
4. The Committee amended the Guide to the Operations of the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations and agreed that it should accompany the letter of invitation by the Chair to each Crown Corporation requested to appear.
5. The Committee agreed to meet on Monday, July 8, 2002 for the purpose of hearing from the British Columbia Buildings Corporation.
6. The Committee agreed to meet on Wednesday, July 24, 2002 for the purpose of hearing from another Crown Corporation.
7. The election of a subcommittee on agenda and procedure was deferred to a subsequent meeting of the Committee.
8. The Committee was informed of the distribution of documents to Members in electronic format.
9. The Committee adjourned at 1:48 p.m. to the Call of the Chair.

Ken Stewart, MLA
Chair

Craig James
Clerk Assistant and
Clerk of Committees

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2002

The committee met at 1:02 p.m.

Election of Chair and Deputy Chair

C. James: This being the first meeting of the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations for this session and there not being a Chair, being Clerk of the committee, I call for nominations for Chair.

D. Jarvis: I move that Ken Stewart be reappointed as Chair.

C. James: Any further nominations? Any further nominations? I see no further nominations. I presume you accept the nomination. That being said, I'll put the question.

Motion approved.

[K. Stewart in the chair.]

K. Stewart (Chair): Thank you for that vote of confidence. I appreciate it. Obviously we did all right last time. We're still continuing on with the same Chair.

I'd like to move on to our second order of business, which would be the election of a Deputy Chair. Do we have any nominations from the floor?

D. Jarvis: I'll move that we reappoint the member for East Kootenay, Mr. Bennett.

K. Stewart (Chair): I assume that if it's a reappointment, it has to be the member for East Kootenay. Would you accept?

B. Bennett: Sure.

K. Stewart (Chair): Any further nominations from the floor? Any further nominations from the floor? Any further nominations from the floor? I'll make this official here.

Motion approved.

The Year in Review

K. Stewart (Chair): Moving on to the next order of business, the year in review.

I trust everyone's got a copy of our report that was turned in. In that report you'll notice that we had four meetings in the last session. During those meetings we were in anticipation of the core reviews to be finished by the Crown corporations, which held us back from having any of the Crown corporations come before us. My understanding is that a number of Crown corporations, if not all, have finished their core review and would be prepared to come before us. In reviewing the work of the committee in the past, we did go and make some suggestions in the report under "A Guide to the Operations

of the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations."

[1305]

The Year Ahead

K. Stewart (Chair): Now, I believe it was my understanding and the understanding of many members of the committee that we would have got started a little earlier, during session. Based on that presumption, we laid out a fairly regimented schedule that would have the committee meeting every two weeks. As we're in an off-session period right now and coming into the summer months, I am not sure how easy it will be for us to meet those types of guidelines we let earlier with regards to the regularity of the meetings.

There are a couple of issues there, and maybe I could just refer to the Clerk to give us some direction as to where some of those conflicts may arise.

C. James: In terms of the paper flow this year, what we're trying to encourage all committees to be cognizant of is the cost of photocopying, duplicating and couriering material back and forth from witnesses — in this case, from Crown corporations — to us and out to the members. To the extent possible, what we're going to try this year — this is the first committee; the other committees, I hope, will participate in this as well — is electronically e-mailing to members of the committee the websites and other sites and points that we think members should access in order to gain access to publications and material that is relevant to a committee's forthcoming meeting.

To use an example, if the committee was to hear from a Crown corporation in the next few weeks, what we would do is make note of that Crown corporation — of course, the appropriate officials over there would be contacted — and then we would notify every member on this committee with the Crown corporation's website and point them in that direction. The onus would then rest with the member to gain access to those particular reports, whether they happen to be annual reports or performance plans and the like.

Josie has on her desk, in fact, the binder which I think was circulated to all members of the Legislative Assembly sometime this year. It contains, I think, the service plans and some other related material for government ministries but also for Crown corporations. You already have that material. We would point that out. If you are missing that material, then you could let us know, and we could try to arrange for you to receive a copy.

In essence, what we're trying to do is minimize the paper flow over the course of this exercise and put the onus back on electronic versions of material for members. If that proves cumbersome or you see a better way of handling it, we would certainly be more than happy to entertain those requests.

Do you have anything to add, Josie?

J. Schofield: The only thing I would add is that our office is going to get one print copy of the corporation's annual report, which will be kept in the main file. For any member who would actually like to look at how glossy it is or whatever, it will be available in the office. The annual reports are actually available on line too. I think that — that a couple of members would actually like to see the print version — came out of a meeting last year.

C. James: Too, just to supplement all of the information, should Crown corporations be asked to provide material to the committee after a hearing or whatever, or prior to a hearing, we will be asking them to supply it in electronic form to the extent possible so that we in turn can just get it right back out to the members wherever they happen to be.

K. Stewart (Chair): I just want to touch on a couple of protocol issues, if I may. In our last series of meetings we decided that we could use first names when referring to members. Is it the wish of the committee that we continue that practice? Is anyone uncomfortable with being referred to by their first name? Let's phrase it that way. That's your choice.

[1310]

The one request I would have, given that it is a legislative committee and we want to keep some decorum through the Chair, is if we could refer to the Chair as the Chair. If it's me sitting here, or the Deputy Chair or whoever else happens to be the Chair, if we could refer to them that way and, again, continue, as with other parliamentary procedure, to refer questions through the Chair to the presenters as they come before us. There are some issues in the questions they may want clarification on, and we may want to make sure that the question is within the scope of the committee before passing it on. If we could just keep that in mind when we move through, it would be appreciated.

The other thing that may be appropriate to do at this time is to just quickly go over what our mandate is. I'll just read this. I trust most of you have.

In the legislative session it was moved by the House Leader, by leave:

"That the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations be appointed to review the annual reports and performance plans of British Columbia Crown corporations. In addition to powers previously conferred upon the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations, the committee will be empowered: (a) to appoint of their number, one or more subcommittees and to refer to such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the Committee;" — meaning we can set up subcommittees — "(b) to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned, during the recess after prorogation until the next following Session and during any sitting of the House; (c) to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient; and (d) to retain personnel as required to assist the Committee; and shall report to the House as soon as possible or following any adjournment or at the next following session, as the case may be, to deposit the

original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly."

Any questions about that?

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): Mr. Chair, I'm just wondering where I can get a copy of what you just read. Is that available on the Net somewhere?

K. Stewart (Chair): It should be in *Hansard*. It's the motion that was read in the House when we were appointed. Actually, we were appointed before that, but those are our orders.

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): I just wanted to have a copy of the authorizing language.

K. Stewart (Chair): It will be in *Hansard* under the last day of sitting. I believe that's when it was done.

C. James: It's also on the committee's website.

K. Stewart (Chair): And it's on the committee's website. Thank you.

Any other questions with regard to that?

In dealing with that, it's my understanding that we have a relatively free rein to question the Crown corporations that come before us, with the intention of ensuring that what they are doing is in the best interest of the government and the people we represent.

I'd like to note at this time that this is a *Hansard* committee, so everything is public the moment we state it in this meeting. If there are questions that you have with regard to privacy matters, you can question either the Clerk or myself ahead of time. That's another one of the reasons why we want to direct the questions to the Chair. It isn't the position of this committee to dictate government policy. I would put it as a fact-finding oversight committee that reports back to the Legislature. I trust that's clear, too, for everyone.

If there are no further questions on that, let's move along to the workload ahead of us. As mentioned earlier, there was some difficulty in awaiting the conclusions of the Crown corporations and, again, in getting some meetings through the last session, as our committee wasn't fully bound through the House by that point. We're now ready to go.

In anticipation of that, one of the organizations that was waiting in the wings through the session was the British Columbia Buildings Corporation. As convener, I touched base with that organization to see when they would be available for a meeting before this committee. They are, to my understanding, available on July 8, and we have tentatively booked that date as a meeting.

Now, that was all subject to the will of the committee and the appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair today. We've accomplished that today, so we now can move on. Granting that, is it the wish of the committee

to continue on with that program? I hear people assenting to that.

[1315]

D. Hayer: What time was that?

K. Stewart (Chair): I believe the meeting is scheduled from one to four on July 8.

Now, in the report there were some guidelines set out, and as earlier clarified by the Clerk and Josie, we will have that information made available to us — their websites, etc.

The other difficulty we're faced with in the short term, again in time, is that it's summertime. Organizations are not as easy to schedule in. Members aren't as consistently in the House, and we want to be considerate of the costs of bringing members over to Victoria or Vancouver or wherever the site is appropriate for the meeting with the Crowns. You'll notice that we do have the opportunity to have meetings in places other than Victoria if that meets our needs. I think we all have to be considerate of the costs of bringing a group together. Today we tried to find a day where there were other activities scheduled in Victoria, so we'll try and work around those.

Any comments with regards to scheduling so far? My understanding is that most of the members are here on July 9, so the 8th works out quite well for us that way, for those out of town. Again in consideration of the cost of getting everyone over here, we're going to consider that.

Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure

K. Stewart (Chair): The next order of business would be a subcommittee, as we had in the past, that basically looked after setting out the guidelines included in our Crown corporation report. I would like to thank Bill Bennett for his work. He did a very good job on that.

At this time, I'd just like a little clarification from the Clerk, if I may. Do we appoint the committee? Is it my prerogative to appoint, or do we need an election for this?

C. James: You need an election.

K. Stewart (Chair): Okay. There has been some interest by a member of the opposition to be on our subcommittee. That person isn't here today, but they've made that known to the Clerk, so we can take that into consideration when we select our subcommittee.

In the past our subcommittee included myself, Bill Bennett and Dave Hayer. With the other business, we were just getting started on that.

I. Chong: I just was curious. The necessity for a subcommittee this year was...? Are you setting up another mandate for the subcommittee?

K. Stewart (Chair): The purpose of the subcommittee last time, initially, was to do scheduling, and as a result of awaiting the core reviews and the availability of the Crown corporations at that time, to be premature, that component of it really never happened. I perceive that as being the more important role of that committee at this time.

Now, we have tentatively booked our first meeting, just out of necessity and time. I would like to see the committee involved with doing that booking and scheduling so that it's convenient for the members and also in consideration of the cost and the availability of some of the people that aren't here today.

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): What I would like would be some more detail on what exactly this subcommittee would be doing. Also, I'd like to know what the role of the.... I'm not sure whether it's the Clerk's office or the Clerk of the committee who works on scheduling and that sort of thing. I'd like to know what would be involved for the subcommittee, plus what's involved for the other office.

K. Stewart (Chair): Maybe I could just ask the Clerk to clarify what their role is in this, being a legislative committee. I'm sure they have a fairly clear mandate of what their role is, and we can just go through that. Also, maybe just express some of the needs that your agency has with regards to this committee to allow you to go on and schedule the meetings and do the work you need.

[1320]

C. James: Well, ordinarily, a subcommittee on agenda and procedure is quite useful, we've found in the past. The subcommittees have generally been charged with a variety of tasks but traditionally deal with the scheduling of meetings, the scheduling of witnesses and other sorts of administrative matters that might crop up from time to time and, to the extent possible, decide among themselves whether the issues they're deciding upon are better handled by a meeting of the full committee or summarily dealt with themselves.

As far as our office goes, we expedite all business of parliamentary committees. We're the keeper of all the records, and we find that it works very, very well for the work to flow through our office to provide that focal point of consistency and continuity throughout the entire inquiry process for any parliamentary committee.

Again, to the extent possible, that's the assistance we would provide. In the case of a Crown corporation appearing before the committee, the Chair would — once the committee or the subcommittee has agreed to the schedule and the witnesses — send out a letter, through our office, to the officials or official of the Crown corporation. We would be in contact with the Crown corporation, verifying the names of the officials who are appearing and any material they might be

wanting to present to the committee, going over the procedure with them, answering questions relating to the guidelines that have been developed around their presentation or their appearance before the committee and, following all of that, of course, preparing a report, either on that particular Crown corporation or one of a more global nature, depending upon the view of the committee at the time.

Administratively and procedurally, we've become quite involved in the work of all parliamentary committees, and to that extent, members should feel free to rely on us to perform those functions.

K. Stewart (Chair): Any questions of the Clerk with regards to that?

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): Sorry, I must be having a bad day. I still really don't have a good understanding of what exactly the subcommittee would do. Would we, for example, be making decisions as to what Crown corporations we meet with and then, once we make a decision, passing that on to the Clerk, who would send the letter out, and the Chair of the subcommittee would sign that letter? Is that how the scheduling would be done? Who would communicate with members of this committee to make sure that they know about meetings? Would those kinds of things continue to be the Clerk's office?

C. James: Any time the subcommittee would meet, whether it would be in a physical meeting such as this or a telephone conference call or however it would be arranged, we would minute that fact. Those minutes would be circulated to all members of the committee and then posted on the committee's website as well. There may not be any *Hansard*. Traditionally, subcommittee meetings don't have *Hansard* present, but that doesn't mean they're not public meetings; they're more planning sessions.

In the case of the subcommittee for this particular committee, it seems reasonable to assume that the subcommittee would meet and say: "Well, let's develop a workplan for the course of this year. The committee seems to be happy in delegating that task to us. We've asked all members of the committee to provide us with some input on the Crown corporations they feel would be most beneficial to call to appear before the committee, and when." Then the subcommittee would just put together a schedule. They may find, for instance, that they could hold two meetings in July and a couple of meetings in September, October, November and December, build that schedule and then along with that schedule incorporate the various Crown corporations they would like to see appear before the committee and in what sequence.

If I could also add, that's very helpful for us. It helps us plan our workload better throughout the course of the year, because there are a number of other committees, too, which are functioning right now. Also, it enables us to plan financially — the costs — in particular for this committee, in terms of juxtaposing the

meetings of other kinds of committees in this place, such as caucus committees and government caucus committee meetings and a variety of other meetings as well.

K. Stewart (Chair): If I may add, there's also an affiliation with the Crown agencies secretariat, which is a body within our government that deals with all the Crown corporations, and we would look to that group to see where the Crown corps were with their core reviews. It would be my belief that the mandate of the subcommittee would be to decide what Crown corp we were going to see next, subject to them finishing their core review, and what the priority for this group would be — so it would be agenda and priorities — and also to look at the reporting process. It's page 16 in my draft of the committee meetings.

[1325]

There's a time element that was broken up there, based on that nice little two-week format that we had initially intended to follow. That's what we'd be looking at for the Crown corporations. It would be up to the subcommittee to decide what Crown corporation we were going to see. It would allow us to take over the decision at the end of the meeting as to what information we needed for the next meeting. It would also allow us to distribute any of that material. In this case it may just be website information or one hard copy.

The other part of that is to discuss recommendations for the report. I would see the subcommittee having some responsibilities for drafting the report to present to the committee at the next time. It would be my understanding that the subcommittee is just that: it's a committee of this committee. Therefore, we can adjust that as meets our needs as a committee. I would like to think there would be some flexibility within this organization to adjust that committee to meet the needs of itself.

I hope that's not too roundabout. Basically, the subcommittee does what we need it to do to make this committee function as well as possible.

Any other questions on the subcommittee?

I. Chong: I'm just curious, then. Would we submit to the subcommittee a list of those Crown corporations or agencies that we would like particular attention paid to earlier rather than later? Or are you suggesting that the subcommittee meet and they would prioritize as to how we go through this? There are about 56 various Crown corps and agencies in total in this report. I would imagine we would need an updated list, because some of these no longer exist; they have been repealed.

K. Stewart (Chair): That's correct.

I. Chong: Maybe we're down to 48 or something like that. If we have one Crown corporation or agency each meeting, it would take us 48 meetings, so it would take us probably quite a few years to get through everything. I was wondering whether we would suggest to the subcommittee that those which obviously have a

more particular interest be dealt with sooner. The time frame, three and a half hours per meeting, doesn't seem too unreasonable for a Crown corporation, but whether we can fit two agencies in a particular meeting or not.... Not all agencies are as substantial as some of the Crown corporations.

I'm suggesting, even now, that we help the subcommittee in whatever way we can to do as much of this work as possible and have as much available when we complete our report.

K. Stewart (Chair): I appreciate those comments, because I think they point out that there are Crown corporations that we may have more interest in seeing earlier than others. Obviously, there are the big Crown corporations that have a lot more impact on what's going on in government than some. There are some very, very small agencies in there that may not have as high an interest with this group of being seen early, as compared to at all.

I believe that's the prerogative of this group and that the subcommittee would make recommendations back to this group but that it would be up to the full group to actually make the decisions. I trust I'm correct in that the subcommittee would be reporting back to this full committee and then we would approve or adjust the recommendations as needed. Does that pretty much satisfy you...?

I believe also, if I may just take off from one of your other comments, that you would like to see this committee give the subcommittee some direction on those. We may be able to have some time in the next meeting to go over the mandate of the subcommittee and also to discuss the priorities of the will of this committee with regards to who comes earlier in the game than later.

[1330]

I. Chong: I'm perhaps just being a little more optimistic, hoping that we could set some direction, if possible, for the subcommittee. I suggest that at the conclusion of the next meeting, they be able to give us a shortlist — having received input from us, if we wish to, via e-mail or whatever, to the subcommittee — that these are the Crown's particular interests and these are the agencies' particular interests, so that at the next committee meeting we can discuss that in a broader way. Otherwise, I see us going to the following meeting after the next meeting before we actually start our process.

K. Stewart (Chair): There are two ways we can go with this, following your lead there, Ida. One is that I don't believe we have any mandate that we have to strike the subcommittee today. We can give that some thought.

We do have an agency coming, subsequent to the will of the committee. I'll ask the question. Is it your will that we continue with BCBC on July 8?

Some Voices: Yes.

K. Stewart (Chair): Given that there's no one opposed to that, we do have a group coming before the committee. At that time, when we're finished the presentation of the Crown corporation and we have our questions and discussions about that Crown corporation, we can discuss recommendations for that report. Then we will have some time at the end of that to talk about our future presenters and a time line for that, and strike the committee. Does that seem to be a reasonable way to go? Is everyone comfortable with that?

Some Voices: Yes.

K. Stewart (Chair): Why don't we continue on that path, then? If you have any comments or suggestions or thoughts about the subcommittee, please get them to me before the 8th, and we will try to format those and bring them back to the whole committee at that time.

That gives you an opportunity to give some thought as to who you think would be appropriate to represent this group on that subcommittee.

Future Meetings

P. Bell: I'm wondering, if we're going to try having a second meeting in July, if we shouldn't select another Crown corp at this point to gear up. Otherwise, we'll probably lose that month.

Just glancing through the list of Crown corps, I believe that the B.C. Lottery Corporation has completed their core review and may be available. That's just a suggestion for the Chair to take into consideration.

K. Stewart (Chair): I looked at the schedule. I tentatively looked into July. I believe we can pretty much say goodbye to August, looking at everyone's schedules. Is there any will to meet in August? I didn't think so.

There appeared to be a date somewhere near the end of July, which was about three weeks after our first meeting, where it appeared that the majority of us would be in Victoria. That was July 23. That would leave us either the 22nd — though I believe there's a conflict with the GCC on the 22nd — or the 24th. Again, the consideration here is the convenience and cost of the meeting. One of the things we could give some thought to today is a meeting on the 24th.

We could tentatively look at the Crowns, taking some suggestions here today, and come back and do as I previously did with the B.C. Buildings Corporation, which is to say that there is a potential that we could meet at this time. It's tentative and it's subject to the will of the committee, which we've done today. We could do the same thing for the 8th. If we had some suggestions of a date, I would be open to take any suggestions about the Crowns that you would like to see. We could try to find the appropriate date

and the appropriate Crown that could meet at that time and get one more in before the summer has concluded for us.

D. Hayer: My understanding is that on July 24 we'll tentatively book the B.C. Lottery Corporation.

K. Stewart (Chair): Any other thought or discussion around those times and groups?

D. Jarvis: We're all in town here anyway. We'd have it at, say, nine or 9:30?

[1335]

K. Stewart (Chair): Sure. We'll confirm the time. Again, if you have any suggestions, get them to me between now and the 8th, and we'll confirm. What we'll tentatively be looking at is the B.C. Lottery Corporation. That's one.

Any other suggestions, in case they're unavailable at that time? Any suggestions from the committee as to who you would tentatively like us to see early in the game? I believe B.C. Lottery were ready, too.

I. Chong: That's what I guess I was originally trying to allude to — the fact that we could get suggestions. As Mr. Bell has indicated, he, like me, would like to get another meeting in, in July and move on some of these Crown corporations. I think it would probably be prudent for us to consider two or three corporations in the event that their CEOs are on holidays in July. It's not that they're not ready. Again, I would maybe submit that we send it via an e-mail process either through the Clerk of Committees or yourself until the subcommittee has an opportunity to meet, and then schedule the rest of them. That might be helpful.

Whether or not it's possible for the Clerk to e-mail us which of these Crown corporations and agencies do not exist anymore — I think I have a general idea, but I'm not sure if we all have that same thought — so that we can eliminate them from our review process....

I would be very keen on seeing us have a meeting on the 24th, preferably in the morning on that particular day rather than the afternoon, seeing that I think members may be anxious to return to their constituencies later in the afternoon.

Perhaps, as well, there's a member who's aware of those that have not yet gone through core services review, which aren't available for us to look at. It's unfortunate, because not all of us know what has gone through core review, so we cannot provide that information to the subcommittee. In addition, I'm just wondering whether agencies are going to be going through that core review process as well or whether we can start with agencies fairly quickly and maybe, as I say, deal with those more expeditiously than the Crown corporations.

K. Stewart (Chair): A few comments. I think we're on the right track, and I appreciate the input with

regard to getting us a second meeting. I thought that at the end of July we may be able to do this. It expedites our process a bit. One of the things I will, in conjunction with the Clerk, get for the committee is the update of the Crown corporations and the status with regard to their core reviews.

Also, there has been one suggestion made that we'll get on with the B.C. Lottery Corporation. I throw it open now. If there's any name you would like to present at this time for us to look at for that date of the 24th, feel free to do it now, or feel free anytime between now and the 8th to fire away with any names you think may be appropriate.

P. Bell: I would offer a couple of other options to consider. The Oil and Gas Commission may be an option, and the British Columbia Heritage Trust. Those may be two options to consider if we aren't able to get Lotteries.

K. Stewart (Chair): Are we comfortable with looking at those three organizations as potential, finding the one that would be available for the 24th?

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): Two things, Mr. Chair. First of all, I think that as a new committee and having just developed an approach to how we're going to examine these Crown corporations, we'll no doubt get more proficient at it as we go along. The Crown corporations we examine in the beginning.... I think we should make sure they are not those that we want to put some real intensity to. The Oil and Gas Commission is something I wouldn't mind putting a bit more intensity to and a bit more time into. Just from my own personal point of view, I'd rather wait past July to look at that one.

K. Stewart (Chair): We'll take all these suggestions, and we'll bring those back on the.... First off, I'm going to try for the Lottery Corporation first, if everyone is comfortable with that. We will confirm it. It'll be, again, left to confirm at the next meeting, but we'll try and tentatively set that one up. If they're not available, we'll try for the Heritage Trust.

[1340]

The other issue I wanted to point out.... Again, this is our committee. If we wished, we could have a Crown corporation come before us, and if we had a whole sheet of unanswered questions at the end of that, it's certainly our prerogative to bring them back again. We may want to do that as we get more proficient at this. As we go through the process, we may find more questions. We shouldn't lose track of what it is we're trying to do here, and that is to ensure that the public interest is being carried out through these Crown corporations.

I. Chong: I was just going to say there's a possible third option in the event that Lotteries or Heritage Trust are not available. I would like to submit an

agency I would like to hear from, and that's the B.C. Immigrant Investment Fund. Again, it's just as a third option if the others aren't available.

K. Stewart (Chair): Okay, we have a number here. We'll target the first suggestion first and see if we can nail those down. We will certainly endeavour to have a meeting on the 24th with the second Crown before us. If we're comfortable now with that, I'd like to move on to a couple of other little housecleaning items before we move on.

Other Business

K. Stewart (Chair): As the convener, I met with the Clerk, and there were a couple of issues with regard to appendix C. Did you want to just touch on those? That's the may's and shall's with regard to the committee. I don't know if we fully touched on those.

C. James: Just for the information of members, on pages 15 and 16 of the guide, midway down the page, the one under "Review process...." "Prior to the scheduled meeting, Crown corporations are asked to supply the committee, no later than two weeks before a scheduled meeting, the following documents: annual report and service plan...." I think Josie had a couple of concerns about clarification there, so I'll ask her, if she doesn't mind, to speak briefly to that.

J. Schofield: I think the question for the members really is, given that both the annual report and the service plan are already available and actually easily accessible now, whether this paragraph is somewhat redundant.

D. Hayer: Where is it, Josie?

J. Schofield: Sorry. It's where we have "prior to the scheduled meeting." Our office can ensure that you are all informed how to access both the report and the service plan, which are the documents you're required to look at — right? — under the terms of reference. I suppose the research staff just wanted clarification whether it was really still necessary to ask the corporation to supply this information.

C. James: Certainly, rather than getting bogged down in some of the detail here, it might be sufficient for the office to ensure that no later than two weeks before, we advise all the members where this material is. That might be just a better way of handling it.

P. Bell: Just as a point to note, there are some Crowns that do not have their service plans posted for one reason or another, so it may be necessary in some situations either to.... You know, an e-mail that outlines the access points from the Clerk of Committees to the members or an alternative method of access would, I think, suffice.

C. James: On page 16 of the guide, right under the heading, "Reporting," it says: "The Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations will report to the Legislative Assembly...." In that paragraph, there are a few "wills." I think maybe it's quite rigid, what the committee has proposed, and it might be better for the committee to entertain the words "may report" or "shall strive to report" rather than getting locked into the language that's currently in that paragraph. Otherwise.... You may also consider it to be quite irrelevant, but I just wanted to point that out to you.

K. Stewart (Chair): The point there is that what it does is.... We're locking ourselves into when we submit our report, and we may not want to wait until those other reports are submitted. It just gives us some freedom when we submit our report.

All those in favour of making those adjustments? Thank you. I appreciate that.

[1345]

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): Since I think we're going to be using this document as our guideline.... I mean, the document allows for regular revisions. Should we be doing that formally in a way that ensures all committee members get the most up-to-date guideline at each meeting?

C. James: Well, what we'll do from today's meeting is revise this guide based on the approval of the committee, apprising the committee of these two issues we've sought clarification on, revising it and making note of the revisions. Just for your information, too, when the Chair writes to each Crown corporation, this guide — the updated, latest version of the guide — will accompany the letter, as well, with a request that should there be any concerns or suggestions or comments about the process or their appearance before the committee, they contact the Chair, Deputy Chair or myself in relation to the procedure prior to their attendance.

K. Stewart (Chair): I'd just like to comment on the guidelines. The report is not a draft report now; it's a report. I was quite pleased — and again, thank you, Bill, and your committee, for the work — with the guidelines that were in there, and I think we can follow them. Certainly, as we go through the process, we will adjust them as needed, and that may be part of the work of the subcommittee. I'll give that to the committee's thought until the next meeting, to see whether they want to include that or not.

At this point in time, I believe....

D. Hayer: I've just got one correction, on page 16 where you have my name as "David." Actually, my full name is just Dave, not David. Since you were correcting another part, I thought I might as well mention it to you.

K. Stewart (Chair): Okay. Sorry, Dave. I appreciate that. So we now know it's....

Any other issues prior to the conclusion of this meeting?

B. Bennett (Deputy Chair): I'd like to suggest that table 1 and table 2 be e-mailed out to the members of the committee before the first meeting, just by way of reminding folks that that's the way we're going to approach these meetings. The Crown corporation will have received table 1 and table 2. We're not circumscribed by this at all, but it gives us a platform to start from.

K. Stewart (Chair): And I think it's a good one, so I will follow up on that suggestion with the Clerk.

Maybe I'll just take one moment to touch on what we will be doing. We will have, in this case, BCBC

come before us. They'll have an hour for their presentation. They'll be informed of that so they know what type of guidelines they have. There will be an hour for questions and discussions with the organization. Then they will leave, and we will have time after to discuss what we gleaned from their presentation and questions and start with our report process at that time.

Any further issues for today? Well, thank you very much for coming out today. I know it's a nice summery day, and we're all anxious to get back to our ridings. I appreciate that. We look forward to seeing you all on July 8, and at that time, we'll have the British Columbia Buildings Corporation with us.

The committee adjourned at 1:48 p.m.