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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 28 April 2004

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 28 avril 2004

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Wednesday 28 April 2004

Mercredi 28 avril 2004

The committee met at 1014 in room 151.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

Clerk of the Committee (Ms Anne Stokes): Good morning. I call this meeting to order. As my first order of business, honourable members, it's my duty to call upon you to elect a Chair. Are there any nominations?

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): It's my pleasure to nominate Elizabeth Witmer.

Clerk of the Committee: Any other nominations? There being no further nominations, I declare Mrs Witmer to be Chair of the committee.

The Chair (Mrs Elizabeth Witmer): Thank you very much for the nomination. It's a pleasure and honour to be Chair of this committee. I'm just glad I was here.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair: Honourable members, it is my duty to call upon you to elect a Vice-Chair. Are there any nominations?

Ms Monique M. Smith (Nipissing): I nominate David Oraziotti as Vice-Chair.

The Chair: Are there any other nominations? There being no further nominations, I declare the nominations closed. Mr Oraziotti is elected Vice-Chair of the committee. Congratulations.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I want to say for the record that I've felt this committee has always been chaired by a member of the opposition because it is an oversight committee. Unfortunately the government early on had decided to Chair this committee with one of their own members. I'm glad the government House leader has finally accepted the tradition of this place and that it will revert to an opposition Chair. I think that is very important, considering that the work we do is as an oversight committee. I thank the government members for finally coming to their senses, and I want to take the opportunity to congratulate you, Madam Chair, on becoming the new Chair of this committee.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Bisson.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The Chair: Our first order of business is the report of the subcommittee on committee business dated Thursday, April 22, 2004.

Ms Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock): I have a point of order, Madam Chair, and congratulations on your appointment. Thank you, Lorenzo, for your past work. We appreciate that.

One of the items of the subcommittee report was to request a review of the appointment of Sylvia Sutherland, but last Monday, April 19, in the Legislature, Minister Smitherman indicated that the government had already appointed Ms Sutherland. I'll just read the quote: "I'm pleased to say that this government appointed Mayor Sylvia Sutherland to the board of the College of Physicians and Surgeons."

Now, I recognize the number of government members compared to the number of opposition members on the committee, and it can be easy to regard the reviews we conduct as simple formalities, but I had hoped not in this case because the agencies, boards and commissions play a significant role in Ontarians' lives. It's important we make sure that the people who are being appointed are able to effectively discharge their responsibilities, so I would like to ask the Chair to contact the minister on behalf of the committee to remind him of the role this committee plays in reviewing government appointments so that he does not presume upon the outcome of our deliberations.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

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Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): Madam Chair, just for your reference, because this was raised one week earlier, there's a letter to Anne Stokes dated April 27, 2004, which I hope you have a copy of because I'm going to refer to it. It's a letter that was written to Anne Stokes by Debra Roberts, director of the Management Board of Cabinet, Public Appointments Secretariat. It has to do with a point similar to the point raised by Ms Scott. We raised it also with respect to Noreen Taylor, and I just refer you to page 1, the bottom paragraph:

"With respect to the article regarding the chair of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, I can verify that the appointment has not yet taken place. While the ministry press release correctly refers to Ms Noreen Taylor in its first sentence as having been 'nominated' for appointment, the use of the word 'appoints' in the headline allowed for confusion. I have asked the ministry to revise the release on its Web site to ensure no further mistakes are made."

Then, on page 2, Debra Roberts goes on to say:

“In order to avoid similar confusion in the future, I have taken the opportunity to remind all ministries that any public statement or release should clearly state that a nominee is not appointed until they have been considered by the standing committee on government agencies and that care should always be taken to ensure readers understand exactly where a potential appointee stands in the process. I’ve also directed that the Public Appointments Secretariat must review any announcement regarding appointees to ensure that the procedures of the standing committee are respected.”

The point Ms Scott is raising is that the appointment of Sylvia Sutherland was raised in Hansard by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. That’s an additional matter we want raised in terms of usurping the function of this committee. Ms Sutherland has been selected now and will also be interviewed, but that won’t happen for a couple of weeks.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Tascona.

We still need someone to move its adoption.

Mr Parsons: I’d like to respond to the previous point of order, if I could.

I can understand it being confusing with the way the newspaper story was written. It certainly did make it sound as if it was a fait accompli, but the press release put out by our government indicated “as nominated.” We do understand the process, and unfortunately the media story indicated it was an appointment when in fact the press release indicted “nominated.”

The Chair: Thank you for the explanation. Further discussion? Thank you very much for those points. I think they are well taken, and I trust that those responsible for making the appointments will ensure that before people are officially appointed, due process has been followed. We are going to follow up with the appropriate minister and also with the appointments secretariat to ensure that this doesn’t happen, that it doesn’t taken place.

Mr Parsons: I would like to move acceptance of the report of the subcommittee.

The Chair: All in favour? Opposed? Seeing none, the motion is carried.

Going back to Sylvia Sutherland, a selection from the certificate dated April 16, 2004, intended appointee as member, Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, she is unable to attend a committee meeting until May 19. Pursuant to standing order 106(e)11, unanimous consent is required by the committee to extend the 30-day deadline for consideration.

We need to take a look at having Robert W. Schmidt come forward as well, who is an appointee being considered for the College of Physicians—

Interjection.

The Chair: Oh, he’s being considered for Essex Kent and Lambton District Health Council.

So I guess what we’re asking for, and perhaps the clerk has more information, is, do we have unanimous consent to extend this deadline for Sylvia Sutherland

further from May 16 to June 15, 2004, and also for Robert W. Schmidt?

Mr Tascona: May I just ask what the impact of that is on the process?

Clerk of the Committee: We’ve contacted Sylvia Sutherland and she’s unable to attend before the committee until 19 May.

Mr Tascona: Is that the constituency week, or are we still in the House?

Clerk of the Committee: The following week is the constituency week.

Mr Tascona: She’s not going to be deemed approved.

Clerk of the Committee: No. By extending this deadline, that allows the committee the time to consider the appointment.

Mr Tascona: And if there isn’t unanimous consent?

Clerk of the Committee: Then the committee would have to consider her within that 30-day deadline, and if it hasn’t been considered within the 30-day deadline, the concurrence is deemed to have been given. So it’s a scheduling question. It’s just to extend the deadline to give us some flexibility to be able to schedule these people.

Mr Tascona: Agreed.

The Chair: All in favour? Opposed? All right.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MARC DENHEZ

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition: Marc Denhez, intended appointee as member, Ontario Municipal Board.

The Chair: We can now move to the appointments review. Our first interview this morning is with Marc Denhez, the intended appointee as member of the Ontario Municipal Board.

Good morning, Mr Denhez. As you may be aware, you do have an opportunity, should you choose to do so, to make an initial statement. Subsequent to that, there are going to be questions from members of the committee.

Mr Marc Denhez: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My presentation will be brief since the committee has already received my CV. I propose to speak to you about two things: the multi-disciplinary nature of my experience, and my aspiration to bring a balanced perspective to my future work at the OMB if you approve my appointment.

Years ago, I decided to devote my career to a combination of law and planning. In most of my years of practice, I have pursued that objective, with a concentration in two main areas: the institutional framework for planning and development, and the question of governance. My planning-related work has had a particular focus on homebuilding, the renovation industry, natural habitat and cultural and built heritage. My governance-related practice has included advice to national organizations on certification, licensing and accreditation procedures, internal bylaws and disciplinary proceedings.

Thanks to organizations including UNESCO and the World Bank, I have served on assignment in 14 countries. I've taught courses at the planning schools of four universities in Canada and Europe and given lectures from the University of Edinburgh to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

My articles have been published in over 200 journals and anthologies, some of which have been translated into seven languages. As for my own books, one is on the history of the Canadian home, two are on environmental protection, and five are on the law of built heritage. In my reports and publications, I use two standard analytical tools of the French tradition, for which, oddly enough, there is no English translation. The first is called a *tour d'horizon*, literally meaning a 360-degree survey of a landscape to identify what's out there. The next tool is what we call a *problématique*, which is a listing of everything that might cause a problem so that you can then distinguish the symptoms from the disease and zero in on the core issues.

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In the areas of planning and governance, that kind of classical analysis—*tour d'horizon* and *problématique*—is precisely what many of my clients hire me to do. It has been a staple of my practice. My clients have usually been governments and NGOs. At various times, I've been retained by different federal departments, from Parks Canada to CMHC, six major cities, and all 10 provincial governments. I've worked closely with governments of all stripes—Liberal, Conservative, NDP and Social Credit.

I also chaired the public-private sector task force on the future of the residential renovation industry in Canada, and I'm the longest-serving member on the executive of the Canadian Renovators' Council. My NGO clients have included three of Canada's national associations involved with housing and construction, environmental and heritage umbrella groups, and a national professional organization that approves degree-granting programs.

Obviously, my client base is not homogeneous—quite the contrary. For example, one of my clients is a national environmental organization whose local chapters are often skeptical about developers. Another is an umbrella group for heritage organizations whose constituent groups take a similar view. Still another client is the national association comprising many of the very same developers who, at the local level, are routinely at odds with the other local interests that I've just mentioned.

Having been the president of several volunteer organizations, I know how strong some of these feelings can be. I'm sometimes asked the question: How can I have clients coming from such diametrically different directions and how do I avoid conflict of interest?

Fortunately, in all my years of practice, I've never ended up in a conflict-of-interest situation, and for three very specific reasons. The first is that strictly local disputes are not at the level at which I've usually worked, namely, the organizational or systemic level. I've never

represented an individual developer. The second is that mine is not a litigation-oriented practice—quite the contrary. My usual objective was to identify and expand opportunities for synergy and to help clients find solutions that could avoid the necessity of litigation. Third, and most important, I believe that my clients retained me precisely because I had nurtured a multidisciplinary knowledge base. They knew that I was familiar with the concerns of a wide range of different stakeholders.

I believe that the OMB's mandate can be distilled down to two words: good planning. Ladies and gentlemen, I don't believe that good planning is about viewing things from any single perspective, whether that perspective is housing, environment, heritage, transportation, economics or anything else. Good planning is, by definition, multidisciplinary. How could it be otherwise? A city is the largest, single tangible object that our civilization produces.

Good planning is a simple term, but it summarizes a very complex process. I believe that my familiarity with the concerns of most stakeholders will assist my objectivity in considering their cases.

The day-to-day task of the OMB is to sift through the evidence to reach an informed conclusion about what the path of good planning is. In today's context, it's all the more imperative to be able to bring a balanced perspective and understanding to the different points of view.

To summarize: First, in pursuing my commitment to the law of good planning without becoming embroiled in individual local controversies, I've developed a close understanding of several of the major stakeholder interests simultaneously; second, it's my experience in balancing these interests that I hope will be my greatest asset at the OMB.

I sincerely hope that this committee will approve my appointment.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Denhez. We will begin our questioning today with the Liberal caucus. We have about three minutes for each party to ask questions, and we will go in rotation. So three minutes then for the Liberal Party and 10 minutes for the opposition.

Mr Parsons: We'd like to stick to the three minutes for each party.

The Chair: Seemed fair to me.

Mr Parsons: Exactly. We waive our questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Parsons. Ms Scott?

Ms Scott: Thank you for appearing here today and informing us. You do have a wide background of knowledge. You have a great deal of expertise in heritage buildings.

Mr Denhez: I do my best.

Ms Scott: How did you find out about this board, and why this board as opposed to the Ontario Heritage Foundation or the Conservation Review Board? That's a two-part question.

Mr Denhez: It started last August, actually. I was invited by the Ontario Bar Association to deliver a paper

at their municipal law section in January, and I was finalizing the text back in November and I was surfing the Web. I was on the site of the Ontario Municipal Board, and that's where I saw how many vacancies were likely to occur in 2004. That's when I undertook to make inquiries and explore the possibility of applying.

Over the Christmas holidays, I was at a party where I met an old friend of mine, Jim Watson, whom I've known for 15 years. I asked him what the correct protocol was for making this application, and he advised me of the Public Appointments Secretariat.

In January, before I had actually completed my papers to file with the Public Appointments Secretariat, I made that presentation to the Ontario Bar Association. A gentleman in the first row professed such enthusiasm over it, he came up to me and asked me to make the same presentation again to his organization, which turned out to be the Ontario Municipal Board.

Subsequently, when my papers were filed with the Public Appointments Secretariat, not long afterwards I received an invitation to meet with the chair and two of the vice-chairs, one of whom was the gentleman I had met at the OBA. It was a very positive interview, and at the end of the interview, they advised me that they would be making a recommendation to the government of Ontario that I be appointed. And that is why I'm here today.

Ms Scott: You mentioned Jim Watson is an old friend of yours.

Mr Denhez: Fifteen years.

Ms Scott: Were you involved in his campaign?

Mr Denhez: I certainly was. I was the president of the riding association for the provincial Liberals in Ottawa West-Nepean, and I was the president of the riding association through his campaign, so I was obviously very closely involved. I stepped down from that immediately after the election, and that was several months before I made the application to the Public Appointments Secretariat.

Ms Scott: Did you step down in preparation because you would be applying for this position?

Mr Denhez: No, no.

Ms Scott: You just stepped down from president of the association?

Mr Denhez: I had done my two and a half years.

Ms Scott: Thank you for that. Have you donated money to the Ontario Liberal Party?

Mr Denhez: I certainly have. I gather from my receipts that it's about \$250 worth of donations. Given what's happening the day after tomorrow, since I have to file my tax returns, I wish it were more, but that's what it is.

Ms Scott: OK, I'll pass it over.

Mr Tascona: You're a lawyer by profession?

Mr Denhez: Yes, sir.

Mr Tascona: And you're legal counsel for the Canadian Home Builders' Association?

Mr Denhez: They are one of my clients, yes.

Mr Tascona: They're still one of your clients?

Mr Denhez: Yes, indeed.

Mr Tascona: What kind of work do you do for them?

Mr Denhez: Mostly governance-related issues, a fair number of issues that are handled at the federal level, notably tax.

Mr Tascona: That would stop if you become a full-time member?

Mr Denhez: Clearly. If I become a full-time member, I clearly wind up my entire law practice, including the law practice that I have with them as well as with the other clients I have.

I should perhaps provide some context to indicate that over the last couple of years, the largest studies that I've done have actually been for the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Parks Canada, two heritage agencies of other provincial governments and a federal quasi-judicial tribunal. It's a fairly varied practice.

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Mr Tascona: Are you aware of the conflict-of-interest guidelines for the OMB?

Mr Denhez: I'm aware not only of the Deputy Attorney General's guidelines but also the code of ethics of SOAR, the Society of Ontario Adjudicators and Regulators, yes.

Mr Tascona: What period do you have to stand down with respect to clients?

Mr Denhez: I would be in full windup mode now if this committee—

Mr Tascona: No. If you're on the board, how long would you have to stand down with respect to not being the chair in front of a client?

Mr Denhez: My preference would be to wind up 100% of my private practice before I set foot—

Mr Tascona: No, that's not my question. Assume that you're appointed.

Mr Denhez: Yes.

Mr Tascona: What period of time do you have to stand down with respect to any clients that you've consulted with, once you're on the OMB? Do you know that?

Mr Denhez: I don't know the exact time frame, but I have never represented any individual developers in the province. I have never represented, for example, any individual or local architectural conservation advisory committees in Ontario, even though I hope to found the umbrella group that represents—

Mr Tascona: So you don't know. Maybe the clerk of the committee would have a copy of the conflict-of-interest guidelines for the Ontario Municipal Board.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Tascona.

Mr Tascona: Is that all our time?

The Chair: We'll make sure the clerk does follow up, and that is the 10 minutes.

I would now ask Mr Bisson, for the third party.

M. Bisson: Merci beaucoup, madame la Présidente.

Parlez-vous français?

M. Denhez: Bien sûr, avec plaisir.

M. Bisson: C'est ce que je pensais.

Je ne veux que clarifier quelque chose, très vite. Je ne veux pas prendre beaucoup de temps. Vous avez dit que ça fait 15 ans que vous n'avez pas vu votre ami.

M. Denhez: Non, j'ai dit que je connais—

M. Bisson: Ok. J'ai mal compris. C'est bon.

Sur la question de votre pratique : elle est assez grande? Y a-t-il beaucoup de clients?

M. Denhez: C'est suffisant.

M. Bisson: La raison pour laquelle je vous demande ça, et c'est quelque chose qui m'a toujours achalé un peu quand ça vient à ces appointments-là : vous comprenez que l'appointment n'est pas à vie.

M. Denhez: Non, bien entendu. C'est pour une période de trois ans.

M. Bisson: Exactement. Après trois ans, ça veut dire que tout va recommencer, et des fois ce n'est pas exactement facile. Vous êtes préparé, comprenant que c'est possible que cet appointment ne va pas être renouvelé. C'est toujours possible. Vous comprenez les conséquences.

M. Denhez: Bien sûr.

M. Bisson: C'est quelque chose qui m'a toujours achalé, que du monde des fois changent leur vie complètement pour avoir un appointment de trois ans puis après, ils essayent de recommencer leur commerce. Ce n'est pas aussi facile et apparent des fois qu'on pense. Je ne voulais que faire ce point-là.

L'autre affaire que vous avez dit est que vous n'avez pas d'expérience à représenter les individus. Pensez-vous que ça va être un problème pour vous une fois que vous arrivez au CA? Comme vous le savez, l'OMB parfois est là pour écouter les plaintes ou les procès pour certains individus qui ont un problème avec le planning.

M. Denhez: Bon. Est-ce que ce serait un problème étant donné que je ne suis pas avocat spécialisé dans le litige? Réponse : non. L'avantage que ça me fournit, étant donné la pratique que j'ai eue, est que si j'ai des parties qui sont devant moi, qui sont en train de présenter des arguments portant soit sur le développement immobilier étant prometteur, ou bien s'ils sont partisans du patrimoine ou partisans de l'écologie, ou des citoyens, j'ai déjà participé dans la pratique dans tous ces domaines-là. Alors, s'il y a quelqu'un qui me présente un argument, je n'ai pas besoin de traducteur. Je suis déjà au courant des arguments principaux, et je pense que c'est le fait que j'ai eu une participation directe dans tous ces domaines qui me fournit l'occasion de regarder le dossier objectivement sans parti pris en faveur d'un côté ou de l'autre.

M. Bisson: Je comprends, puis c'est une bonne réponse. Mais le seul point que je vais faire est que parfois le monde se trouve devant l'OMB après un processus qui était assez difficile sous le plan local. Parfois ils sont pas mal frustrés par le temps qu'ils arrivent devant ce groupe.

Ma seule crainte, puis ce n'est pas quelque chose pourquoi je ne vous donnerais pas de support, mais je vais vous donner un avis pour avoir une réplique, c'est que des fois le monde est frustré. Des fois, c'est à cause

du processus. Je voudrais m'assurer, dans mon idée à moi, que vous êtes préparé et capable d'écouter, de passer les frustrations aux points saillants du cas lui-même. Parfois, nous autres on sait comme députés que le monde de chez nous est frustré. Il ne faut pas regarder la frustration. Il faut passer la frustration au point de pourquoi la personne est frustrée. Êtes-vous préparé et capable de faire cette étape?

M. Denhez: J'espère que oui, soulignant le fait que, comme vous avez vu dans mon curriculum vitae, j'ai été moi-même le président d'associations de bénévoles. Alors, je saisis parfaitement le point que vous soulignez.

M. Bisson: J'ai confiance que vous allez être capable. Je voulais qu'on mette ça sur le record.

La question qui est plus importante pour moi, peut-être pas pour les autres, est sur votre approche quand ça vient au planning. Vous savez qu'il y a eu de différentes approches quand ça vient à la planification dans une municipalité. Il y a eu une approche qui était changée avec les Conservateurs qui est devenue plus en faveur et favorise plus les développeurs, et moins les questions environnementales et communautaires. Où vous situez-vous là-dedans? Trouvez-vous que vous êtes un progressiste quand ça vient à la planification ou plutôt pour les avocats de l'autre bord?

M. Denhez: Tout le monde aime se faire traiter de progressiste, monsieur Bisson.

M. Bisson: Mais vous?

M. Denhez: Bon. Pour commencer, évidemment, on aurait dû être autruche pour ne pas constater les controverses qui ont eu lieu à la Commission des affaires municipales de l'Ontario depuis quelques années. Il y a eu des développements majeurs. Dans la décision de la Cour suprême du Canada, c'est dans l'affaire de la municipalité de Hudson où on constate que le rôle des représentants élus des municipalités n'est pas perçu de la même façon aujourd'hui qu'il l'était il y a quelques années.

Il y a eu aussi des changements dans le projet de loi 26 au mois de décembre qui prévoient tout justement que ce qu'on appelle les politiques provinciales seront maintenant perçues différemment, en vertu de la nouvelle loi—

M. Bisson: Êtes-vous en faveur de cette loi?

M. Denhez: Eh bien, la loi, c'est la loi.

M. Bisson: Pas nécessairement; mais ce n'est pas la bonne question. Êtes-vous en faveur du concept d'être capable de retourner un procès où on regarde la politique faisant affaire avec le développement—provincial policies? Êtes-vous en faveur de cette approche?

M. Denhez: Si on regarde le mot anglais pour « l'aménagement », le mot « planning », le mot dénote en anglais la notion que les choses peuvent être, sont prévisibles dans la mesure qu'il y a des critères et des barèmes. Elles sont prévisibles. C'est l'élément fondamental et indispensable de tout système d'aménagement cohérent. Alors, dans la mesure que le gouvernement est en train de promulguer une nouvelle loi qui prévoit un rôle distinct pour la politique provinciale, à mon avis

c'est un ajout au rôle que doit jouer non seulement la commission des affaires municipales, mais toutes les municipalités et tous les participants qui doivent prévoir ce qui va se faire dans le développement immobilier en Ontario.

M. Bisson: Je vous remercie. Dernière question.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That concludes the time allocated. Thank you very much, Mr Denhez. You may now step down.

Mr Denhez: Thank you, Madam Chair.

WILBER BRETT

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition: Wilber Brett, intended appointee as member, town of Essex Police Services Board.

The Chair: Our second interview this morning is with Wilber R. Brett. He is the intended appointee as a member for the town of Essex Police Services Board. Good morning, Mr Brett.

Mr Wilber Brett: Good morning.

The Chair: As you probably heard me say, you do have the opportunity, if you wish, to make an initial statement. Subsequent to that, of course, you will be asked questions by members of the committee. Each party is going to have 10 minutes. We'll go on rotation. If you make a statement, then your time is deducted from the time allotted to the government party. I don't know if you want to make a statement.

Mr Brett: Yes, I do, Madam Chair. Thank you very much.

I would like to start by thanking you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today so that you have a better understanding of the knowledge and skills I would be bringing to the Essex Police Services Board. I'd like to take a few minutes to provide you with some background information.

I'm proud to say that I have lived in the town of Essex all my life. I have been married to my wife, Judy, for over 41 years, and we have two daughters and four grandsons. I'm an active member of my church and I sit on the board of directors as a church warden.

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Unlike the vast majority of people, I have been fortunate to spend my entire career in one workplace. The Essex Free Press is a weekly community newspaper and commercial print shop that has been recording the history of the people of Essex and surrounding areas since 1896. It was originally owned by my grandfather, handed on to my uncle and then purchased by myself and a business partner in 1979.

Before transferring the newspaper to my oldest daughter earlier this year, I wore many hats. Commercial printer, typesetter, graphic designer, newspaper production manager, news editor, photographer, publisher and bookkeeper are just some of the job titles that come to mind. I am slowly easing out the business and wish to resume my involvement in community affairs.

That brings me to the background you are probably most interested in: my political experience. I have had extensive political experience at the municipal level. From 1970 to 1980, I was a member of the Essex town council as a councillor, deputy reeve and, for the last four years, as mayor. During my four years as mayor, I was a member of the Essex police commission.

From 1981 to 1985, I took a break from politics and was appointed to the local planning board. In 1986, I re-entered politics, sitting on council for the former town of Essex from 1986 to 1998. In January 1999, the town amalgamated with three other municipalities and I was elected as one of two representatives of ward 1 in the former town of Essex. I held that position until November 2003, when I decided to retire from active politics and to seek other involvement.

Over the years as a member of council, I have had to deal with many police issues, including the annual review of the police budget, the hotly contested move of the police station to the other end of the amalgamated municipality, a review of existing police services in light of an attractive offer from the Ontario Provincial Police, and other sundry issues. With over 30 years of experience dealing with the Essex Police Services Board, I feel that I am amply qualified to serve effectively as a government appointee. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Brett. We're going to start now with the official opposition.

Ms Scott: Thank you very much for coming today, Mr Brett, and congratulations. You have a long history of public service in your family; many generations preserving your local heritage. So congratulations to you for that.

I would ask: Are you a member of a political party right now?

Mr Brett: Yes, I'm a member of the Liberal Party.

Ms Scott: Were you involved in Bruce Crozier's campaign?

Mr Brett: Not actively. I did contribute financially to his campaign; I've known Bruce for over 40 years, so it was a no-brainer.

Ms Scott: OK. And I'm sorry if you mentioned it before and I didn't hear: How did you hear about this position?

Mr Brett: Being active in politics all these years, I knew there were government appointees, so one day I met Bruce on the street and asked him that if there was ever a vacancy on the Essex Police Services Board to let me know; I'd like to apply. He said that as a matter of fact there was and gave me an application. I filled it out and gave it back to him, and here I am today.

Ms Scott: So you asked Mr Crozier if there were any vacancies and he said, yes, there were, and you applied from there.

Mr Brett: Right.

Ms Scott: I'm interested to hear: You went through amalgamation in Essex and you chose to keep your own local municipal police force as opposed to contracting out with the OPP. And you did—

Mr Brett: Yes. In 2000, I believe, or 2001, council made a decision to request a quote from the OPP as well as from our local police service board, and after waiting about six months for the quote, the council decided to stay with the local police service board.

Ms Scott: Very good. And you've had experience, as a member of council, being on the police service board, you said?

Mr Brett: Yes. From 1977 to 1980, as I said, I was mayor, and at that time there was a judge appointed and, I believe, a member appointed by the province. For a good many meetings, it was the member and myself doing the business. Sometimes we'd have to go to the next municipality where the judge lived to have a dinner meeting, just to catch up with him. So it was an improvement when they got rid of the judges and started making appointments to the board.

Ms Scott: Very good. Have you developed an opinion about whether you feel your community is best served by the municipal police force as opposed to the OPP contract? Do you have an opinion about what works better, or changes?

Mr Brett: I supported keeping our local police. I felt there was more of a local flavour. Most of the officers lived within the municipality—some of them are neighbours, and so forth—and even though the OPP proposal was much cheaper, the atmosphere of the municipality was that they wanted to keep their local department. They didn't really care about the extra expense. So I was satisfied to keep our local force.

Ms Scott: That's interesting to hear. I have that in my riding; part of my municipality says that. So that's interesting feedback. Thank you very much for appearing. I'll just pass it over to Mr Tascona.

Mr Tascona: What do you see as the main policing issues in the town of Essex?

Mr Brett: The town of Essex is a small municipality with a population of 19,000. Basically, it is Highway Traffic Act violations, domestic disputes—much different from a force like in the city of Windsor or even, of course, the city of Toronto, where the force is so big that it's kind of hard to manage. We're small. We had, I believe, 26 officers and the chief and deputy chief, so it's a small force. Other than just plain PR, I don't see much of a problem within our police service right now.

Mr Tascona: Would you want your police force, or the municipality, to have photo radar?

Mr Brett: It would probably be nice to have it, but I don't really think it's a benefit. They're busy enough; we have a small force. I'm not sure it would be that much of a benefit to the municipality, if you're thinking financially—the revenue from it.

The Chair: Mr Bisson.

Mr Bisson: Thank you for coming before us, sir. Let me just come to a whole bunch of questions here. As you know, there is obviously a controversy going on in the city of Toronto right now with regard to some unfortunate actions on the part of some officers. Some people purport that there should be some sort of civilian over-

sight to deal with complaints, when it comes to complaints against police officers for wrongdoing. What's your view on that? Should it be an internal complaints process or should there be independent civilian oversight of the police?

Mr Brett: I think that should be a judgment of, I believe, the Attorney General's office. If it's a request by the police service board, I would think the Attorney General's office should appoint—

Mr Bisson: No, that's not so much my question. My question is, you know what's happened in Toronto, and I don't want to belittle that, because I think most police officers—the vast majority of them—do a great job. Unfortunately, there are some incidents that do happen where, as with all workers, there are some bad apples. So let's put this in context.

My point here is that there was a time in this province when we did have civilian oversight of the police. If a citizen had a complaint against the police, rather than bringing your complaint to the police at the end of the day, if you weren't happy with the result of the investigation, you went to civilian oversight. That was undone by the Harris government; they got rid of that.

There is some call by some—not all, and it's a bit of a controversial issue—to return to a civilian oversight in cases of complaints that are not adequately dealt with internally by police. I just want to know your view on that. As a person who would serve on the police service board, that's fairly significant, in my view.

Mr Brett: Yes, it is. At this point, I would say it should be left within the jurisdiction of the police service board to decide whether they should bring in an independent body.

1100

Mr Bisson: So there should be no provincial involvement? I guess the problem that logic brings to me is that in the city of Hamilton you may have a police oversight commission that's independent and civilian, and you may not have one in Toronto. Do you know what I mean? Wouldn't it be better to have one policy across the province?

Mr Brett: Yes, I would agree with that but—

Mr Bisson: My question is about your personal view. You're not going to get failed on your answer. There are different views. I just want to know what yours is.

Let's put it in context. People should, first of all, complain to the police because the police, by and large, do a fairly good job of complaints handling. I know that with the ones I've dealt with in my community—Madame Smith and I have talked about this before—the police do a pretty darned good job of this, but every now and then something goes amok. In those cases, should the citizens have the right to a civilian oversight process, in your view?

Mr Brett: I would say no, at the present time. Unfortunately, with the atmosphere in our population, I think you would have complaints piling up and nobody would ever be satisfied with what the police came up with.

Mr Bisson: I would hope they wouldn't have complaints piling up, because that would indicate there's a

heck of a problem in our society. I think I know what you're saying, but let's not go there.

Mr Brett: OK.

Mr Bisson: That's going to start a whole other debate.

Moving on to another issue—you've answered my question—with regard to employment equity, I don't know what the makeup is currently of the Essex force. Is it all men? Is it a split of women and men? Are there people representing various parts of the community?

Mr Brett: Right now I believe there are two, if not three, female officers and the rest are men.

Mr Bisson: What's your view on that with regard to hiring policies on the part of a police force? Should the police try, as closely as possible, to mirror the community they police? For example, where I come from, there's a large aboriginal component and there should be police officers from the aboriginal community. In Toronto, there are people of various ethnic backgrounds, so the city of Toronto, through Metro, tries to do that to a certain extent. What's your view? If you were on the police services board, put on an HR committee, had to hire, the choice is between two people, and there are some who are underrepresented, how do you feel about that? What would you do?

Mr Brett: I would think we should be hiring the right person for the job, the most qualified person for the job. Unfortunately in Essex we don't have an ethnic background in one part of the municipality or the other, so I can't say that we should be hiring—

Mr Bisson: I understand. My question is: You have two candidates and you have to make a decision. You're underrepresented in a certain part of the community—let's say women, just as an example—and you have two applicants who have passed the process. They have both gone through the interviews and they've both done well. What's your view on the equity issue at that point? "The most qualified person" normally means the guy. In most places that's how it works, unfortunately.

Mr Brett: There are female officers—

Mr Bisson: I'm just saying it's not your fault, but there's still a certain amount of sexism and racism within our institutions. My question is, where would you find yourself on that? If you're underrepresented, do you think we should take into consideration the issue of employment equity?

Mr Brett: I think with the police services board you should be hiring the most qualified—

Mr Bisson: You've answered my question.

How do you reward good policing? That's really the question. There are a lot of officers out there who work really hard, do an excellent job in our communities. They're the vast majority. They are about 99% of our officers. What do we do to satisfy them? Quite frankly, they are sometimes undervalued in our communities. What do we do as a police services board to reward good policing, good decisions on the street? How do we encourage that so we can support our officers on the street?

Mr Brett: At present, with the Essex Police Services Board, they have a PR officer who does an excellent job

of promoting the department, the officers, the VIP program. As a newspaper person, we get calls all the time to go and take a picture of officers making a presentation at a school or a group who have gone through the VIP program.

Mr Bisson: I guess what I'm getting at is that when I talk to officers, both OPP and Timmins police, in the riding I represent, often they really feel undervalued. They put up with quite a bit, get paid a salary that some would say is enough or not enough but that's another issue, but really feel sometimes that it's an ungrateful job. They're having to deal with all kinds of issues where people are frustrated because they're being pulled over for a traffic violation, or they're into domestic disputes etc, as you said. The big question is, what do we do as service boards to support those officers, the 99% of them who are doing an excellent job in our communities? What do we do to encourage them? What do we do to reward the work they do for us that sometimes goes unnoticed until something goes wrong?

Mr Brett: I really don't know how to answer that. It sounds like if they're not satisfied or happy with the job, then maybe they shouldn't be a police officer and should be looking for another profession.

Mr Bisson: You've answered my question. Thank you.

The Chair: I would now ask the government if there are any questions.

Mr Parsons: No, that was an excellent presentation.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Brett, for appearing before the committee. You may now step down.

Mr Brett: Thank you very much. It's been a delightful experience.

The Chair: A safe trip back home.

RONALD DiMENNA

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition: Ronald DiMenna, intended appointee as member, Kingsville Police Services Board.

The Chair: Our third interview this morning, and our last, is with Ronald DiMenna, intended appointee as member, also of a police services board, this time Kingsville.

You can make an initial statement, and after that, of course, you're going to be asked questions by the committee. Each party has 10 minutes. We'll go in rotation. Any time that you take in your statement will be deducted from the government party.

Welcome, Mr DiMenna, and do you wish to make a statement?

Mr Ronald DiMenna: Yes, I do.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the committee, for affording me the opportunity to make this presentation on a possible appointment to the Kingsville Police Services Board.

You have my curriculum vitae in front of you. I'm a lifelong resident of the town of Kingsville, since 1946. I

was born and raised on a farm and educated in Kingsville, the Catholic separate school board as well as the Kingsville District High School. Concomitantly, I went on further to post-secondary education and graduated from the University of Windsor in 1970 with a master's degree in analytical chemistry. Then I pursued a teaching career in post-secondary education, community college, taught chemistry for 31 years, and retired in December 2003. I did work for Ag Canada and put myself through university.

As my curriculum vitae states, I have experience in municipal government: I was elected in 1978 and went all the way through the system to deputy reeve and reeve, culminating in 1991, and by virtue of being mayor—or reeve, which is mayor now—and deputy reeve, I was on county council for six years and chair of the county finance committee. I was also chair of the conservation authority, Union Water system, and I'm familiar with the policies and procedures of boards.

I have wanted to continue my municipal involvement toward the community since I retired. Also, if appointed to the police services board, I want to bring a flavour to the board. I am from the rural area of the town. There used to be the town of Kingsville, Gosfield South and Gosfield North in that area. The current composition of the board is all from the former town proper and there is no rural flavour to it. This would also further my community involvement with the residents of the town.

That's my presentation, and I'm ready for your questions.

1110

Mr Bisson: I really agree with your comment that basically we often lost sight of representing the rural parts of these organizations and it gets to be a real problem. I know that in areas like where you and I live, and others, sometimes it's very difficult to bring that perspective. So I'm glad you flagged that; I think it's really important.

I want to ask you the same questions I asked the previous gentlemen. I'm just going to go right back to it and ask you a couple. Again, for the record, I want to be very clear: 99.99% of police officers work hard; they serve above and beyond; they, quite frankly, are not thanked enough; and sometimes they're—I wouldn't say "undervalued," but under-appreciated when it comes to the work they do, and we all know how difficult that job is.

So my first question is: What do we do to reward and help acknowledge the work that police officers do for us, so we can encourage them to keep on doing and keep striving to do better?

Mr DiMenna: I would answer that question in probably two parts. One would be simply—we have an OPP contract, so it would have to work with that. If there was, say, a community relations position, using an officer in that regard, to me it would be a reward to take him away from the actual everyday labours of doing the job of traffic enforcement or whatever the case may be, and allow him to develop professionally.

Second, if there was an opportunity to send this individual to conferences or professional development courses, that's one way of rewarding. If it's salaries—first- or second-class constable—I guess you have to go through the rungs. If there's a promotion, we from the police services board could recommend to the OPP that maybe this person should be in line for a promotion to sergeant or whatever the case may be, assuming they meet the appropriate qualifications.

Mr Bisson: So you do agree with the concept that it's not good enough for us just to sit back and make sure they get a paycheque every week but to be proactive in trying to work with them and recognize the valuable work they do in our communities?

Mr DiMenna: Yes. If there's something that can be done for the individual, I would wholeheartedly agree.

Mr Bisson: The previous gentleman, Mr Brett, said—and I don't want to take this out of context—that if they don't like the job, they can leave. Do you agree with that kind of approach?

Mr DiMenna: No, I don't.

Mr Bisson: OK, that's what I wanted to know.

Let me get back, in reverse order, to the issue of equity. It is not an issue everywhere but it is an issue in some places, and I have no idea when it comes to your police force. I'll just repeat the question: In some communities, probably most in Ontario, there are various people who make up the community, depending on where you live in the province. For example, where I come from, there's a large aboriginal community. Do you think it's important that, as much as possible, we try to find ways through hiring practices to make sure we represent with our officers the community they police?

Mr DiMenna: I wholeheartedly agree with that statement. Based on assuming that all things being equal—they all have the qualifications, they all can do the same jobs—I think the force should actually reflect the demographics of the municipality it serves. It's very difficult to have equal numbers at this stage, but all things being equal, yes, I would probably cast my vote in favour.

Mr Bisson: I agree with you; "all things being equal" is the way to put that.

The other thing is, let's say you have in your police force—and I don't know if it would be the case—a community that is really under-represented, and I'm just going to use women as an example. Do you believe it's part of the responsibility of the police services board to try to address that by way of recruiting, by advertising that it is looking for police officers and that it is in short supply on the force with women, and try to proactively seek out applicants?

Mr DiMenna: My thinking on that is, yes, we as a board should do everything possible to encourage that. We do have what we call a police services committee, which is representative of all—there are about 21 members on our police services committee, and we try to get people from different walks of life, ethnic groups as well as women etc—whatever the case is. As a member, I

would probably go to them and say, “Give me some ideas of what we could do. Would you support this? Could you go out to the community and actually have a look-see at what’s going on?”

Mr Bisson: That’s a really good idea, actually.

Before my last question, the issue of oversight, which I raised before—I don’t want to get into the whole explanation again, but it is an issue. I’ve had to deal with this in my own constituency. Again, in 99% of cases, police departments do a really good job of dealing with complaints about police officers. Often police officers are put in a tough spot. They’ve got to do the job of maintaining the law, and that is not always popular. We need to put that in context—and unfortunately, people get upset and file complaints.

But let’s say the person who has filed a complaint is not able to get satisfaction by way of the internal process. Do you believe there should be a civilian oversight committee to deal with those, a committee that is at arm’s length and removed from the police service?

Mr DiMenna: If the person complaining went through the appropriate steps—if they come to the police services board with a complaint, we have a sergeant in charge and then we have a police inspector, the head of the headquarters in our area. Let them come back with an appropriate report, and if that’s not particularly solvable, then I would say, “Is there a possible solution in our police services board for this?” If there is not, then I do believe there is an Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services, and I would probably push to refer it to that board.

Mr Bisson: I want to say again that in the experiences I’ve had, the police do a good job 99% of the time, but every now and then you do get that complaint where—what do you do with it? Anyway, you’ve answered that question quite well.

I thought you were really good on the issue of how to deal with trying to reward good policing in our communities: those officers who really work hard and sometimes are undervalued, I guess the word is. But let me get to the other point: What do we do when we have cases where something goes wrong; for example, like we’ve seen on the Metro force? How do you deal with that?

Mr DiMenna: What do you mean by “something goes wrong”?

Mr Bisson: I don’t know if you’ve been following what happened on the Metro force—again, I hope it’s an isolated incident, I really do. What do you do if you start to get a whiff that there’s something wrong in the police department? How do you approach that as a police service board?

Mr DiMenna: First of all, I would find the person in charge and say, “What depth is this? Bring us forward a report.” I would look at that, and if it’s very unwieldy—in the particular situation, if they’re committing an offence under the Criminal Code, they should be charged like any one of us; let the law take its course. If there’s no satisfaction within the internal ranks or whatever the

case is, looking at your own people, then I think you have to bring in an outside service.

Mr Bisson: Hear, hear.

Have I got a couple of minutes?

The Chair: Yes. You’re getting close.

Mr Bisson: I just want to make the record show the following: I’m going to be supporting your application. I would love to have you on my police services board along with the other people who are there. They do a fine job. I will be voting against Mr Brett for exactly the opposite reasons I’m supporting you. I really got a sense that you know what you’re getting into, you understand some of the issues and challenges that face police, and I really feel comfortable in approving your appointment.

I want to say for the record that I will not be supporting Mr Brett. Quite frankly, I think he represents the opposite view, which I don’t think is the way I would want to see a police services board operate.

Mr DiMenna: Thank you very much for your confidence.

The Chair: The government has seven minutes.

Mr Parsons: We’re fine.

The Chair: The official opposition.

Mr Tascona: Thank you for coming before the committee today. I just want to ask you a couple of questions.

Are you in favour of random testing of police officers for drug usage?

Mr DiMenna: The only way I can answer that, to be quite truthful, is if there was a problem surfacing and it did crop up that substance abuse was prevalent, or whatever the case is. Then I would have no problem supporting it. But if there’s nothing to indicate it, then I don’t think it’s necessary to put those people through that. I think they’re professional in their own right.

Mr Tascona: You’d be in favour of it if there was a reasonable basis for it to be done?

Mr DiMenna: If there’s a reasonable basis, yes, but I would assume the department of the officers—they’re professional in nature, whatever the case is.

Mr Tascona: Are you in favour of photo radar within your municipality?

Mr DiMenna: Yes. We do have photo radar, and I’m a victim of it, by the way.

1120

Mr Tascona: Where do you use photo radar within your community?

Mr DiMenna: On the highways. We have the OPP contract. That’s on our municipal roads, as well as the provincial highways. We have two or three provincial highways going through our town.

Mr Bisson: Really? I didn’t know you could do that.

Mr Tascona: You’ve had photo radar. The photo radar system that the province is talking about, is it the same one you have right now? I know police use radar to detect speeders.

Mr DiMenna: Oh, you’re talking photo radar.

Mr Tascona: I’m talking about photo radar.

Mr DiMenna: No, we don’t have any. I’m sorry, I misinterpreted your question.

Mr Tascona: My question is, are you in favour of photo radar within the municipality?

Mr DiMenna: Am I in favour of photo radar? Yes, on the major highways or the 401, whatever the case may be. I think they would obviously release—

Mr Tascona: How about within your municipality? Are you in favour of photo radar within your municipality?

Mr DiMenna: Within my municipality? No, not at this time.

Mr Tascona: Are you familiar with the civilian oversight process?

Mr DiMenna: No, I'm not. I'm sorry.

Mr Tascona: You're not. OK.

Ms Scott: Thank you for appearing here before us today. I wondered, how did you hear about this position?

Mr DiMenna: I applied through the municipality for a lay appointment to the police services board. The municipality advertised in a local newspaper for appointments. That sort of piqued my interest and I made an application. Obviously it was unsuccessful, because the current member who got appointed by the council was the outgoing mayor. Now, I was in that position myself once. It's one of those things. Consequently, I said, "OK. That's basically what the situation is."

I was at the municipal offices talking to the administrator, and he indicated to me that there was a possibility of a provincial appointment coming up. I obtained, through him from the Web site, an open letter of application and fired it up here. Then the public safety and correctional services area sent me an actual application. I had to sign a form for the police clearance etc, whatever the case is, and then I formalized the application. There was more correspondence coming back that they wanted a letter of reference, as well as a curriculum vitae—resumé—from me, and I submitted that. That's how I found out about that.

Ms Scott: So you applied directly to the overseeing body of the correctional—

Mr DiMenna: It was public safety in the correctional services area, I think, or the secretary.

Ms Scott: OK. You sent your resumé directly in to them.

Mr DiMenna: Yes. It was on the Web site, so they sent me an application.

Ms Scott: OK. Are you a member of a political party?

Mr DiMenna: Yes, I am.

Ms Scott: What political party is that?

Mr DiMenna: Liberals.

Ms Scott: Have you ever donated to the Liberal Party?

Mr DiMenna: Yes, I have.

Ms Scott: Were you involved in Bruce Crozier's campaign?

Mr DiMenna: Not actively; only by donation. I've also donated to other parties as well. They're friends of mine. I've had friends who, when I've run for political office in the municipality, have given me donations, and I

reciprocate. There was the PC Party and there was also the NDP.

Mr Bisson: That gets really expensive after a while.

Mr DiMenna: It's unfortunate, but they're friends. Why not?

Ms Scott: I see that in 1999 you dissolved your municipal police force in your area.

Mr DiMenna: Yes, it was amalgamated. Ours wasn't dissolved; the Kingsville was. Ours was Gosfield South. We had the OPP right from day one—I think 1957 or so. We were actually the first one in that area to have the OPP.

Ms Scott: So you've experienced both municipal and OPP contract. What do you feel serves your community the best, the OPP contract or the municipal police force? What's your opinion on—

Mr DiMenna: I'm not familiar with the Kingsville police force, the actual municipal part. We always had OPP when I was reeve or deputy reeve, and we were very satisfied. I think the pros and cons—I wasn't on the transition team but I was on council at the time, and the thrust was made from council that the OPP would be probably much more cost-effective because you have a professionally trained officer. You have access to emergency services, the canine patrol, all kinds of stuff like that. Of course, you don't have an overhead of uniforms or cars or whatever the case is. You pay a flat rate. You pay so much for a well-trained officer and it's one of those things you can budget for.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr DiMenna. We've certainly appreciated your being here and we wish you well.

Mr DiMenna: Thank you very much for your consideration and time.

The Chair: You are very welcome.

We've now completed the interviews for this morning. We now have the opportunity to consider the intended appointment of Mr Denhez as member of the Ontario Municipal Board.

Mr Parsons: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Mr Parsons has moved concurrence in the appointment. Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The next appointment we are going to consider is the intended appointment of Mr Brett as member, Essex Police Services Board.

Mr Parsons: Again, I move concurrence.

The Chair: Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by Mr Parsons. Any discussion?

Mr Bisson: I hope the government reconsiders. This gentlemen, although he is probably a great individual, is opposed to rewarding officers who do a good job. His attitude is, the officers should quit if they don't like it. Do you really want somebody like that on your service board? He is opposed to employment equity and trying to get the police to represent the community that it serves. He is opposed to the idea of having some form of oversight in cases where something has gone wrong and there has been no solving of a complaint. I seriously

think the government should reconsider and vote against his appointment.

If you vote for him, you are condoning his position, which is: You fire a cop because he's unhappy about the way he's being treated. That's not the kind of person I want at the police services board representing police officers who work really hard, who are under valued, who are sometimes under-appreciated. They need support at the police services board, and I believe we should be voting against this appointment. I think it's a bad appointment.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Bisson. Any further discussion?

Mr Bisson: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Berardinetti, Oraziotti, Parsons, Qaadri, Scott, Smith, Tascona.

Nays

Bisson.

The Chair: The motion is carried.

We will now consider the intended appointment of Mr DiMenna as member, Kingsville Police Services Board.

Mr Parsons: I move concurrence.

The Chair: Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by Mr Parsons. Any discussion?

Mr Bisson: For the exact opposite reason I'm going to be voting in favour of this gentleman's appointment. I want to put it clearly on the record: This committee has a responsibility to vet appointments. If we get bad appointments, we should be doing our job, which I think we just failed to do on the previous vote.

This gentleman clearly, I think, understands policing. He has done an admirable job of responding to questions. He looks at things from the perspective of representing the community. More importantly, what I was quite satisfied with was the issue that he understands that our police officers need support. That begins not only with the cop on the beat and the sergeant and the police chief at the police station but also having a supportive police services board that understands that our officers need

support and sometimes need to be told they are doing a good job, because they are under valued. Along with all of the other issues he responded to, I have no problem supporting this gentleman's application.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Bisson, for those comments and reminder of the purpose of the committee.

Any other discussion? If not, all in favour? All those in favour, would you please raise your hands.

Ayes

Berardinetti, Bisson, Oraziotti, Parsons, Qaadri, Scott, Smith, Tascona.

The Chair: Opposed? None. The motion is carried.

I believe that concludes the meeting.

Mr Bisson: Other business.

The Chair: Other business. I know—

Mr Bisson: Very, very quickly. One minute.

The Chair: All right. We were going to postpone that. You had indicated that you might want to take a look at possible agency reviews.

Mr Bisson: I understand that we are going to do that at a future meeting.

The Chair: Yes, we are.

Mr Bisson: I have no problem with that. I just want to raise something very quickly. I just remind members that the function of this committee is to review appointments. I think we should have, at one point, an in camera discussion.

Interjection.

Mr Bisson: Thank you, Mr Oraziotti, for your many years of service and experience here in the Legislature. I really appreciate it.

My point is this: we should, at one point, have an in camera discussion about the role of this committee, maybe at a future meeting so that we understand what our responsibilities are when it comes to appointments.

The Chair: Thank you very much. Any other business? Seeing no other business, this meeting is adjourned until probably, at the earliest, May 12.

The committee adjourned at 1130.

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

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