

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

PH-19

**Standing Committee  
on Procedure  
and House Affairs**

Committee business

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament  
Tuesday 24 October 2023

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Chair: Jennifer K. French  
Clerk: Christopher Tyrell

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

PH-19

**Comité permanent  
de la procédure  
et des affaires de la Chambre**

Travaux du comité

1<sup>re</sup> session  
43<sup>e</sup> législature  
Mardi 24 octobre 2023

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Présidente : Jennifer K. French  
Greffier : Christopher Tyrell

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON PROCEDURE  
AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT  
DE LA PROCÉDURE  
ET DES AFFAIRES DE LA CHAMBRE**

Tuesday 24 October 2023

Mardi 24 octobre 2023

*The committee met at 0901 in committee room 1.*

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Good morning, everyone. Welcome back to committee. It has been a while since we had a chance to connect. We have a fair number of things to talk about. The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs will now come to order.

On the agenda is committee business. Two documents were circulated to committee members titled Bellevue House and Sir John A. Macdonald's Legacy—have all members received that?—and Media Search—Contending with Monuments to John A. Macdonald in Canada—2019-Present, respectively. So all members should have those, and we had asked that all members have a chance to review it so we could have a discussion today.

However, an additional three documents have been handed out today, exhibited by MPP West. MPP West, I understand that you have some comments to share about your documents.

**MPP Jamie West:** Yes, if it's appropriate now. Just to be honest with everybody, I received these yesterday, so I haven't had a chance to read them yet, but I wanted to share them with the committee. I was thinking, though, when we had the subcommittee meeting to discuss moving forward and when we would table this meeting and what documents were coming from research, that was in the wake of Truth and Reconciliation Day. I was thinking about the make-up of our committee or even our Assembly. In our committee, I don't think—no one is visibly Indigenous; I don't know everyone's background.

But I've been in the situation before, working in health and safety, where we make really good decisions as a committee but don't consult the people who are directly affected. I know that we're making every effort to make consultations right now, but I had asked research to look into truth and reconciliation and any guidance they had in terms of a consultation process, anything that would help us be more successful so we would make an informed decision, because I don't want our committee to look across from each other and think that we've made a really great, helpful decision but not consult with the people who might have more of an interest at stake.

So maybe it would be helpful to hand it over to Erica Simmons from research just to explain the documents,

because she would have a more thorough knowledge than I would, because I just honestly haven't had an opportunity to read them yet.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** Sure. Thank you. My name is Erica Simmons. I'm a—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Sorry, you're going to have to pull the microphone closer. I can't hear you.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** My name is Erica Simmons. I'm a research officer with legislative research. My background is as a historian. I was involved in creating one of these documents: the later one, the October 23rd one. What I and my colleagues in the research office have tried to do is answer your direct questions but also think about what other information might be useful.

The most recent document, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Statues of Sir John A. Macdonald, was in response to specific questions from MPP West about how recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the TRC, might inform possible approaches to the statute of Sir John A. and also about Indigenous views of Sir John A. and of the statue and potential consultation.

This is really a very, very brief document addressing, in a few paragraphs, a number of related issues, including whether the TRC actually specifically addressed statues of Sir John A., which it did not; and the Shoe Memorial at the Legislature, which is one of a number of shoe memorials that were spontaneous memorials across the country commemorating the children lost at residential schools. It addresses very briefly what happened with the protests and boarding up the statue, what the TRC report says about Sir John A. himself, and then a little bit more about Indigenous voices and perspectives on Sir John A. and what various leaders have had to say.

On page 5, there's a brief paragraph about consultation, mainly to introduce these two guides that come from the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs that have been printed out for you—two guides to consultation. These were developed by and with Indigenous staff at the ministry, so they're authoritative in terms of how consultation is meant to be conducted with Indigenous peoples. It's a very complex process.

Finally, this memo looks at how a select number of Ontario communities—there have been many Ontario communities with statues of Sir John A. Macdonald who have had to grapple with what to do with those statues in

the wake of protests, and this just describes the approaches taken in a few locations. There are many more locations.

The earlier memo from October 13, which was done at the request of MPP French, focuses specifically on the process used by Parks Canada at the Bellevue House National Historic Site to handle the legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald. They did engage in consultation with Indigenous communities, so it talks a bit about what was involved.

Lastly, there's a media scan, which is not comprehensive. It's also just select articles about different communities in Canada and how they have handled either his legacy or his statue.

And then, what I wanted to say is that what we can offer you from legislative research as you begin grappling with this issue yourselves is a research report, a high-level overview and backgrounder that will address these issues—everything already covered and more—in a substantive way. Off the top, it's things like:

- the history of the statue;
- who owns the statue—I saw a reference somewhere, which I haven't had a chance to verify, that it's actually owned by the Archives of Ontario;
- why Sir John A. Macdonald has become a focus of protests and attention;
- what the TRC says in more depth about Macdonald;
- what the TRC and post-TRC Indigenous perspective is on these statues and how they should be handled; and
- what the experiences are of these other jurisdictions: They made certain decisions; how was it received? Was there any backlash? In one case, there was one jurisdiction that decided to move the statue to a cemetery. That was the decision they were happy with, and then the cemetery said, "No, we don't want the statue";
- whether jurisdictions remove their statues or not, and whether they put up plaques along with the statues or instead of the statue;
- whether jurisdictions have decided to put up memorials to residential schools, which is something that the TRC and Indigenous leaders have called for; and
- how community consultations were handled. In some cases, jurisdictions have used Indigenous consulting firms to organize the consultations, because it's more than city councils and small municipalities can handle.

So those are the sort of things we could cover. We keep it at a high-level overview; we're not going weigh you down with a lot of information. And anything else you can think of that you're interested in, we can add to that report, or we can do separate memos and reports as you see issues that you want to delve into.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you. I will add, just for clarification, that the memo on the Bellevue House and the legacy that had been done was at the behest of the committee.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** Oh, yes; sorry.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** But the other one—that is, the memo to Mr. West—was because we hadn't had a chance to discuss it when Mr. West reached out to research and said, "I think the committee might be interested in this," which is why he has presented it. The committee can decide how we gratefully utilize research

going forward. But just if you're wondering, we hadn't discussed Mr. West's; that just came recently, okay?

**0910**

Thank you so much for that. Does anyone have any questions for Erica right now? Okay. And I know that the committee has not hesitated to make good use of research to this point, so I'm sure that that will continue.

So we had already received the one that we had originally asked for as a committee. Have members had a chance to take a look at that, and do they have thoughts? Recognizing that this particular project, as I had mentioned previously at committee, that was undertaken was not a statue; it is kind of a living museum and obviously a different-sized project but, in terms of their process and consultation and the community involvement, I think it would probably be worth our better understanding as we're heading into our own process.

So, for discussion? Mr. Rae.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. Rae? There we go; you're live.

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** I can speak louder if you want me to.

Thank you to the legislative research branch for putting this together, and thank you to MPP West, as well, for reaching out for that memo. I know we just got these this morning, but I really do appreciate that and look forward to going through those items for the Sir John A. statue, but also for our general restoration project, as well, I think would be very helpful.

I can't speak for others on the committee, but I've never been involved—I've only participated once in my life through Indigenous and it was sort of as a bystander, but not really actively seeking that sort of feedback. So I really do appreciate that, MPP West, and for getting this together. I know it gives the committee a lot to think about and look over going forward, around the general restoration, as well, moving forward. I think it will help inform us to a great extent, moving forward.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay. Ms. Hogarth and then Mr. Kanapathi.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** Thank you.

A couple of weekends ago, I took part in a conference here, and we had politicians from around the country. BC had an interesting presentation about what they've done with truth and reconciliation with their legislative assembly, so I think it would be interesting to share with the group what they have done. It was like an outside area where people can go and reflect. I just thought it was a really nice story, so maybe if we could get even some photos or some background.

But I also learned the background of the art piece in the committee room with the shoes. I didn't know that history, which I think all politicians who work here should actually know what that's about. I don't know. Maybe if we could share a little bit about what happened, it was all the shoes—the little shoes that people had left on the stairs.

At other Legislatures, when you leave things behind, they remove them right away, but they never realized these are people's memories, these are people's thoughts, these

are people's missing children. It kind of gives me the shivers, thinking about it. A lot of credit goes to the staff here, realizing that you couldn't just sweep this away. These aren't trinkets; these are memories. And they let them all dry out, I guess, before winter came, and somebody created that art piece.

So it's a really nice history that should be shared with everybody. I probably didn't do the story justice, but I'm sure somebody here who worked on it—I don't know, Chris, if you were part of that team that worked on it, but it's really nice story. But if we could learn a little bit of lessons from what BC did, I think that might help with our thoughts.

I do like the idea of still having our past and—the Sir John A. Macdonald statue, I think, is important to be housed here, in the Legislature, someplace. I also think that it's important that we reflect on the truth and reconciliation, but I do believe there is place for both.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. Kanapathi?

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Today is my first day on this committee.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Welcome. Glad to have you. A few new faces.

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** Good morning.

This is an interesting topic. I commend MPP West for bringing this issue to the committee, and I'd like to hear more—a little bit of clarification about this proposal. What are we going to achieve? It's a great initiative—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Sorry, can you move the microphone so we can hear you better? Thanks, Logan.

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** It is a great initiative, and I'd like to get some clarification from MPP West. Thank you for bringing this proposal forward. What are we trying to achieve as a committee together? I know history is sometimes written by them, not written by us—Indigenous perspective. This is a wonderful initiative, a wonderful proposal you are bringing to the committee, and I'd like to get some clarification on what we are trying to achieve.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** You're welcome to answer that. I will also get some of our new members—just so that they know what we have been tasked with by the Board of Internal Economy and why we're discussing this.

But if you want to go ahead and answer Mr. Kanapathi, then I'll frame it.

**MPP Jamie West:** Thank you, Chair. I was going to summarize, kind of. One of the tasks for the committee that we're working on—traditionally, in the past, this was regulations and private bills, and then it merged into the standing committee on regulations and House affairs.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** It's procedure and House affairs.

**MPP Jamie West:** Procedure and House affairs, thank you.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** All the things.

**MPP Jamie West:** A large chunk of what we've been tasked with is the upcoming renovations of Queen's Park.

There were many protests after they found the bodies of those children at residential schools, the first 213 and

then they began to find more and more, and vandalism to the statue of John A. Macdonald on the south lawn, right at the very peak of our lawn. It eventually was boxed up, and then that was brought to the Board of Internal Economy to decide what to do with it. They determined that it fit in our scope of what we were doing here with the renovations at Queen's Park, and then we've been considering what to do.

I think the first start was sort of, what have other people done and how do we move forward? That led to the first bunch of research that's probably been a little overwhelming. We usually don't have this much to read on the first day of joining committee. But the media scan and what Parks Canada has done and, while waiting for that, I had asked Nick, who does a lot of our research here, if he could let me know if there's anything in the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission regarding statues and monuments. There isn't anything specific to John A. Macdonald. There is something about having monuments or things to recognize Indigenous history.

But while looking into that and while working with research, they let me know there were these guidelines, Meaningful Engagement with Indigenous Peoples: An Operational Guide and Working with Indigenous Peoples: An Introductory Relationships Guide, which I thought would be helpful because I remind myself that you don't know what you don't know. Much like my colleague had mentioned earlier, my knowledge and education around Indigenous history probably didn't start until I was like 40, so there's a lot for me to learn and understand.

While we were having the conversation this morning, for example, I reminded myself that in my city, there's a school that everyone calls Mack-Jack and I never considered—I mean, it's Macdonald-Cartier, but I never considered it was named after John A. Macdonald or anything like that, right? My viewpoint of that school is just it's Mack-Jack, and it's a nickname, and they've got a really good volleyball team, but for other people, it could be a hurtful name, or harmful or whatever else. So recognizing that lapse and the sort of ignorance, I think it's important that we do our best to get this right.

Not to monopolize the time, but one of the things I applaud the committee for is there's a real dedication I've found—and probably solidified after our trip to Ottawa to see the renovations there—to try to get this right. We have this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with the renovations of the building. How do we do the best we can knowing that many of us may not be here to see the final renovations, at least as elected officials? How do we make this better for everyone, staff, officials, the public—more accepting, more welcoming? Even some of the basic things of chargers on your desk, you know?

I think there is a real commitment, and one of the things you notice in the committee is that we don't sit by party; we sit together, because we're committed to making things better together.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I'm going to put myself on the speakers list and frame this a bit as I'm reminded by the letter from the Board of Internal Economy that we received in April.

0920

All committee members, including our new ones, welcome. We'll make sure that you have this, so you can see what is at the core of why we're undertaking this work. It says, "The board noted that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs is currently studying and plans a consultation on Indigenous representation as part of the Legislative Building rehabilitation," so as Jamie said, part of the broader project of renovation and rehabilitation.

It continues, "The board would therefore like to request the committee to also consider and recommend to the board on ways in which Indigenous representation and viewpoints can be reflected at the Sir John A. MacDonald statue installation." It continues on to say, "Section 102.2 of the Legislative Assembly Act assigns control of the legislative precinct to the Board of Internal Economy, and the board believes that receiving the advice of the committee on this matter will be of assistance to it as it reflects on the future status of this installation, which has now been sealed and protected behind hoarding for a lengthy period of time."

So, just to remind us, they're looking for our hopefully thoughtful and, I would say, quite important work, and they will ultimately make a decision. We have been tasked, as I just read it again, "to consider and recommend to the board on ways in which Indigenous representation and viewpoints can be reflected at the Sir John A. MacDonald statue installation." I do not read this or understand this to say they're looking for us to recommend what ultimately to do with the statue, but to gather and present that to them. That's how I interpret it, but also the committee can ultimately choose its own course, because anything to do with the procedure and affairs of the House falls under our purview.

I am actually going to lead us away from this—well, continue on to a broader thing also connected. As the Chair, the committee had tasked the Clerk and myself with reaching out with and connecting with Indigenous communities on the restoration project and those initial consultations, inviting their input, finding out who else to connect with. We had decided to invite them for quite involved and comprehensive tours. The Métis Nation of Ontario has already had one of those tours, and my understanding is it was quite involved and they appreciated it.

Then, as each group that participates in this process comes through and experiences this space, there will be not only art that I'm sure they will reflect upon, but the building itself, and they will experience it in ways that we as committee members may not have experienced it. I'm handing it back to the committee to recommend what we do next. Is it a matter of consultation with them? Are we inviting them to make submissions? All of that process, we have yet to determine.

Further to that, we have a meeting with Chief LaForme of the Mississaugas of the Credit. It was going to be last week, but we had to bump it to this week. Those pieces are coming together, and then we'll be able to put together the next stages with those that we're connecting with. That was originally on the restoration and renovation. I'm looking for permission from the committee to layer in the conver-

sation about Sir John A. MacDonald as well, because I had not to this point—that was not on my discussion list with them.

Ms. Hogarth?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** I don't want to be so bold as to say—I would actually like to see Indigenous artists design their area, outside or inside, but I would love to see them come in and actually do the design outside of the scope of the entire building. Give it to them in their hands.

Just an example, what we're doing in my riding with MABELLEarts, which has a community centre they're building: a portion of it, they're handing over to Indigenous elders to create a reflective fountain. So they've given them a plot to create their own space, to design it the way they feel, so that it's theirs, built by them for them, and for us to learn and for future generations to learn. I just have to say, we don't know what we don't know. I don't know if that's too bold to state at this meeting, but I just thought that would be a nice way of doing that.

Part and parcel from Sir John A.—I don't know; maybe it's on the opposite side. I don't know. There's a connection, but maybe there's not a connection.

I like to see Sir John A. because that's part of our history, but there's also part of a history we can't forget that we're now learning about. Jamie, as you said, we were in our forties when we started learning about these things, and it's true, but we don't want the next generation to not know. So I would like to keep them separate but still part of this precinct.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I think as we look through the documents, the truth-and-reconciliation research, we'll also see that there have been priorities put on plaques on how the story is told adjacent to or nearby—there are different approaches that you will see have been undertaken in different ways, and I think it's not too bold to have ideas at this point.

The committee, though, does need to start to put together—and I don't know about it being immediate, but what will it look like? Are we going to invite folks in to sit and depute? Are we going to be having conversations like we've had with other groups where it's not a fixed time but more of a learning discussion, and then the committee can put together a report, can put together its ideas? That's sort of what I've heard from folks before, but the committee needs to give that some thought—what we think would be responsible, respectful, thoughtful, helpful, all of those things.

I saw hands over here: Mr. West and then Mr. Rae.

**MPP Jamie West:** Just on your last point, Chair, it's one of the reasons I wanted to get these documents about the engagement. So, on the media scan—and thank you to research for all the work that they went through—it was really interesting going through there. If I can diverge for a second, I would read one article and think, "Oh, maybe that's what we would do," because in one article, they had added a plaque. And then I read the next one, and they had moved it to a museum. I'd read the next one, and they had additional artwork. There are lots of different approaches to this.

But one of the final articles, the last or second last one, one of the people they interviewed—because these are



from newspapers—said that, culturally, we don't do statues. In her historic background, she was saying, that we don't highlight people; we're typically modest. While statues make sense for my background, they don't for theirs. So that was one of those things in terms of us approaching it. I might think that having an equal statue or something else might make sense, and it could not make sense.

Getting back to my original point about this meaningful engagement with Indigenous people, we may have to adjust how our committee meets—and I don't know because I haven't read the document yet, but it may not work to have them coming to us; we may have to go to where they are. We may have to adapt how we do things to get meaningful engagement in a true sense.

I'm not trying to suggest anything; I'm just saying that, not having read the document yet, we may have to do things slightly different than traditionally in the building. I think we have to be aware of that or prepared for that.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. Rae?

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** No, it's your microphone. There you go.

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** I didn't hear my booming voice.

I agree with MPP West—obviously, again reiterating that I appreciate these documents. I think it would be great for us to take it back as a committee to review the more fulsome aspects and then come back obviously, as a committee, to discuss how next steps moving forward and whatever that may be, whether that's going to the Indigenous people that we want to consult with.

Chair, it's a question for yourself and maybe Chris as the Clerk. I know for our newer members, we also sent a letter to MOLA. I was wondering if we received a response to that letter.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** We did, and it's on our agenda.

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** Okay.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I was just confirming with the Clerk whether or not it had been distributed, and he said no, because I have it. We're going to answer that in just a moment, but I do want to check with the committee members.

So the Bellevue House document: Members have had a chance to read it. When you read this, was there anything you wanted in terms of an action step, or will we hold on to this? What is your advice?

0930

If we wanted to reach out to the people involved in this process, if we thought that was interesting, if you wanted to take a trip to Kingston to experience it yourself—I'm putting it out there. We commissioned this research as a committee, and I would like to know if there's something—if there's nothing at this time, that's fine; we can revisit. There are no have-tos today. Mr. West has put a fair bit of reading on our plates as well, so perhaps we can consider them all at once.

I'm looking for head nods. Mr. Rae?

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** I would concur, Chair. I think it would be helpful for all of us to consider it all of it as a package.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay. I think that moving forward with that plan, we will need to take the time and pull that together as a committee.

I had already told you that I'll be meeting with Chief LaForme, and I'm looking forward to that initial conversation. As you recall, those conversations are very introductory, explaining to him and explaining to the First Nations and Indigenous folks that I'm meeting with what the work of the committee is shaping up to be, and finding out how they might like to be involved in that or what they would like to see in terms of their involvement. That is moving forward.

On to the next: As Mr. Rae has asked, we as a committee did reach out to the Ministry of Legislative Affairs, and I have a letter. It will be on the screen. Minister Calandra thanked us for the invitation and has said he will make himself available to the committee at its request. He has basically given us two options for timing. He said, "If the committee would agree to a presentation closer to the end of November I expect to have a more substantial update to share."

"If the committee desires my attendance sooner, I have set aside time on Thursday, October 26, 2023, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m."

I will say in defence of Mr. Calandra that we did receive this letter with bit more runway, and the subcommittee chose his option to present closer to the end of November, when there is more to report. Is that right, Mr. West?

**MPP Jamie West:** Yes.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. West, do you want to—

**MPP Jamie West:** Just for context, Mike and I, as subcommittee chairs—I don't think we thought there was anything pressing that had to be addressed or answered right away, or that the committee had anything, so I apologize if there was something. It seemed to make more sense to have a more fulsome conversation in November.

There was the option of having him come and saying we didn't need anything, but it seemed like a lot of time out of the minister's schedule. I know that ministers are already busy with a lot of things, and for the minister to come and have us say, "It's good to see you but we don't need anything now; we'll see you in November" didn't make sense. It was sort of a gut feeling, and I trusted MPP Harris's opinion as well.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I'll also point out the fourth paragraph, if you're able to see it on the screen. It sounds like the minister would appreciate the format of an open discussion, to share broadly with the public and to take questions from the committee, and then go into a closed session to share a few things that are not yet ready for public consumption, as he has said, given the commercial sensitivity and security risk of some of the information.

We have not responded back to Mr. Calandra—that's not true; did we let him know that he's not coming on Thursday?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Christopher Tyrell):** I told him that today would be the first opportunity the committee would have to discuss his letter, and that I

would respond to him once I received direction from the committee.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay. Would the committee like to discuss and give direction to the Clerk? Mr. Rae.

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** If it is the will of the committee, I would suggest potentially November 23. I think we can meet on that day, for Mr. Calandra to come and address—we might as well give him a date in the future, so he can work toward that. Do I need a motion for that?

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I don't know yet. I was going to ask, is that the Tuesday morning or is that the Thursday?

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** It's Thursday. Sorry, Chair.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you. I don't have my calendar in front of me. Will we suggest that he, if available, come at the beginning of the committee period? So we can sit from 1 o'clock and, if it works with his schedule, that gives him five hours if he wants it.

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** If he wants to spend five hours with us.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Does that need to be a formal motion or—

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay, discussion with the committee. Mr. West?

**MPP Jamie West:** I just wanted to know if we should offer either date, or is it better for the Thursday because we have more time and now it's time-limited. I'm comfortable either way.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Good question. Committee? If you couldn't hear him—let's all endeavour to be a bit louder.

**MPP Jamie West:** Sorry, I was wondering if we should offer the Tuesday and the Thursday, or if Thursday simply made more sense because Tuesday is so time-limited with question period right after committee.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** And with caucus.

**MPP Jamie West:** Oh, and caucus, right.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Tuesday there is not—Tuesday is just from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. So that's one hour—is it?

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Christopher Tyrell):** It's 9 to 10:15.

**MPP Jamie West:** We're just efficient.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay, from 9 to 10:15. I feel like that's new information for me, for which I apologize as the Chair.

Thursday, there is more opportunity and folks can plan ahead based on their Thursday however. Ms. Hogarth?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** Just a thought, Chair: It does say that he suggested a Thursday. Maybe we go with a Thursday because it says between 3 and 5, since he suggested Thursday first. So we're not taking this day; maybe we suggest a Thursday in November.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. Rae has already—not officially moved, but he said the 23rd specifically.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** All right.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I would say that we let him know the time that the committee is scheduled to sit. Hopefully, it will not be 3 to 5; it will be 1 o'clock.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** I see, okay.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay? I see consensus. I think we can move on from that.

Other things that we had discussed recently—and I will put it to the committee either to handle today or to think about or however you would like to proceed: the possibility of travel to other Legislatures or projects, as previously discussed; also, hearings and further research on the five areas of study that the committee had identified.

And reminding you of what those are, what is posted online—to the new committee members and to those who are established, you will know that on the legislative website where the public can choose to participate in committee business, there is that drop-down menu where they can select bills. There is also the renovation or the restoration project as an option, and then further to that the following areas: Education and Tourism; Grounds and Monuments; Accessibility and Equity; Heritage Groups/Historical Groups—and also reminding you that Indigenous voices are not included in this because they are not stakeholders. We're doing a separate process to ensure that we do that well.

Thoughts on all of those things? What would the committee like to undertake next in terms of the restoration, the renovation project?

I understand that we're going to be hearing from Minister Calandra at the end of November. That is quite a while away. If we, as a committee, choose to learn from a different jurisdiction or invite—please read the Bellevue report. If there was work that has been done elsewhere that we want to invite people either by Zoom or in the room, to learn from: Are there any thoughts? Ms. Hogarth.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** As I had mentioned earlier, it was the Speaker from BC that gave a presentation. Maybe we might want to just listen to his presentation. He had one here at the Legislature. Maybe he could share what they've done with regard to truth and reconciliation. We don't have to travel there; they can do it over Zoom. He already has a presentation already done, so we might want to reach out to them if some people are interested in that.

0940

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Would the committee like for the Clerk to look into that? I am seeing decisive head nods, so yes.

Anything else that folks would like to see, in terms of the process beginning? Mr. West.

**MPP Jamie West:** I'm kind of brainstorming as I'm speaking, but this summer I was able to go to Regina and see their assembly. They have a hall of chiefs—the format of their building is smaller than ours but similar, with a grand staircase. So if you go around the grand staircase, there's a hall of chiefs with all these portraits of chiefs. I don't know if we necessarily have to go to Regina to see that, but it makes me curious in terms of other assemblies, either assemblies in Canada or state houses in the States, how have they reflected Indigenous culture or other cultures?

I don't know. We don't have to limit it to Indigenous cultures, but how have they reflected things?

Getting to MPP Hogarth's earlier statement about what can we do during the renovations, there's an expression where I used to work where they used to always say, "Steal good ideas with pride." You don't have to reinvent stuff; if you see something in another plant and it's a good idea, then take it to your plant.

You had mentioned earlier about visiting other locations, and we've discussed that. But it would be interesting to see what other state houses and assemblies have done. But I don't know what sort of direction to give research because that feels very broad.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Research is waving her hand and excited to weigh in. Erica, go ahead.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** Given that MPP Hogarth said a while ago that you were interested in what they've done in BC, and you didn't know the background of the Shoe Memorial here, and then there's some other Indigenous art here, we could easily provide you with an overview of what has happened here so far in our Legislature in terms of Indigenous representation and what has happened in other Legislatures across the country.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I am thinking that as we are consulting with Indigenous groups and inviting them to a tour, that document—if it could be in a shareable format, if it were something that we could also share with them as they're going on a tour, recognizing what they're seeing on the wall or knowing what the Legislature has chosen to do to this point.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** I think there is a booklet that the Legislature has put out about the recent artwork, but what we could do is we could give you two separate documents, one about the Ontario Legislature that you can then distribute—it will have a nice little cover; it won't look like a memo—and then the other about what has been done in the rest of the country, so one thing you can hand out to people and one thing for the committee's—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Hand out and share for discussion.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** And share. Sure.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I don't see anyone thinking that's a bad idea, so thank you, Erica.

And I don't see folks, at this point, offering a plan yet for the additional five areas of study identified by the committee. Ms. Hogarth?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** I do believe accessibility is a big one that we need to tackle. That was something that came up in the conference I was in. You're looking at a new building about accessibility but bringing in people—I don't know if we're ready for that yet, but I think that might be the next one we want to tackle because it is quite a large one, and people of various abilities would need to be involved in that.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** And to that point, these five points—Education and Tourism; Grounds and Monuments; Community and Business Groups...; Accessibility and Equity; Heritage Groups/Historical Groups—is a massive potential list. This is where, if the committee

decides to open it up broadly for consultation, it would be a lot and many and varied.

However, if the committee also chose to have focused sections, as we had come up with, and invite groups one at a time—if it's Accessibility and Equity—and come up with what we recommend, then, to the Legislature, as we have done in our first report, and that way it might be easier for the committee to digest information. If it's about grounds and maintenance and monuments, we're going to hear from folks about historical monuments on the property and important landscaping. I know that the cherry trees are gifts from the Japanese community. There are things that all have to be considered and factored in, especially as we're heading into a massive construction project, in how we are responsible caretakers of this space—not to overwhelm; I just overwhelm myself.

Erica?

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** Yes, thank you. In terms of accessibility, if you were interested, we could look at what's been done in other Legislatures. That's one thing, and research could provide that.

The other thing is that I am aware that there are consulting groups that I know the information division of the Legislature has used for their online presence. They used a consultant group that has on-tap people who are experts on accessibility, who have accessibility needs, to look at all the products: the physical, printed products; the stuff online. I think there are groups like that that will also go through the building and do an accessibility audit, and tell you what's missing and what might be needed. It's not a substitute for consultations, but it's also a way to be sort of a one-stop shop.

Research could possibly give you names of consultant groups that have been used and what they do, and also what has been done in other parts of the country, if you're interested.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I would imagine the committee is interested in most things at this point.

I am also going to remember out loud that when we were in Ottawa, we saw how they had differently used their courtyard spaces and the areas that had previously been outside. They had included them and enclosed them, and that really changed the accessibility of the building, because they could bring in elevators that they could not install in the original, existing structure.

It will be very interesting, as the renovation design work and architectural work begins. While we are not responsible for that, if we are gathering information at this time about what is needed, perhaps making the recommendation to the secretariat that that there be ongoing pieces, if the committee thinks, "You know what, you're going to have to consult with folks as it unfolds"—as you said earlier, we're part of a very once-in-a-lifetime quite involved work.

I'll take my direction from the committee. If there's anything further we want to ask for today—Erica has very generously offered a whole whack, and if we want to take advantage of her, I am fine with that.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** If I could just add to that, there are two pieces—am I just allowed to interrupt? I'm sorry.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Ms. Hogarth, please interrupt.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** It's not just the building itself, but in the Legislature. Some people were talking about if you need a wheelchair to get in, if you can't hear, if you can't see, all these little pieces. As a politician who gets elected, how do we make their job part of an inclusive—it's both, I would say, the inside and outside, if that makes sense.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** It does. Other members of the broader Legislature have offered personal experience or things that they have learned in this job to consider, so I think, whether it's a matter of surveying of existing members—but also more broadly, as Erica had said, those who know what they're looking for and know what they're seeing would be quite helpful in shaping what we do.

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** And we can't forget about age.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Sometimes with age, I do forget.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Oh, that's not what you said?

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** No, just seniors.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Yes.

**Ms. Erica Simmons:** Anybody can have a disability at any time in their lives.

**MPP Jamie West:** Chair?

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. West.

**MPP Jamie West:** I was just thinking, with the addition of new members in the committee, and maybe to refresh some of the regular members: Would it make sense in the future to schedule a meeting where we just look at the scope of what we're doing and maybe just brainstorm about the path forward and what that looks like? Perhaps next week, or whenever. I think that it would be helpful because we've taken in a lot of information and I think we may—personally, I'm not sure if I remember all the different things that we're focused on and I want to make sure we don't forget anything. I think some of them might intertwine, right? When we're talking about accessibility, MPP Hogarth's comments about our grand staircase and our front stair—she didn't say that specifically but, you know, outside of the building. If you're looking at renovations in the building and you're also looking at what the grounds look like and we're looking at the tree that was donated from Japan, the consulate—

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The sakura trees, yes.

**MPP Jamie West:** Yes. There's a lot of intertwining things and so I don't know if we can necessarily just take them in chunks, because they may connect together, or we

may be asking people to come back. I don't know of the timing, if it makes sense to do it soon or if it makes sense to do it after we have a bunch of information and we're brainstorming, but at some point I think we should group together and have a conversation about, what do we think the path forward looks like? Maybe we make a plan of what we want to achieve or get to at certain points so that we're not, I'm just going to say, like cats chasing a laser pointer, but that idea of—like, we're focused and we have an idea of what we're doing, and we're not just jumping from one thing to the next and maybe doing duplicate work.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Would members want that to be an open session, or would we have an organization discussion in closed session to do something like that?

**MPP Jamie West:** My preference would be to do it as a closed session, not because I don't want the public to know what we're talking about, but I think that you can have a more casual conversation about things. When everything you say is on the record, if somebody mis-speaks or says something casually or makes a reference—you know, I would rather just be closed. Also, it allows us to, if necessary, talk about security implications and that sort of thing.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay. I'm seeing head nods to that.

There are a lot of important moving pieces that we want to keep track of. I have planted the seed—I didn't get an answer, but the possibility of travel to other jurisdictions. Ms. Hogarth had mentioned, as we're following up on, perhaps inviting at least the BC individual to present via Zoom or share something with us, but there may be others, so please give that some thought.

And, to the new members, if you're looking for a welcome/homework packet, this committee had done quite comprehensive work on our initial report to the Legislature, which was more about the guts of the place, and now we're looking at some of the other components. While you have missed the trip to Ottawa, certainly our discussion of it was very thorough, so you can read that in Hansard. And if you're looking for more, the Clerk, I'm sure, can share that, but I think you're close to up to speed after today of knowing how we're hoping to move forward and what that could look like.

Do either of you have anything you want from the Clerk? Also, welcome. We're glad to have you. Please tell Mr. McGregor and Mr. Oosterhoff that they're going to miss out.

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** I'll engage with him, and I'll learn from him, yes.

**The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Okay. Is there any further business? Anyone?

There's no further business. This committee meeting is adjourned.

*The committee adjourned at 0954.*







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