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**Assemblée législative  
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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 4 September 2002**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Mercredi 4 septembre 2002**

**Standing committee on  
government agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des  
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

Chair: James J. Bradley  
Clerk: Tom Prins

Président : James J. Bradley  
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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES  
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Wednesday 4 September 2002

Mercredi 4 septembre 2002

*The committee met at 1033 in room 151.*

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**The Chair (Mr James J. Bradley):** I think we're all present this morning so I'll start the proceedings for the purpose of Hansard. I should begin by mentioning that Yvonne Weir, who was an intended appointee, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, to be appointed to the Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound and Timiskaming District Health Council, has withdrawn.

The first item we have to deal with is the report of the subcommittee on business dated Thursday, July 25, 2002.

**Mr Bob Wood (London West):** I move its adoption.

**The Chair:** Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The second item of business is the report of the subcommittee on business dated Thursday, August 15, 2002.

**Mr Wood:** I move its adoption.

**The Chair:** Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

## INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

## GAIL O'BRIEN

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Gail O'Brien, intended appointee as member, board of trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology.

**The Chair:** Our first intended appointee is Gail O'Brien, intended appointee as member, board of trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology.

Ms O'Brien, you may come forward, please. As you are aware, you have an opportunity to make an initial statement for up to 10 minutes, the time of which is deducted, unfortunately, from the government side. It breaks my heart to say that.

We welcome you to the committee. You are certainly welcome to make your statement should you see fit, and then you'll be questioned by representatives of each of the political parties on the committee.

**Ms Gail O'Brien:** Good morning, everyone. Thank you for inviting me to be here this morning and to have the opportunity to appear before this committee.

As requested, I will make an opening statement. I will speak briefly about my background and explain why I

would be proud and excited to serve on this board and why I believe I'm qualified to do so.

First, my background: I was born and brought up in Montreal and received a bachelor of arts degree from McGill University in English and fine arts.

In 1978, I moved to Calgary with my husband, who had been offered an exciting job opportunity, and our three children. My own career began at this time in the fashion business, as a partner in a successful boutique for six years, followed by two more years as an adviser. A career change for my husband resulted in our brief move to Montreal in 1989, but we returned to Calgary in 1990. I continued in the fashion business and accepted the position of general manager of Holt Renfrew, which opened in September 1990. I ran that store with great passion and great success for 10 years. During that 10 years at Holt Renfrew, I also found time to contribute to the community on the board of directors of the YWCA of Calgary and the Glenbow Museum. As well, in my capacity as general manager of Holt's, I started a benefit fashion gala which to date has raised almost \$1 million for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Alberta chapter.

In September 2000, I retired from Holt Renfrew to spend more time with my family. In February 2002, I moved to Toronto, where my two daughters—one a doctor who did a residency at the Toronto Hospital, the other a lawyer who studied law at the University of Toronto—now live. My husband still has significant work in Calgary, so we maintain a residence there as well. However, I am loving Toronto and looking forward to being involved in the community here, which leads me to why I would like to serve on the board of the Ontario Science Centre.

A year ago, I was taken on a tour of the science centre by the chair of the board. I was immensely impressed by the scale of the venue, the imagination of the exhibits and programs, the excitement of the visitors, young and old alike, and the entrepreneurial approach of the science centre. I was truly inspired. The science centre is truly a world-class facility, and I would be proud to be a part of it and to contribute to its success.

Equally, though I am certainly not what you would call a scientific mind, I am passionate about education. It is the key to people's independence and self-sufficiency and, in a broader sense, the key to our global competitiveness and survival as a society. Science and

technology in particular lead the way in this regard, and the science centre is able to offer this education to everyone and to make it fun. I became a grandmother a year and a half ago and again one month ago, and I look forward to sharing the fun and learning with my grandchildren.

Finally, as I mentioned above, on a more personal level, I love to be busy. I find it personally satisfying to give back to the community. Having just moved to Toronto, where both my daughters now live, this position would give me an opportunity to continue to contribute.

Now I'd like to highlight my qualifications to serve on this board.

First, as a result of my business experience, I bring to this or any organization strong leadership skills, a strong sense of the importance of financial accountability, highly developed entrepreneurial and marketing skills, and the experience of running a large venue and maintaining the buzz and excitement both from an activity and a visual point of view.

Second, I have had significant board experience on not-for-profits, including, as I mentioned, the YWCA of Calgary and the Glenbow Museum, as well as the Prairie Action Foundation, whose mission is to find and fund solutions to violence in the community. I have held various leadership positions on these boards, including chair of strategic planning, nominations, development, and communications committees, and have also been involved in various fundraising initiatives, including the capital campaign of the YWCA. I take very seriously the governance role of the board in supporting the organization to deliver its mission and, more latterly, the sense of responsibility for holding the organization safe and with integrity for the community.

**1040**

I will share with you that since my move to Toronto and as a result of my experience and my commitment in both the corporate and not-for-profit sectors, I have been approached by a couple of organizations to serve, both provincially and nationally. The first which I have accepted is the Ontario Science Centre, for the reasons which I outlined above, and on whose board I really would be honoured to serve.

Thank you for your attention.

**The Chair:** We begin with the government party.

**Mr Wood:** We'll waive our time.

**The Chair:** We'll move to the official opposition.

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** Ms O'Brien, welcome to the committee. I don't think there is any question about your abilities and background enabling you to make a contribution to the Ontario Science Centre. I notice from your background that you omitted something like receiving the Woman of Distinction award for business and entrepreneurs and I would congratulate you on that, as well as on becoming a grandmother, which I personally think helps to enhance your contribution to the science centre.

**Ms O'Brien:** Thank you.

**Mrs McLeod:** I was interested that, in talking about what you see as the challenges of the science centre, you touched on the very two things I wanted to ask you about as a candidate for appointment, and that's the whole issue of the entrepreneurial spirit you mentioned, which I might describe perhaps as an entrepreneurial imperative that's been imposed and how that works with the commitment to education that I think has always been a founding principle of the Ontario Science Centre.

I don't know if you have had a chance to look at the budget situation at the Ontario Science Centre.

**Ms O'Brien:** I've looked a little bit at the budget and I was pretty impressed, number one, that their entrepreneurial spirit is certainly already evident in the increase in 2001 over 2000 in terms of self-generated revenue, and obviously the creativity and expertise that have been developed to market exhibitions internationally. Honestly, I think that's very exciting and very impressive.

With regard to education, I think there is opportunity for sure for possibly expanding international initiatives, possibly exchange programs, and further intensifying not only the exchange of students and instructors but also expertise. It's great that the expertise part has already been developed to market these exhibitions abroad. I'm sure that can be strengthened. Also, perhaps the programs that are being offered to students can attract international students, where there might be revenue opportunity. Both of those things, I think, are pretty exciting. I didn't notice international initiatives in anything I read other than the travelling exhibitions.

**Mrs McLeod:** You've obviously done your homework here.

**Ms O'Brien:** By the way, the one thing I may not do is increase the rate of admission in order to raise more revenue. I'd like to attract more people but I really believe in accessibility. It's such an opportunity for children and students to learn in a fun environment. I think it can really turn them on and can have great future benefit and I would hate to restrict people by the admission.

**Mrs McLeod:** I appreciate your saying that. Is it your sense that that's how the revenue increase was achieved, in part through an increase in the rate of admission, or has it all been through innovative programming?

**Ms O'Brien:** I have no history. I'm not sure when that rate was decided upon. I did notice that it is lower than some of the other museums. I notice that it's lower than the ROM, for example. I notice that the revenue already accounts for—I think it's something like just over 20.7% of the overall revenue, which is a significant amount. I just would not like to see it create inaccessibility for the broad range of people.

**Mrs McLeod:** By contrast—that's the entrepreneurial side—then there's the educational side, which you also mentioned. As I looked at the statement of expenses and revenues, one of the areas in which the science centre does show a deficit is on the school programs and the school admissions.

**Ms O'Brien:** I noticed that too.

**Mrs McLeod:** I guess one of the concerns I have as I look toward this year is that that's likely to get greater. Schools are going to find it very difficult to do those things that are seen to be outside the immediate classroom. I'm wondering whether you have some thoughts on whether a deficit is sustainable, whether there should be increased support for school programs, to ensure that children, who are the primary beneficiaries of the science centre programs, can access the science centre even if the school boards are not able to make it revenue-neutral.

**Ms O'Brien:** I would probably support at least the same level of programming, if not increased, although I'd need a better understanding of specifically what they are and what they think their impact is and who they benefit. But I notice that the admissions and programs actually account for 8.3% of the revenue, notwithstanding the fact that they are in a deficit position, so they do bring in a significant amount of revenue. I think the key is to make sure the costs are carefully monitored, and it seems like the existing board has a good record in that regard. They've wound up with a surplus this year of \$874,000, so it was pretty impressive.

**Mrs McLeod:** Just lastly on the same point, then: if schools are saying over the next months, "We can't keep paying admission to bring our students into the programs; we can't support the programs as part of our curriculum because of our own financial situation," would you see it as important for the government to augment the resources of the science centre so that the school programs can continue?

**Ms O'Brien:** I would certainly support maintaining the programs. There may be, and in my past experience I've certainly had some success in this regard, another option besides government support, which is corporate sponsorship. For example, in the museum on which I'm a board member there is a corporation, one of the oil companies, that actually sponsors the school program. It's a great benefit to the corporation because that corporation is known all over the city for sponsoring the school at this museum. I think it's a mutually beneficial situation. So I would try to find a way.

**Mrs McLeod:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Richard Patten.

**Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** You have a very rich background, especially coming from Montreal, which I did as well. So we welcome you here today.

Have you received any indication as to the extent to which the government is talking about increasing the centre's self-reliance?

**Ms O'Brien:** I know the self-reliance currently, or the self-generated revenues currently—well, I have two different sources. One says 46%; one says 48%. I have no idea what the objective of the organization is, and I truly do not know what the government's expectations are.

**Mr Patten:** If it were 50-50, given the nature of the centre, that probably is a fairly healthy ratio or formula.

In terms of your fundraising, and you have an extensive background in this particular area, did you have any ideas as to—you mentioned corporate sponsorships which can go along with certain programs. I've personally found that's often a good way to go. Did you have any other fundraising ideas that might relate to this?

**Ms O'Brien:** I've personally been involved in capital campaigns, the chair of events, corporate sponsorships. My experience in fund development and the various things I have done shows me that it's probably best, in terms of actually raising money, to get corporate sponsorship where you get a commitment for a fairly long-term investment so that it's a win-win on both sides. It's seen as an investment by the corporation, which gets payback from the association with this particular cause, and it's a win-win, obviously, for the not-for-profit that is benefiting from the programs.

Increasingly, people are not wanting just to support single events; maybe to be part of an event, but part of a bigger overall commitment. That's the way I would go about it. I think events are great. They're great for creating awareness and friend-making, but—

**Mr Patten:** Does the centre have a reserve fund or an endowment of any sort that it is able to retain itself?

**Ms O'Brien:** I'm not 100% sure. I do know it had a surplus of \$874,000 this year, which is pretty impressive. I haven't seen any sign of an actual endowment. That certainly is helpful, if you have that.

**Mr Patten:** For sure. Thank you.

1050

**Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie):** I certainly understand the need to make places like the science centre financially feasible and the effort to export some of what is being developed to the world and create some interest and generate some revenue there. I'm just wondering if you've given any thought to how we might make the science centre more available to the rest of Ontario, to places like Hornepayne and White River and Gogama.

**Ms O'Brien:** I understand that the school system probably supports some students coming at this current time. I would love to consider the possibility of outreach programs; once again, I don't really know if those things exist, but things like taking experiences or exhibitions to smaller venues, both in Ontario and perhaps even nationally, to benefit the entire country with the kind of level of expertise that I've seen there. So that would be one thing.

Another thing I was thinking of, and for all I know, this exists, but it's just a thought, is that it would be interesting to have an annual science competition where people from all over the province participate and contribute. Of course, it would be a big event once a year to show those exhibits and to have them judged.

Obviously, the other thing might be to kind of organize with local communities or local clubs and communities in Ontario to bus people in and perhaps try and subsidize that. I'm honestly not sure. I think it wouldn't be until I become involved in the organization that I'd

have a better sense of what they're currently doing and therefore would have a better sense of what the options would be.

**Mr Martin:** But you would see some potential outreach there?

**Ms O'Brien:** Absolutely. It's a very exciting place and I think that the more people who are involved, who have a chance to benefit from it, whether it's older people—it stimulates thought. When I was there, obviously people of all ages were having fun, but particularly young people.

**Mr Martin:** I've often thought, as I've met groups from my own community that come to Toronto to visit and go to the science centre and other places, that there are a tonne of other students who don't get to do that. Oftentimes a school goes on a trip like that because a teacher in that school takes the initiative to organize and fundraise and make it happen. If there's nobody in the school who does that, then the school doesn't go.

**Ms O'Brien:** Right, exactly.

**Mr Martin:** It seems to me to be unfortunate, because it is such a wonderful exhibit and there are so many really neat things there that would stimulate kids to want to learn more and perhaps get into the sciences and to be creative around how we share that resource with the rest of the province.

In your mind, would the issue of cost—because that's always a real concern in terms of taking stuff out as opposed to always bringing people in—be a huge stumbling block in your view?

**Ms O'Brien:** I'm not sure. I'd sure like to explore it, because one of the things is, if you can bring the excitement to the people, then it generates, it creates the interest. Then you might find even on individual levels people deciding to—Ontario is big but it's not so huge that you can't drive for a day and have an outing and bring your children to see the centre. I would certainly look into it, and again, as I say, corporate sponsorship is—

**Mr Martin:** Yes. A lot of the centres outside of Toronto often feel somewhat distant and isolated, and you can imagine, if the big centres are feeling that way, how a lot of the smaller important centres feel because they can't access. They know there are lots of resources and energy going into developing these things and yet they don't get to take advantage of them. I have a real concern about that.

The other thing is, do you know much about Science North?

**Ms O'Brien:** I do not.

**Mr Martin:** It's a fairly exciting facility in Sudbury that's been developed over a number of years that does somewhat similar kinds of exhibits. Again, school classes visit there and spend a day. They have an IMAX and that kind of thing.

Would it be your intention to learn more about Science North, and the next question I was going to ask you if you said you did, to develop a more direct relationship between—

**Ms O'Brien:** I think collaboration in that regard is hugely important these days and that all not-for-profits should be trying to do that, develop collaboration with other like-minded businesses or organizations or things that are connected, because it's always mutually beneficial. So, absolutely.

**Mr Martin:** OK. Thank you very much. Those are all my questions.

**The Chair:** Any other comments? No? We're all set. That means you may step down. Thank you very much for being with us.

#### JULIE DI LORENZO

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Julie Di Lorenzo, intended appointee as member, board of trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology.

**The Chair:** Our next intended appointee is Julie Di Lorenzo, intended appointee as a member, board of trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology.

Welcome to the committee. As you recognize, you have that opportunity to make an initial statement, should you see fit, and then there'll be questions from each of the political parties represented.

**Ms Julie Di Lorenzo:** Thank you very much. I will make a very short presentation, and I believe my resumé was submitted in advance. Good morning. Thank you for consideration for an appointment to the Ontario Science Centre board.

As you may have read in my resumé, I once was a board member at the Ontario Science Centre and I'm honoured and delighted to be considered again to be part of this important cultural and educational institution. I wish to state that I have received as much, or more, of a contribution from public service in return for my time.

I appreciate I'm supposed to speak about myself, but if you would indulge me I would prefer to speak about some issues which I believe are very important and which I will then relate directly and indirectly to the Ontario Science Centre experience. Through these things, you will probably have enough of a glimpse of what possible role I can play as a board member on behalf of the people of Ontario.

At a recent meeting at the science centre I read a quote that was used in a presentation by a scientist. I have found myself using the quote over and over again in presentations to young people and in business speeches. It said, "If you want to predict the future, invent it." To me, this is a statement full of faith and potential. I admire the people at the Ontario Science Centre because I believe they instill in our adolescent and adult visitors, through a participatory experience, a feeling of confidence through knowledge, empowerment and satisfaction and a new appreciation that allows them to feel they can invent the future. What better role for a public institution to play without political venues?

As you can see from my resumé, I have been honoured with many board roles and I've been on many

committees, in addition to being an engaged business person. I have become very efficient and have found that much can be accomplished in teamwork environments. I offer as an explanation another one of my favourite phrases: “Cross-reference your synergies and work as a team.”

One important role the Ontario Science Centre could play in the future is to expand its role in the community in a proactive direction, as an incubation pot to both the scientific and creative communities, which are often the same. I have encountered so many potential opportunities, through my work at last year’s Skills Canada competition Ontario chair and through discussions with young women about their career choices and even to the development and manufacturing community, which is dealing with impending future labour shortages, and with private sector environmental consultants about liaison projects with the Ontario Science Centre. Co-operative networking could be a milieu provided by the Ontario Science Centre, where youngsters are exposed to exciting career opportunities outside of the traditional and where the Ontario arts, science and business communities can share their concerns and ideas and promote efficient solutions.

The Ontario Science Centre can be a resource for the private sector, and more of a piazza environment where ideas are shared and incubated. For example, in my industry, construction, we have a severe skills shortage where both the heritage and preservation groups are complaining that there is no skills base for restoration projects, and architects and engineers are saying that new design is being crippled by the same lack of skills required for the execution of the work. In fact, an irony is that this building during the restoration process—I’m not sure if people saw the news that there was a severe shortage of skilled masonry experts, and I believe we weren’t even able to tap into our local resources. Would it not be an ideal situation when the science centre could host a series of think-tank meetings with all of these diverse stakeholders about how to address the future skills shortages so that the quality of life we expect does not deteriorate?

In addition, the Ontario Science Centre does co-operative networking with our educational system, and we must acknowledge that the Ontario Science Centre provides an extraordinarily experiential educational experience. It is a wonderful way to expose people to learn through means that are democratic, ie, there is a broad range of exposure to the sciences that is not available elsewhere in one place through various tangible mediums, even through the mischievous teaching camouflage of entertainment where parents are interested in accompanying their children. The science centre does such a good job in its unique role that it should be championed under many ministries—the ministries of science, technology, education, economic development and culture.

**1100**

I was a board member when a fantastic presentation was made in the Great Hall about prejudice and dis-

mantling preconceived notions and expectations through scientific methodology. I invited a grade 9 class from my old high school, which for me was poignant, since when I was there it was predominantly white Anglo-Saxon and I was an outsider. In addition to being delighted by the diverse profile of the students today, I was thrilled about the opportunity provided through the Ontario Science Centre to expose young people to such a comprehensive, tangible, humanistic living lesson against discrimination as was presented at the centre.

I am also a successful business person. I know that, as a board member, the value-management exercises that we perform in the private sector must also be considered on behalf of the Ontario taxpayer. I believe there is not yet enough liaison between the public sector and the private sector and that the future of our relationships between these institutions cannot be just about fundraising, but should be about a more fruitful exchange of ideas and efforts as invented by the Ontario Science Centre, where they would be considered the backyard garage or the basement where the Steve Jobs of the world could invent the future because the Ontario Science Centre was a resource and provided the inspiration and the confidence.

As I look through the recent exhibits, the proof is in the Petri dish. The Robot Zoo exhibit is described as an exhibit featuring animal robots which illustrate real-world animal functions. I’m not sure if you knew that the famous architect Santiago Calatrava designs his buildings around the science of the skeletal systems of men and animals. A new Santiago Calatrava may have been inspired by this exhibit.

Circus! is described as an exhibit that uses science to immerse visitors in the illusion and reality of the circus. Think of the economic and cultural benefits as ambassadors to Canada by the wonderful Cirque du Soleil troupe. This exhibit may have inspired a new Cirque du Soleil.

Timescape is described as an exhibit through which one can unearth the mysteries of time. Considering that new time has been created by the Internet world as Internet time—and I still have not figured out what Internet time is on my Swatch watch—the science centre is a living encyclopedia that is completely up to date.

In parallel to the current green summits and world meetings on sustainability, and the province’s own initiative to save the moraine and promote smart growth, where better to present the issues of environment and human relationships in the future than through the Ontario Science Centre?

I congratulate the Ontario Science Centre for serving Ontario very well, and I thank you for the opportunity to be before you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We will begin this time with the official opposition.

**Mr Patten:** Thank you for joining us today. In your outline, the information sheet we had, it says you are a former board member as well. Presumably your term was up when you left—

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** Yes. It was a three-year term.

**Mr Patten:** —and by popular demand they wanted you back. Who—

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I was appointed by the New Democratic government at the time. After the three-year term—

**Mr Patten:** I see. Right.

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** It's good to get new blood in, but I'd like to go back.

**Mr Patten:** It says also, "as a board member and involvement with the construction of the IMAX project." Was that construction by virtue of being a board member or was this by virtue of your business relationships?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I believe, Mr Patten, that when I was placed on the board it was for the purpose of contributing to that exercise in terms of value management and overseeing the construction.

**Mr Patten:** Sort of overseeing with the committee because of your background in construction and all that kind of thing.

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** Yes.

**Mr Patten:** Good.

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I believe we saved the taxpayer money in that exercise.

**Mr Patten:** You must have observed a few changes going back a little bit from your own experience. I guess it's the same kind of question I asked Ms O'Brien on the idea of being more self-reliant. It would seem to me that has increased to where now it's almost 50-50. How do you see that? What do you think the potential is for the centre's proportion of generating funds outside of government grants?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** There's obviously opportunity. I think one of the venues is not necessarily exclusively to consider donations; it's actually participatory. That's where it becomes more of a resource as opposed to something that one puts their name on. I think we may have—not exhausted, but I don't know if the depth of that pool of funds is as extensive as we would require.

One other, I find, surprising piece of information is that, per capita, Canadians don't give as much in philanthropic efforts as Americans do. I don't understand why, but it could be that our institutions aren't yet as skilled at going out and making those co-operative efforts. I think that is probably the new future of public-private participation: not just the naming of the buildings but going out and finding what we can do for the private sector as a public institution and then asking the private sector to pay for those services.

**Mr Patten:** Not to anticipate Mr Martin's question, but do you see an outreach function of the centre that isn't so confined to—I shouldn't say "confined," but obviously somewhat limited to the travel of youngsters or people who want to attend the centre?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I think we're very lucky that technology has lent us the mechanisms to actually bring some of the knowledge base of the science centre to other locations, to remote locations. So through technology there could be all kinds of presentations.

In terms of interactive, we'd have to correlate, or the board would have to correlate, and coordinate with that community to see what in fact could be exported—but yes, absolutely necessary to act as a satellite and potentially have many satellites of information that get dispersed through the whole province.

**Mr Patten:** I noticed in the budget figures that OMNIMAX hasn't yet balanced its budget. Do you have a take on that?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** My term as a board member ended I think a year after OMNIMAX was up. There is other technology that is competing with OMNIMAX. One of the other public institutions in fact has a similar theatre. I believe that will be a focus point to broaden the capability of all kinds of new visitors, but not necessarily exclusively in and of itself. I think it probably should be looked at in conjunction with other things the science centre can provide. But I do believe it improved exposure, and exposure is the first step to capitalizing on that sort of new energy.

**Mrs McLeod:** Is it your sense that the Ontario Science Centre board is operating under the assumption that there's absolutely no point in putting in a budget that would request an increased amount of government support?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** That was a good question. I don't presume on their behalf, obviously, anything they could be thinking, but I don't deny that the public is aware that institutions may be obligated in the future to be more self-sufficient.

**Mrs McLeod:** It strikes me that there has been a consistent focus on the private partnerships in order to sustain the areas which are now apparently non-sustainable, at least on a revenue-neutral basis. As you may have heard from my previous questioning, I'm particularly concerned about the educational/school component of the Ontario Science Centre, and I loved your description of the science centre and its value; I share your views on that. That is why I'm really concerned about whether or not the financial pressures on schools—I speak as a northerner but I'm not even suggesting there should be a way found, through government resources, of opening the science centre to northerners. It used to be the case that people from other parts of the province could come down on school tours and avail themselves of what is supposed to be a provincial resource. I guess I'm not optimistic that we're going to see much development of that in the future. People from my community—we get maybe two groups per year that come down now because there are no grants for that any longer.

But I'm even worried about the greater Toronto area schools being able to avail themselves of a resource that is geographically within their community. I'm not sure that it's going to be possible to sustain even the level of contribution they've made now to make those programs possible. Is the only hope for school programs corporate sponsorships?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** There are four or five answers I'd like to give. I always find it very unusual that there is an

antipathy toward corporate relationships and public interests. I don't think that in an entrepreneurial sense an enlightened capitalist is really a bad thing. I think it's a great thing.

**Mrs McLeod:** Don't take that as antipathy toward it. I just see an overwhelming movement in that direction and I think it can be stretched to the point where some things are going to fall by the wayside.

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I appreciate that. You don't want the dependency, but there are ways to promote that relationship. For example, I sponsored a class from my old school. In a lot of ways that is almost like giving a donation in someone's name, and yet it was a living donation where 30 new students could participate. There could be all kinds of promotions saying, "Sponsor your old class, or sponsor this class," etc, and I think that's very positive.

In terms of education, anybody who is an entrepreneur and denies the absolute, essential urgency of education and the children co-operating with each other and with all sectors, science and the arts—it would be foolish of me to consider that that's not the most important thing for my business going forward. You build a company around people, and the private sector and the public sector have a responsibility in terms of the education of those people.

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The science centre has been really smart at doing things, as I said, under Machiavellian entertainment venues, attracting parents to possibly bring their children also. So it's going to be a co-operative effort going forward between families, the private sector and the government. But I don't think that in any way the relationship between the schools and the science centre should decline. We will have to very seriously look at either improving that or at least stabilizing the situation.

**Mrs McLeod:** I did appreciate very much your comments and your ideas about bringing people together to talk about skills shortages, recognizing that it's not just in science areas where we are experiencing skills shortages. I think that is the great untouched issue of the day, quite frankly. The demographics should have told us a long time ago that the skills shortages in a whole variety of fields are going to be extremely critical. So don't lose that thought.

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** OK.

**Mrs McLeod:** Thank you for being with us today. We don't often get a chance to talk about the science centre and explore visions for the future of the science centre as well as its present operations. I appreciate your being here and sharing your thoughts with us.

**The Chair:** We now move to the third party.

**Mr Martin:** Do you have any experience in development or activities outside of Toronto? Have you been involved in initiatives in other parts of the province?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I know from a recreation standpoint the Parry Sound area. But in terms of business, the last business experience was in Ottawa five years ago, building a building in Ottawa, and in North Bay 12 years

ago. Other than that, it's been outside of Canada; in Taiwan, for example.

**Mr Martin:** It may not be news to you but parts of Ontario outside of Toronto, outside of the larger centres, are really struggling these days to keep an economy going, to keep some of their people at home. There's emigration. We're losing population like crazy out of places like Sault Ste Marie. Since 1996, we've lost 6,000 people. Most of them are young and our brightest. It's quite depressing when you think about it. When I think of an opportunity like the science centre and what it offers Toronto—you have talked of some of the opportunity that's there—I despair that we're not getting the same kind of investment.

You mentioned in your opening comments that there was a need for the science centre to reach out and to be present in other parts of the province. It's nice to be doing things internationally, and even nationally, but if you're not doing something in your own province, particularly in parts of the province that aren't doing well, that are struggling not only economically, but maybe because of the economics, to attract some of the professionals that we need—you talk about a lack of tradespeople. We have a lack of doctors, nurses and other professionals in many parts of northern and rural Ontario. Do you see the science centre playing any role in that respect in those parts of the province?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** If I think about the geology of the north of Ontario, there may be some projects in fact that could showcase elements of the rest of Ontario from a geographic or geotechnical area. In terms of exposing the science centre to those areas, I do think that the venues are the mobile demonstrations. If it's impossible to bring the people to the science centre, there may be some potential, once we have a mobile demonstration, to actually go and have satellite meetings all through Ontario.

So it would be two ways: one, to showcase elements of the rest of Ontario at the science centre—for example, as I said, the Precambrian Shield. The economic issues of small cities could be a very interesting project, what happens to small cities in the future.

I remember being at a conference in Europe called Urban Marketing, which was in the last recession, and the rest of Europe was saying, "How do we reinvent our cities? How do you reinvent a steel town into a recreation centre?" etc. Those conferences could be something the Ontario Science Centre could also host for the benefit of all the people of Ontario.

**Mr Martin:** Yes. Just a little warning to you that steel centres don't necessarily want to become recreational centres. They would like to be part of the new economy too. One of the ways they do that is by having the opportunity for some of our young and our brightest to stay at home and actually practise in their profession. The opportunities aren't there right now, particularly in the private sector. It seems that both presenters now being appointed to the science centre are really focusing on this entrepreneurial partnership with the private sector, and there not being, as you have suggested, the kind of

tension that maybe some of us think there is between public and private. But it's not working for us up in northern Ontario. The partnership isn't working for us. Government needs to be involved, needs to give leadership, needs to be partner with all of us who are trying to create a new economy, make the leap from—or at least balance the old economy with the new economy up there.

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I don't necessarily think the technology sector was everybody's panacea. For example, the elements that were implemented from the technology sector gave more longevity to the economic cycles. I also know that, and this is a generic statement, in all the examples I've reviewed, to place something that's not domestic to a centre—for example, to say in northern Ontario that Huntsville should be a technology centre isn't necessarily in the best interests of Huntsville. I mention Huntsville because I do have some familiarity with it. Through Skills Canada there are people who volunteer, and I've been asked to go and lecture to students on what their future is in terms of jobs and skills.

In fact, the skills shortages are in the tangible, and those are the high-paying jobs of the future. So in Huntsville—I'll give you an example—what could be a resource that could be turned into something that could be value-added? All the industries that have longevity are value-added industries, not necessarily things that sprout from absolutely nothing. So I go back to the technology sector: although everyone wants, or everyone thinks they want, a technology centre—and I'm not presuming that this is what you're referring to; I'm just giving it as an example—it could be that the strength of northern Ontario will be to find what resources it has and to turn those resources into more tangible, value-added things.

**Mr Martin:** Do you know of Science North?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I'm familiar with it through my last experience with the Ontario Science Centre. I have never visited, I'm sorry to say.

**Mr Martin:** So you wouldn't have any comment on how we could add value to the fact that we have a science centre in the north and connect it somehow to the Ontario Science Centre and begin to do some things that would be helpful, or do you?

**Ms Di Lorenzo:** I appreciate that that's a concern to you, and if I am placed on the board again I would promise to go and visit Science North and see if there would be something that would be complementary.

**Mr Martin:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We now move to the government party.

**Mr Wood:** We'll waive our time.

**The Chair:** The governing party has waived its time, so you may step down. Thank you very much for being with us today.

#### GRAHAM COVENEY

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Graham Coveney, intended appointee as member, council of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.

**The Chair:** Our next intended appointee is Graham B. Coveney, who is an intended appointee as member, council of the College of Optometrists of Ontario. Welcome to the committee, sir. You have an opportunity, as you have observed, to make an initial statement should you see fit. Subsequent to that there will be questions from members of the three parties represented on the committee, and the questions this time will commence with Mr Martin of the third party.

**Mr Coveney:** Good morning, Mr Chair and members. My name is Graham Coveney. I want to thank you for the opportunity of being considered for this public appointment and also for the opportunity to speak with you this morning. I live in the riding of the Chair, Mr Bradley, in the Garden City of St Catharines, and I've been married to my beautiful wife, Sarah, for two years now. Six months ago, we went through a great life-changing experience when the Lord blessed us with the birth of our first child, Camille Sarah. It was an experience I will never forget—I am sure my wife more than me. You can just ask her that. Family is very important to me. I believe the family is a cornerstone of a strong nation.

As for my employment, I've worked in the financial industry now for over 11 years. In 1999, my company asked me if I would launch our financial planning division in the Niagara Peninsula. I gladly accepted and it's been one of the great decisions of my life. I currently work as a financial planner with TD Waterhouse Financial Planning, helping families create financial plans as a road map to their retirement, and I receive great satisfaction from what I do. I hold the internationally recognized designation of certified financial planner, CFP, through the FPSC, which is the Financial Planners Standards Council.

Some of my volunteer work has included working with community television, where I have numerous roles but mostly as a cameraman covering local events. I have coached minor hockey for six years, ages eight to 14. This, I must say, is a very rewarding experience for me: watching these kids grow up and seeing what an impact a sports coach can have on their lives.

I'm very involved with my local church in community outreach events and programs. Some of these include free kid fun fairs, concerts and helping families in our community that are in need, to name a few. My community is very important to me and I believe everyone should be involved in helping their community in some way. I strongly believe that if you want a better quality of life, you have to work toward that. This does not happen by sitting on the sidelines and warming the bench, but rather by getting involved and helping in every possible way to help this happen.

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Having a young family, which I hope will continue to grow, I want to ensure the quality of life in Ontario continues to improve. I know it is my duty as a resident of this great province and as a father to do my part to help ensure that this happens.

I believe the experience in my profession in dealing with people and finding ways to resolve their issues would be a great asset to the council. I believe that I would play a positive role as a public appointee on the council and look forward to the challenges and learning that would come with the role. I will be strongly dedicated to the role and believe that I would have valuable input. I would hope that in some way I could do my part to continue to improve the quality of life in this province for my children and the rest of the people of Ontario. Good health care is vital to ensuring a good quality of life in this province and this country, and I look forward to the opportunity to play a role in this area.

Once again, I want to thank the council for considering me for this appointment and allowing me to speak with you today. Thank you, and I'd be happy to answer some questions at this time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, sir. We begin with the third party.

**Mr Martin:** I'm just interested; there's nothing in your resumé to share with us why you'd be interested in this particular appointment, the College of Optometrists of Ontario. You talk about bettering the quality of life of people in the province. I suppose if I worked at it I could figure out how this appointment would connect to that in some way. But why this appointment?

**Mr Coveney:** As I said in my opening comments, I believe health care is vital to the prosperity of the province. Optometry is one of those; it's part of health care. In the Niagara Peninsula, we have a very aging population. I believe eye care is going to become a more vital part of the health care system as we continue down the road, and I think playing some type of role in that would be something I'd enjoy doing.

**Mr Martin:** But why optometry? Is there a particular personal interest there?

**Mr Coveney:** Not necessarily a personal interest. I just wanted to be involved in some type of health care appointment. Optometry was one that came up, and definitely it's something that was of interest to me once I found out about the appointment.

**Mr Martin:** How did you find out about it?

**Mr Coveney:** I have a friend who works in Tony Clement's office. He had mentioned the public appointment to me, would I be interested in taking on a public appointment, and I definitely assured him I would be.

**Mr Martin:** Was there an array of appointments presented in terms of what you could pick from?

**Mr Coveney:** There was one earlier. There was the midwifery public appointment, which I'd indicated I'd be interested in also. When our daughter was born we went through midwives, and definitely that was of some interest to me too, but that was not available at the time.

**Mr Martin:** So it was Mr Clement's office that was encouraging you?

**Mr Coveney:** I wouldn't say it was encouraging me. He just mentioned that there were some public appointments available, and I indicated I would be interested.

**Mr Martin:** I don't see in your resumé here anywhere any reference to any political activity that you might be involved in. Do you mind sharing with us some of your background?

**Mr Coveney:** I've had some political involvement. I don't mind sharing that. Federally with the Canadian Alliance Party, I've had some political affiliations there and also provincially with the local Progressive Conservatives.

**Mr Martin:** In accepting this appointment in a spirit of being non-partisan, did you consider at any point perhaps dropping those memberships so that you might serve in a way that would be—

**Mr Coveney:** No. I believe I can have political affiliations and still do a proper job in my role. I don't believe political affiliation has any bearing on how I'll be effective in my role.

**Mr Martin:** So what do you hope to accomplish in terms of the College of Optometrists? What are the challenges there that you see that have jumped out at you and said, "This would be a good fit for me"? What are the issues right now in optometry?

**Mr Coveney:** A couple issues are before them. Right now, the optometrists in the province can't prescribe medication, and I know they are looking toward being able to do that. I think that's one issue that's important there. Also, I believe another important issue is between the three colleges: optometrists, ophthalmologists and opticians. They are now going through some times where the opticians also want to prescribe and dispense. I think that's an area that's being talked about at the colleges right now. There are issues on the table.

**Mr Martin:** What would your take on them be? Where would you like to see that go in terms of—

**Mr Coveney:** I would obviously like to see it resolved. I don't have enough details on the intricacies of it, but definitely I would like to see it resolved rather quickly. I know the Minister of Health sent a letter, I believe back in November of last year, wanting the three boards to get together to resolve it, and to date I don't believe they've come up with a resolution yet.

**Mr Martin:** OK. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** We now move to the government caucus.

**Mr Wood:** We'll waive our time.

**The Chair:** The government caucus has waived its time. We move to the official opposition.

**Mrs McLeod:** I would lead off my questions by asking just how you see the role of the College of Optometrists.

**Mr Coveney:** How do I see the role of the council?

**Mrs McLeod:** Yes.

**Mr Coveney:** Obviously what I've read is that the council is the regulatory body of the College of Optometrists and is there to ensure that the policies and regulations are being followed by the college.

**Mrs McLeod:** Could I ask you your views on a self-regulatory body?

**Mr Coveney:** I believe it's important as a self-regulatory body, but I also believe it's important as a

public appointee to have an outside look at the profession. I look at my profession as a financial planner, and we can get together as financial planners and talk about a number of areas and say, "We think this would be best for our clients," but without some outside clients saying, "I don't want that. Here's what I want," I believe that's where the part of the public appointee will play a good role in the council.

**Mrs McLeod:** In a self-regulatory college, of course, the lay members are a minority as opposed to the professionals, which are the majority. You spoke about resolving issues between the various colleges. Let me just get your thoughts on this. Quite frankly, it's a three-way turf war that goes on in this area. Presumably, the professional majority on the college is going to want to set its standards for optometry. How do you see resolving that when those standards come into direct conflict with the standards of another self-regulatory body—the College of Opticians, and yet another, the College of Physicians and Surgeons representing ophthalmology—standards which they believe are appropriate for their bodies?

**Mr Coveney:** Again, I think it is a difficult issue and that's why it hasn't been resolved yet. I think ultimately the patients' safety and well-being have to be considered in any changes or amendments to any of the acts. I believe that should be the ultimate concern. I believe if it can be shown that patients' safety or well-being is OK with any amendments to the act, then that is something I think should be considered.

But you're right, it's a very difficult time to get three different areas that do have their own interests to agree on something, but you can't give up on it. You still have to work toward that.

**Mrs McLeod:** Do you have any personal views going into this about the expanded role for optometrists in terms of prescription and diagnosis of disease?

**Mr Coveney:** As I indicated, I know that's an issue going on right now and I know that optometrists do have training in pharmaceuticals. Again, I'd go back to having to look into that more, as to what type of exact training is there and, again, the patients' utmost safety and well-being to be taken at hand. I know also that they've indicated, too—I think there are only 400 ophthalmologists in the province right now and it's declining. The optometrists' argument was that it would be more cost-effective for the health care system if they were also able to prescribe. So anywhere we can create efficiencies in the system, I'm for it, but again, taking the patients' safety and well-being is number one.

**Mrs McLeod:** You come from the St Catharines area where there is a shortage of ophthalmologists. It's been an issue that my colleague, the Chair of the committee, has raised repeatedly. Do you see the whole issue of optometry and ophthalmology—do you see some prospect for dealing with shortages in the Niagara area through a greater use of optometry?

**Mr Coveney:** As I indicated earlier, I believe that with our aging population in Niagara—as people get

older, obviously their eyesight tends to weaken. I believe it's going to become an area, not just in Niagara but all over the country, where there's going to be a greater need for it. But I believe especially in the Niagara area, because right now we are becoming known as one of the biggest retirement communities in the country. So I believe it will be a very important area in the health care system coming down the road.

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**Mrs McLeod:** There's another issue and that's opticians and optometrists. One of the issues is that opticians are not able to do any prescribing for glasses, but optometrists, who can do prescribing for glasses, are now allowed to sell. They can dispense. They can sell the glasses. I'm less interested in your reaction to that, because I know you're going to tell me it has to be resolved, but do you have a problem with the whole issue of the health care professional who is also the salesman of the product he's prescribing?

**Mr Coveney:** Again, I don't necessarily have a problem with it, but I believe there has to be some governing council in there to ensure that what they're prescribing is what's best for the patient.

**Mrs McLeod:** How do you do that on a governing council? You can't oversee every optometrist in the province.

**Mr Coveney:** No, but under a licensing issue, if you have gone through the schooling and you agree to follow the procedures and principles of optometrists, that's something I believe as a professional you would want to do. I agree that governing that can be very difficult, but again, that's something I believe we may have to allow the optometrists to do. I don't necessarily have a problem with it.

**Mrs McLeod:** How do opticians stay in business?

**Mr Coveney:** Again, I know they have something too, wanting to be able to prescribe. As I'd indicated earlier, I don't necessarily have a problem with that either, because I know they've gone through a lot of training and they've indicated they're able to. Again, I'd need more information on that. But the utmost thing is that the patient's well-being is number one. If it is, I think if we can find efficiencies in the system, absolutely, let's do it.

**Mrs McLeod:** Lastly on my part, are you familiar with the role of the Health Professions Advisory Board?

**Mr Coveney:** Sorry, would you repeat that?

**Mrs McLeod:** It's the Health Professions Advisory Board. It advises the minister on regulatory matters.

**Mr Coveney:** Not overly, no.

**Mrs McLeod:** I won't push the issue, then.

Quite frankly, one of the confusing things I've found in the minister wanting to have these issues worked out between the three bodies is that there is an advisory body that advises the minister as to any dispute in terms of scope of practice and the regulations, and advises action under the law. It's my understanding that on at least one of these issues, the body has advised and the minister has accepted the recommendations. So I was a little unsure what remains to be left out, but perhaps at some point in the future that will become clear to both of us.

Thank you, Mr Chair.

**Mr Patten:** In your background you listed something called the Conduct and Practices Handbook. Is that something you developed or is it something that—

**Mr Coveney:** No, actually the Conduct and Practices Handbook is—we're registered under the Investment Dealers Association, and as that, you have to take this Conduct and Practices Handbook, which is basically our rules and regulations for being in the business that we are in.

**Mr Patten:** So that means you have it, you're familiar with it and you abide by it, presumably?

**Mr Coveney:** Absolutely.

**Mr Patten:** You list university-level courses in marketing and economics. What university was that?

**Mr Coveney:** U of T, Erindale campus.

**Mr Patten:** What kind of courses did you take there?

**Mr Coveney:** Like I said, economics and marketing; more or less entry-level courses there.

**Mr Patten:** Are you aware of the phenomenal compensation that you get by being a member of this council?

**Mr Coveney:** I read about it. I'm aware that there is some per diem per day.

**Mr Patten:** That's all the questions I have.

**The Chair:** That completes the questioning. You may now step down. Thank you for being with us today.

We will deal with the appointments in terms of motions that will come forward. Subsequent to that, I'll ask the committee on an informal basis about where we are with government agencies, the actual agencies, but I'll ask that after we deal with the various appointments.

The first appointment to be dealt with is Gail O'Brien, intended appointee as member, board of trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology.

**Mr Wood:** I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Any discussion?

**Mr Martin:** I'm probably going to support this appointment but I have to put on the record that I was a little disappointed that, being appointed to the science centre, she had no knowledge whatsoever, it seemed, of Science North, which would be, in my view, a natural ally, and that if this person was interested in the outreach component or potential capacity of the centre, she would be aware of and be already looking at how that facility might be incorporated into a larger plan for the province. I just wanted to put that on the record as a concern that I have with this appointment, but will probably support the appointment.

**Mrs McLeod:** Being a northerner, I would share Mr Martin's concern if the Ontario Science Centre was not prepared to look at the kind of support it gives to Science North. I do recognize that Ms O'Brien has only recently come to the province and probably hasn't had an opportunity to really recognize the relationship that's there. But I certainly share his belief that that is part of the mandate of the Ontario Science Centre and I'm glad he opened that area of discussion today.

**The Chair:** Further discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The second appointment is Julie Di Lorenzo, intended appointee as member, board of trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology.

**Mr Wood:** I move concurrence.

**Mr Martin:** The same issue: I think that this person is probably quite competent and capable and will do a good job, but the fact that she was a member of the science centre board before and has not yet visited Science North in Sudbury, which is a rather significant centre in the province and should have some natural alliances with the Ontario Science Centre, is disturbing—and that the government wouldn't be looking for appointments to this board that would include a knowledge and an understanding of the north of the province so that any future plans would incorporate and have some intimate knowledge of what the opportunities and the challenges are in areas outside of the larger centres that need to be explored and built on, value added, as she suggested. I take her at her word that she will, on her appointment, make an effort to visit Science North and get to know about it and perhaps from there begin to build some plans that would include Science North and the north and those parts of the province that are distant or rural from the larger centres.

I have a concern that we're building, and in a rather aggressive way, lots of facilities and new opportunities in the larger centres and forgetting that the outlying areas like the north and the rural areas are not growing, that as a matter of fact they're shrinking. I mentioned in my questioning to one of the applicants this morning that the population of the north has shrunk significantly since 1996—the last census was 2001—anywhere from 5% to 10%, depending on what community you're looking at. Certainly my own community was hit very hard, with a reduction of around 6,000 people, some of them our brightest and with potential, if there was opportunity for them to stay at home, to actually add value and grow the economy and the quality of life of our area.

I have some real concern, one, that the government hasn't considered in its appointments—we had two here this morning to this very important facility—people who have knowledge and experience and understanding of other parts of the province and who have not involved themselves in the activities of Science North.

So even though, again, I'll be supporting this appointment because I think she does bring a lot of other talent to the table, this is a piece that is obviously missing and I hope she will develop it in short order on her appointment.

**Mrs McLeod:** Again following Mr Martin's lead—and I would certainly support both these appointments because I think both women have shown that they have a background of interest and an enthusiasm for the job—I am concerned about the mandate of the Ontario Science Centre to be a provincial resource. It is no longer possible for it to serve as a provincial resource by having people from the north come to visit it, certainly in the sense of school trips.

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There was at one point an effort made by the Ontario Science Centre to have satellite programs—one in Thunder Bay. It was highly successful. It was a mobile unit that the science centre prepared and sent out in the summertime so that there could be some exposure of people in the north to at least some part of the science centre. I don't know whether it touched base in the Soo or not. It was withdrawn because of the funding concerns.

I guess the sense from the presenters we had today is that if we're ever going to see anything like that again, it's going to have to be through some kind of corporate sponsorship that would bring it into northern communities. But if that is ever going to happen, there are going to have to be representatives of those communities on the Ontario Science Centre board to make that case. Although I'm supporting these two appointments, recognizing that they are both from Toronto, I would just hope that there is some attempt on the government's part to reach beyond the greater Toronto area in the future.

**The Chair:** Any further discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The third appointment is Graham B. Coveney, who is the intended appointee to the council of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.

**Mr Wood:** I move concurrence.

**The Chair:** Concurrence is moved by Mr Wood. Discussion?

**Mr Martin:** I'll be opposing this appointment in that I just find it more and more difficult as I come week after week to this table to consider the appointments that the government brings forward. We continually, more and more, see people appointed who are of the same political persuasion, friends of cabinet ministers. It doesn't speak to the wide variety of good candidates out there to be appointed to some of these boards and commissions.

In this instance, we have somebody who has no experience with the field that he's being appointed to, nothing to suggest that he's had any interest in this. He has even considered being appointed to the college of midwifery. I found that kind of interesting and somewhat strange.

I think the only thing that qualifies, I would suggest, in the government's eyes, this appointee as being suited for this appointment is the fact that federally he's an Alliance member and provincially he belongs to the Progressive Conservative Party and is a friend of Minister Clement's. You'll remember the last meeting when we sat here. I was criticized for being critical of actually participating in the appointment. I think one of the members across the way had to absent themselves because we were actually appointing his sister-in-law to an appointment in London. I can no longer continue to support that kind of blatant patronage that is going on here and will indicate so by not supporting this appointment here this morning.

**The Chair:** Any other comment?

**Mrs McLeod:** First of all, let me say that I'm not sure what I would expect in terms of background for a lay

member to serve on the college of optometry, so I wasn't so much looking for that. I did think this gentleman had at least investigated some of the issues or, knowing he would be coming to the committee, felt it was imperative to investigate some of the issues. I obviously don't think that belonging to a political party should mean that you don't get to accept appointments.

I guess it's the first time I've sat in on the government agencies committee and I admit to some surprise, though, at the way in which public appointments are being made. I haven't had the experience Mr Martin has with similar appointments coming forward, but as a point of information, could I ask, is there any kind of public advertising of vacancies on boards where public provincial government appointments are to be made?

**The Chair:** I believe it varies, but I'll ask our clerk or perhaps our researcher, one of the two, to comment.

**Mr David Pond:** I don't think staff of the committee should be—

**The Chair:** OK. Maybe I can ask Mr Wood. Would you help us out on that?

**Mr Wood:** The details of what they do in terms of public advertisement are on the Web site, as far as I know. Many—I don't want to say all—are advertised publicly.

**Mrs McLeod:** So there is no standard policy in terms of a wider circulation? I know once upon a time all members' offices used to circulate names of people in their communities who might have some interest or background in a particular area, and I know that's no longer a practice. So I wondered what the substitute practice was for canvassing for interested and qualified individuals to serve in public appointments.

**Mr Wood:** I would invite you to look at the Web site, and if any questions arise, pass them along to me or the Public Appointments Secretariat.

**Mrs McLeod:** I would have thought that the members who are regular members of the committee might be able to answer the question.

**Mr Wood:** There is no simple answer. It varies from appointment to appointment.

**Mrs McLeod:** In that case, as a first-time member joining this committee, I have to express my own surprise that the answer to the question Mr Martin posed about interest was that there was a call from the minister's office and the minister basically said, "We've got this one or we've got this one." It wasn't as though the College of Midwives of Ontario or the College of Optometrists were important appointments, which I believe they are, and were looking for people who have had some interest, some background, whatever; it was, "Here's an appointment. It doesn't really matter what it is. Would you be interested in one of these?" That really concerns me. I'm not sure whether that's grounds on which to oppose a specific appointment, but the whole process of the appointment certainly causes me some concern.

**The Chair:** I think what you are making reference to under the government of which Mr Martin was a member—they provided to each of us a yearly one that each

constituency office had. I think the local library had it as well. I think Mr Wood points out that while that may not exist at the present time, from time to time on the government Web site there is some availability. It's not perhaps what it once was or as easily accessible, and that may be something members of the committee have heard, particularly government members of the committee. You may want to pass that along to the appropriate people in government, as they do so well.

**Mr Wood:** The Web site is intended to provide the same service as the book did, only in a more up-to-date fashion. The book obviously became immediately outdated. The Web site is as current as the thing can be kept. So we are of the view that we provide a lot more accessibility now than we did under the old book system.

**The Chair:** There is the discussion. I won't get in the middle of this one, as the neutral Chair.

Any other discussion of these matters? OK, I'll call for a vote on Mr Wood's motion. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next question I have is how Mr Dunlop got such a nice shirt. I think members of the committee were interested in that. What a nice shirt he's got on today.

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I actually got this last year. I don't know who gave it to me; I think I won it somewhere.

**The Chair:** They are really nice shirts, I must say.

**Mr Dunlop:** Yes, it looks good on me especially.

**The Chair:** A good ambassador, yes. Actually, I think I had one from a Christmas auction they had upstairs.

**Mr Dunlop:** Yes, I think it was something like that.

**The Chair:** Well, thank you very much for that part of it.

May I just informally ask: Mr Wood, Mr Martin and Mr Gravelle have been discussing for some period of time the possibility of certain government agencies; the specific agency they were discussing was the community care access centres across Ontario. Mr Wood, do you have anything to report?

**Mr Wood:** Yes. A number of formal suggestions were made, and I've received a number of informal suggestions. If I were to attempt to summarize what I've heard, it would be along these lines. There seem to be three issues around which there is concern: (1) whether the resources currently being given to the community care access centres are adequate to discharge the tasks which they have been given; (2) whether the appointment of board members and executive directors by the cabinet is an appropriate way to get the right people for these positions; and (3) whether the community care access centres are using the resources in the most efficient manner possible. Those seem to be the three issues I've been advised members are concerned about.

We also have the issue of which CCACs to review, and we've had a number of ideas suggested on that.

We also have an issue that I haven't heard a lot of comment on, and I might invite comment from any who might wish to make it today, as to how much time should be allocated to this enterprise.

What I propose to do is to suggest we might discuss this today and I at least would propose at the next meeting to present a motion which the committee can then consider. Others may of course wish to do the same. But I would suggest we discuss it today as opposed to dealing with motions today; give people a chance to digest what they've heard.

1150

**Mr Martin:** I guess it is now becoming quite frustrating, that we just keep going over and over this thing. We brought forward a very simple request, a long time ago it seems—I forget how long ago it is now—for a review of appointments to CCACs, given the hostile takeover that happened before Christmas of last year in that whole area, so that we could determine whether in fact these boards were able to do the job they are assigned, given the new regulations regime and funding. There's just a whole whack of areas that, if we could get some members of these CCACs before us here, we could delve into and ask questions around and about. I'm not sure what the holdup is now in terms of just simply saying, "OK, we'll call two or three boards, their executive director, their chair and other people as identified by the three caucuses as necessary to do a good and complete review of where we're going with this." But we don't seem to be able to nail down a date and names of some agencies so we can get them in here.

If you're asking how long it would take, I would say probably at least a day for each board. I don't think we want to be hauling people down here and keeping them for days on end, but certainly a day at least for each of the boards we would call. That would be one suggestion, my suggestion. Perhaps others think that we would need more time, and that would be fine too by me. If the government caucus decides it wants to participate in the questioning that goes on at this committee level, then we might want to look at maybe more time. But certainly for now, if it's only the Liberal caucus and the New Democratic caucus asking questions, perhaps a day will be enough.

I would hope that after all this time of back and forth and the obvious work that Mr Wood has done and is doing on our behalf on this front, we could finally get down to saying, "OK, next week we're going to have the CCAC from Sudbury in here." That was one of the groups mentioned that we would have some interest in speaking to. Let's get on with it so that we can report back to the people we serve, the people of Ontario, as to whether in fact this initiative is working in their best interests or not.

**Mr Patten:** I'm substituting today for Mr Gravelle, and I know he has an abiding interest in this as well. Generally, I would suspect most members must receive numerous appeals at their offices through telephone calls or what have you concerning the role and the cutbacks to the CCACs and the—Mr Martin uses the term—takeovers that took place, and it happened in my community as well. The executive director got fired because she spoke up. She was considered to be extremely competent.

There are new board members in place, all with the same political stripe, I would point out. So I think it does raise the question for this committee in terms of appointments.

Mr Wood identifies resource levels, the appointment for people and the efficiencies of resources. I think some of those questions I'm not sure this committee needs to address so much as flag perhaps for another committee, the social development committee or one of those—

**Mrs McLeod:** Estimates.

**Mr Patten:** Yes, maybe estimates or public accounts.

But certainly the procedure around appointments was pretty heavy-handed, and if this committee has any sense of contributing to the integrity on behalf of the public, engaging public institutions on the basis of the very best available and not whether you agree with the government 110% and whether you're a member of the ruling party's party.

So I would certainly agree with the recommendation by Mr Martin. I think it would be a worthwhile exercise. I'd want to attend myself and invite a few and have each caucus select a couple of CCACs to come in and talk about their experience and allow the members to pose questions.

**Mr Martin:** Just one other question, I'm not sure to whom, but there was the issue of whether the appointments could be called forward to this committee because of the parameters that were put around it: they were only being appointed for a year and a few other things. We haven't had any of the appointments that have been made to CCACs show up on the orders in council that we choose from in order to bring people forward here. Is there any new information on that front?

**The Chair:** I can read from our standing orders. Speaker Stockwell, April 30, 1997, said:

"The starting place for the government agencies committee is the certificate it receives from the public appointments secretariat. It does not ferret out appointments that should have been referred but weren't. Likewise, there is no way that a Speaker could possibly be in a position to determine which intended appointments should or should not be referred to the committee."

So it really gets down to the fact that there must be a certificate from the public appointments secretariat. Mr Wood may be able to provide us with a little more information because he's been doing the spadework in this regard.

**Mr Wood:** I think what the standing orders say is that an appointment cannot be submitted to the Lieutenant Governor for signature until the standing orders of the House have been complied with. As far as we know, they have been in each case. If a case is identified where the standing orders have not been complied with, I would invite whoever is aware of that to let me know and I will certainly immediately investigate it. But the standing orders govern what has to be submitted here and if there's any instance anybody is aware of where the standing orders have not been complied with, certainly I will immediately pursue it because an appointment is not, under the standings orders, supposed to be submitted to

the Lieutenant Governor for signature until the process outlined by the standing orders is complied with. If there's any case where that's not happening, we certainly would want to know about it. I'm not aware of any case where the standing orders have not been complied with, but I'm not all-knowing, so it may be that something has happened that I don't know about.

**The Chair:** To your knowledge, then, since all of these appointments are one-year and therefore would not normally fit under the parameters of this committee, then the government would be in compliance with the standing orders and we are not receiving those appointments before this committee because they would be for one year?

**Mr Wood:** My understanding is that the committee has no jurisdiction to review anything other than pursuant to the standing orders. So if we got one that didn't require review, I don't think we could review it. I think we have two functions: one is to review appointments as set out under the standing orders and the other is to review agencies. That's it. I don't think we can get involved in frolics of our own that aren't within the standing orders.

**The Chair:** As I understand it, the two opposition parties have expressed a hope that the appointments that are made to the community care access centres could come before this committee. It appears at this point in time that the only way that could be the case is if the appointments were increased to two years, which would then place them under the purview of this committee.

**Mr Wood:** Or that the standing orders are changed.

**The Chair:** Or the standing orders be changed. I think Mr Wood makes a good point there.

**Mr Martin:** I understand what the Speaker in the ruling said and what Mr Wood is saying here, but I think all of us also on another level understand what's going on here. It's a frustrating of the system that we've put in place over a number of years to make sure that all appointments made on behalf of the people to oversee the expenditure of these very public monies and deliver services that are very important to some of our more at-risk and fragile seniors and disabled people in the province—and we at this board charged with reviewing that cannot get access because the government has found a loophole and is only appointing these new members for a year. I don't know about you, but to me it's an insult and an affront to the democratic processes that I think we all, at least in coming here, hope to serve, and are not able to in this instance. It's really frustrating.

1200

**Mr Wood:** I wonder, Mr Chair, if I might invite all interested parties to write to me with a list of the CCACs they think should be reviewed. I'd like to consider the views of others in drafting my motion, so I'd like to invite anyone who has a suggestion to pass that along to me, say, over the next few days so that I can consider that when I draft my motion.

**Mr Martin:** We've already done that, Bob.

**Mr Wood:** Could you send me a copy of what you've done, just so we have a file that's current?

**The Chair:** Perhaps if there's an update of anything that any of us have already submitted to Mr Wood, if there's something additional, and included with the original, it is a helpful suggestion from Mr Wood that when he is framing the motion that he'd like to put before the committee, he have the input of other members of the committee. So I will invite—I again emphasize the invitation from Mr Wood for other members of the committee to submit to him their suggestions on which agencies would be called before the committee.

We cannot formally deal with this at this time because we are in a session outside of the legislative session; therefore, we are mandated at this time only to deal with matters related to appointments by the government, order-in-council appointments. However, on an informal basis we are able to exchange our views, and that's why I've invited that today. I certainly hope that members will take advantage of the offer Mr Wood has made to submit suggestions to him on which agencies you believe should be reviewed by this committee as agencies.

Mrs McLeod and then Mr Martin.

**Mrs McLeod:** Mine was on another matter before the committee adjourns, Mr Chair.

**The Chair:** OK. I'll go to Mr Martin.

**Mr Martin:** Just a request, if I could, to either legislative research or the clerk to maybe make available to us—I suppose we could do this ourselves, but it would be helpful if it was easier—a list of the times that we've discussed this now, the comments that were made, and the CCACs that were suggested by both Mr Gravelle and myself to be called on our behalf before the committee. I think this is the second summer we've been through this, isn't it? If I remember correctly, we talked about this last summer, hoping that when the House—the very same comment was made back then by the Chair, that "We're in intersession and so we can't deal with this," that we had to wait until the House came back. Then the House came back and we still didn't deal with it. So if we could have some information presented to us that indicates how long we've been at this, how much discussion we've had and how many times we've gone over the same turf, it would be interesting and helpful.

**The Chair:** I'm sure he'd be happy to do that.

Mr Wood, are you on this matter here?

**Mr Wood:** Yes, I'm on this matter.

**The Chair:** Yes. Mrs McLeod has a different matter.

**Mr Wood:** If indeed this matter is not going to be in order until the House resumes, perhaps I could ask you to put this on the agenda at the first meeting after the House has resumed, and at that time I want to make my motion.

Obviously I don't want to make my motion until it's in order. So if I could ask that that be put on as an agenda item for the first meeting after the House has resumed, I would propose at that time to make a motion which can be considered by the committee.

**The Chair:** OK. Thank you very much. Anything else on this matter? If not, we'll move to another matter.

**Mrs McLeod:** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I'd like to take advantage of my sitting on the committee today to ask for a point of information related to appointments to government agencies, boards and commissions. My question is whether or not it is universal practice with appointments to require all board members, all appointed members, to sign affidavits of confidentiality that preclude them from speaking publicly about the work they're doing.

**The Chair:** I suppose that's information we can try to obtain, and we will try to obtain that information. I can't say that I'm aware that that is the case. I've heard that said from time to time, but "heard that said" is not good enough for our committee, so perhaps we can do some investigation of that to at least determine whether that is one of the conditions under which a person gets appointed to an agency.

**Mrs McLeod:** I'm not on a fishing trip, Mr Chairman. I'm aware that people appointed to the board of Cancer Care Ontario have recently been asked to sign such an affidavit. I'm also aware that has not happened before. But they have been told that it is a requirement, has always been a requirement and it's just now being enforced. I think that makes it a legitimate question for the committee which deals with government agencies as well as with appointments.

Since I don't anticipate an answer could be forthcoming, I would be very appreciative of finding out whether this is an exceptional situation, whether it is being applied across the board as a new policy and, if it's not universally applied, which board members or members of agencies are in fact being asked to sign such an affidavit.

**The Chair:** That indeed is an interesting subject and we will try to obtain that information for members of the committee, and ultimately it can be made available to you.

Any other business before the committee? If not, I'll accept a motion of adjournment.

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** So moved.

**The Chair:** Mr Gilchrist has moved adjournment. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Thank you very much, members of the committee.

*The committee adjourned at 1206.*





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