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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 23 April 2003

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 23 avril 2003

**Standing committee on
government agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

Chair: James J. Bradley
Clerk: Anne Stokes

Président : James J. Bradley
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Wednesday 23 April 2003

Mercredi 23 avril 2003

The committee met at 1307 in room 151.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair (Mr James J. Bradley): I'll bring the meeting of the standing committee on government agencies of Wednesday, April 23, 2003, to order.

We have some reports of subcommittees to deal with first of all. The first is a report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, April 10, 2003.

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

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved its adoption. Any discussion? If not, I will call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The second is a report of the subcommittee on committee business dated April 17, 2003.

Mr Wood: I move its adoption.

The Chair: The adoption of that subcommittee report has been moved by Mr Wood. Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

The Chair: We have appointments review next. First, there is a request for an extension, but that requires the approval of all parties, so I had better make sure all parties are here for that. There is also a matter of another individual from a previous meeting that I think is now scheduled for the end of this.

Mr Wood: That may not be a matter.

The Chair: I see. Well, we'll see how that comes about.

JACK JOHNSON

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Jack Johnson, intended appointee as member, Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario board of directors.

The Chair: The first intended appointee is Mr John McLellan Johnson, who is an intended appointee as member, Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario board of directors. Mr Johnson, you can come forward if you will, please. I didn't know your middle name was McLellan. That's my problem. I should have looked in the parliamentary guide and I would have found that out, Jack. Welcome to the committee, Mr Johnson. As I think

members of the committee know, Mr Johnson is a former long-time member of the Ontario Legislature. He comes before us today as an intended appointee.

You have the opportunity, as you know, to make an initial statement. Subsequent to that, there will be questions from the representatives of the three political parties who choose to direct questions to you. I should indicate we will be beginning with the government in the questions today. Welcome, Mr Johnson.

Mr Jack Johnson: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Members of the committee, I appreciate this opportunity to appear before you this afternoon to discuss my proposed appointment to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. I hope you've had a chance to look over my resumé. It is my understanding that board members represent a cross-section of the community, with varied backgrounds and expertise. They should have the ability to resolve disputes, solve problems and, above all, they should have integrity, common sense and be extremely fair.

My 31 years in business as a retail merchant, my years as a member, past and present, of the chamber of commerce, businessmen's association and director of the retail merchants' association have given me some expertise in the business field and have to be of some value to a prospective member of this board. My many years of service as a school board trustee, municipal councillor and mayor and 15 years at Queen's Park have given me the opportunity to work with and assist numerous citizens and resolve their problems, and show my ability to act in a fair and impartial manner.

As a community-minded citizen, my involvement with my church, legion and Lions Club have allowed me to meet with a very large cross-section of society, determine their needs and find ways to assist them.

Most important of all, I believe my success in being elected in 15 elections over 35 years should demonstrate my constituents' belief in my integrity.

My experience as a member of the Canada pension plan review tribunal and as a member of the rural economic development program review panel should be beneficial in performing my duties as a member of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

Thank you. I'll await your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Johnson. We begin our questions with the government, with Mr Johnson -- a different Mr Johnson.

Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex): I wanted to congratulate you. I didn't realize it was that many elections, but I wanted to recognize that. The other thing is that I understand -- and I haven't seen it in Hansard -- I guess I would call him one of the great orators here, certainly the best orator I have heard. The member for Renfrew, Mr Conway, once referred to you as an angel. I was looking for the halo and the wings. I just wanted to confirm that that's right. It would save me looking it up if you could confirm that.

Mr Jack Johnson: I think, Mr Johnson, I could make reference to that someplace.

The Chair: The question, for the members of the committee who didn't hear it, was, "Are you an angel?"

Mr Jack Johnson: I don't think it was an angel.

Mr Bert Johnson: Certainly a heraldic character, then.

Mr Jack Johnson: The angel has flown away.

Mr Bert Johnson: I wouldn't bother you with it. Suffice it to say that I can continue with the rest of my life and say that I've heard absolutely nothing to contradict it.

Mr Jack Johnson: I found it. The angel has returned. It was in reference to when former parliamentarians of Ontario were invited by the members of the three parties to sit in the gallery two years ago. As we were sitting there, the members of the Legislature took turns making comments about them, paying tribute mostly, and each party made their comments. The dean of the House, from Renfrew -- and I'll quote Sean Conway. He looked up in the gallery and he mentioned Lorne Henderson, and then -- I'll quote this: "The former member from Wellington-Dufferin-Peel, Jack Johnson, is up there. I've known many sinners in politics. I don't think I ever knew a saint except Jack Johnson. Jack had to be one of the absolute best people who ever came here, and I'm delighted to see him here today."

I'm no angel, but a saint.

Mr Bert Johnson: Close enough. Certainly from that recollection I'll try my darnedest to see if I can't find a relationship between our families.

Mr Chair, I have no other questions.

The Chair: Anything further?

Mr Wood: We'll waive the balance of our time.

The Chair: We now move to the official opposition.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): Let me begin by saying, Mr Johnson, I watched you as a young staffer here, and while I can't attest to your saintliness, I can certainly say you've got a remarkable career and history of public service both here at the Legislature and in your own community. I think you're to be respected for that and the province is grateful for your service.

You are being appointed to a significant body, and I'd like to ask you a couple of questions about that, particularly as they relate to gaming. What are your views on the expansion of casino gaming in the province of Ontario?

Mr Jack Johnson: The expansion of the present --

Mr Duncan: Yes, from the present number of both casinos and charitable casinos.

Mr Jack Johnson: I happened to read an article in the Toronto Star this morning that reflects that the province makes close to \$2 billion a year between them. I'm not sure how much further we have to expand.

Mr Duncan: So you would oppose the expansion of casinos?

Mr Jack Johnson: No, I can't say that, Mr Duncan. I'm not privy to any information pertaining to the needs of the industry or the commission, but my personal feeling is that we have enough gambling facilities in the province, unless there's something I'm missing.

Mr Duncan: In the area of liquor control and liquor control inspectors, there are some counties in the province that have less than two inspectors. Do you feel that's an adequate number? Is there an adequate number of liquor inspectors out there? What are your views about the licensing and the regulation and the policing of liquor-serving establishments in the province?

Mr Jack Johnson: Again, Mr Duncan, I'm not knowledgeable about the results of what they are doing now. I'm not sure if two is enough, but certainly it's something that has to be controlled and looked after.

I have a bit of a difficulty: I realized I was going to be asked questions about these items, and yet I haven't any information that can help me to answer them in a meaningful way. When I met with the chairman of the board for a short spell, I asked him if I could obtain some information, and he said, "At the appropriate time we'll give you all you need. Then you'll come in for a training session." I assume at that point in time I will be made knowledgeable about these different areas, but at the present time I can't give you anything.

Mr Duncan: How did you come to know about the appointment? Did you seek out an appointment, or did the government approach you? How did that happen?

Mr Jack Johnson: I would think that basically I sought it out. When I retired, I stood for council again and was re-elected, and I was appointed to a board, the Canada pension plan review tribunal, for a three-year appointment. I enjoyed it very much and I felt I was quite good at it. It was made up of a doctor or somebody in the medical profession and a lawyer, and I was the third party. In all the hearings we had, we never had anything but unanimous agreement. I felt I contributed a lot toward that, because I was always able to work with people. When that term was up, I was asked if I would be interested in serving on the rural economic development program project review panel. I thought that would be of interest, so I agreed to serve on that. I'm still on that board.

1320

Mr Duncan: I note you were born in Detroit, Michigan. You must be terribly disappointed with the Red Wings this year.

Mr Jack Johnson: I'm sorry?

Mr Duncan: I note you were born in Detroit, Michigan. You must be terribly disappointed in the Red

Wings, not to mention the Tigers. I expect they'll come back somewhat.

That'll be all, Mr Chair.

The Chair: I know that the member for Windsor-St Clair is certainly disappointed these days. There's a lot of disappointment to go around, it seems to me. After the first round of the playoffs, there's a lot of disappointment to go around.

Mrs Dombrowsky, you have questions?

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Yes. Good afternoon, Mr Johnson, and thank you for coming.

I live in a part of the province where from time to time I hear from store owners who live in parts of my riding that derive most of their business from seasonal business, from the tourist industry in the summer. They live in areas where there are lakes and a lot of cottages. They sometimes have problems obtaining lottery terminals because of the lack of consistency of sales. Overall, they achieve the expected number of dollar sales. However, from month to month, particularly during the fall and winter months, it can be problematic for them to meet the dollar minimum sales in their places of business. Of course, they encounter problems because the commission is quite rigid in terms of its criteria for assigning such gaming terminals in general stores.

Do you have an opinion in terms of the flexibility that perhaps might and could be exercised so that some of the businesses which do rely on seasonal business might be able to access some of the lottery terminals?

Mr Jack Johnson: I come from a small community. The whole area is small towns. I realize there are quite different problems in rural Ontario than there are in larger cities. The point you make is quite valid. As I've said before, I'm not knowledgeable about some of these regulations, but your comments make eminent good sense. I would wonder why the board or the administration or whoever would make the changes couldn't take into consideration that you have a limited number of months and base it on the monthly rather than on the year.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Certainly it's not the request of the store owners I speak with that they would be expected to sell any fewer dollars over the course of a year, but for them it can be particularly problematic to meet the minimum number of ticket sales in the winter months. So I would like to know if you saw that you might have any kind of role to advocate on this issue.

Mr Jack Johnson: Maybe I'm premature in saying yes, but I would like to say yes. I realize that, for example, in your riding, with the geographical area and the small communities, many businesses fall into this category. Unless there's something I'm missing now, it would seem to me that it should be looked at and that there's no reason at all why a type of reasonable compromise couldn't be reached. I can't say that I can change anything.

Mrs Dombrowsky: No, but you would be prepared to advocate?

Mr Jack Johnson: Certainly.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You certainly can appreciate the issue. In some of the communities, if area residents or seasonal residents are not able to obtain tickets, for example, at the general store, it requires a 20-kilometre drive to the next centre where they could obtain those. So what the shopkeepers tell me is that's business going 20 kilometres down the road for them.

Mr Jack Johnson: For many years I've always had similar problems trying to relate the small communities to what is available in the cities. There are always issues like this that can at least be addressed or discussed and looked at, and unless there's some compelling reason, they quite often can be changed.

The Chair: We now move to the third party: Mr Martin, MPP, Sault Ste Marie.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): Thank you. It's good to be back. I missed the last session. I heard it was pretty exciting. I read all about it in the newspaper back home and was wishing I'd been here.

The Chair: We certainly did miss you on that occasion, but we did have to carry on.

Mr Martin: The last meeting was during March break. I had commitments to my kids and my family that I couldn't get out of, and so wasn't able to be here for it. But it's good to be here again. I welcome you, Mr Johnson, this afternoon.

Mr Bert Johnson: I welcome you too.

Mr Martin: Jokers everywhere.

You are being considered this afternoon for what I think is a very important appointment for the province, when you consider the amount of activity and money that's spent and generated these days by people on behalf of government in licensed establishments, whether it's gaming, lottery or alcohol. It's phenomenal. There was a report in the paper yesterday that there's something like \$6 billion worth of revenue for government now through gaming of various sorts. So it becomes a very important responsibility for a number of reasons.

In considering your appointment -- and I'm sure you considered it quite seriously, given your very impressive track record of public service -- what would be the most important thing, in your mind, that you would be called upon to do in terms of this appointment?

Mr Jack Johnson: I'm not sure I understand, Mr Martin.

Mr Martin: When you consider the responsibility and the role of the commission that you're being appointed to, what, in your mind, would be the priority issue or concern at the moment that this commission would be dealing with?

Mr Jack Johnson: What I should be doing?

Mr Martin: No, the commission itself, in your view.

Mr Jack Johnson: The report in the Toronto Star today shows the \$2-billion profit that the province makes on it. They've got some money so that they could look into some of the areas that could be causing concern. Maybe an increased study of the problems of gambling could be one. You have a committee set up. I'm not sure

how effective it is. You constantly have to control the sale of alcohol. You can't just take the profits and let things go. You have to put some back to help to solve some of the problems created by the lotteries and the alcohol.

Mr Martin: Do you think there are significant numbers of problems created by the overwhelming presence now of gaming and gaming opportunity in the province?

Mr Jack Johnson: There certainly are always problems related to gambling. There have been for centuries. It will never go away. We certainly shouldn't be encouraging people to spend their money on gambling when there are so many other things that they need. Unfortunately, some of the less affluent people are the ones who suffer the most.

Mr Martin: Is there any training or experience in your own background that would make you particularly appropriate for this appointment, given those concerns?

Mr Jack Johnson: I think the main factor would be my many years of service with the public. I've been constantly in touch with people who have had problems in all facets of society. I feel that I'm very concerned with helping to solve those problems; I always have been. It's one reason that I enjoy working. I've always worked with people all my life. I'm not mechanical by nature, and I'm not interested in gardens and things. People have always been what I've worked with, the boards I've sat on and committees and councils, so their concerns and their problems have to be basic to my way of life. I've always tried to help them, in whatever way it is.

On the school board, they would have children who need help. In fact, in the last few years I've even served breakfast in the school breakfast program. Little children come who've had nothing to eat. Some of them would eat three, four or five pieces of toast. They're eating their lunch, as well as their breakfast. This bothers me.

1330

Mr Martin: Certainly problem gambling is a problem. There are other problems that are now starting to crop up across the province. I have a charity casino in my own community of Sault Ste Marie, and that, combined with the aggressive nature of the lottery corporation in doing what it has been mandated to do, which is to introduce new gaming opportunities and raise money for government, is also, because of that, killing or hurting in significant ways the ability of many other charitable organizations in my community and, I dare say, across the province to actually raise money in the usual, traditional way that they've raised money for their events.

I know that the money that's collected through this commission is, for the most part, put into general revenues, and then some of it is distributed through Trillium grants that go back out into communities. Some of the communities, like my own, get a 5% cut of any profit that's realized. But there are many other organizations, like the Legion, for example, or, in my own community, the Marconi that for years ran bingos and had raffles of various sorts that are finding now that the

competition is fierce for that scarce dollar, that disposable money that was available previously to the charitable sector for fundraising and games of chance etc. It just isn't there any more.

The other thing that's happening that I think this commission could speak to if it really wanted to and if it wanted to carry out a study is the application now of the rules and regulations where gaming is concerned outside of the casino for Legions, Elks clubs, the Eagles and that. They're finding it more and more difficult to get a licence. They're finding it more and more difficult to cover administrative costs for themselves from the money that's generated through the running of a bingo or a raffle of some sort. They're finding their ability to spend that money on their charitable objectives now being challenged more and more by the authorities. Is that an experience of yours in the community you come from? Is there anything you could bring to shed some light on that or perhaps that we could do -- maybe you, if you get appointed today as a new commissioner, and me, concerned about my community -- to change that circumstance?

Mr Jack Johnson: I'm not sure, Mr Chair, if I should mention this or not; it might be a conflict of interest. But the very point that has been raised is one that was raised at home. I'm a member of the Lions Club and work in their bingo. Actually, I sell Nevada tickets; maybe I won't be permitted to any longer. I'm not fussy on the bingo, but I sell tickets. One of the members who looks after them mentioned the problem they're having with the commission. They have to pay so much for a licence. The licence expires. Because of the bad weather these last three or four months, their sales haven't been up, so they've got five boxes of tickets that they've paid X number of dollars for that they can't use unless they get an extension. The licence has run out and they have to reorder the licence. So they're going to contact the board. I didn't mention I had any involvement, but it is a problem and it's something that should be brought to the attention of the commission or whoever. If changes are needed, they certainly should be made, unless there's something that again I'm not familiar with. So on the point you raised, I agree with you.

Mr Martin: I would encourage you to bring that experience to the board, if you get the all-clear today, because the sense I have is that the folks operating at that level now don't seem to be connected to the real, everyday trials and tribulations of charitable organizations now trying to get licences, trying to run their operations and pay for their overhead costs, and then actually being allowed to spend the money on the things they're chartered to do by way of their charitable objects with the federal government. It's a terrible difficulty, to be honest with you. There are a number of organizations in my own community that are considering just folding their tents and saying, "We're not going to do the things we used to do; we can't afford it."

Mr Jack Johnson: Well, Mr Martin, maybe again I'm speaking out of turn, but my feeling would be that if I sat

on this board and things of the nature you mentioned were brought to my attention, it would be remiss of me not to bring them to the attention of the board. I feel that if service clubs maybe jointly made presentations saying they have problems -- or the Legion, whoever runs the bingos. If it was brought to the attention of the board, to the members of Parliament, and they were to see -- if it was brought together and looked at, there's no reason that common sense couldn't prevail and changes couldn't be made.

I sat here so long, and when a rule is made, when a law is drafted, it's sometimes possible to change it. One of the lawyers sitting in one of the committees I was at one time said there isn't a piece of legislation drafted that shouldn't have changes made to it before the ink is dry.

Mr Martin: The sense we have in our community is that there's somebody orchestrating this such that more and more of the disposable income available to charities and games of chance that small operations run is being driven into the casinos and the bigger lottery operations, so the communities are losing. You know, you never get back what you lose, and the volunteer effort that is what creates community in the first place is disappearing. The Marconi club, which runs a fabulous Italian festival and soccer tournament for children every summer, said to me two weeks ago, "We're not going to do it. The rules and regulations are so tight now and so stringent that we just can't be bothered. We can't work our way through it." It has to be changed.

The other thing I find in my community, if I have a couple more minutes, Mr Chair, is that there is also an overwhelming oversight in the area of some of the small bars and corner pubs in my community, where the Alcohol and Gaming Commission is almost like a SWAT team, Gestapo, coming in and setting people up to actually break the rules and then charging them, with really no provision to appeal before they get a summons to close down for a number of days or whatever.

I know at one time Minister Runciman spoke of organized crime in the province, to get a grip on it and erase it. But the sense we have in our community -- and I've had meetings with lots of my small business community who run pubs and bars, most of them family people trying to make a living, providing employment for a lot of people, generating some tax revenue for government and providing an opportunity for the community as well to do other things. They as well are finding that they're forever under the thumb, not knowing who is looking over their shoulder or who is sitting at the back of the pub watching. Entrapment by some of the officers who work under the direction of the commission is now sort of almost the order of the day. Is that something that goes on in your community?

Mr Jack Johnson: No. I can honestly say that in my many years of experience I have never had any connection whatsoever with any entrapment pertaining to the police. We have 30 or 40 OPP officers in my hometown, and they have an excellent relationship.

The Chair: You won't believe this, Mr Martin, but that concludes your time. I know it was just getting interesting for you, and I'm always the ogre who has to intervene and say the time is up, and I have to say that at this time.

Mr Johnson, thank you very much for being with us today. You may step down now, sir, and we'll move to our next intended appointee.

1340

DIANE MAVRINAC-ROSS

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Diane Mavrinac-Ross, intended appointee as member, Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre Corp board of directors.

The Chair: Our next intended appointee is Diane Mavrinac-Ross, an intended appointee as a member of the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre Corp board of directors. You may come forward. I know you are aware that you have an opportunity to make an initial statement, and then questions will subsequently come from members of the committee, should they choose to do so. Welcome to the committee once again.

Ms Diane Mavrinac-Ross: Thank you very much and good afternoon.

The Chair: It's all yours.

Ms Mavrinac-Ross: Thank you. I would like to make some opening remarks.

Mr Chairman, I would like to begin by thanking you and your committee for providing me with the opportunity to address you this afternoon. I appreciate your interest in my proposed appointment to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre Corp board. I would like to begin by stating that it is an honour to be nominated for a directorship on the board, and I welcome the opportunity to serve the city and province in this capacity.

I understand that you've been given a copy of my resumé. In addition, I would like to provide you with additional background information and to highlight my qualifications.

I had the good fortune to be born and raised in the mining community of Kirkland Lake, in northeastern Ontario. During my youth, Kirkland Lake was a vibrant town where my family enjoyed success in the hospitality industry for 40 years. My father, Joe, started in the hotel business with my grandfather, and he eventually went on to own a hotel with a restaurant and catering operation. The underpinning of my family's success was our commitment to quality and the emphasis on personal service.

While in high school and university, I worked in the family business. Years later, I feel I received no better training. I learned to deal with the public and to appreciate the importance of customer service, the very basis of the hospitality industry. An understanding and application of these core values is required whether running a small, family-owned business or the largest convention facility in the country.

Also, growing up in Kirkland Lake provided me with a lifelong commitment to community service. My family, in particular my father, was very active in the community. I don't remember a time when we were not supporting community events and projects. The common thread was always to promote the town and to improve its services and facilities. For example, my father took a leadership role in building the home for the aged, the community complex that has recently been renamed in his honour, and the museum of northern history.

When I moved to Toronto, I continued to serve the community in a modest way. I have done volunteer work throughout my life, running an arts and crafts program for disadvantaged children while in university, volunteering as a Big Sister for the children's aid society and canvassing for the arthritis society. When my children were younger, I did extensive volunteer work at their school. Recently, my husband and I initiated a leadership donation to the Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care to fund Alzheimer's research on behalf of his parents.

Now that my children are older, I have the time and commitment to serve in another capacity. As a director of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, I feel I would have the opportunity to make a contribution to both the city and the province. As the largest convention facility in the country, the MTCC takes a leadership role in promoting tourism in Toronto and the rest of the province. I believe that my background, experience and interests prepare me to make a real and positive contribution.

Additionally, an important aspect of running any large facility is efficient and cost-effective property management. My husband, Jeffery, operates his family's, as well as his own, property management firm, overseeing the management of their residential and commercial holdings. Through my husband, I have acquired considerable knowledge of day-to-day property management and ongoing maintenance issues, as well as long-range planning for capital improvements.

Lastly, should I be appointed, another perspective I would bring to the position is that of a convention facility client. From 1996 to 2002, I served on the Ontario PC Party convention planning committees, with responsibility for much of the programming. As a result, I have a detailed knowledge of the facility, layout and services of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, as well as the other convention centres in the province -- London, Hamilton and Ottawa. This has enabled me to compare and contrast the large convention centres across the province, as well as providing me with a working knowledge of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Based on personal experience, I feel there is no better convention facility than the MTCC.

I would like to close by restating that I'm honoured by this nomination and I believe I can make a positive contribution. The Metro Toronto Convention Centre, along with the tourism industry in the city and the province, is currently faced with unprecedented challenges due to the war in Iraq and SARS. I welcome this challenging opportunity. I have the time, the commitment

to community service and the related background experience to serve as a director.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We will begin our questioning with the official opposition.

Mr Duncan: Thank you for attending today, Ms Mavrinnac-Ross.

Do you know what the asset value of the convention centre is right now?

Ms Mavrinnac-Ross: No, I couldn't answer that question.

Mr Duncan: Do you know what the deficit of the facility was last year?

Ms Mavrinnac-Ross: I don't know what the deficit is, but I know it is operating at a deficit and one of the challenges facing the facility is to increase revenues.

Mr Duncan: The asset value, according to the public accounts, is approximately \$158 million. The deficit last year was approximately \$2 million. There are no convention centres in the country -- in fact, in North America -- that make money. How would you propose to run it more efficiently?

Ms Mavrinnac-Ross: Thank you for that question. One challenge that faces not only the Metro Toronto Convention Centre but the tourism industry in Toronto has been a slight but steady decline in tourism. It's a question of working collaboratively with Tourism Toronto and the Ontario Tourism Partnership team to develop tourism strategies.

The other way to look at it is in terms of costs, property management costs, and looking for efficiencies. I know that the current board is committed to doing so and that these are very real issues before them.

Mr Duncan: It's been suggested to me by officials in the industry that you are wrong about that. In fact you don't need to be looking for efficiencies in the day-to-day operation; you need to be investing more, particularly in light of what's going on in terms of the broader convention business. There is also a fear in this community, as I understand it, that Toronto has actually been losing ground in terms of tourism and convention business even before the most recent problems.

You indicated your experience running your family's hotel business in Kirkland Lake. Was there a convention centre attached to that? What size of business was it?

Ms Mavrinnac-Ross: It was a typical small business in a small town in northern Ontario. But in point of fact, for those of you familiar with small-town businesses, it was more than just a motel. With the catering operation, the business extended to communities in that part of north-eastern Ontario. So it was conventions, government meetings, social functions, weddings -- it was the full gamut.

Mr Duncan: You indicated your position as first vice-president of the Ontario PC Party between 2000 and 2002 and fifth vice-president of the Ontario PC Party from 1998 to 2000. I guess you were the Toronto regional vice-president of the PC Party from 1996 to 1998. You've served in a local capacity from 1982 to the present.

You indicated that as a Tory and as a customer you felt you had a good understanding of the business. How many convention days were actually booked in that period of time?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: In my time on the party executive we had conventions in London and Hamilton and two in Toronto, and then the leadership. While I wasn't involved in organizing the leadership convention, I certainly was involved in organizing two of our conventions at that facility.

Mr Duncan: So less than 10 days in total?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: With all due respect, if you've ever been involved in planning a convention, it requires more than 10 days.

Mr Duncan: I understand that. I've been involved. It's just a question of whether being a customer entitles -- I mean, I buy my car from the Ford Motor Co. That doesn't qualify me to be on their board of directors.

The next question I have is, how did you find out about the appointment?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: I decided in the New Year that I had the time to serve in some capacity, so I went to the public appointments Web site and reviewed the agencies and boards that were available. I focused on a few I was interested in and forwarded my resumé.

Mr Duncan: To whom did you forward your resumé?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: To the public appointments office.

Mr Duncan: And you spoke to no members of Parliament or no people within the government about this appointment?

1350

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: No. Actually, it was self-initiated.

Mr Duncan: Did you speak to anybody subsequent to self-initiating?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: No.

Mr Duncan: Who informed you of your appointment -- your proposed appointment?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: Catherine Mustard, in the appointments office. It's not my appointment; it's my proposed appointment.

Mr Duncan: I think I indicated proposed appointment.

Have you any work experience in the convention and visitors' bureau, area conventions or tourism, subsequent to when you worked in the family business in Kirkland Lake?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: No, I do not.

Mr Duncan: That ended 20 to 30 years ago?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: Yes, approximately.

Mr Duncan: That will be all, Mr Chair.

The Chair: Any further questioning? Mrs Dombrowsky.

Mrs Dombrowsky: No, thanks.

The Chair: None. OK. Then we move to the third party.

Mr Martin: Good afternoon.

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: Hello, Mr Martin.

Mr Martin: It's always good to see somebody who has some knowledge and experience of northern Ontario being appointed to some board or commission.

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: Thank you.

Mr Martin: I note with some pleasure, actually, your upfrontness in terms of your political affiliation. Oftentimes when people come before this committee it's like prying teeth to try to find out what a person's political affiliation is, particularly if it's a member of the Conservative Party. You've obviously got some significant affiliation, involvement and experience there. What role do you feel that background played in your being offered this appointment we're considering here today?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: That's a fair question. I would say the fact that I was involved politically, I was aware of the public appointments process and, as I mentioned earlier, it was self-initiated and I forwarded my resumé. I would suspect that my name was recognized, but I don't think that it was what necessarily tipped the scales to bring me before you today.

Mr Martin: There was some reference in earlier questioning as to your background or experience in the convention centre business. You yourself had mentioned the tremendous challenge that confronts Toronto at the moment because of the war and SARS. Do you have any particular recommendations or suggestions or things you will bring to the table that will be helpful in front of that?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: Well, clearly we're in an unprecedented situation. These are untested waters, and it isn't for me as an individual to sit here and come up with suggestions. It will take the participation of all three levels of government in partnership with the private sector to solve this problem. We are currently faced with the World Health Organization's pronouncement today. We have to win the war on SARS and then go forward to revitalize the tourism industry in Toronto. This will be a collaborative effort. We are, as I say, heading into uncharted waters, and the challenges are immense. The Metro Toronto Convention Centre, while a key player, is a player in a very diverse industry in the city.

Mr Martin: If you find in your role, if you're approved today as the director of this corporation, that in fact it was some shortcoming or some lack of effort by the provincial government, to which you have some affiliation and connection and relationship, that there's some fault there -- for example, there are some who will suggest that the way dollars have been spent on public health over the last few years and the thinness of that resource has now led to our not being able to respond in an aggressive and effective way in the actual stopping of this. If you find out, in your role as a member of this board, that in fact the government itself is getting in the way or is a cause, will you be able to disconnect from your obvious political leaning and be actually critical and challenging of the government to do whatever is required to position Toronto to again be a leader in the tourism industry?

Ms Mavrillac-Ross: Well, I don't foresee that that would be an issue. Public health officials are currently

doing just an excellent job with this crisis. We have to wait until we have a handle on the situation before we can go forward with any revitalization efforts. I don't see that this is an opportunity to blame the government. This is unprecedented. From my personal observation, public health officials in this province are doing an outstanding job. That's how I feel. I don't think there would be a conflict, as a director of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre board, to criticize the government for its handling of the SARS situation.

Mr Martin: Let me maybe frame it differently, then. I also believe that the public health officials out there are doing an outstanding job, but with limited resources. If this government had chosen different priorities over the last five or seven years while it has had power, instead of giving money away by way of tax breaks to those who are not really in need of it, and had spent that money on a strong public health sector which, for example, would have prevented Walkerton and now perhaps could be more aggressively involved in the SARS situation -- the people in the trenches are doing a great job, but we're still not winning the war here.

You yourself suggested that today the World Health Organization has now red-flagged Toronto as a place not to go to. I wouldn't suggest that's anything you could refer to as excellent in terms of dealing with the ultimate long-term end game here, which is to stop this and get a handle on it. If it became obvious to you in your role as a member of this corporation that a lack of investment, support or interest by the government was causing some of the difficulty, would you be able and willing to be critical, challenging and honest in front of that?

Ms Mavrinc-Ross: By nature I am, but I don't foresee that that will be an issue.

Mr Martin: OK, thank you very much.

The Chair: We move to the government. We have Mr Mazzilli.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): Thank you very much for attending. I don't know what it is with the last name, but your father somehow landed in the same seat you're in a while back. Certainly he's very proud of his family. I spoke to him when he was here and at some other events.

You had some very difficult questions posed to you that can be answered in many different ways, quite frankly. Mr Duncan asked about the value of the convention centre. I tried to find these things out myself when I was parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism. Try getting a value on convention centres that are built on leased land. Good luck trying to get any value. No one can come up with one because of the leased-land arrangement.

The other thing we often see with these convention centres is the reporting mechanism of the bottom line: never knowing where the capital money comes from or how that's reported. So the difference between Toronto, London, Ottawa and the many others really depends on where the money for improvements comes from -- does it

come from general revenues or the provincial government? -- all of that and how it's reported.

I think these are things to keep in mind when you are appointed -- everyone's going to have a different opinion of how well the centre is doing or not doing -- and see where the money really comes from and where it goes out.

I would say that Toronto does have challenges. The one thing we heard from the hotel sector is that a lot of the Toronto business is business travel, in fact, and not really tourism. Some of the tourism sector stays out in Mississauga. Obviously, hotel rooms are a little bit cheaper in some of the outlying areas. So Toronto's challenge is going to have to be to bring back business travel. It has to focus on that, because a lot of the tourism, families travelling -- quite frankly, some of the hotel rooms and so on in Toronto are too expensive for a lot of people to afford. So the priorities on promotion and so on between the outlying areas like London and Toronto are very much different. I suspect now there's some competition among the different cities for some of these conventions. Not long ago, London did not have a convention centre, so you had to come to Toronto or Hamilton to book a good-sized convention. Now there's more choice out there. Everyone knows that it's a lucrative business. It's good for their communities.

I just want to say that I think you have your work cut out for you.

1400

Ms Mavrinc-Ross: I would agree with you. Thank you, Mr Mazzilli.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Mazzilli. Any further questions?

Mr Wood: We'll waive the balance of our time.

The Chair: The balance of the time is waived by the government caucus.

Thank you very much, Ms Mavrinc-Ross. You may step down now.

Ms Mavrinc-Ross: Thank you very much.

The Chair: I'm going to depart from the chair for the next one because it is the intended appointee as member, Environmental Review Tribunal. I think members of the committee know I have an interest in that. So with your indulgence, I will ask the member for Windsor-St Clair.

DONALD MARTYN

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Donald Martyn, intended appointee as member, Environmental Review Tribunal.

The Acting Chair (Mr Dwight Duncan): I'll call Mr Donald Martyn, intended appointee as member of the Environmental Review Tribunal. Mr Martyn, you can make an opening statement.

Mr Donald Martyn: Good afternoon, Mr Chairman. Thank you very much for affording me the opportunity of coming before your committee this afternoon. As many of you can see from my background, which I believe you have a copy of, I have a considerable interest in public

service in this province and have been long involved in the affairs of Queen's Park and the programs of the government of Ontario.

By way of brief introduction, I was born in Toronto and brought up in both Toronto and Sutton, Ontario, which is in York region. I was educated in schools in Toronto and received my honours BA and MA from the University of Toronto and completed my doctoral course work at the University of Toronto before I went into public service.

My experience began with teaching. I taught for the Toronto Board of Education and for remedial English programs for ESL, the beginning of the ESL program, which I later had some responsibility for when I was in government. I taught at the University of Toronto and at York University at night school while I was working for the government of Ontario. I became executive assistant to the Premier of Ontario and served in that office for four years, which enabled me to have a broad experience as a senior public servant ranging across the entire government mandate. The advantage then was that it was a much smaller government. We only had five professional staff in the Premier's office, two of whom were in the Cabinet Office. One was a speech writer and --

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): That's a long time ago.

Mr Martyn: It was a simpler day. So there was an opportunity to learn about the government, how it worked, and to have some input into policy development.

When my Premier retired, I went into the civil service and had a senior position with COMSOC -- the beginning of a very enjoyable four years. I ended up supervising 400-plus staff, so I had a significant administrative role. We had offices throughout Ontario, which afforded me additional opportunity, after the years in the Premier's office, to travel the province and to know and understand its communities. I do believe there isn't a community of more than 2,500 in population that I have not visited at some time over the past several years.

In this role at COMSOC, I had some opportunity to administer several statutes and regulations, I had a program development role, and I participated in new statute and regulatory drafting with departmental lawyers and of course with the committee of the Legislature responsible for drafting statutory and regulatory changes. This involved the entire range of that division's activities, and we were able to develop significant new programs in the area of multiculturalism policy, refugee reception for problems that had occurred outside the country, teaching of English as a second language, and the development of the community information program, which was the libraries across the province -- the community development program for communities that needed some opportunity to take charge of their own communities' affairs and articulate common positions.

We also were able to ultimately develop the Ontario lottery program, which stopped the flow of funds to hospitals in Ireland and provided funds for the people of this province for things such as art galleries and sports

and recreational programs -- and not least was the opportunity to make a substantial contribution to the consolidated revenue fund. I think some of you will appreciate that at that time that was known as ostensible dedication.

Following my years at COMSOC, I left the government and went into a consulting practice that primarily looked at government programs, and I worked with various governments -- municipal, regional, provincial and federal -- over the course of a number of years. Of interest to this committee was the development of the technology program in the early 1980s, during the horrific recession we had. This involved embarking upon on a \$250-million program over five years with technology centres located in the north, in the southwest peninsula, and in St Catharines, Sudbury and Ottawa. Among other things, it was the beginning of Silicone Valley in Ottawa and the manufacturing muscle of the tri-city area in the Cambridge area. This involved creating the business plans for these technology centres and the initial staffing of them -- setting up boards of directors etc.

I was also involved in such other areas as agricultural conferences, strategic planning, zero-base budgeting etc. We did a number of things with the federal government with regard to free trade, a very important issue for the province of Ontario, its workers and its industries; and some not-so-much-fun things like teaching boards of trade and so on how to deal with the GST and so on.

With regard to my private activities, I've had considerable experience in agriculture. I mentioned Sutton -- I've run a farm for some time, doing some cash crop and some livestock in the earlier period. I've been a member of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the York soil improvement association. As most of you know, farming is managing, or at least coping with, your environment. I also participated in a Latin American-Team Canada ag trade mission with Minister Vanclief in 1998. It was absolutely striking, the difference, the environment backwardness of agricultural practices in places such as Chile. You might want to reconsider your next purchase of Chilean red wine.

1410

In the community, I've had some experience which reflects on the mandate of this tribunal. As I think I mentioned, teaching is an experience which allows you to learn, to assess, to listen and to adjudicate. To run a committee of adjustment in the town of Georgina in York region for four years gave me ample opportunity to understand the problems of conflicting points of view and the need to develop a consensus that was acceptable to all. I was a member of the planning board for the town of Georgina. I was, for four years, the planning and finance chair of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, in which period we expanded the authority's participation to municipalities further up the lake. It's just about, at this date today, to completely encompass the shores of Lake Simcoe -- an extremely important water area in the Toronto area. It dealt with morain issues; it

dealt with runoff of manure, for instance, from duck farms on the moraine, which flowed both north and south from the moraine; the problems of the Holland Marsh farmers and their intense efforts to get three crops per year, to enable the city of Toronto to be fed, but by so doing they contaminated water in the Holland River -- and this of course flowed into the system of Lake Simcoe, which has a sports fishery. I was also, for a period, an executive director of the Toronto waterfront council, for three years, which dealt with the problems of the harbour cleanup and had a variety of individuals, including the royal commission on the waterfront.

Through this experience, we all here have an appreciation and a wish to contribute to public service. The fact that we're all here means that we want to make Ontario a better place. I believe very strongly in that. I believe in public service. I believe what we're all doing is part of a process that's extremely important. I also believe that there's something reassuring about governing by the rules. The Legislature, on behalf of the people of Ontario, makes the rules; the ministry applies them; quasi-judicial bodies such as the Environmental Review Tribunal make an independent and important review of decisions of ministry directors and provide a fair and unbiased public hearing process to assess the merits of projects that will have an impact on the environment.

The environmental statutes which are the subject matter of the ERT are important to all Ontarians. The decisions of the Environmental Review Tribunal must reflect a serious and intelligent understanding and support for principles that are environmentally significant. I want to assure members of the committee today that I will uphold the protections contained in the legislation for the benefit of us all. I believe that sound environmental principles are fundamental to the health of the people of Ontario. This is our public interest mandate.

The Acting Chair: Thank you, Mr Martyn. We'll begin the questioning with the NDP this time. You have up to 10 minutes.

Mr Martin: Your appointment is a full-time vice-chair position.

Mr Martyn: Yes, sir.

Mr Martin: Do you have any idea what that pays?

Mr Martyn: I don't know exactly. I suspect it will be not enough.

Mr Martin: It's a civil service salary.

Mr Martyn: Yes. It's probably an executive 3.

Mr Martin: Will we be reading your name in the paper next year, as one of those folks who make over \$100,000?

Mr Martyn: No. Mr Robarts used to quite take delight in putting those on the front page of the Globe, all his salaries. Salaries at that time were \$15,000.

Mr Martin: Are you a member of the Progressive Conservative Party?

Mr Martyn: I certainly worked for the Conservative Premier. The answer is yes.

Mr Martin: I find it strange -- one of the comments I made the last time I was here, and it was quite a while

ago, was that we had at least two full sessions of the committee where we didn't have anybody before us except Conservatives being appointed. Then, I believe last week some of the excitement was some comment by somebody relatively new who was here also noting that we had a full slate of Progressive Conservatives being appointed last week; then we had Mr Tilson given a year-less-a-day appointment I guess a week or two before that; and now, today, we have had so far three full-fledged, bona fide Progressive Conservatives before us. I guess this will continue, to some degree. Not that it should in any way diminish the qualification of some of the folks before us, because we've all, I think, at some point or other approved of appointments of people of various political stripes. It's just passing strange that that's all we get coming before the committee these days.

We have some really serious challenges confronting the province at the moment in the area of the environment, and particularly in the area of how we protect our water, and some of what's happening out there in light of that. For example, it wasn't that long ago that there was a report that I believe the Minister of the Environment -- I could have this wrong; maybe Mr Bradley would know, and he could get to it when it's his turn. There was a licence given to take water from a river in a small community in the province that flew in the face of recommendations by all of the responsible bodies and organizations overseeing that. If that in fact became a regular habit, what would your position be as a member of this tribunal in front of that kind of behaviour, given the concern, particularly since Walkerton, that exists in the province at the moment?

Mr Martyn: Water is fundamental to us all and it's extremely important that we be absolutely vigilant in everything we do with regard to the use of water. I don't think any of us would be appreciative of efforts to bulk-export water, but we also have to know that water has multi purposes, including what we ourselves need. I think the ministry is approached with thousands of permit requests per year. There's a complexity of individual circumstances as to where the water is to be drawn. Each watershed is different. Individual circumstances apply, whether they be industry or communities or even golf courses; certainly agriculture. And you must ensure that there be a balance and a protection of all interests.

I suppose in the issue of water permits, it is almost impossible -- it's certainly difficult -- to come up with one-size-fits-all. I would like to know a great deal more about the issue than I do now. That's just based on my general knowledge. But in this and many other issues, it's not the tribunal that makes the rules; it's the Legislature that makes the rules.

Mr Martin: Yes, and I guess it's important for us to know, in coming to the tribunal and being appointed to the tribunal, what your leaning or attitude would be in some of these matters.

I was at a meeting a week ago Saturday in Elliot Lake, where the Algoma District Municipal Association got together. They were looking at the challenge of water:

protecting water at source, distributing water and then managing waste water. The presentation that was made, given the desire of government and the public to make sure we don't have another Walkerton -- it's going to be very expensive. The new technology, the regulations, the standards that are being set are quite high, and all for good reason. The discussion that took place after that was, "How do municipalities now actually deliver on this requirement?" There was some suggestion that, just as in the case of Hydro, we may be heading down a road to privatize the management of source water, the distribution of water and the management of waste water. What would your position be on that?

1420

Mr Martyn: I think the legislation gives the mandate to the Ministry of the Environment to supervise this area, as a primary mandate. I think personal opinions I might have would have to be better informed than they are at the moment. I think the role of the tribunal is not to make uninformed decisions; I think it's to evaluate appeals over actions of directors of the Ministry of the Environment, which I think is the proper way for this to be done.

I think the educational role of environmental issues is important to everyone: to members of the Legislature, to members of the staff of the ministry and to members of the public. I think everything that could be done by the tribunal members by way of public information sessions, by clear and cogent writing of decisions -- these are efforts to inform and improve the public's knowledge, which should be one of our public interest mandates.

Mr Martin: OK. The information that was prepared for us for today indicates that the Environmental Assessment Act "applies only to public sector undertakings. However, the minister retains the statutory discretion to exempt any public sector project from the requirement of undergoing an environmental assessment.... In addition," environmental assessments "are required of private sector projects at the government's discretion. (For example, many private sector landfill sites are covered under the regulations)."

The Acting Chair: Mr Martin, you have one minute left.

Mr Martin: OK. It has been argued by many folks that "the act should be amended to make EAs mandatory for all environmentally significant projects, regardless of whether they are proposed by a public sector agency or a private sector firm." What would your thoughts on that issue be?

Mr Martyn: Well, it's the responsibility of the Environmental Review Tribunal to conduct all hearings about environmental assessments that are sent to it. The Environmental Review Tribunal must be careful to make no prejudgments. If all, or even more, environmental assessments are to be heard by the Environmental Review Tribunal, that's clearly a decision for the Legislature.

The Acting Chair: Time's up, Mr Martin. The government has no time left; the proponent took 11 minutes. I'll turn it over to the official opposition. Mr Bradley.

Mr Bradley: I first want to note with great interest the fact that when you were the executive assistant to Premier Robarts, the Progressive Conservative Premier of a number of years ago, there were fewer than 10 people in the Premier's office. Today there's a virtual army of advisers and whiz kids and so on in that office. So you can certainly hearken back to the good old days, probably when members of the caucus had much more say than the whiz kids who advise Premiers to hold budgets at major corporate headquarters instead of in the Legislature.

Mr Martyn: You should call for an environmental assessment.

Mr Bradley: I think that's a very good suggestion -- some kind of assessment at the very least.

I have to be careful about the questions I'm asking you, because the minister's staff is back there taking copious notes. I know them very well, and they're all great people, nice people, but they'll want to know the questions I'm asking and report them to my friend the minister.

There are two concerns out there amongst political observers -- and I'm totally neutral in this regard. But amongst political observers there's a fear that just before a provincial election the government is going to rush through all these patronage appointments of well-known Progressive Conservatives, loyal Progressive Conservatives. I've heard people say that, and you may fit that category.

But I want to go to another concern that is expressed by the environmental community, and that is that the government wants to ensure that its environmental tribunals and other tribunals that might have some influence on the environment have more cautious, small-c conservative people sitting on them than perhaps might be the situation at present, particularly after the situation with Tay River, where the minister felt he had to overrule the tribunal, and the situation where the Minister of Natural Resources overruled the Niagara Escarpment Commission. So there's this fear out there. Would you describe yourself as a cautious, conservative person -- I'm not asking for a capital c there; small c -- in dealing with environmental issues?

Mr Martyn: I'm not sure quite how to answer that, because throughout my life I've been anything but cautious. If I'd been cautious, I would have stayed in the public service and have retired by now on a fully indexed pension. I think my instinct has always been to try to do the best job I can in any of the myriad interests I've pursued and to try to feel I've done something worthwhile when that is completed. I believe very strongly in public service, Mr Bradley. I believe this is an extraordinarily important board, and I think it's reflected in the fact that you yourself review each and every appointment to it, and your background would indicate an ongoing, lifetime interest in it.

I think the interests I've pursued in my private endeavours both in agriculture and with conservation in the past would indicate that I care about the issues. I

think it's extremely important that we attempt to make this a better society because of our efforts rather than any personal point of view that might be deemed to have influenced us. I think an open mind does not mean an ill-informed mind. I think the responsibility here is to require people who serve on boards such as this to approach issues in an intelligent way and to try to do the best they can to ensure a result that is beneficial to all Ontarians.

Mr Bradley: Does it concern you that the Minister of the Environment, in a very high-profile case, after a long hearing and evidence produced, in fact overturned the ruling of the tribunal based on evidence which was obtained by the minister after the tribunal hearing and therefore evidence that would not have been tried before the tribunal -- at least that was partially his reason for doing so -- and that the Minister of Natural Resources would have overruled the Niagara Escarpment Commission recommendation on an aggregates issue? Does that concern you, that ministers are now making what most would define as political decisions to overrule tribunals and make decisions which are anti-environmental rather than environmental?

Mr Martyn: Well, I indicated earlier that I believe in the rules, and I believe that you as members of the Legislature set the rules, including the rules that govern the operation of ministries. The Environmental Review Tribunal reports administratively to the Minister of the Environment, and no responsible member of any board likes to have their decisions overturned after weeks of review and work. But as you know as a former minister, certain decisions in this field can be overturned by the cabinet on behalf of the Legislature with regard to facts, or by the courts on issues of law. I think some of the suggestions of the Environmental Commissioner, who is sort of like an independent environmental ombudsman to the Legislature, are useful. I think his suggestion, for instance, about a watershed plan is a good idea, and I endorse the idea. But not every river should be subject to this. It's very costly and it won't happen overnight. But in terms of long-term planning, I would think this sort of work should be part of the ministry's long-term planning to ensure that there's a balance and the development of a useful database.

1430

Mr Bradley: Thank you. I will yield to Mrs Dombrowsky, who has some further detailed questions.

The Acting Chair: You have about three minutes, Mrs Dombrowsky.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Then I will be brief, and hopefully maybe you could make your answers brief. First of all, do you still operate your consulting company?

Mr Martyn: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You've indicated in your remarks you are a fully indexed pension --

Mr Martyn: No, I'm not.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Oh, I thought that's what I heard you say.

Mr Martyn: If I had stayed in the public service I would be, and I'd be retired. Oh, heavens no. I have no pension from the government of Ontario, absolutely none.

Mrs Dombrowsky: All right, then. OK.

I want to now go to the comments you made with regard to watershed assessments. Are you aware that at the present time, the Ministry of the Environment does not have the resources to do any kind of cataloguing of permits to take water within watersheds?

Mr Martyn: I wasn't aware of that. I would think that it would be a useful long-term planning tool for the people of Ontario if the ministry had the resources.

Mrs Dombrowsky: The Environmental Commissioner, Mr Miller, would say that that in fact is imperative, that if we as a province are going to continue to issue permits to take water with any kind of responsibility, we should have some sense of what permits to take water are out there already.

You have suggested that it is the Legislature that makes public policy with regard to environmental issues. Are you aware that there was a private member's bill, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act, the water source protection act, that would have done three things? It would have required the Ministry of the Environment to notify conservation authorities and municipalities of permits to take water in their jurisdictions, and the third thing it would have done was that it would have placed the statement of environmental values that the Ministry of the Environment has in legislation; it would have made it legally binding. You probably read in the background material on the OMYA issue that that was one of the arguments made by the government, that, "Yes, we have a statement of environmental values, but because it's not in legislation, we really don't have to follow it." Do you have an opinion on that?

Mr Martyn: I'm cautious about having an opinion as a member of a tribunal, but I would like to --

Mrs Dombrowsky: You're not there yet. It's important for me if I'm going to support you there.

Mr Martyn: I understand. I would like to think -- because I've always thought that words are important, words have value. I think it's important that ministries have environmental statements of value. I think they should form guidance and a benchmark for not only ministry decisions but the activities of the Environmental Commissioner.

Mrs Dombrowsky: But should they have the force of law?

The Acting Chair: Time's up. I apologize. So many questions, so little time. Thank you very much, Mr Martyn.

I will relinquish the chair to its rightful inhabitant.

The Chair: And the cloak of impartiality is now placed on my shoulders.

Thank you very much, sir. You may step down now.

REGINALD STACKHOUSE

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Reginald Stackhouse, intended appointee as member, Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The Chair: Our next intended appointee will be an intended appointee as a member of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Mr Reginald Stackhouse. Mr Stackhouse, you may come forward, sir, if you will, please. You are welcome to make an initial statement to the committee if you see fit, and then the questions will flow from the committee members if they see fit. Welcome.

Mr Reginald Stackhouse: Thank you very much. Mr Chairman and members of the committee, I will be honoured to serve on the Ontario Human Rights Commission and would like to present some of my qualifications for that appointment.

In my second term as a Progressive Conservative member of Parliament, I was Chair of the House of Commons standing committee on human rights. During that term, our committee published two significant reports. One was Human Rights Behind the Iron Curtain, and the other, Human Rights and Aging in Canada. I was a Canadian delegate to the World Conference of Experts on Human Rights in Ottawa, and a Canadian delegate to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations in Geneva. As well, I was a member of a parliamentary mission to Ethiopia during the 1985 famine, and the next year served as a Canadian representative to the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York.

In 1988, I toured five Central American republics with the Canadian foreign minister to consult with human rights officials in the governments of those countries. From 1990 to 1993, I was a commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission and spoke on its behalf in a number of cities as well as addressing the International Convention of Human Rights Agencies in Philadelphia in 1992.

Before those parliamentary and federal years, I served on the Scarborough Board of Education for three terms, the Scarborough Public Library Board for one year and was the first chair of the founding board of governors of Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology, and later a member of the Ontario Council of Regents.

I am now principal emeritus and research professor at Wycliffe College in the University of Toronto and the Toronto School of Theology. In this position I devote myself chiefly to theological research and writing. Currently I'm working on two books that indirectly relate to concerns of the Human Rights Commission. One is Theologies of Wealth and Poverty, which will be a history of thought on those subjects. The other is The Courage to Grow Older.

My wife and I live in Bracebridge and Toronto. We have four adult children and nine grandchildren.

The Chair: Thank you very much, sir. We begin our questioning with the government.

Mr Wood: We'll waive our time.

The Chair: The government has waived its time, so we go to the official opposition. Mrs Dombrowsky.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good afternoon, Mr Stackhouse. It was very interesting to read the background material that you provided to this committee. You are obviously a very busy man, and you do a lot of writing.

Mr Stackhouse: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Very good. I have a couple of questions with regard to your interest in this role. I certainly do appreciate that your past experiences are germane to the area you would be working in. How is it that you have come to be an intended appointee here this afternoon?

Mr Stackhouse: Thank you very much, Mrs Dombrowsky. Did I pronounce that correctly?

Mrs Dombrowsky: Yes, you did.

Mr Stackhouse: I'm always conscious of that because of "Stackhouse." I just spell it out automatically.

Why am I interested in this position? A couple of years ago, the Ontario Human Rights Commission conducted a study and issued a report on age discrimination and aging in general. One of the public statements indicated that the chief commissioner and the commission were very keen on older people having an opportunity for jobs and career development. I thought at the time, "Well, I'll see if they really mean it," and I applied for the Human Rights Commission. That was two years ago, and here I am.

I'd be very glad to do my part, as one of the older people of Ontario, to speak for them and be concerned about them, and also as a resident for more than half the year in a small town, to reflect that as well.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I also noted in your background, along with the fact that you grow prize potatoes, that you live on Lake Muskoka but that you spend the winter in Florida.

1440

Mr Stackhouse: That used to be the case, but we disposed of our property there in 1999. We now have a condo unit in Toronto.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Oh, I see. So your place of residence is Toronto?

Mr Stackhouse: And Bracebridge.

Mrs Dombrowsky: All right, because the address here --

Mr Stackhouse: I'm not as familiar with what you have there, but my address in Toronto is 20 Avoca Avenue, apartment 505; and my address in Bracebridge is Rural Route 4.

Mrs Dombrowsky: So you're suggesting, then, that you don't spend that time in Florida any longer.

Mr Stackhouse: No, not any longer. While I was there, I must say, it wasn't just vacation. I wrote every day and completed, I think it was, two books while we were there.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Mr Stackhouse, when I read that you spent considerable time out of the country, it did raise some questions for me in terms of this appointment, because I'm sure that you read in the background of the

caseload of the commission. I would expect that all members of the commission are given a pretty energetic calendar and I'm sure would be expected to carry their fair share of the load. So I think it is important that we have clarified that.

Mr Stackhouse: Thank you.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You've indicated in your remarks, of course, that you are particularly interested in the human rights issue with regard to mandatory retirement. I know that you would be aware as well in this great city that there is another issue of great concern, one that is being written about and that we hear about a great deal in the media, around racial profiling. There are some mixed views on that issue. Do you have any that you would be able to share with us here today on that important issue?

Mr Stackhouse: Ms Dombrowsky, I think what we have to appreciate is that profiling means generalizing. One of the first lessons I learned as a philosophy student a long time ago was that generalizations are generally wrong. Racial profiling involves generalizations about members of any racial group. We ought to be on guard against that, especially when it might be in the hands of people with the power that the police have. Equally, it's important for us not to generalize about the police and to assume that if some are racist, most are. I would hope that examination would show that that is not so. We have, however, to take seriously the allegations, the information found in newspaper reports on this subject. That has been done already, by the response of authorities, and we can look forward next fall to the report of an inquiry by the Ontario Human Rights Commission, not on police profiling, but profiling and racial tensions generally.

So my view there is that in our society, we've already indicated by laws, federal and provincial, and by the establishment of the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Ontario Human Rights Commission that racial profiling is contrary to the laws, norms and values of the Canadian people and the people of Ontario.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Do you believe it exists?

Mr Stackhouse: Do I believe --

Mrs Dombrowsky: It exists?

Mr Stackhouse: Of course it exists, because we are a human society, and being humans we will have our various faults, and one of them is generalizing about other people: generalizing about old people or generalizing about gender, generalizing about anything, generalizing about politicians. As a former politician, I can testify to that. I think part of our response has to be information rather than generalization. If people know one another, they are less likely to have prejudice and biases about one another. I think it's incumbent upon the authorities, whether the police, the municipality or the province, to carry forward the spirit of the human rights documents, the code, which requires that all employers maintain a poison-free environment. It's not enough for the employer to simply say, "Well, we're not prejudiced." We must do all we can to ensure that the environ-

ment in which people live, the environment in which we exercise our daily lives, is free from the kind of discrimination or harassment that many people say they have suffered.

Mrs Dombrowsky: That would conclude my questions. Thank you.

The Chair: We now move to Mr Martin.

Mr Martin: Good afternoon. It's certainly a very busy and interesting career to date, with more to come, I guess.

Mr Stackhouse: Thank you for the last part.

Mr Martin: It's interesting. I note your early years, mostly theology and religious studies, and then you moved very aggressively into money management. How do you do that?

Mr Stackhouse: To give you the full answer, I became principal of the college and ex-officio member of its portfolio committee, and I found that I really didn't understand the discussion that was going on with respect to the college's investment portfolio. I thought I had better educate myself rather than confess ignorance to the trustees who were doing their best for us. I began to take courses in investment finance and got interested. I went from one to another and finally qualified, had I been in the business, to be a fellow of the Canadian Securities Institute and put the letters FCSI after my name, which I don't do, not being in the business.

Later on, when I was off salary and with a quite inadequate pension from the Anglican church, I had to supplement that pension to make a living. One of the ways was doing some financial planning in the Bracebridge area, which I did for five years. I stopped two years ago.

Mr Martin: Is it a challenge balancing theological interest with financial interest?

Mr Stackhouse: Oh, not at all. I have an MA in political economy to start with. That was when I was a very young student. Much of the Bible gives us guidance on financial management, and part of my interest in developing what I hope will be a book on the theologies of wealth and poverty would be indicating how in scriptural teaching and in theological teaching since, various values, positive and negative, on financial management have been clear and have had an influence on the development of our society. Sometimes it has been the other way around; it has been economic change that has impacted on theological thought. My book will try to show that.

Mr Martin: OK. Just a couple of questions, given your theological background. They are issues, actually, that I have to be honest and say I struggle with too, in that I try to blend a bit of my faith with my politics and be balanced in that way if I can.

You've written a couple of pieces, I think, on the issue of abortion.

Mr Stackhouse: Yes.

Mr Martin: It's one that comes up quite regularly. It's one that's debated quite actively out there and is quite an important issue for many people of faith. People

of faith come at it from different perspectives and end up with different positions. Given the appointment to the Human Rights Commission that you are seeking here this afternoon, what would your position be on that question?

Mr Stackhouse: The question of abortion isn't regularly on the agenda of the Human Rights Commission, but I'll answer as straightly as I can on abortion itself. My position is that we should not make an absolute out of life, an absolute out of choice, but we have to respect both. I think a woman, first of all, should not be vulnerable to imprisonment or other penalties for an abortion. I am not in favour of sending any woman to jail because she wants an abortion, nor am I in favour of putting a doctor or other medical care person under that threat.

Secondly, I think a woman should have the right to choose, especially if it is to protect her health and her life. However, I think we should not close the question just with that. We should want to provide counselling and social and financial assistance to a woman which might enable her to carry forward with a pregnancy, because very often a woman can be threatened by the fact that she is alone, without a spouse, without a family -- when I was the minister of a church I found that -- and she needs help. Sometimes people are in great financial need, and they're threatened that way, so they think an abortion is the way out.

1450

So I think we should try to get it as far as possible from the context of whether we are sending people to jail or not. We should try to be positive and help women who are confronted by a pregnancy and who feel threatened by it to cope with it if they will make that choice themselves.

I feel that in Canada we have sort of evolved that policy, perhaps without intention. This is one of the few countries in the world which has so very little law on abortion. We seem to be carrying on rather well that way.

Mr Martin: The issue of abortion is very much an issue of women's rights. You have a very healthy background in church activity. The church's history is checkered where women's rights and involvement are concerned. What would your position be in terms of women and their rights and maybe women and the church?

Mr Stackhouse: You're right when you speak about checkered, because the church spans almost two millennia. But if we're talking about recent times, I've had the experience and the privilege of voting to open ordination to women in the Anglican Church. I was the principal of Wycliffe College when it became a co-ed institution. Half of its students now are women. We have women professors as well as men and women trustees. In fact, the last vice-chair of the board of trustees was a woman. So if you go back far enough, yes, the church might have seemed down on women's rights, but so was society in general. In latter days, I think many churches, my own included, have given a lead in respecting the rights of women.

Mr Martin: Just one other question, if I might, on an issue that's obviously very current and pertinent, and the church is certainly playing a role in it as well -- I apologize, but that seems to be your background; I'm actually finding your answers quite interesting and helpful -- the whole area of gay rights and the right of gay people to marry.

Mr Stackhouse: This is a complex question for lawyers and constitutionalists to work out because of the division of authority between Canada and the provinces and territories. So in the time allowed perhaps I can just speak in general terms about my own values here.

I think we have to get focused on marriage as an expression of humanity. If I may quote the Book of Common Prayer, it gives two purposes for marriage: one is the procreation of children and the other is the mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other in both prosperity and adversity. In a gay marriage, or for two lesbians, procreating children is not possible. But we know that adopting children or providing foster care is a possibility. That is now permitted by law. So that objective can be fulfilled. Second, when we ask about marriage for the mutual society, etc, we should understand marriage is a way many people -- most people -- adopt as a means of fulfilling themselves as human beings. I respect two gays or two lesbians seeking to find in each other a life together that will enable them to be fully human.

If we look upon being gay or being lesbian as simply a bad moral choice, that conclusion will be questioned. But within the past 20 years, scientific research has shown that homosexuality, to use that term, may not be a choice at all; it is perhaps the result of genetic inheritance and is thus part of a person's nature, part of his or her givenness.

That being the case, we've seen how language has moved from, say, "sexual preference" to "sexual orientation," and that embraces us all. Each of us here in this room has a sexual orientation, and we do not judge one another for that, and I don't judge people if they have a gay or lesbian sexual orientation. I think society -- our kind of free and democratic pluralistic society -- has to provide an umbrella over all people under which they can find a life of peace, a life in which they can develop.

I respect individuals or faith communities or other societies that are subgroups within our province saying, "No, this is wrong and we want no part of it" etc. We respect that. But the province itself has to provide for everybody, and that's what I hope the law would do.

Mr Martin: Those are all my questions, but I just want to say how much I appreciate your willingness to answer the questions I put before you -- they're challenging and difficult questions -- and your honesty.

Mr Stackhouse: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you for being with us, Mr Stackhouse. You may step down now, and we'll move to our next intended appointee. It was very nice to have you with us.

SANDRA MCCLEARY

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Sandra McCleary, intended appointee as member, Simcoe York District Health Council.

The Chair: Our next intended appointee is Sandra McCleary, intended appointee as member, Simcoe York District Health Council.

Mrs McCleary, you may come forward and take your position in just a moment.

Mr Stackhouse: I'm moving out as fast as I can.

The Chair: Take as much time as you need, Mr Stackhouse. We're on a flexible schedule here.

Mr Stackhouse: Thank you all very much.

The Chair: Welcome to the committee. As you would be aware, you have an opportunity to make an initial statement. Subsequent to that, there are likely to be questions from members of the committee.

Mrs Sandra McCleary: Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you, Mr Chairman, for the opportunity to speak to the committee regarding my intended appointment to the Simcoe York District Health Council. It is an honour to be considered for such a position.

You have received a copy of my resumé, and I would like to take a few minutes to highlight some of my experiences and qualifications.

I have resided with my husband, John, in the town of Newmarket for 35 years, after moving from Toronto. I am the mother of three and grandmother of seven. Two of my children reside in the region of York, as well as seven of my grandchildren.

I started out years ago as a computer programmer, and when my children came along, I was very fortunate to be able to stay home with them. My volunteer experience for many years centred around the activities of my children, being involved in many things, including Girl Guide leader, nursery school president and Scout group committee secretary.

Moving on, I became involved in the church, taking positions of leadership in many organizations, as an elder in the United Church of Canada, president of the United Church Women, unit leader and treasurer of the York Presbytery's Camp Big Canoe.

1500

I have volunteered for 20 years at York County Hospital, now known as Southlake Regional Health Centre. I joined the auxiliary board as treasurer and had to decide where my volunteering interests were going to take me. I decided that the hospital and the auxiliary were going to be my main focus of volunteering.

As I moved through the offices of the auxiliary board, taking many directorships, I learned to work with staff and volunteers as a team player. I attended conventions, region 7 spring conferences, regional meetings and executive workshops, realizing the importance of networking with other volunteers. During my last directorship of the auxiliary board in 2000, the auxiliary made the commitment of \$1 million over a period of five years, to be directed to the new emergency department at South-

lake Regional Health Centre. I chaired the 2000 annual tag day fundraiser, which included working with volunteers from the towns of Bradford, Schomberg, Aurora, Keswick, Sutton, Pefferlaw, Mount Albert, Queensville and Sharon. We raised over \$45,000 toward the \$1-million commitment.

As president and vice-president of the auxiliary, I was appointed to the hospital and foundation boards for a four-year term. I sat on the hospital board committee, including finance, and took an active part in the board task force on volunteerism. On the foundation board, I was a member of the board development committee and was part of a grant review committee for 10 years, first as a volunteer and then as a board member. This committee worked with foundation and hospital board members and staff through an in-depth process to determine what new equipment needed to be purchased and what old equipment needed to be replaced.

During my time on these boards, I could see the changes starting in our health care system. Percentage of day surgeries was increasing, areas of focus were considered and patient-focused care was becoming a reality. I learned that change was becoming an ongoing challenge, and as such should be used as an opportunity to explore new and innovative ways of doing things.

I have worked as an accountant for my husband for the past 15 years in a small practice in Newmarket. I have used my skills to work in many administrative and financial positions with volunteer organizations. In my different positions of leadership, I have learned to listen, read, digest information and make decisions based on fact. I have learned to work with people who have held opinions different than my own.

I do have a strong interest in our health system and the processes that determine the course our health system is taking. Three members of my immediate family work in a health-related field outside Simcoe county and York region.

I have been awarded a life membership in the United Church Women, an honorary life membership of the auxiliary to Southlake Regional Health Centre and a provincial life membership in the Hospital Auxiliaries Association of Ontario, and it was my honour in February 2003 to receive the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medallion.

In preparing for this interview, I spent time reflecting on the changes in our health care system. After reviewing the mandate and goals of the Simcoe York District Health Council, I recognized that this DHC is playing a very important proactive role in the changes of our health care system. I feel that I have been a part of the health care system and would like to participate in its future planning. With my commitment, dedication and ability to work with other volunteers as a team player, I feel that I would be an asset as a member of the Simcoe York District Health Council.

Becoming a new board member in any organization is a time of learning and challenge. I am ready to give the time and commitment and to accept the challenge as a new member to the Simcoe York District Health Council.

I will now answer any questions you may wish to ask me.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We'll begin with the official opposition. Mrs Dombrowsky.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Good afternoon, Mrs McCleary, and thank you for coming. We certainly appreciate your background remarks.

I have a couple of questions for you. What is your understanding of the role of district health councils?

Mrs McCleary: Reading the mandate, which is a directive coming down from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, we have to help the ministry know the health needs and other health matters of our diverse communities. We also have to carefully look at the allocation of resources -- human resources as well as funding. We have to make plans for the development and implementation of a balanced and integrated health care system. We also are to perform other duties as assigned under the act.

Mrs Dombrowsky: I know what's written, but really what did you know about district health councils?

Maybe I should ask this question first: how is it that you have come to be an intended appointee on a district health council?

Mrs McCleary: I was asked by my MP's office if I would let my name stand to be nominated as a member of the health council.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You were asked by your MP or your MPP?

Mrs McCleary: My MPP.

Mrs Dombrowsky: And that would be who?

Mrs McCleary: Julia Munro.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Julia Munro asked you if you would let your name stand to be the provincial appointee. Obviously you're very active in your community. Ms Munro would be familiar with your work in health services.

Mrs McCleary: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Would she know you because of your political involvement as well?

Mrs McCleary: Not particularly.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Are you a member of the --

Mrs McCleary: I am a member of the PC Party, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Have you worked on campaigns?

Mrs McCleary: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Did you work on Ms Munro's campaign?

Mrs McCleary: I know I worked on the federal campaign. I'm not too sure whether I did or not, to tell you the truth. I think I probably participated somehow, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: And you continue to be a member of the provincial Progressive Conservative Party?

Mrs McCleary: Yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Maybe I can then get back to my question around district health councils. When she asked if you would let your name stand, did you know what a district health council was?

Mrs McCleary: Yes. As a member of the hospital board, I was quite aware of what the district health council was. As a member of the hospital board, I did attend one of their meetings, 1983-84, when I was on that board, because I thought it was part of my learning process as a board member to attend one of their meetings.

Mrs Dombrowsky: What I have come to understand in my role as an MPP is that there are many people in my riding who really don't know what district health councils are or what their mandate is, what they do and what they're responsible for. They certainly are familiar with the work of health units. They are familiar with the work of hospital corporations. But there is not only confusion, there's just a lack of understanding or even a lack of knowledge that district health councils exist. I find that quite perplexing, given the fact that there are some significant dollars put toward district health councils. One of your roles -- I don't think I heard you mention this -- is to advise the minister on --

Mrs McCleary: That's true, on the needs of our area.

Mrs Dombrowsky: On the particular needs of an area of the province of Ontario. In your particular case it's Simcoe-York. Would that be your sense in your area as well: that there would be many people who really wouldn't know what a district health council is or what its function is?

Mrs McCleary: I would believe so, yes. But I noticed, in reading some of the information that was given to me, that there is a newsletter, The Link, and they also have a Web site that people can refer to for more information. But I think a lot of people don't know what is available in the health care system, and as a member, one of the important things is talking about what the district health council is and what it does and promoting the understanding of what it does.

Mrs Dombrowsky: You indicated in your remarks that you spent some time reflecting on the changes in the health care system. I'm sure you spent some time reflecting on health needs within your community. Would you be able today to identify, say, the three most pressing needs in your community?

Mrs McCleary: One of the needs is that there's the increase in population and the growth in age of our population. I think we have to -- this is very new for me; excuse me -- understand what those needs are. I guess what I want to say is -- oh boy. When I was on the health board, I realized that there was a lack of resources.

Mrs Dombrowsky: What kind of resources?

Mrs McCleary: Human resources. It's hard to get doctors and nurses in the outlying areas and this type of thing. I think the area that the district health council involves is a very diverse area. People have to come from long ways. They live in sparsely populated areas. We have to make sure that the resources are available to them, both doctors as well as other resources.

1510

Mrs Dombrowsky: Would you be aware of the situation with regard to home care services in your community?

Mrs McCleary: Yes. We have a very active community care access council that looks after the coordination of home services. When a person is discharged from the hospital, right in the hospital is a CCAC representative who works with the person being discharged to make sure they have the support they need, whether it's physio, a dietitian, a nurse coming to visit or everything like that.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Is it your sense that community health care is under pressure in your community?

Mrs McCleary: Of course, with the growing of our population and the needs and I think because of the shortened length of stays in our hospital and the acuteness of the people when they're there. When they go home, they do need support.

One example comes to mind. We were looking after my granddaughter two years ago. She stayed overnight and was bitten by a cat. We took her to emergency, and they put a shunt in. Four or five years ago, she would have had to stay in the hospital while the drug was being administered. But with the assistance of part of our home care program, she was able to go home. A nurse came to our house once a day and put the drug in. So she was able to go home without staying in the hospital.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Are you familiar with the mental health services that are available within your community?

Mrs McCleary: Not really.

Mrs Dombrowsky: In my role as critic, I hear from mental health agencies. I would suggest that they are under the similar pressures as other health care providers within the community. Just given that you have identified, for example, doctor shortages as an issue in your area, community health practitioners, professionals -- there are some critical issues there in your community -- as a member or representative on a district health council, what would you think you should be advising the minister to do to address these issues?

Mrs McCleary: To look at our needs. There is a shortage of doctors. My son moved to Keswick -- and knowing of people in the area who have tried to get doctors' appointments. There just aren't any doctors to go to. I think that as part of the mandate of the DHC we have to make the ministry aware of this need. It's one of the needs that we have.

Mrs Dombrowsky: The minister -- I mean, you advise the minister directly, not just the bureaucrats. You talk to the minister in person. You have a direct line to the minister. So that is very significant. I think that makes district health councils significant as well.

Mrs McCleary: That is part of their role, yes.

Mrs Dombrowsky: But in terms of your advice or your direction to the minister, what would you suggest the minister do in those two particular areas? What do we need to do? Are you aware that in the last budget home care was not mentioned?

Mrs McCleary: No. Sorry. Going on a new board, I know I have a lot to learn. But I have the time and the willingness to learn. I've been doing a lot of reading, and I have a lot to learn. But I'm prepared to learn. So I

probably won't be able to answer a lot of your questions. But ask me in two or three months, and I'll be able to answer them.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Do we still have time?

The Chair: You have about 30 seconds.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Then that would conclude my questions.

The Chair: We move to the third party now. Mr Martin, your questions.

Mr Martin: Just in your experience, what does the Simcoe York District Health Council actually do?

Mrs McCleary: It coordinates the areas of Simcoe-York. It partners with community groups to assess what the needs are. It also is responsible for the disbursement of the funding, whether it's resource or fiscal, in the agencies that they're involved with.

Mr Martin: And is it successful at that?

Mrs McCleary: Well, reading through this again, I've noticed that the funding from 2001 to 2002 has really decreased, so I think they really have to look at the order of priorities within the region and then decide what the priorities are. It's a process that we have to work with with people in the areas that the district health council serves.

Mr Martin: Yes. I just know that in my own area when I first got elected, from 1990 to 1995, it seemed to me I was forever attending meetings of the district health council as we tried to pull together the various providers and interest groups and other community groups to come up with resolutions, solutions, coordination, and move forward recommendations out of the community flowing to the ministry. Then when the district health councils were reduced in number from 33 down to -- how many are there now? Seventeen or 18?

Mrs Dombrowsky: Sixteen.

Mr Martin: Sixteen. Our district health council seemed to disappear, because I never get invited to a meeting any more. I don't remember the last time I got any communication from them. To be frank with you, I'm not quite sure what they do. I know they cover a huge area. They cover all of northeastern Ontario. Where we used to have a district health council for Algoma, which was Wawa, Sault Ste Marie over to Elliot Lake, we now have a district health council that covers North Bay, Sudbury, Timmins, Sault Ste Marie and everything in between. It's a massive undertaking even to have a meeting.

I'm wondering what the purpose is any more. Obviously in the more populated areas, if you say it makes decisions about who gets what money, that's probably an important function. It makes recommendations to the minister, and as Mrs Dombrowsky said, if you have a direct link to the minister, that's important, particularly to get the voice of the community heard. But I know that in the north, anyway, nobody seems to be listening. The district health council, if that's our voice, doesn't seem to be very effective, because we have hospitals all over the north that are either half finished or still on the drawing board, and we have a heck of a time, as you've indicated

in your area, attracting doctors and keeping them. So health care is becoming a very difficult and challenging proposition.

Is there anything that you think we should be doing as government to correct that, to make these councils more effective? The budget went from \$25 million when there were 33 DHCs operating down to a budget of \$9.5 million, I guess, this past fiscal year, 2002-03. Is there anything we could do to make them more relevant and effective?

Mrs McCleary: Maybe listen. I guess just listen, and I think the district health council has to make plans for development of the integrated health care.

One of the things that I think the district health council has to do is make sure that resources are used in the best way. In our hospital now, the mammogram program does function at night. Why aren't our MRIs and our CAT scans functioning? It's because we don't have the personnel or the funding. This is one of the reasons we should encourage that you look at the personnel and the funding, because I don't think there should be the waiting lists there are for diagnostic tests if we effectively looked at running the CAT scans and the MRIs longer for the convenience of people.

1520

I think one of the things we have to look at is patient-centred care. Many years ago I went in for surgery in York county. I had to go in the day before. They put my IV in at 9 o'clock in the morning, and my surgery was at 5 o'clock. I've had six eye surgeries in the last six years. You go in the day of, you have your IV put in while you're waiting and then you take your IV pole and you walk to the OR. Positive things like that are happening. I think we have to look at the resources we have and how we can improve more things like that. Day surgery is up to 65%, 75%, 85% and there's same-day admit.

Rather than wasting resources -- I'm talking personnel and money as well. There are ways they can re-look at things and make things better. Things are happening, changes are happening for the positive. I think once I get into that I will be able to see more. As I said, this is a new area. The district health council and all this is new to me. I'm sure looking forward to the challenge of working to make things better.

Mr Martin: Do you think district health councils should have a role to play in public health issues: water, smoking, promotion of health, prevention of sickness?

Mrs McCleary: It's all part of the package as far as I'm concerned. Reading the notes from the district health council, I noticed that they've been proactive in many programs, in healthy programs. There are a number of them here -- new stroke care centres for seniors. There's one in Royal Vic, there's one at York Central and now they're asking that York regional health centre be sited for the third.

Keeping Seniors Healthy is a network to foster and maintain the well-being of seniors. The purpose of this project is to identify seniors who frequently access the services of the hospital but do not require admission and

to help them access the proper community-based systems that are there so that they don't have to go into the hospital as often.

Another one is the community heart program funding, Good for Life, and York region's Heartyparty. This is part of extending the successful Ontario heart health program to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. I think this is part of the area that the district health council is involved in. They're being proactive in maybe preventing some of this.

Mr Martin: There are some parts of Ontario where municipal councils just don't have the political will, for example, to legislate that there be no smoking in any public buildings anywhere. There is always the argument that if we do it, then we give the town next door an advantage -- bingo halls or bars etc. There are some health units -- not district health councils but health units -- that are actually taking the bull by the horns themselves and saying, "We're going to legislate that there's going to be no smoking." Do you think district health councils should have that kind of authority, to in fact move in where the political will isn't present to legislate, for example, that there be no smoking in public buildings?

Mrs McCleary: That would be nice, but I don't think it's a reality. I'm not a smoker. I think everything should be no-smoking because smoking increases the cost of our health care system. It certainly can be proactive in that, but I don't think that is what their mandate is.

Mr Martin: Do you think the district health council should have a role to play, for example, in the very challenging circumstance that we now find ourselves in here in Toronto, where SARS has broken out and we're having a difficult time containing it? A district health council has responsibility for a large area. Is there a role that it could play there that you're aware of?

Mrs McCleary: I think so: communication with our partners and the agencies they partner with. Yes, I think so. Yes, I do.

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

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Martin, for your questions. We now move to the government.

Mr Wood: We'll waive our time.

The Chair: The government has waived its time for questions, so you may step down, Mrs McCleary.

Mrs McCleary: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much for being with us this afternoon.

At the present time, I have next on the agenda consideration of the appointment of Edwin Morton Parker to the Quinte West Police Services Board. This matter was deferred from our previous meeting at the request of Mr Wood.

Mr Wood: I'm authorized to indicate that the government is withdrawing his name for consideration.

The Chair: Mr Wood has indicated that the government is withdrawing the appointment of Edwin Morton Parker to the Quinte West Police Services Board. That requires no action from the committee, simply the

acknowledgement from Mr Wood. Thank you very much, Mr Wood, for that acknowledgement for us to help us out.

We will now move to the appointments review itself. I'll go through each of the appointments, as I always do.

The first is the intended appointee as member, Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario board of directors, Jack Johnson.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence in the appointment. Is there any discussion of the appointment? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The second intended appointee is as member of the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre Corp board of directors, Diane Mavrinc-Ross.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence in this appointment. Any discussion? If there is no discussion, I will call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The third selection was Donald R. Martyn, intended appointee as member, Environmental Review Tribunal.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence in the appointment. Any discussion? If not, all in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next appointment was Reginald Stackhouse, intended appointee as member, Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence. Any discussion of the appointment? If not, I will call the vote. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Next is Sandra McCleary, intended appointee as member, Simcoe York District Health Council.

Mr Wood: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved concurrence in the appointment. Any discussion? If not, I will call the vote. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

I have another matter to come before the committee, and that is an extension which has been requested.

Mr Wood: Perhaps I could ask for unanimous consent to extend the time for consideration of the intended appointment of Vivian Jarvis by 30 days.

The Chair: Do we have the consent of the committee?

Mrs Dombrowsky: Agreed.

The Chair: The committee has agreed with Mr Wood's request.

Is there any further business the clerk knows of for the committee or any further business that members of the committee have for the committee? If not, I will entertain a motion of adjournment.

Mr Wood: So moved.

The Chair: Mr Wood has moved adjournment. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried unanimously. The meeting is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1529.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 23 April 2003

Subcommittee reports	A-277
Intended appointments	A-277
Mr Jack Johnson	A-277
Ms Diane Mavrinac-Ross	A-281
Mr Donald Martyn	A-284
Mr Reginald Stackhouse	A-288
Mrs Sandra McCleary	A-291

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