



First Session, 40th Parliament

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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
(HANSARD)

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Victoria**  
**Monday, January 6, 2014**  
**Issue No. 4**

HON. LINDA REID, MLA, CHAIR  
AND SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Victoria  
Monday, January 6, 2014

*Chair:* \* Hon. Linda Reid (Speaker of the Legislative Assembly)

*Members:* \* Hon. Michael de Jong (Abbotsford West BC Liberal)  
\* Eric Foster (Vernon-Monashee BC Liberal)  
\* John Horgan (Juan de Fuca NDP)  
\* Shane Simpson (Vancouver-Hastings NDP)  
\* Michelle Stilwell (Parksville-Qualicum BC Liberal)

*\* denotes member present*

*Officials Present:* Craig James (Clerk of the House)  
Kate Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees)  
Gary Lenz (Sergeant-at-Arms)  
Hilary Woodward (Executive Financial Officer)

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MINUTES

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Monday, January 6, 2014  
1:30 p.m.  
Douglas Fir Committee Room  
Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C.

**Members Present:** Hon. Linda Reid, MLA (Speaker and Chair); Hon. Michael de Jong, MLA; Eric Foster, MLA; John Horgan, MLA; Shane Simpson, MLA; Michelle Stilwell, MLA

**Officials Present:** Craig James, Clerk of the House; Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees; Gary Lenz, Sergeant-at-Arms; Hilary Woodward, Executive Financial Officer

1. The Chair called the Committee to order at 1:31 p.m.
2. **Resolved**, that the Committee adopt the agenda as circulated. (Eric Foster, MLA)
3. The Committee discussed its process for the future review of *in-camera* minutes.
4. **Resolved**, that the Committee adopt the minutes of December 12, 2013. (Michelle Stilwell, MLA)
5. The Clerk of the House and the Executive Financial Officer provided the Committee with an overview of the revised Vote 1 Budget Estimates: FY 2014-17 and the recommended budget reduction option.
6. **Resolved**, that the Committee approve estimates of expenditure for the Legislative Assembly for Vote 1 as amended. (Eric Foster, MLA)
7. **Resolved**, that the Speaker transmit the estimates of expenditure for the Legislative Assembly for Vote 1 to the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Committee. (John Horgan, MLA)
8. The Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees provided the Committee with an update regarding the proposed iPad project.
9. **Resolved**, that, further to the Committee agreement on December 12, 2013 approving in principle the proposed iPad project, the Legislative Assembly proceed with the acquisition of iPads to ensure all Members are provided with equitable electronic access to House and parliamentary committee documents. (John Horgan, MLA)
10. The Speaker provided the Committee with an update on the proposal to install an accelerometer on the main dome of the Parliament Buildings to measure and monitor its movement.
11. The Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair at 2:12 p.m.

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Hon. Linda Reid, MLA  
Speaker and Chair

Craig James  
Clerk of the House



MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014

The committee met at 1:31 p.m.

[Madame Speaker in the chair.]

### Adoption of Agenda and Minutes

**Madame Speaker:** Hon. Members, thank you for joining. Item 1 on the agenda, approval of the agenda.

**E. Foster:** So moved.

Motion approved.

**Madame Speaker:** Review of the December 12 minutes and any business arising. I'll give a moment for examination.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Madame Speaker, the minutes looked fine to me, that I saw. I did not see minutes from the in-camera section.

**Madame Speaker:** Correct. Neither did I.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Kate, would you like to respond?

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees):** Good afternoon, Members. In-camera minutes have been prepared in the past for this committee, although the committee has not opted to review them. Particularly during a public proceeding they haven't been reviewed previously, nor have they been reviewed of previous in-camera sessions. If the committee has an interest in adopting that practice, we'd be pleased to facilitate that at any time for your future deliberations.

**Madame Speaker:** Okay, perhaps you can just bring them to the next finance audit meeting.

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk):** Absolutely. Thank you.

**Madame Speaker:** Does that satisfy, Mr. de Jong?

**Hon. M. de Jong:** I think, actually, we spent some time on a matter last time really with the view to ensuring that we were properly minuting our actions, so we probably should have a process whereby we satisfy ourselves that that documentation exists in a form that (a) is reflective of what took place and (b) we are comfortable with generally.

**Madame Speaker:** No, point very well taken.

Kate, if you can make sure that that comes to me forthwith, we can have a determination following.

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk):** Yes, Madame Speaker, I would be happy to do that. Thank you.

**Madame Speaker:** Item 2, review of the previous minutes as well. Any business arising?

Motion to adopt.

**M. Stilwell:** Stilwell.

Motion approved.

**Madame Speaker:** Item 3, Vote 1 budget estimates. That is in your tab in the binder, just following the goldenrod.

There are three considerations.

Craig, are you speaking to them?

### Vote 1 Budget 2014-2017

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Yes, I have a few notes that I am about to read.

On December 12, 2013, the Legislative Assembly Management Committee reviewed the proposed Vote 1 2014-15 budget estimates and agreed to consider in January 2014 whether a reduction should be made to the initial budget proposal. The proposed 2014-15 Legislative Assembly budget presented on December 12, 2013, provided for total operating expenses of \$69.9 million and total capital expenses of \$3.4 million.

[1335]

Although the budget as currently proposed will show a \$5.6 million, or 7.4 percent, year-over-year decrease in the estimates due to the fact that last year's estimates included election-related costs, the purpose of today's materials is to present to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee, for its consideration, a series of potential budget-reduction options that would show an even greater year-over-year decrease. The budget-reduction options focus on the legislative operations side of the organization and, in particular, on reducing what had been included as a contingency reserve for dealing with potential budget risks.

As organizational units have been held to very limited or no increases during the budget-building process, it was considered prudent to include a contingency reserve, given that several of the major budget drivers and/or risks are difficult to predict.

The first option reduces the year-over-year budget increase from 2.5 percent to 2 percent. This reduction was achieved by reducing the operating budget contingency reserve from \$747,000 to \$347,000, a reduction of 50 percent. Under this option, the 2014-15 operating budget would be \$69.6 million.

The second option reduces the year-over-year budget increase from 2.5 percent to 1.4 percent. This reduction was achieved by removing the entire operating budget

contingency reserve of \$747,000. Under this option, the 2014-15 operating budget would be \$69.2 million.

The third and final option reduces the year-over-year budget increase from 2.5 percent to 1 percent. This reduction was achieved by removing the entire operating budget contingency reserve of \$747,000 plus removing a further \$260,000 set aside for major asset maintenance projects on the legislative precinct. Under this option, the 2014-15 operating budget would be \$68.9 million.

The materials presented today outline the pros and cons associated with each option as well as the potential operating budget risks associated with the creation of this budget.

The recommended option for consideration by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee is option 1, to reduce the proposed year-over-year increase to 2 percent. This option demonstrates a 7.9 percent increase in year-over-year funding for Vote 1 in the estimates while still maintaining some budget flexibility should assumptions not turn out as planned.

I would like to point out to the members, as well, that hundreds of hours have gone into building the budget for Vote 1 for the next fiscal year and the years following. It starts off with the executive committee considering proposals for the budget for the forthcoming fiscal years. Directors of the Legislative Assembly are consulted and actively engaged in designing and preparing budgets for their various branches.

My audit working group examines, in some detail, the budget recommendations and makes recommendations to the finance and audit committee, which has met several times now, to consider the budget estimates for the Legislative Assembly. And the Legislative Assembly Management Committee itself has been considering this matter for the past two meetings at least.

**Madame Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Anyone wishing to respond, please just identify yourself.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Madame Speaker, I have a couple of questions.

**Madame Speaker:** Please proceed.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Craig, first of all, to cut to the chase, I'm inclined to agree with the recommendation, particularly dealing with the contingency amount in the way that's proposed. What is the process for granting access to contingencies presently?

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Well, there has to be an application, number one. The application would go either to the Speaker or myself, based on a solid business case as to whether the contingency funding would be sufficient to provide the financing for an unforeseen expense.

[1340]

An unforeseen expense could be anything that might affect the mechanical or other operating and maintenance costs of the Legislature. It could also impact upon parliamentary committees. Certainly, Gary, the Sergeant-at-Arms, has a keen eye on that in terms of his concerns surrounding some of the ongoing maintenance of the Parliament Buildings.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Would it follow that any such application would, as a matter of course, now be brought to the attention of either LAMC or the audit and finance committee?

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Well, the process, again, is something that my executive committee discussed this morning. It should be brought first to the executive committee, which consists of the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees, myself and the executive financial officer, regardless of whether it involves staffing or access to contingency funding or any other matter.

From there we discuss that and raise issues with the audit working group, which has as a consultant Arn van Iersel, a former comptroller general and also a former Acting Auditor General. From there, should the proposal succeed, we would then make recommendations to the finance and audit committee and provide the finance and audit committee with the briefing on the topic, who in turn would make a recommendation to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee — all of which is not intended to be bureaucratic but certainly to provide the Legislative Assembly and members with a very thoughtful and analytical process regarding the spending of public funds.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Okay, so the point being that the body that is responsible at the end of the year for answering the question of did you arrive within your budget — that is, LAMC itself — would be notified in a timely way if we get to the point where we're having to access contingencies.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Exactly, yes.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Okay, that's fine.

There were two other things that arose out of the listing of the operating budget risks, Craig.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Yes.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** I don't know if this is helpful to you, but the one refers to implications for public sector wage settlements: "Budgetary implications of the recently announced BCGEU collective agreement..."

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Yes.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** "...should LAMC agree to provide a similar increase to Legislative Assembly employees."

Unless my memory has failed me, the first year in that agreement calls for zero.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** I believe you're right, yes.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** So the point is that there is no risk there.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Yes, that's correct.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Then the second bullet below that, again with respect to risk, refers to the CPI adjustment. I haven't seen these numbers, but the last time I saw an inflation number, around the second quarter report, it was negative.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Yes.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** So that's the risk there.

The last question I had.... I don't know to what extent this is significant. Generally it isn't a significant thing in the budget. But I've directed the ministers that they're not to fly business class. I'm not even sure what the authority for doing that is.

To the extent that there is travel, I think there should be a mechanism by which.... There are always exceptions. If we've got someone representing us and they need to arrive after nine or ten hours on an airplane, I guess they have to get as much rest as they can in circumstances that they can. But it is one of those things where if we're trying to demonstrate some leadership on cost-cutting, it really should be, in my view, the absolute exception.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Correct.

**Madame Speaker:** Any other comments?

**S. Simpson:** With the contingency, what's been our experience over the last few years in terms of the use of contingency funds and having to dip into those?

[1345]

**H. Woodward:** We have used it in the past. Typically, we've used the capital contingency more than the operating, but there has been occasion. Typically, we've been able to identify savings, so we haven't had to use contingencies.

**Madame Speaker:** Can you give us an example, Hilary, of a project that it would have been used for?

**H. Woodward:** Plainly, I might turn to Gary, but it would primarily usually be in the facilities area. So it's an unanticipated issue with building maintenance that we would typically look to contingency funding for.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Again, following up on the Government House Leader's comment, I think it would be appropriate for at least the finance and audit committee to be aware of the application of the contingency fund to any request so that they understand fully what the request is and, if they have an objection, for us to build a better business case for it.

**H. Woodward:** I was just going to add that the expectation is that the individual departments look to their existing budgets that have been assigned before they access contingencies or seek that, and we first put them back to identify any savings they have.

**J. Horgan:** Craig, because we're all scattered around here and maybe not looking at the same pages at the same time, can you perhaps give me a breakdown of the percentage increases by unit within Vote 1?

**Hon. M. de Jong:** John, can I jump in?

**J. Horgan:** Sure.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** I don't know if you have this, but there's a really good page. I'm trying to find it. It's in the last document that I have, and it's called — this might help you as they go through this — "LAMC Decision Note." It's a seven-page document. On page 6 of that document it lists, sort of by department, what the '13-14 estimates were and what the '14-15 estimates are. Quite frankly, if we were having a normal estimates debate around this budget, this is where you would ask the questions about: "Why did this go up, and why did this go down?" Maybe that helps.

**J. Horgan:** Craig, that's exactly what I'd like you to go through, and explain to the committee the rationale for the increases.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Okay. Also, the final page, just before you get to the brown tab, has even more detail relating to budgets from 2011-12 through 2014-15. We're just leaping to the proper documents ourselves here.

**H. Woodward:** By section, the information was in the previous meeting on December 12 in the more detailed budget submission, but I'm happy to walk through the different departments. It might take a bit of time, but that's okay.

**Madame Speaker:** Hilary, you're referencing summary operating expenses by subvote, that page?

**H. Woodward:** I'm actually back to a December 12 document, which was the detailed budget submission that was dated December 4. I'm not sure if that was....

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Let's all look at the same document. Someone sent us a seven-page document that begins "LAMC Decision Note." It says: "Prepared for Legislative Assembly Management Committee consideration in January 2014."

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** That's right, under the blue tab.

[1350]

**Hon. M. de Jong:** And on page 6 of that document is what I believe is the latest version. Candidly, for anyone analyzing, they would ask the question that John has just asked in those nine areas: "Why did things go up? Why did things go down?"

**H. Woodward:** Okay, so I can start with members services.

**Madame Speaker:** Perfect.

**H. Woodward:** The budget for members services is increased by \$22,000, or 0.06 percent, over the revised 2013 budget. The increase is a net result of a number of adjustments made within this category of expense. The first was a \$563,000 reduction in members' compensation primarily due to a reduction in the benefits chargeback amount to match benefits paid, offset in part by potential adjustments to members' allowances. That's in reference to what had previously been discussed regarding capital city living allowance. There's also a \$430,000 increase in member constituency support, primarily due to an increase in constituency office lease costs.

There's a \$99,000 increase in the legislative committees budget to address an anticipated increase in legislative committee activities in the upcoming fiscal year, and then a \$56,000 increase in the interparliamentary relations budget to address an increase in the number of planned interparliamentary events.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Can I ask...? It's a bit confusing for us. The document we're looking at shows a figure of \$42.208 million for 2013-14, then shows that going down to \$36.068 million, so on the surface it shows a reduction. You have just described an increase.

**H. Woodward:** The \$42.2 million is on the estimates basis. I'm sorry. I'm speaking to the revised amount, which takes out the election-related costs. So in members

services it would remove the transitional assistance payments, which would be the bulk of that payment.

All the explanations are to do with the revised figure. The document that you're referring to is the actual estimates-over-estimates amount that includes election-related costs.

**J. Horgan:** Hilary, what's the driver for the increase in what I assume is foreign travel for conferences?

**H. Woodward:** That's a number of anticipated events in the year. Some of them, I believe, like the youth parliament, are planned.

**J. Horgan:** But would they not happen annually? I mean, in that case it does.

**Madame Speaker:** I don't think it's the travel. I think it's probably what's anticipated for the two events coming up which are probably within British Columbia — how the province celebrates the Queen's longest tenure on the throne and what we do in terms of preparation for the 150-years-of-the-country celebration.

I don't think there's anything extraordinary about travel in here.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** In that category, as well, are CPA — Commonwealth Parliamentary Association — proposed events as well as certain twinning arrangements that have been proposed.

**H. Woodward:** We'll move, then, to caucus support services. Again, we're comparing.... If we look at that document, the '13-14 budget for the estimates for caucus support services was \$7.195 million. The revised, after taking out related election costs, no change, \$7.195 million. Then the planned 2014-15 budget is \$7.097 million.

The explanation for the variance. The budget for caucus support services is decreased by \$98,000, or 1.4 percent. Although the caucus funding formula is unchanged, the reduction in the number of independent members resulted in budget savings of \$166,000, offset in part by a net combined increase of \$68,000 to the remaining caucus budgets.

[1355]

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Okay.

**H. Woodward:** I'll move on to the Office of the Speaker. In the '13-14 estimates the budget was \$380,000. The revised budget for '13-14 is \$391,000, and the planned budget is \$420,000. The budget for the Office of the Speaker is increased by \$29,000, or 7.4 percent, as a result of an increase in funding for professional services and travel expenses, \$55,000, offset in part by \$26,000 in salary and benefits savings through the elimination of 0.5 of an FTE position.

I'll now move on to the Clerk of the House. The budget for '13-14 was \$1.043 million. The revised budget for '13-14 is \$1.06 million, with a planned 2014-15 budget of \$1.13 million.

The explanation for the change. The budget for the Clerk of the House is increased by \$70,000, or 6.6 percent, as a result of a number of adjustments within the department. These include a \$175,000 increase in professional services to fund the outsourced internal audit function for the Legislative Assembly, and a \$5,000 increase to the travel budget. These increases have been offset by a \$110,000 decrease in salary and benefits expenses, primarily related to the elimination of the Clerk Consultant position.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** If I could just add to that as well, in the past, travel for the Clerk of the House was placed under interparliamentary relations, but my view is that my travel should actually come out of my office. In discussions with Hilary Woodward on this, we both agree that would be a more accurate representation of disclosing my travel.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Agreed.

**H. Woodward:** We'll move on to the Clerk of Committees.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** I don't need to hear about — others may, but I don't — the \$15,000 or \$12,000, or whatever it is.

**H. Woodward:** Okay, so we'll move to legislative operations.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Others chime in if you do, but I don't need to.

Interjections.

**H. Woodward:** Okay, legislative operations. Speaking back to the budget-reduction options, this is where those reductions focused on. The total legislative operations budget for '13-14 was \$13.446 million. The revised budget is \$12.129 million. The planned budget, prior to the budget-reduction options, was \$13.787 million.

The explanation for the change. The budget for legislative operations is increased by \$1.658 million, or 13.7 percent. The increase is primarily due to the following adjustments. A \$260,000 increase to salary and benefits, comprised of an additional 3.5 FTEs, accounted for \$197,000 of it; reinstatement of full funding for a financial analyst, \$20,000; and the 2014-15 impact of the remaining 0.7 percent BCGEU-equivalent wage increase accounted for \$43,000.

There was also additional funding of \$112,000 for pro-

fessional and information technology services across a number of departments for required project work — for example, financial systems upgrades and business continuity planning. There was also additional funding to address priority major asset maintenance projects on the precinct, \$504,000. Increased costs associated with producing legislative documents — that was \$13,000. Finally, a contingency reserve of \$747,000, or 1 percent of the total proposed budget, to address unforeseen expenses.

Also included in that budget is \$526,000 in recoveries from the legislative dining room, the gift shop and leasing arrangements on the precinct. The recoveries for the dining room have been reduced by \$22,000, based on current-year revenue trends.

The combination of all those explanations and amounts come up with the variance change.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** A question, Madame Speaker.

**Madame Speaker:** Yes, go ahead.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Hilary, you mentioned the BCGEU wage adjustment. I don't think it was a lot of money. I think you mentioned \$100,000, or something like that. But again for fiscal year 2014-15 there are none.

[1400]

**H. Woodward:** No. The previous budget had built in 3.3 percent of the 4 percent. This is the residual full-year implication of the 4 percent, the last portion that came into effect in December. It's just the annualized increase of that.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** Not the fiscal year, to the annual calendar year.

**H. Woodward:** Yes. It's the annualized impact of the full 4 percent, so there's no additional increase beyond that.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** How much is that?

**H. Woodward:** The 0.7 percent was \$43,000.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Okay.

**S. Simpson:** So we're clear, you're saying that's where the contingency would fall in the legislation.

**H. Woodward:** That's correct.

**S. Simpson:** So we're roughly here.... If we agree, if we approve the option 1 recommendation that's been put forward, then we're going to end up back at about \$13.4 million or so, in terms of that operation. That's where the \$350,000 is going to come out of?

**H. Woodward:** Under the proposed option 1, the \$747,000 contingency reserve would be reduced by half.

**A Voice:** I have the answer to your question, Shane.

**S. Simpson:** Right, so why not leg. operations...?

**H. Woodward:** And you can see that under option 1, under the planned budget. Under the scenario you'll see that the leg. ops goes down by that amount.

The next one is the Sergeant-at-Arms budget. The 2013 budget per the estimates was \$4.533 million. The revised, after taking into account election-related costs, is \$4.582 million. The planned budget submission for that is \$4.623 million. The explanation is that the budget for the Sergeant-at-Arms has increased by \$41,000, or 0.9 per cent. The increase is primarily due to salary reclassifications, \$69,000, offset in part by operational savings across a number of expense categories, for \$28,000.

I'll move on to Hansard.

**Hon. M. de Jong:** I do not need to hear about either Hansard or the library. We're going to talk about the library later.

**J. Horgan:** Separately. I'm good with that too, Hilary.

**H. Woodward:** Okay.

**Madame Speaker:** Any other comments? Any other questions?  
Eric? Michelle?

**M. Stilwell:** No, I'm good.

**Madame Speaker:** Would someone wish to move that recommendation?

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** The Vote 1 budget estimates for fiscal year 2014-15 as amended be adopted.

**E. Foster:** Foster.

**Madame Speaker:** Seconded? Simpson. Thank you.  
Motion approved.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** The next motion is that the Speaker transmit the Vote 1 budget estimates to the Minister of Finance.

**Madame Speaker:** Moved by?

**J. Horgan:** I'll move that. I think you heard it, though, didn't you, Mike?

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Yeah. Maybe I should move it.  
[Laughter.]

**Madame Speaker:** Secunder? Thank you.

Motion approved.

**Madame Speaker:** Thank you, all. Good discussion. Item 4 on the agenda, tablet project. Any updates?

### Tablet Project: Update

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk):** Good afternoon, Members. With respect to the committee's discussion at your previous meeting of December 12, you'll recall that the committee has received a proposal to provide necessary tablet hardware for members to access House and committee documents in the forthcoming year. In undertaking the work in that regard, the committee requested information to confirm the source of earlier expenditures on iPads and also further information on the number of devices that were estimated to be required.

[1405]

With respect to the actual numbers that we anticipate for this project, we would be looking, I think, in the neighbourhood of approximately 28 devices, if we were to proceed with providing iPads to all private members who are not currently in possession of iPads or tablet devices, to facilitate their access to these documents.

As was noted at your previous meeting, the proposal would be essentially a twofold project, in that we would like to provide not only supporting documentation for members in support of their parliamentary committee assignments on active parliamentary committees but also provide them with access electronically to House documents on a day-by-day basis.

Given that the House is sitting as early as next month, I'm anticipating that we could, with the approval of the committee, proceed with the acquisition of the necessary devices to provide those tablets to members who are serving currently on active committees and then, as the weeks unfold in the session, try and ensure that all members are provided with a method by which they can access House documents.

Much will turn on the timing of the rollout of that program and the assistance of our assembly systems department. But that was the information we had been working with, with the caucuses and the independent members over the last couple weeks, just to confirm the number of 28 devices, which is our best estimate at this point.

**Madame Speaker:** Any discussion?

**J. Horgan:** My concern is the information technology. All that's driving my interest in this is ensuring that I can have equal access to information with government members, particularly when it comes to legislation, orders of the day, motions that are being tabled, and so on. If there's existing technologies without an additional ex-

penditure, then we should try and work through that.

I know that the IT people do a fairly good job of keeping us up to date on the computer systems in our offices. If we can do it without an expenditure, I'm good with that. My concern all along has been equal access to all members, and if not all members are having these purchased for them from a central fund, we should correct that.

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk):** The primary driver of this project was, of course, to provide all members of parliamentary committees with a more uniform and secure method of accessing documentation. For those members, for example, who serve on the Public Accounts Committee or even this committee and who have been in receipt of extensive binders of supporting documentation in anticipation of upcoming meetings, we felt that we could do a better job in providing members with thorough information to support their roles on those active committees.

With respect to House documents, there are, of course, means by which members can already access information through the Legislative Assembly website.

However, if in the fullness of time we have an opportunity to provide members with a better way of accessing those documents in a way that you can get the most up-to-date version onto an iPad device — in a way that you could perhaps, while you're in preparing for a day's debate, review in advance a proposed motion that notice has been provided of or a bill that's pending on the order paper for consideration at a future date — and use that tool in a way that you could mark up potential text and make notes for yourself or even possibly amendments....

There are ways that we could probably facilitate and better support your roles in the House. But as I said, the driver for this project was really in recognition of the substantive amounts of information that we routinely provide to members of parliamentary committees, which we're hopeful will facilitate their participation and help them in those roles.

John, if the committee's view is that.... If the committee prefers to take a staged approach, we could certainly prioritize the active parliamentary committees as stage 1 of this project and then do an assessment as to where we are with the final numbers, in the fullness of time, and anticipate whether or not we want to expand that to support House documents. Certainly both options are available with this opportunity.

**J. Horgan:** Thank you, Kate. Is existing technology not adequate to...? Technology is already provided to all members. Is it not adequate to meet the needs that you've just outlined for committee members?

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk):** I think, in order to have, as you mention, uniform access to all members, the ideal of this project is that there would be a common de-

vice that all members have access to. Right now there is a blend of software and hardware in the hands of members, and it becomes more challenging for us to deliver a uniform and consistent product to all 85 MLAs.

**Madame Speaker:** In a timely way.

[1410]

**J. Horgan:** If this project meets that objective, I'm fully supportive.

**Madame Speaker:** Any other questions, comments?

**Hon. M. de Jong:** Only a comment, Madame Speaker. When we start to do this, make sure whoever's getting these devices also gets the briefing document on the protocols that must be followed in the event of loss or theft. Part of the idea here is that with respect to the committees, members will have access to documentation that is otherwise not public. So knowing what to do when the thing gets left on the plane or lifted somewhere — make sure members get that information as well.

**Madame Speaker:** Point extremely well taken.

**K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk):** Yes, thank you. We'll ensure that that is done.

**Madame Speaker:** Looking for a motion.

**J. Horgan:** I'll move the motion.

**Madame Speaker:** Excellent.  
Secunder? Stilwell.

Motion approved.

**Madame Speaker:** Any other business? Is there anything anyone would wish to raise?

#### Other Business

**J. Horgan:** Did we get the spectrometer-magnometer on top of the dome, or are we waiting for February?

**Madame Speaker:** We're going to try to get it done in January. We are now in receipt of a leasing cost, and I'm looking for a purchase cost as well, to see if it makes sense to have it up for a greater period of time. They're anticipating six months at roughly the cost of \$25,000, and it may be that we'll get one or two or three more quotes before we make a final decision.

**J. Horgan:** All righty, then.

**Madame Speaker:** Thank you for asking.

Any other questions, and any business arising?

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** If I could just remind members that the Speaker has called for a meeting of the finance and audit committee on February 25, followed by a Legislative Assembly Management Committee meeting on March 11. An agenda and further notice will be coming out in due course.

**Madame Speaker:** I will bid you all a fond farewell. Happy Ukrainian Christmas, and I will see you all shortly.

Thank you very much.

Hilary, a special thanks to you for all your preparation. I really appreciate it.

**H. Woodward:** Thank you, Madame Speaker.

**C. James (Clerk of the House):** A motion to adjourn.

Motion approved.

The committee adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

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