



Fifth Session, 40th Parliament

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Victoria

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Issue No. 13

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

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Victoria
Wednesday, October 19, 2016

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

Members: Hon. Michael de Jong, QC (Abbotsford West BC Liberal)
Mike Farnworth (Port Coquitlam NDP)
Eric Foster (Vernon-Monashee BC Liberal)
Shane Simpson (Vancouver-Hastings NDP)
Jackie Tegart (Fraser-Nicola BC Liberal)

Clerk: Craig James (Clerk of the House)

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MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 19, 2016
2:00 p.m.
Douglas Fir Committee Room
Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C.



Present: Hon. Linda Reid, MLA (Speaker and Chair); Mike Farnworth, MLA; Eric Foster, MLA; Shane Simpson, MLA; Jackie Tegart, MLA

Unavoidably Absent: Hon. Michael de Jong, QC, MLA

Legislative Assembly Officials Present: Craig James, Clerk of the House; Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees; Hilary Woodward, Executive Financial Officer

1. The Chair called the Committee to order at 2:06 p.m.
2. **Resolved**, that the Committee approve the agenda as circulated. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)
3. **Resolved**, that the Committee approve the minutes of November 23, 2015 and January 18, 2016 minutes. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)
4. **Resolved**, that the minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee for November 23, 2015, and March 8, 2016 be accepted; and that the minutes for February 23, 2016 be accepted as amended. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)
5. The Committee considered the October 19, 2016 report of the Finance and Audit Committee, which provided two recommendations for the consideration of the Committee.
6. The Committee considered the Legislative Assembly's 2015/16 third quarter results for the period April 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015.
7. **Resolved**, that the Committee approve the Legislative Assembly's 2015/16 third quarter financial results for the periods April 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015, as presented. (Jackie Tegart, MLA)
8. The Committee considered two reports: *Review of Telecommunications Goods and Services Contracts* and *Internal Controls over Financial Reporting Process Documentation*.
9. **Resolved**, that the Committee approve the report *Internal Controls over Financial Reporting Process Documentation* and the report *Review of Telecommunications Goods and Services Contracts*. (Mike Farnworth, MLA)
10. The Committee reviewed the following Finance and Audit Committee information items: a proposed draft Use of Volunteers Policy; a proposed draft Chamber Use Policy; a briefing note outlining changes to the Members Transitional Assistance policy; recent work by the Members' Information Technology Refresh Committee; a briefing note suggesting enhancements to financial controls in Constituency Offices; a proposal to establish a Heritage Restoration Fund; and a planned Bee Sustainability Project.
11. The Committee referred the enhanced controls for constituency offices to the Finance and Audit Committee for further consideration.

12. The Clerk of the House provided the Committee with an update on various Assembly projects including: the cenotaph and flagpole; the Royal Visit; the Armouries; Weir Jones seismic sensor equipment; the Sustainability and Environmental Report; the Accountability Report, 2015-16; the Assembly's budget estimates; and the work of a forensic auditor on the management of constituency office expenses.

13. The Committee requested clarification regarding allowable constituency office expenses during an election period.

14. The Clerk of the House advised Members of a recent active shooter training exercise in Washington, DC which he and the Sergeant-at-Arms attended.

15. The Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair at 2:45 p.m.

Hon. Linda Reid, MLA
Speaker and Chair

Craig James
Clerk of the House

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2016

The committee met at 2:06 p.m.

[Madame Speaker in the chair.]

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Madame Speaker: Hon. Members, I'm happy to call the meeting to order of October 19, 2016, two to 3:30. Item 1, approval of the agenda.

J. Tegart: So moved.

Madame Speaker: Moved by Tegart. Seconded by Simpson.

Motion approved.

Madame Speaker: Review of the previous minutes — November 23, 2015, and January 18, 2016. I think it's just one I want to make a comment on.

Any business arising?

If I might draw members' attention to February 23, item 10: "The Clerk also noted an opportunity to provide members with active shooter training." I think we should say "active shooter awareness training." That's the only piece of clarification I have found.

Motion to approve the minutes as circulated?

J. Tegart: So moved.

Madame Speaker: Moved by Tegart. Seconded by Mr. Simpson.

Motion approved.

Finance and Audit Committee Report

Madame Speaker: That brings us to item 3, finance and audit committee, previous minutes and report to LAMC.

C. James (Clerk of the House): In the hands of members is a copy of the report from finance and audit which lays out a number of matters that the finance and audit committee has been considering over the past while. It really amounts to a progress report on some of the issues and a request by finance and audit for the Clerk of the House, the executive financial officer, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees to undertake a further review on those various topics.

Madame Speaker: Hilary, do you want to walk us through some of those?

H. Woodward: Yes, sure. The finance and audit committee report, as Mr. Clerk has outlined, includes key items reviewed at the February 23, March 8 and September 27, 2016, meetings of the finance and audit committee. The report includes two decision items brought forward for Legislative Assembly Management Committee consideration as well as a number of information items.

The first decision item for consideration and approval is the Legislative Assembly's third quarter financial report for the period April 1 to December 31, 2015. This report was reviewed and recommended for approval by the finance and audit committee in February 2016.

[1410]

I'd be pleased to answer any questions on that report.

Madame Speaker: Any questions arising? A motion to support?

J. Tegart: So moved.

Madame Speaker: Moved by Tegart and seconded by Farnworth.

Motion approved.

H. Woodward: The second decision item for consideration and approval is the acceptance of the two final internal audit reports prepared by Ernst and Young, the assembly's internal auditor.

The first report — they're both in your packages — assessed the assembly's internal controls over financial reporting. It also included identification of control gaps or weaknesses and recommendations for remediation. The report itself includes the auditor's findings and recommendations and management's response to those recommendations.

The assembly has since implemented a number of those recommendations. In particular, I draw your attention to.... We have finalized a contract management and procurement policy that was implemented for all branches on July 1, 2016. We've also made a number of enhancements to our existing capital asset management policies.

Madame Speaker: Any questions for Hilary?

H. Woodward: I'll move to the second audit report. It's also in your packages. That assessed the governance and oversight framework in place with respect to telecommunications contracts and whether the services provided met the needs and represented value for money for the assembly. Again, this report was prepared by Ernst and Young, our internal auditor. Similar to the first report, it included auditor's findings, recommendations and the management's response to those recommendations.

The assembly is in the process of implementing a number of those recommendations. In particular, we are working on updating the existing policies relating to telecommunication services. We're also initiating regular reviews with our secondary carriers, similar to the processes we currently have in place with our primary carrier.

Again, those were the recommendations coming out of that report. I'm happy to answer any questions on those as well.

Madame Speaker: Any questions for Hilary?

S. Simpson: When I go through this report, then, based on these recommendations — having not read the report entirely — when it talks about value for money for arrangements and the ability to leverage economies of scale, this is something that we're looking at now, as to how to enhance, maybe, some of those contractual agreements?

H. Woodward: Yes, that is correct. The report itself actually identified that we were getting good value for money out of our current contracts. Since the report was released, we did renew with our primary carrier, which is Telus. We did negotiate some improvements on that contract, increasing our value for money. Some of the recommendations that were in that report are reflected in that contract renewal.

C. James (Clerk of the House): Speaking to the telephone contract renewal, in terms of renegotiating the contract, we have managed to save an additional \$39,000 per year over the three-year life — so three times \$40,000, or \$120,000, which is fairly significant — while improving the quality and the amount of data and usage for members themselves.

J. Tegart: Just in regards to members and the rapid change in technology, what will this mean to members? Any changes in the manner in which they use the technology? In regards to how quickly technology changes, is there the ability for us to respond to that?

C. James (Clerk of the House): I believe there is. We are able to secure a certain number of phones should they be lost, stolen or otherwise be broken over the life of that three-year contract. I think you will find it seamless. You won't notice a difference. We will notice the difference, because it's going to cost less money.

Madame Speaker: A question that was raised last time.... Somebody asked about it. I think it was Mike who asked about a two-year contract, as opposed to three. Were we successful?

C. James (Clerk of the House): No, we went with the three-year contract. I believe the government still is with

a three-year contract. But we were able, through our negotiating ability, to reduce the overall cost by \$39,000 per year. That being said, the ability of members to secure another phone after two years is okay. But not everybody.... We are restricting that ability within the assembly branches. Because they'll be on the same plan, essentially, they won't be able to return their phones within that three-year period. [1415]

H. Woodward: Just further, to add to that, the corporate contracts that Telus offers us — they don't offer a two-year plan, so we are only able to get three years. As Mr. Clerk is noting, though, we do get a number of renewals of phones throughout the year, so there is that opportunity for members. They could still refresh on a two-year basis. It's not necessarily a three-year contract; there are just renewals. But there are not enough for everybody to renew over that cycle.

E. Foster: On these contracts, what kind of a maintenance replacement...? I know Craig just spoke to that. But phones that don't work — is it just like when you do it privately, when you have a three-year contract and a one-year warranty? Is it the same type of thing?

H. Woodward: Yes. If your phone is not working or there's a problem with it, you just need to get in contact with information technology.

E. Foster: That's for the full length of the contract, not just a portion of it?

H. Woodward: Correct.

C. James (Clerk of the House): We do have a note on the topic as well, if you're interested in a spreadsheet comparing the old plan to the new plan and what would exist on a two-year contract. The two-year contract works out to actually be much more expensive for us.

S. Simpson: This is somewhat related but not exactly there. Maybe it's a question that will come back and we'll hear some more about later.

Having just read the news reports about the Auditor General's most recent report around mobile technology and concern around some of that.... That was expressed, I believe, in an Auditor General's report that was recently released.

C. James (Clerk of the House): Yesterday.

S. Simpson: That's pretty recent. Whether any of those implications are pertinent to the Legislature...?

C. James (Clerk of the House): They may very well be. We will be re-examining those protocols in terms of the

security of phones for members and staff. We also will be discussing with the Auditor General the implications to the Legislative Assembly and, also, to the government entity that's responsible for providing phones generally to the government and the public service.

Madame Speaker: The motion reads: "That the committee approve the report *Internal Controls over Financial Reporting Process Documentation* and the report *Review of Telecommunications Goods and Services Contracts*."

Looking for a mover — Michael Farnworth. Seconded, Jackie Tegart.

Motion approved.

Finance and Audit Committee Update

Madame Speaker: It brings us, if you turn the page, to the information items. I think Craig will walk us through that.

C. James (Clerk of the House): Sure. You have information items on page 2. There are a number of them.

One is the use-of-volunteers policy. There was a request at one point for the finance and audit committee to consider the ability of members to have volunteers in their offices within the Parliament Buildings. The finance and audit committee considered that very carefully and decided against recommending to this committee the implementation of a volunteer policy at this time.

M. Farnworth: Yeah, I just want to follow up on that. The current policy is no volunteers, correct?

C. James (Clerk of the House): That's correct.

M. Farnworth: Is that policed, I guess, or enforced?

C. James (Clerk of the House): To the extent that we can without invading members' privacy.

Madame Speaker: If you have situations in mind, please bring them to me. I am happy to do the follow-up.

M. Farnworth: Okay.

A quick clarification. This covers interns too, right? Like, there is an intern program where interns are defined as being... I, for example, could not say: "Oh, they're not volunteers; they're interns in my office."

Madame Speaker: Correct, because our interns are paid assembly employees.

M. Farnworth: That's right.

C. James (Clerk of the House): It's quite different.

M. Farnworth: Yeah, exactly. I just wanted to make sure that that's... Yeah, okay.

Madame Speaker: Yes, I understand.

S. Simpson: Just to follow up on this a little bit, when the universities — schools of social work and folks like that... Periodically I get folks wanting to come and do practicums or do internships and that in my office. They are students in programs through the universities where they do six-week internships or whatever. So is that affected by this?

C. James (Clerk of the House): If the program that you're talking about is for a day or two or a week, perhaps that wouldn't apply. The original request for the use of volunteers in the Parliament Buildings was for a much more extended period — like the life of the session, or for perhaps a year.

[1420]

S. Simpson: I'm talking about periods... Often they'll come in maybe during a semester. They will intern in a couple of different locations over a semester — a social work student. Then they'd be seeking to spend a portion of that working in an MLA's office, a portion with a non-profit or whatever or working elsewhere.

Madame Speaker: The ones I've been apprised of, to date, have mostly been in constituency office locations, which is why I think this doesn't infringe upon that activity.

M. Farnworth: Or offices, as opposed to offices in these buildings.

Madame Speaker: Correct.

C. James (Clerk of the House): That's correct, yeah. Of course, our big concern was liability and confidentiality, access to the Parliament Buildings, use of computers and a variety of other different issues that arose during our review of this.

No. 2, chamber use policy. Perhaps I could ask Kate to wander us through that particular topic.

K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees): Good afternoon, Members. The finance and audit committee has undertaken an initial consideration of a draft policy with respect to use of the chamber and parliamentary committee rooms by external groups. It's a relatively new area of activity for the Legislative Assembly, but to date we did not have any policies prepared to address the nature of reviewing and vetting of requests that might arise, any cost-recovery mechanisms and then reporting out in terms of any overhead expenditures that would be incurred by assembly departments. So we're working, with the finance and audit committee, through

a draft policy process there to answer any questions that they might have.

In essence, the external groups that have traditionally used facilities here include youth parliaments and other groups that are somewhat associated with the interests and objectives of a parliamentary institution. So we have a number of youth and model parliaments, which we would expect to continue; training sessions for public servants; the teachers institute today. There are a number of extended professional development opportunities that we support.

But fielding requests from external groups for conference use here requires that we should have a closer look at policy mechanisms just to ensure that the interests of the groups are aligned, in essence, with the public nature of this building. A private function, for example, should not have a ticket fee associated with it in order to use the site without any cost-recovery mechanisms — and then, certainly, that any proposed use does not conflict in any way with the needs of parliamentary committees or use of the chamber generally.

We're looking forward to having a further conversation with the finance and audit committee, but in essence, that's the intent of the draft policy to date.

E. Foster: As I'm not officially on finance and audit, I'd like to sort of stick my two cents in on this. I would have a great concern about renting the facility out on several levels — the security and all those things — but also, we're surrounded by taxpayers who have made huge investments, and if we start allowing people out of the private side to come in and use the facility, we're going to be cutting into their business as well. That would be part of it, other than all the things that Kate mentioned.

K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk): There seems to be significant interest, and I know that the intention is to be as open as we can. However, as best we can, we'd like to manage the substantive costs that are incurred as well, whether it's maintenance before or after the event, security, overtime — any additional weekend coverage by staff, for example.

We're certainly going to try and develop a policy that provides some flexibility for the Office of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk to approve certain events that have an alignment and support, generally, I think, a greater understanding, for example, of the parliamentary process, parliamentary democracy. I'm speaking in these instances, in particular, of the youth parliaments, parliamentary workshops for public servants. We host those on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

When we have a request from an external group to have a conference or an annual meeting on site here, I think those are the instances where we'd like some guidance from members, just to ensure that we understand the principles that would be applied to those kinds of re-

quests and also give the Speaker and Clerk some flexibility to pursue cost recovery, if there a substantive impact with respect to departmental budgets.

Madame Speaker: The only other example I can offer would be statutory officers. I think it's critical that there's a connection to this place if you wish to use the library, reception hall, etc. I have mandated, for my office, that those are the folks we give access to the buildings. We have not considered private groups inside the building.
[1425]

C. James (Clerk of the House): Okay. Transitional assistance policy. The transitional assistance policy is remaining the same, with the exception of reporting. For those members who have declared that they're not running or have lost their seat in an election and are eligible for transitional assistance, they will be required to report to us, on a regular basis, any other employment income that they would receive in an effort to address a concern by the Auditor General that there should be, essentially, no double-dipping and that the onus remain with the member to report any extra earnings over the period of 15 months — should they be eligible, should they be receiving transitional assistance during that period of time.

That is an area of the transition guide, which has been previously circulated. The finance and audit committee will, I hope, consider this matter further when it next meets, and the Legislative Assembly Management Committee approve it when it meets, so that we can formally get this document out and into the hands of members as quickly as possible.

Just for your information, as well, you probably know that we have arranged for a pension and transitional allowance and retraining allowance seminar, to be held in Vancouver on November 15. The purpose of that is, so far, exclusively for those members who have declared that they are not seeking re-election — for them to receive a briefing from financial services, myself and the Deputy Clerk, and also from the Pension Corporation as to the status of their pension and the review of what needs to be done by way of their constituency offices, at dissolution, for the next parliament. We have a number of members who have declared that they are not seeking re-election.

What I'm proposing, as well, is that in January, perhaps late January, another seminar will be made available for all other members, regardless of whether they have declared that they are not seeking re-election or are seeking re-election — just for them to be in a position to know, at dissolution, where they stand with their pension, the retraining allowance and the transitional assistance, and also to review matters relating to their constituency offices, should they be unsuccessful at the next election.

Madame Speaker: Any questions for Craig?

C. James (Clerk of the House): Number 4, members' information technology refresh committee. Members will be aware that, some time ago, I struck a members' IT refresh committee, so called, to enable members and caucus staff to participate in what kind of technology works best for them in the next parliament. We did this in the last parliament. I think it worked quite well.

The Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees has spearheaded that particular endeavour, and members have participated in it. The report is in draft form, I understand. There is some more work to be done. But in any event, I might let Kate have a few words about that as well.

K. Ryan-Lloyd (Deputy Clerk): Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

The report that Craig has described will likely be before the finance and audit committee at their next meeting in early November. As Craig explained, it was based on a survey, coordinated through each caucus, to receive feedback on the current technology tools that are provided to members, assess how effective and productive they currently are and recommend a new suite of technology to support your work in the 41st parliament.

The report includes a range of recommendations. I think there are seven in total. It also includes recommendations for not only your constituency office and workstations there but laptops and mobile devices.

I think, should the Auditor General have a look at the report, she might be pleased to see that a detailed inventory is included for all assembly devices at the current time, which of course is a first step in terms of appropriately managing security of devices. Step 1 is to know what we have and who owns and is responsible for those devices.

We're just fine-tuning some details of the report, but I look forward to providing the finance and audit committee with a detailed briefing on that in the weeks ahead.

Madame Speaker: Any questions for Kate?
Item 5.

[1430]

C. James (Clerk of the House): Enhanced controls for constituency offices. The finance and audit committee did consider the issue of enhanced controls for constituency offices and asked the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and the executive financial officer to examine, in more detail, different mechanisms for enhancing constituency office management.

We do have a briefing note. Actually, we have two briefing notes, one on the subject, offering some options, and also another document that enables members to understand the impact of the proposed recommendations.

Madame Speaker: That will come to discussion for November 6, the next finance and audit.

C. James (Clerk of the House): November 2.

Madame Speaker: Item 6, heritage restoration.

C. James (Clerk of the House): Would you mind speaking to the heritage restoration?

Madame Speaker: I'm happy to. I promised I would come back.... I'm meeting with the Victoria Foundation in the next week or so. Definitely, we can bring it back for discussion November 2, whether or not that's the most appropriate platform for us to, frankly, ensure that we have restoration dollars in place for the care and nurturing of this legislative precinct. So that, too, will come back November 2.

The bee sustainability project, while I have the floor. We, at the last meeting, discussed the timing around that project. What we can do this fall is, in fact, create a pollinator garden, which is something that's vital to the success of the project, should it go forward. But the only time to move bees, apparently, at this end of the Island, is in May. So the actual colony, should we proceed.... The decision will be taken after the next election.

But we will do the pollination garden at this time because we have some lovely donors who are prepared to assist us in that regard. It will be adjacent to the carriage house at the back of the buildings, the south lawn of the buildings —and, frankly, assisting all the bees in the neighbourhood. We will see what the future holds.

Craig, thank you.

Any questions? Okay, I think that brings us to....

Interjection.

Madame Speaker: Any other items? Any other business?

Other Business

C. James (Clerk of the House): Just to update the members of this committee on work that we are undergoing and also some more obvious examples of what has been accomplished.

The cenotaph flagpole out front has been completed, as members know. The flagpole was due to be completed by B.C. Day and the cenotaph by Remembrance Day. But when we learned of the royal visit, we were asked to try to accelerate one and defer another so that they were both essentially completed about the same time.

The overall budget was \$90,000. Am I correct?

Madame Speaker: For both?

C. James (Clerk of the House): For both. Or was it just for the cenotaph?

H. Woodward: No, that's the cenotaph. The flagpole....

C. James (Clerk of the House): So the budget for the flagpole was \$65,000. We came in slightly over on the flagpole, but we are going to save probably \$5,000 a year because it has a hydraulic lift instead of bringing in a crane to paint it and service it and do other things to it.

On the cenotaph, we had budgeted \$90,000. The original plan contemplated a very grand area around the cenotaph, but very respectful. We scaled that back and did most of the work in-house, ourselves, and managed to save a number of dollars by doing that as well. We've had great reports from people who have seen the flagpole and also the cenotaph, all of which was done for the royal visit.

In terms of the royal visit, initial costs for the royal visit on the Saturday, when it was held out front, were approaching \$170,000. I asked Kate to be in charge of the budget for that, and she did so very well. We went from that amount to our own costs of just over \$18,000 for that very special event.

The total cost for that event outside was around \$90,000. So the difference between what we paid is being paid between the provincial and federal governments.

S. Simpson: I would appreciate having the Clerk's office, possibly, through your office, have a discussion with Elections B.C. and come up with a very specific and clear list of what is allowable in terms of expenditures by constituency offices. I'll give you an example of the challenge.
[1435]

For example, we've had some advice from some of the constituency assistants that where members might traditionally buy an advertisement in a directory in their constituency, there is a case to be made that if that directory is available during the election period, that's not an allowable expense.

If you bought an advertisement in your community centre, or your community association puts out a calendar with some advertisement around it and you were to purchase a piece in that, that would not be an allowable expense because that calendar would be in use during the election period.

I would like some clarity, particularly from Elections B.C., so that members know what they can spend money on and what they cannot spend money on, when they have to stop spending money in terms of their constituency offices — something that's just as clear as possible, so everybody knows what the rules are, presumably by the end of the year.

C. James (Clerk of the House): I have already asked that question, and I've received a response from Elections B.C. on allowable expenses, and the pre-election portion as well. I'll circulate that notice. I'll talk to Elections B.C. to make sure that it's up to date and circulate that to all members.

S. Simpson: That would be great. In some of these questions, those kinds of questions.... I buy a piece in the

program that the community centre association puts out about their fall and spring program. I put a piece in there, and I probably break the rules. If, in fact, they're that harsh, then I won't be buying that piece in their program.

Madame Speaker: If it's the wish of members, we can certainly have Keith Archer come to a finance and audit meeting and have a discussion. Ponder that.

E. Foster: Just to add to that, if you could please add my concern. I buy a section of the boards in the arena that are there year-round. Are they going to have to take that section of the boards down during the election campaign?

M. Farnworth: This space to be filled after by.... To be determined.

Madame Speaker: Shane, excellent questions.

C. James (Clerk of the House): Just a few more topics to quickly go over.

We have had a review done, and I've got copies for all members, of the armouries — of course, next door. It's not in good shape. It has been classified as a health and safety risk presently, with the shale shingles starting to fall off the roof — which, for those that might park around there, might pose some harm. There are a number of issues that are facing it.

There is a one-page summary of the recommendations in this report, but I'll be happy to give everybody a copy of this report. I think it's worthwhile going through. This will be in our budget estimates submission in November-December, a priority for us to deal with in one way or another. So hopefully we can do it at that time.

As well, we have equipment from a company in Vancouver called Weir-Jones. Weir-Jones is a company that makes equipment to alert those who have it of an impending earthquake. They supply most of the U.S. nuclear electricity-generating stations. This equipment, in our discussions with them.... They have donated the equipment to us. We have installed it. The purpose of it is to alert all of us to an earthquake that might affect the Parliament Buildings.

It has detected earthquakes as far away as Kelowna and south of Seattle. They can fine-tune this equipment to get rid of bus traffic, construction noise from behind us, and virtually anything else except the S waves and P waves, which are the more destructive waves of earthquakes.

The idea behind this equipment, which is now installed, is initially for the executive to have an app on our smartphones to see how it works so that we can become familiar with it and in time — in short order, I hope — be able to supply that app to all members and all staff who work in the parliamentary precinct. In the event of an earthquake, they are alerted, and it will give you X number of seconds to X number of minutes to do what you need to do, either run or hide.

Madame Speaker: Any other speakers to that?

C. James (Clerk of the House): We've talked about the transition guide, the internal audit. I would like to let members know that we are working on the first-ever sustainability and environmental report, produced annually for the Legislative Assembly.

[1440]

It will include everything from our carbon footprint to methods of travel to and from the parliamentary precinct and, as well, the other issues that we hope will be enlightening to staff and members and the public, generally, as to what we're trying to do by way of environmental controls.

Kate has been feverishly working on the accountability report. It's coming due soon.

The audit working group consists of the executive, along with Arn van Iersel, and meets every Friday. We have been working on a lot of issues. We're working right now on our budget estimates.

We also have a number of other areas that we are working on. Some I'm not allowed to speak to at great length, but I will let this committee know that I have retained a forensic auditor who helped us with a particular incident and has written two reports, one a very summary report and one a more in-depth report.

I want to draw the attention of the members to the fact that under the management of constituency offices, I have asked this forensic auditor to prepare for me a report on how better controls or different controls might be placed within constituency offices. That report would be circulated among members of this committee.

Essentially, that's it for now. I'll look forward to any questions you might have on any of these matters.

E. Foster: Craig, I've been on this committee now for several years, five or 4½, and we've been discussing the armouries since I got here. We were told when we first came that it was in bad shape and that pretty soon the slate was going to start falling off the roof. We're continuing to talk about it.

M. Farnworth: We were discussing it in '91 too.

Madame Speaker: Yes, we were.

E. Foster: There's a really simple rule that you live by in this business. If you have knowledge, you have liability. If one of those pieces of slate comes off the roof and hits anybody — a staff person, a tourist, somebody planning to do a B and E — we're in trouble.

I think that we need to... We've had several reports, and in each report, the building is in worse shape than it was the last time. We need to deal with this. At least, if we're moving forward with it, we've taken action.

I assume, in the report, it gives us options on what we can do — from turning it into a parking lot, to restoring

it to its original shape, or anything in-between. I don't know. I haven't seen the report, but I assume those would be the options.

We need to move on this, folks. We have the knowledge. We now have the liability. I don't want to be sitting around thinking we should have done something before a 20-pound piece of slate falls on somebody's head. We need to move on this.

C. James (Clerk of the House): In all fairness, I think we are. This particular building and what is commonly referred to as the bunker are in our ten-year capital plan. In our budget estimates submission this year, we're going to accelerate some decisions on the armouries. It is in a state that needs to be repaired because people are working in it. The same with the bunker.

We maintain the place, we repair it, or we replace it. Those are the three alternatives, and they're not cheap, especially the replacing. There is some heritage value to the armouries, as we all understand. This has been an ongoing discussion for many, many years — about this place, the armouries and the bunker itself.

We're very hopeful that, with our budget submission in the fall, the committee will agree to money to begin fixing the place. In the meantime, Facilities Services is looking for a company to provide some kind of netting around the outside. It's not like something's going to happen right now, but we know that there is a problem, and we need to take appropriate action. So that's what we will be doing.

Madame Speaker: Any other questions for Craig? Any other items?

Cabinet is apparently still in session, not quite finished. I'm keeping you apprised.

Anything else?

C. James (Clerk of the House): I might just let members know, as well, that the Sergeant-at-Arms and I and a couple of other people from Canada were invited to an active shooter exercise in Washington, D.C. a couple of weeks ago.

I reluctantly went. I didn't know exactly what it might involve. As the only non-law enforcement person there — and there were 11 or 12 different layers of law enforcement — it was an incredible learning experience. Although I'm sure the Sergeant-at-Arms and others may have had experience in this, I, for one, am much more familiar now in terms of the state of affairs should something like that happen in British Columbia.

Madame Speaker: Thank you, sir.

A reminder of finance and audit, November 2, November 17; and LAMC, December 1.

A motion to adjourn?

The committee adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

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