

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

A-26

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

A-26

**Standing Committee on  
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament

Thursday 7 March 2024

**Comité permanent des  
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

1<sup>re</sup> session  
43<sup>e</sup> législature

Jeudi 7 mars 2024

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Chair: Will Bouma  
Clerk: Isaiah Thorning

Président : Will Bouma  
Greffier : Isaiah Thorning

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

## COMITÉ PERMANENT DES ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Thursday 7 March 2024

Jeudi 7 mars 2024

*The committee met at 0900 in room 151.*

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on Government Agencies will now come to order. We are meeting to conduct a review of intended appointees. We are joined by staff from legislative research, Hansard, and broadcast and recording.

As always, all comments by members and witnesses should go through the Chair.

### SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** The first item of business will be the adoption of a subcommittee report, which was distributed in advance. We have the subcommittee report dated Thursday, February 29, 2024. Could I please have a motion from member Holland?

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, February 29, 2024, on the order-in-council certificate dated February 23, 2024.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Is there any discussion on that motion? Seeing none, are members ready to vote? Yes? All those in favour? Any opposed? Same sign—that motion is carried.

### INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

#### MR. ALAN JAMES PITTIS

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Alan James Pittis, intended appointee as member, Landlord and Tenant Board.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Our first intended appointee today is Alan James Pittis, nominated as member of the Landlord and Tenant Board.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Before we start—

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Oh, sorry.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I have submitted a motion in advance, and I'm just wondering when I'll be able to raise it.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** That's very good. Let's deal with that after we've dealt with our intended appointees.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** That's good, thanks.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** I have not seen any motion. We will deal with that after further business, after we have dealt with—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I want to speak to your ruling.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Okay.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** We just did a motion for them. We're in the part of the process where we're doing motions. The motion was given to the committee ahead of time. I don't know why the Chair wouldn't have the motion, but we want to speak to our motion now, not at the end of the meeting. We should have the right to speak to it now.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** That may be, but I do not have it. The motion has not been filed with the committee.

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** We will deal with the agenda first, and then we will move on to your motion.

Our first intended appointee today is Alan James Pittis—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Is that the ruling of the Clerk, or is that your ruling?

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** That's my decision, sir.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** That's your decision?

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Yes—nominated as member of the Landlord and Tenant Board.

Mr. Pittis, please come forward. Thank you very much for taking time out of your day to join us. You may make an initial statement at your discretion. Following this, there will be questions from members of the committee. For that questioning, we will start with the government, followed by the official opposition, with 15 minutes allocated to each recognized party. Any time you take in your statement will be deducted from the time allotted to the government.

We will just move on, and you may go ahead and make your statement.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Chair?

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Sorry.

Point of order?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Yes, a point of order: Can we take a five-minute break?

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** You have a five-minute recess.

We apologize, Mr. Pittis. Make yourself comfortable. We'll be back in five.

*The committee recessed from 0903 to 0908.*

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Mr. Pittis, go ahead with your statement. As I mentioned, any time you take in your statement will be taken off the government's time for questions. Again, thank you for joining us.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Thank you for the opportunity to present myself to this committee for the consideration of my appointment to the position of adjudicator at the Landlord and Tenant Board of Ontario. My name is Alan James Pittis.

The possibility of becoming an adjudicator is a thrilling opportunity that fits well with my skills, interests and passion as a public servant. I worked with many adjudicators when I was at the Landlord and Tenant Board, and the ones I knew were, without exception, very smart, insightful and hard-working people. The bar is set high.

I began my OPS career more than 20 years ago, at the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal, which is now the Landlord and Tenant Board, dealing with the Tenant Protection Act, which is now the Residential Tenancies Act. I began as a clerk, then a customer service officer, and I took on a secondment as a mediator during my time at the board.

During the last 15 years, I have been a compliance and customer service officer with the Rental Housing Enforcement Unit, the RHEU, of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The purview of the RHEU is the offences provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act. The offences are a list of actions or inactions by a landlord or a tenant that may lead to investigation and prosecution by the government—things like lock-outs, shutting off vital services, denial of entry, and things like that.

Most people who call the unit just have questions about how particular parts of the legislation work; “Can my landlord raise the rent like this?” “My tenant won’t let me inspect. What do I do?” “The electricity is off and the landlord won’t call me back,” for example. While most of these calls are for information or education, I received calls daily where there may have been an offence committed. My role, then, is to understand as much as I can of the situation. I attempt to contact the other side in order to achieve voluntary compliance with the law. I hear the opposing side of the story. I explain the law impartially, the options to correct the offence, as well as the potential consequences of non-compliance. I may suggest other resources, such as legal advice, municipal property standards and, sometimes, the police.

This is a high-volume environment. The situations can range from the outrageous to the banal. I must filter them for the ones that fit within the scope of the RHEU. Despite the high volume, though, I always recognize that for the people I’m talking with, this is their home or their livelihood. It may be another day at the office for me, but this might be one of the worst days of their lives. They need all the compassion and clarity my experience can deliver. Compassion doesn’t mean crossing the line into advice and advocacy, but it does mean, often, being patient and finding ways to help them understand the current situation as fully as possible.

Almost by definition, the people who need the assistance of the RHEU, both landlords and tenants, are facing extraordinary challenges that they are sometimes poorly equipped to face. The barriers can be, but are not limited to, knowledge of the legislation, mental health issues, financial need, knowledge of the language, knowledge of

jurisdictional divisions. It behooves me to do all that I can to accommodate them and make sure they have understood the pertinent information, even if the answer is not welcome.

The essence of the job is to make sure all parties understand the law as it may apply to their situation, but I can only do that effectively if I have fully understood the situation. I have listened to thousands of landlords and tenants telling me their stories from both sides.

The RHEU may investigate further or possibly prosecute an alleged offender, but I do not do that. I can be required to testify if there’s a hearing, and any notes I take or any information I have been given can be used as evidence. All of that, however, is only useful if I do not stray into partisan advocacy for one side or the other.

Using the Residential Tenancies Act may be second nature to me, but I must approach every situation with fresh eyes and check my biases and assumptions, because it is a new encounter for each caller.

Most of the time, I am successful in achieving compliance. People will usually choose to follow the law once they know what it is and how the legislation affects their specific situation.

My whole career in the OPS has been about explaining and interpreting the law. I listen. I ask good questions, revealing questions, and I provide options so parties can make informed choices about how to proceed. I have a finely honed sense of when a story rings true and when things are being left out.

At the LTB and the RHEU, I have been regularly called on to train new staff. Currently, I am the acting coordinator of the compliance and customer service team at the unit. In addition to scheduling and dealing with escalated situations from the public, this role involves onboarding and mentoring new staff. I have found this aspect of the role deeply satisfying.

I was part of the team that developed the first standardized scripts for the team and part of the recent update of those scripts. I’m also involved in information technology planning and recommending improvements to our systems.

A few years ago, I went back to school and received my paralegal licence. I knew I had developed some expertise in one particular area of law, and I wanted to build on that. From my paralegal training, I gained a much broader understanding of how law works and its role in the fabric of society. The law is large, and it can be a rigid and impersonal tool to apply. Real life is messy, subjective and complicated. The law only functions because we have judges and adjudicators at the centre to act as a conduit between what happens in life and the letter of the law.

I have a lot of experience in this very specific, very particular area of law. I have a lot of experience analyzing landlord and tenant situations. I’m excited about all there is still to learn, and it is my hope that my years of analysis, action and education will be the building blocks of an effective career as an adjudicator at the Landlord and Tenant Board.

Thank you for your time today.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Thank you very much.

We will now turn to the government, with eight minutes and 45 seconds on the clock. We'll turn to member Holland first.

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** Thank you for coming out today and meeting with the committee. It's great to see you. I really want to thank you for the interest that you have in serving on this committee and for your submission for our consideration.

Listening to your opening statement and reading your bio, reading your work experience, it's obvious that you bring a great deal of experience to it—we could read that in your résumé and your work experience. Listening to you speak with regard to how you approach and how you look at it and, generally—the unbiased approach that you bring to it is commendable. And I appreciate you mentioning those in your remarks.

You've touched on a lot of what my question will be, but can you share with the committee what sort of engagement you have in your community—volunteer work, for example—and what you've learned from it and how it will help to inform you in your role if you're successful to be appointed to the Landlord and Tenant Board?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I don't do a lot of volunteer work. I was, for a time, a reader at the CNIB. I helped fundraise at work for an orphanage in Africa—Teamwork Children's Services.

I'm sorry; could you repeat the last part of the question again?

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** Can you share what you've learned from your out-of-work experiences that you can bring to the board and how it will frame your approach to inform you on your work on the board?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Nobody ever thinks they're the bad guy. Nobody ever thinks that they're doing something wrong. And my role has been about—certainly, in work—making sure that people understand what the law is—not that they're bad, but that they understand. When somebody cuts me off on the road, I'm thinking, "They don't think they're the bad guy." So it does apply in real life as well.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Harris, with six and a half minutes on the clock.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Thank you for taking the time to appear before us this morning. I know it can be a little bit unnerving and maybe a bit weird if you've never done it before. We'll try to keep things as easy and succinct as possible, and try to focus on your qualifications. It seems like you're extremely qualified for this position.

I was wondering if you might be able to talk to how, in the past, you've been able to manage heavy caseloads. Obviously, the LTB has a high volume that is running through it, and we want to make sure that we're as expeditious but also as judicious as possible when we're moving through those cases. So maybe talk a little bit about some past experiences. Obviously, you don't need to give specific examples of how you've been able to handle those types of situations.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Prioritizing is the most important thing. When they first come in, at the beginning, it needs quick action, so those are—then, as time goes by and I need—I'm sorry; I'm not saying this very well.

Every morning, I go in, I look at my caseload and I say, "These ones need action today. These ones would be nice to get to today. These ones don't need me right now." That's really all you can do. You're one person with two hands and a phone, and you can only do so much in a day, so you prioritize the important stuff. And, frankly, I stay late.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** What about from a teamwork and collaboration perspective? You're not only doing this on your own; you are working with a larger group of individuals, as well.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Yes. I have gotten a lot of assistance from my boss, who will come in and help me close files where things—low-priority stuff. She will often take that and help me.

As the coordinator in the office right now, I'm having to manage caseloads, so I'm shifting files from one staff member to another so that nobody is overwhelmed and everything gets addressed in a timely manner.

So those are two strategies that I use.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Pang, with three and a half minutes left.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Maybe I'll ask you more general questions. What do you believe it takes to be an effective member on the board?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** An adjudicator needs to be able to listen carefully to the story that has been told to understand the story. My experience has been that when somebody tells you a story, if you're really listening, you'll understand it; it will make sense to you. And if it doesn't make sense, then you have to ask the questions that will get you there. And when you ask the questions, you discover that there's—people don't often lie to me; people often leave things out. When you tell the story and you say, "Well, but hang on a second," and you ask the question, then all those things come home to roost. The listening and the asking of questions are absolutely key.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Sandhu, with two and a half minutes left.

**Mr. Amarjot Sandhu:** Thank you so much for your presentation. Listening to your opening statement and looking at your résumé—you have a wide range of professional experiences in your career.

Can you please share with the committee how your experiences have prepared you for your work with the Landlord and Tenant Board?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I've worked with two sets of legislation in relation to landlord and tenant issues—with the previous legislation and the current legislation. I have a huge volume of experience of listening to stories, and that is a big part of why I think I would be good at this.

I'm sorry; can you repeat the question again?

**Mr. Amarjot Sandhu:** How will your experiences help you prepare for your work at the—

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Right. Yes, it's the listening to the stories. You listen to enough stories.

I'm training new staff, and they don't ask, they don't listen—they take it at face value. I say later, “Well, didn't you ask that question?” And they say, “Oh, yes. I should have asked that question.” It's second nature for me to know what I'm missing, to recognize that I'm missing something. That's the most important thing.

I've been in high-volume situations. I've dealt with these—when people call, when people appear in front of you in an adjudicating situation, it's a terrible situation; it has been awful. I'm used to dealing with people who are in that elevated state, and being able to get it down to the story.

That's what I think.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** We'll now turn to the opposition side. The first question goes to Mr. Glover.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I want to thank you for coming in, putting your name forward and being part of this committee hearing today.

The Landlord and Tenant Board: There was an Ombudsman report that came out in the spring; you probably saw it. It talked about a backlog that has grown to 38,000 cases and people waiting seven to eight months for a hearing.

In your experience advising on landlord and tenant issues and dealing first-hand with the Residential Tenancies Act, do you feel that these delays have had an impact on access to justice and, if so, how?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Taking a long time to get to a hearing is not good. I don't think that's a surprise to anybody here.

I'm here because we need more adjudicators to get through the backlog. That's my understanding.

Access to justice has impacted my current role. People are frustrated, and rightfully so.

It is certainly my hope that more adjudicators will help clear that backlog and improve the situation.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I'll just read a quote about some of the impacts, and I'll see if this is what you've experienced or what you've witnessed at the board: “Tenants were stuck waiting while they endured harassment, unsafe living conditions and improper attempts to force them from their homes, and some landlords had to cope with tenants' abuse and face financial ruin.”

Have you witnessed those kinds of things caused by these delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I can't connect it to the Landlord and Tenant Board. I certainly see a lot of frustration from landlords and tenants. It's hard for me to comment usefully because, by definition, somebody who shows up on my desk—I don't see the successful cases. I don't see the situations where people have worked it out and made accommodations. I only ever see where it has gone wrong. So in my experience, 100% of landlord and tenant situations never work out—which is obviously not true. I'm sure that most of them do work out. So I have, I suppose, a bias in terms of my experience in that I only see the bad situations.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Have you seen landlords who are facing financial ruin because of the delays?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I don't know their financial situation, necessarily, but I certainly see landlords with huge frustration and a lot of concern about how long they've been without a hearing.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** And have you seen tenants who are facing harassment?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** “Harassment” is a difficult word for me. It has specific meaning in terms of the legislation—

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Let me rephrase it, then. Have you spoken with tenants who are in fear or who say that they have experienced harassment from their landlords and that their cases are being delayed?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** You're asking me about tenants who are worried about their landlord and haven't been able to get to a Landlord and Tenant Board hearing to address that situation?

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Yes.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I'm sorry. I don't mean to be difficult. Again, it's difficult for me to answer because I try to avoid that. In terms of my conversation with them, I'm trying to deal with what's happening in the moment. So I don't doubt that it's true. But it's not one that I can answer. I'm sorry.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** What have you learned from your experience about making legal information accessible to vulnerable residents in various emotional states, and how could this be applied on a wider level—just drawing on your experience.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Education is huge. If you know what the rules are, it doesn't come as a surprise. Most of what I do, truly, is teaching people what the rules are—“This is what you can do. This is what you can't do.” And 90% of the time, at the end of the conversation, after I've gone through it a few times with them and said, “This is how it works. This is going to happen, and this is going to happen. This is what you can do. This is what you can't do,” people are calmer. People feel like they've got a handle on it. We've—

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Actually, that's okay. I want to make sure I have time for my colleagues to ask some questions, as well.

I do have some standard questions that we ask. They're a little bit uncomfortable, but they're just quick-answer questions.

Have you ever been a member of the Conservative Party federally?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** No. Have you donated to the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Or the Progressive Conservatives in Ontario?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Have you ever worked on a Conservative election campaign?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No.



**Mr. Chris Glover:** Did anyone ask you to apply for this position?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Thank you for those answers.

I'll pass it to my colleague MPP Gates.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Gates—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I wasn't going to ask you those questions, just to be clear. I did my research on you, and I knew that's not what you've done.

I want to compliment you on a very tough job that you've been doing for a number of years. It's not easy when people are coming in, whether on the landlord side or the tenants'. Obviously, tenants have been under attack for a while, in my opinion, because of the cuts to legal aid. It has certainly hurt their chances of winning in the courts.

Do you believe that, currently, we're in a housing crisis in Ontario?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I don't know.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** You don't know that?

0930

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** It's outside of my scope. It's not what I do. You're asking me if I know about housing supply? I don't know. It's not something I can answer. I'm sorry.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It doesn't come up in your conversations, whether you're in mediation—because you mentioned the fact that you do mediation—that some of the people who are coming into your office are desperate because there's no place for them to go, because we are in a housing crisis?

I accept your answer; that's fine. I'm just a little surprised by it. That's all.

You also mentioned the importance of judges. So my question to you is one that I think is fair, reasonable and certainly balanced. Do you believe that judges should be independent and impartial, or do you believe that judges who are appointed should be in line with the Conservative Party of Ontario?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Chair, point of order.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Point of order: Member Harris.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** The same point of order it is every week when we do this—we're here to discuss the qualifications of the candidate before us, not personal opinions of the opposition.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Hearing that point of order, I would urge the member to continue his line of questioning—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Well, I think it actually is in line—

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** —with regard to the qualifications of the person sitting before us.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Let me finish. It's my time. The issue for me is—and I appreciate the comments, but the reality is that people who are being thrown out of their homes, or a landlord who feels he's being wronged—

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Order.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** —has to go in front of a judge, and “Should the judge be impartial?” is my question.

Do you believe that judges, especially in landlord and tenant issues, which can be very confrontational, to say the least—do you believe that the judge who's going to hear these cases after you've gone through mediation—I understand how important mediation is. It's a great way to try to resolve a number of issues, and not just in this particular organization. In collective bargaining, we do mediation; in arbitration, we get into mediation. Do you believe that a judge who's going to hear these cases should be impartial, independent, and do you believe that he should be like-minded like the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Chair, I'm going to not rise but, again, I am hoping—

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Point of order?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** —you'll recognize me again on the same point of order. We're here to discuss the qualifications of the candidate, and we've unfortunately strayed away from that. You've ruled that you should go back to a line of questioning that explores the credibility of the candidate and his qualifications. Member Gates, I think, was a bit out of order trying to speak over you while you were trying to explain to him that he should be doing that, and here we are currently back again on the same point of order. I will keep doing this if the opposition does not respect the time of the committee and the member and discuss his qualifications.

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Point of order, as well.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Thank you. Again, the business of the committee is to see the qualifications of the candidate before us. I will allow the question and the response. I believe that the witness understands what is being asked and what he's qualified for and how that can partake in this conversation, and I'll leave that there. But I would urge the members not to ask witnesses for their opinion on matters that are outside of their qualifications. Time is going by.

Point of order: Member Karpoche.

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I believe that the questions my colleague the member from Niagara Falls is asking are fair given that—

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** That's debate, and that's not a valid point of order.

The clock is ticking. We're down to four minutes and 20 seconds. I will ask the witness—

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Point of order.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Point of order?

**Mr. Chris Glover:** The other point of order took up three minutes of the time that we are supposed to use for—can we have that added back to the clock?

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** No. I'm not going there.

The response is with Mr. Pittis right now.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Judges should be impartial.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I really appreciate that honest answer, and that's one of the reasons why I think you're qualified to do this job, quite frankly. I've taken a look at your record; I've read it extensively. To answer honestly when you come to the committee is something that I'm very, very impressed with. We had the same situation last

week, and that person was honest as well. So I want to compliment you, because you're taking your job very seriously.

I know you do a good job, from what I've read. It's a very tough job. Everybody in this room has had people come into our offices, whether it be the landlord or whether it be the tenant, and they're desperate. Having somebody who has the expertise to explain the law to them and what they can do and what they can't do, and then direct them into mediation because—I've already talked about legal aid and the cuts to legal aid and the challenge it is, in particular, for tenants. Some landlords may have a little bit more resources—particularly corporate landlords; they have a lot of resources.

So I just want to say to say thank you very much for your honesty. It's unfortunate that we couldn't have got that five minutes ago. I've been asked to turn my time over, although I have lots of other questions, but I want to just say thank you very much for your honesty. When you come to this committee, I think it's so important.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Wong-Tam.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you, Mr. Pittis, for your presentation today.

My question to you is regarding the Rental Housing Enforcement Unit. You've been working there for 20 years, and that's quite a long time. As of late, we have received information about the number of complaints going into the unit itself. There are 18,400 calls a year, and yet the unit only investigated about 200 cases. Out of those 200 cases, there was probably about \$200,000 of fines levied, which doesn't seem like a very large amount.

Considering your inside perspective, can you share with us what's wrong and what's happening within the unit that is causing such a poor performance?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** There's nothing wrong.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** There's nothing wrong? The unit is working?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No. That's my job. My job is to teach people to fish; it's not to give them the fish. Most of my job is teaching people what they can do and what they can't do. The fact that we've taken so many calls and have had to pursue so few cases is because I'm successful. That's the point of my job—to help people and hopefully get them to be able to solve the problems themselves once they understand. The fact that we don't take as many complaints, the fact that some of them don't get pursued—I don't see that as a problem; I see that as success.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** And do you believe that the complainants who came to the unit with their concerns would share the same opinion as yourself—that their issues were resolved, as you talk about fish?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** Most of them, yes.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** And do you have any quantitative data that can back this information up?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** No.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** So how do you come to that conclusion, sir?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** From my experience. It's what I do. It's my job. It's what I'm there for.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** So in the 20 years that you were there, there was no record-keeping on the type of complaints that came in and how they were resolved?

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I can't speak to the record-keeping. I don't know. I'm speaking from experience.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** But you are the acting coordinator of the unit.

**Mr. Alan James Pittis:** I have been acting coordinator for the last four months, yes.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Was it ever raised in staff meetings that you should be—

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** That concludes the time available.

Mr. Pittis, thank you very much for joining us today.

We're supposed to be closing the building down after the next election, so if you have a moment, have a look around because it might be a very long time before you have that opportunity again.

Thank you for your service and for your willingness to serve.

#### MR. SCOTT SINCERBOX

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Scott Sincerbox, intended appointee as chair, Provincial Schools Authority.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Our second intended appointee today is Scott Sincerbox, nominated as chair of the Provincial Schools Authority.

Mr. Sincerbox, thank you so much for joining us. You can make your way up here to the front.

You may make an initial statement at your discretion. Following this, there will be questions from members of the committee. For that questioning, we will start with the government, followed by the official opposition, with 15 minutes allocated to each recognized party. Any time that you take in your statement will be deducted from the time allotted for the government.

Again, thank you very much for joining us.

We have people coming with very cool glasses today. I appreciate that very much.

You may go ahead with your statement.

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the committee. I am extremely pleased to have this opportunity to appear before you with respect to the intended appointment as chair of the Provincial Schools Authority.

During my over 30 years of service in Ontario's education sector, I have proudly, capably and successfully responded to the needs of students, staffs and communities. I served and learned in many roles with a wide range of responsibilities. Throughout my professional journey, I have been unwaveringly committed to the belief that the needs of all students of all abilities must be at the forefront of our collective efforts and of our decision-making. Our students must be supported in reaching their full potential.

**0940**

As a leader, I have been responsible for ensuring the effective communication, implementation and monitoring

of actions that support the goals, objectives and strategic direction of my boards and of the Ministry of Education. I am their steward, and I take these responsibilities seriously. My decisions—whether it was the implementation of a new curriculum, the negotiation of a new collective agreement, the development of new policies and procedures, or even how best to respond to a concerned parent—have been undertaken in a thoughtful, fair, reasonable, responsible, informed and equitable manner, where the principle of accountability was observed and practised. These traits have always been present in my approach to management, administration, operations, and quite frankly, in how I deal with people.

The successes I have enjoyed as a professional would not have been possible without the encouragement, support and love of my family. My wife, Carolyn, a lifelong educator, and I live in Dundas. We have three grown children, Emma, Chloe and Sam, all of whom are successful graduates of our Ontario education system. We have a dog, Vimy, and a cat, Clarence. We enjoy golfing, skiing, visiting the Bruce Peninsula, and spending time together.

I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Thank you very much.

With 12 minutes and 45 seconds, we'll turn to the government. Member Gallagher Murphy, go ahead.

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you, Mr. Sincerbox, for being here today. I appreciate your coming, and I appreciate your background. It sounds like you have some extensive background when it comes to our schools and having a good understanding of both the provincial and demonstration schools—as well as your expertise in human resources as well as labour matters.

My question to you would be, how would you deal with sensitive matters that relate to interactions when it comes to a wide range of stakeholders?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Through the Chair: Obviously, every time you are presented with information, you have to deal with it with the utmost of respect and confidentiality.

I'm a person whose career I have prided and built on integrity and being responsive. So I think every time there's a stakeholder or there's a situation that is brought to my attention, I give it the time—I listen; where appropriate, I investigate. I think that's just by the very nature of who I am. I practised that as a school administrator, when I was an administrator in many core area schools in Hamilton. I continued that on through my experiences in Hamilton, where I had a number of portfolios as a superintendent; included was the time that I spent in special education for two years in Grand Erie. There's no doubt that when you have students who are in need, families who may in fact need some additional supports, an ear that you can provide—because they all have a story to tell, they all have emotion that enters into it—I think it's critical, it's important that you give that the time that's required and the respect and the thought that needs to go into that.

I have to say, as well, having spent eight years in human resources, I believe the same holds true when you're talking

about our labour partners. When you're going through a negotiations process, I have always believed that we need to develop a culture of shared accountability, and as such, it's important that we listen, we respond with thought, with knowledge, and we respond in a timely manner. And throughout this, it involves effective communication and respectful relationship-building.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** We're moving on to member McGregor, with 10 minutes on the clock.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Thank you, Mr. Sincerbox, for putting your name forward and joining our committee here today and coming to Queen's Park.

One of the things I found impressive, in looking at your experience, was not only the years of experience but also the diversity of it.

For those watching at home, Mr. Sincerbox has experience at the Grand Erie District School Board as well as the Hamilton-Wentworth board, and then also a short stint at the Provincial Schools Authority's board.

Can you walk the committee through a little bit about the differences between Grand Erie and Hamilton-Wentworth and how you overcame those challenges and the differences in that, but then also some of the differences you've observed in the challenges and the opportunities at the Provincial Schools Authority, and then what you see as the differences of how we approach all three of those different areas?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Thank you for the question.

I believe that I'm a lifelong learner, and I look at every opportunity as a learning experience.

I was born and raised in the Hamilton-Wentworth area. I was a product of the system in Hamilton. I went through, as an early employee, the amalgamation of school boards, which was obviously a change for school boards both in the Hamilton-Wentworth area and in the Grand Erie area. I think that, while there are differences, there are also many similarities. Both have a rural and an urban component. Both have challenges with regard to socio-economic factors. So, I think, from that perspective, they're similar. Having said that, there are also the differences, and I think some of the differences come from the experiences that people have who have grown up in those communities, who have gone to schools in those communities, who shop, who live, who go to the arenas in those communities.

I wanted to be a person who was going to listen and learn. So when I went from a place where I had a lot of experience, in Hamilton, to a place where I was new, in Grand Erie, I didn't come in and say, "This is the way we would do it in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board." I would listen and I would learn.

Foundational to everything, though, is the needs of the students. We had to look at those needs and leave no stone unturned. In my first two years in Grand Erie, when I was the superintendent of special education, that was something that was a big part of my learning. That was personnel resources, resources in terms of technology—whatever it was, we needed to make sure that we were learning about it, accessing it, implementing it appropri-

ately and doing so in a way that would benefit all of our students.

At the same time, you'd want to draw on your previous experiences. There were a number of intervention programs—one that came to mind, specifically, that was run out of SickKids in Toronto, called Empower. It had a lot of data-supported successes in terms of supporting students in reading. We brought that into Grand Erie, to have a very consolidated program to support students when they were starting off in terms of their ability to read with fluency, decoding and so on. Again, drawing on previous experiences, seeing some gaps—let's put that in and benefit things.

In terms of the—

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Can I—speaking specifically about that Empower program, I imagine, when you're bringing in a new program to the school board, you have faculty challenges. You need to bring the kids along the journey with you.

How did you get faculty on board with the Empower program? Bringing the numerous stakeholders, as it were, within the school system together, parents, kids—how did you bring everybody along that journey with you?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Great question.

I drew on my experiences as a teacher. I had to teach staff; I had to bring staff along. I had to say, "This is just not this top-down approach," because we wanted to make sure we had commitment and not just compliance—so, showed the successes, showed the data. We were accountable to not just the expenditure of money to purchase the program, but having the staff invest the time in instruction, and building confidence with parents and with students that this was in their best interest.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** I suspect that experience might serve you well if you're successful in this role.

I'll turn it over to my colleagues.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** We're moving on to member Pang, with five and a half minutes left on the clock.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Scott, I like you telling us that you are a lifelong learner, and you shared with us how you learn and observe from that. But when you are in authority, to a certain extent, you are not a learner anymore.

So what do you think you can contribute to the authority, specifically, from your experience and perspective?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Thank you for the question.

I have 15 years of senior leadership experience in the education sector, in the two boards; the last eight were in human resources. Obviously, in human resources, when you're dealing with a number of factors, it does require you to facilitate processes that put contracts into place, that provide explanations around collective agreement requirements, and where necessary, if compliance isn't made, you have to work your way through the grievance and arbitration process. I have always approached that, in terms of the leadership role, the position I have, with a lens of fairness—one with regard to being equitable, one that looks at being informed.

**0950**

I think, in terms of the role with the Provincial Schools Authority, as the chair, the mandate is very clear. We have to look at communication, collaboration in terms of the stakeholder groups—being the Provincial Schools Authority, the Provincial Schools Authority teachers, the union and PDSB, which is the district school branch. In all of those cases, what the chair needs to do is make sure that they are assisting and resolving grievances, and that would require the interpretation of the collective agreement. At the same time, you have to look at the entire branch and say, "We have to support you with compliance in order to, where necessary, avoid grievances, and where that's not possible, we have to address the grievances and look at a resolution—and if not a resolution, we have to rule on that."

My experiences in the past in terms of human resources, but also in terms of other leadership positions, have shown that you have to be fair, you have to be reasonable, you have to be definitive, and you have to communicate extremely well to say, "This is the course I've chosen to take."

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Sandhu, with about three minutes left.

**Mr. Amarjot Sandhu:** Thank you, Mr. Sincerbox, for your presentation.

You have extensive experience in the education sector. Can you please tell the committee how your experience will complement your role as the chair of the Provincial Schools Authority?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Thank you for the question.

The Provincial Schools Authority has a very necessary role to play as the employer of record for the teachers, the principals and the vice-principals with PDSB. As such, the person who would be in the chair role should have the knowledge, the skills and the attitudes to be successful.

The knowledge that I bring from my experiences is not just how to lead, but how to lead within the bounds of having collective agreements that you have to weigh, that you have to balance, that you have to be informed about. In doing so, you also have to be a teacher, because you have to educate people—and in this case, it could be the principals and vice-principals and the staff—around some of the stipulations in the collective agreement, how they impact what we are doing, what we need to do in order to make sure that we are understanding and not necessarily leading things towards a situation that could evolve into a grievance. What we want to do is have a mutual understanding so that we are successful and it doesn't disrupt the learning in the classroom, but in fact, everyone has a clear understanding of it. So that's the assistance in terms of the understanding, the clear communication, the idea of resolving grievances if in fact they do come up—and certainly, we have to look at the idea of teaching around compliance.

My experiences both as a teacher and an administrator who had to learn about collective agreements, had to learn about the impacts of what they could or could not have in terms of the classroom and the impact on students—and

certainly in my later years, where I was in charge of that, whether it was negotiations or implementation or hearing grievances, but in more cases than not, working as a partner with our union leaders to better understand, to communicate regularly, and wherever possible, avoid grievances or things that would lead to an impact on the students in the classroom.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** You have 50 seconds. Any quick comments? Very good.

Moving on to the opposition side: You have 15 minutes. Member Glover.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Thank you so much for coming here and for putting your name forward.

I also come from an education background. I was a high school teacher, a school board trustee and a part-time professor. I'm well aware of that Empower program. When I was a school board trustee in Etobicoke, we brought it to a couple of the schools there. We brought it in mainly as a response to funding cuts that led to the reading readiness program being cut, but it was a reasonable substitute.

I would just say, in response to that, the most important thing that any child learns—or that we do as a school board, or any school board does, is to make sure that every child learns to read at the end of grade 1. I see you nodding, so I'm assuming you agree with that.

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** I applaud the people who developed the program. There are individuals working in school boards who have far, far greater expertise in that than I do, but I do agree with you.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I want to ask some questions about the Provincial Schools Authority and some of the things that would be within its scope, particularly around grievances. I heard you talk about some grievances, so I'll ask a couple of questions here.

During the 2021-22 school year, the PDSB saw one and a half times the number of grievances as the previous year. And so far, during 2023-24, 145 grievances have been filed by PSAT.

What is your plan to address and resolve these issues? Given the backlog of grievances, is it likely that grievances that date back to your time as an interim executive director will come before the Provincial Schools Authority? And what's your plan to avoid any conflict of interest with regard to these grievances?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** Thank you for the questions.

In terms of specifics, I would have to turn those to the leadership of the Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch and also the Ministry of Education.

In terms of grievances as a whole, I believe that it is important to view grievances as part of a process—it's not necessarily a negative, in that it could identify things that there are disputes about or disagreements about that may require some attention.

Numbers of grievances—they are something that we deal with, and I think the threshold can become an area of concern if people look for trends or what have you.

I'm a firm believer that if you look at a process—and that is contained in the mandate of the Provincial Schools Authority—that you have a mechanism to deal with dis-

putes. So the whole idea of the mandate being collaboration, open lines of communication between the three key parties—the Provincial Schools Authority, the Provincial School Authority Teachers union, and PDSB—is really critical to impacting the working and learning environment, which, hopefully, would be positive on both counts. I think where there are disputes or disagreements about any number of things, whether they have to be with the interpretation of the collective agreement or what have you, there need to be the ongoing conversations. Throughout my career, I have taken the approach of having an open door. My cellphone number has been provided to union leadership in order to provide clarification. We look to have the discussion. We look to understand each other's perspective better. Wherever possible, we look at a resolution at an informal level. Quite frankly, I think if you do have an ongoing dispute, that they say, "We just can't agree with it"—up to and including the time when the grievance is heard, the phone lines are always open. There is always the opportunity for a resolution.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Let me ask you a specific question about the volume of grievances. One of the mandates of the Provincial Schools Authority is to look for ways to reduce the number of grievances filed each year by the union. Over the last three years, there has been a massive increase—and I gave some of the numbers in my previous question. So how should the Provincial Schools Authority be reducing the number of grievances?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** I think, in terms of specifics on numbers, as I said before, I would refer that back to PDSB and to the ministry.

In terms of the process of dealing with grievances, with a possible outcome being a reduction, that process needs to involve listening. It needs to involve regular communication. It needs to involve building a trusting relationship. My experiences in human resources show that if there are things as minute, perhaps, as not providing a timely response, that might have an impact on trust; also, quite frankly, a full understanding of what the issue is, whether it's being brought forward from the union leadership side or from the management side. So, to some degree, there is a teaching and learning piece.

My experiences in two different school boards dealing with multiple different bargaining units—and when I was in Grand Erie, I had nine bargaining units that I dealt with. I can safely say that I had excellent professional relationships with all of them. And in doing so, you get to that point where you've developed that situation of trust, that element where they feel comfortable calling you—

**Mr. Chris Glover:** So do you think if there's greater trust, that will reduce the number of grievances?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** No. I think within the mandate of the PSA and, hopefully, with my role as chair, how it aligns with the mandate—it is the listening, the open communication, the looking to assist with the understanding and, where necessary, resolve grievances. That is clearly the mandate. In doing all of those, does it have an impact on the numbers? That's something PDSB will have to support and have a better understanding of, as will the

ministry. My role, as chair, will be an active participant in the process, and it may well result in a reduction of grievances.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Thank you.

I'll pass it over to my colleague.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** With just under nine minutes left, member Gates.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thanks for being here today.

I'm a little surprised at your comment around the number of grievances, and not that you're brushing them off, but I think it shows a serious breakdown in communications between the employer and the union and, quite frankly, the teachers—because it isn't the union that puts the grievances in; it's usually the teacher or somebody who works in the education sector.

**1000**

And 145, to me, seems extremely large, and the reason why I say that is that I've had the opportunity to bargain 150 collective agreements myself with the biggest employer, at that time, in the country, General Motors, and I wouldn't have had 145 grievances in the 12 years that I represented those workers. So it seems to me that you've got a bigger problem on how you're addressing workload, staffing—those types of issues probably are things that have to be done.

Given the back-load of grievances, it's likely that the grievances that date back to your time as an interim executive director will come before the Provincial Schools Authority. What's your plan to avoid any conflict of interest with regard to these grievances? I think that's a fair question, seeing as you were probably there when they were putting them in.

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** I think when you look at the grievance process, as you obviously do—my experience has been that when a grievance is filed, it is filed by the president of the unit. Hopefully, what would have happened in advance of that was that there was a conversation between whomever would have been the human resources person, whether it was, in the education sector, the manager, the senior manager, or even the superintendent, to better understand what the issues are and, where possible, to come up with a resolution. If that isn't possible, as you're no doubt aware, there can be a number of factors that could lead towards the grievance being filed and, obviously, put in process. It could be timelines that are in collective agreements; it could be things that could go in abeyance that are in collective agreements—a number of factors, as you're no doubt aware.

In terms of the actual numbers, that would be something, again, that I would have to direct back to PDSB and to the ministry.

In terms of how I deal with grievances, I always deal with them, as I said, in a fair, reasonable, equitable way, with a timely response, being respectful of collective agreement stipulations, such as timelines. That has always been my way. And what has always also been my way is that open-door approach, whereby either party can be involved with a discussion that could lead to a resolution, before it gets to the point of actually having the grievance

heard or, in those extreme cases, going towards arbitration—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I only get 15 minutes, so I'm going to ask you another question.

Do you recognize that there is a direct link between the number of grievances being filed and the media reports of lack of funding, staffing and retention? We know that schools are a lot like the hospital system. They're underfunded. They're having trouble keeping staffing. And I would think a number of these grievances are workload—that's one. I'll give you another one that—

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Point of order. Member McGregor.

**Mr. Graham McGregor:** Thanks, Chair. Pursuant to standing order 25(b), I believe the member is directing his speech to matters outside the scope of the committee. I believe we're talking about the qualifications of the candidate in regard to the Provincial Schools Authority; not his political opinions about partisan matters.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** I'm going to allow the questioning to continue, as I do see a connection between the candidate's qualifications and the line of questioning, for now. But I'll be listening carefully.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I appreciate it. I'll go on to something else I want to get out, because I know my colleagues want to ask questions too.

At Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton, the school implanted a system that requires classroom teachers to ring a cowbell in the event of emergencies, which obviously no deaf or hard-of-hearing student or teacher can hear.

Do you think the use of cowbells in schools for the deaf is appropriate?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** The safety and well-being of students has always been paramount in my thinking and my decision-making throughout my career, whether it was as a teacher, school administrator or superintendent.

In terms of the specifics that you're referring to, that would be something that I would have to refer back to PDSB and, if necessary, to the ministry—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Are you aware that's how they're doing it at that school?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** I am not aware of a continuation of that, in terms of whether something was proposed—when you are looking at a full opportunity to look at any options that are available.

One piece that I should point out is, it's important that people are looking at what their areas of expertise are. As it pertains to the hearing today and the chair role with the PSA, that would be around largely, as an employer of record, looking at the collective agreement implications and understanding how to approach disagreements, resolve grievances and look at collective agreement compliance.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I appreciate it. I'm going to turn this over, but I'm going to say this as clear as I can: You've been an educator for a long time. My wife was a principal. My daughter is a teacher. I've been involved with education for a long, long time. It is not appropriate, quite frankly, and you should have said it's absolutely not

appropriate to use cowbells to warn students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. I think that should have been a very easy answer for you, and I'm disappointed in the response.

I'll turn it over to my colleague.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Member Wong-Tam, with three minutes left.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** I certainly appreciate your presentation so far today. Looking at your qualifications, I see you have a very distinguished and esteemed history, and a track record in investments in public education. So I thank you for that.

I want to ask, with respect to the challenges that we're seeing in the schools right across Ontario, the lack of funding in classrooms, oftentimes leading to teachers being alone in overcrowded classrooms—and we're hearing more about the claims about physical assault in the classroom. There's more violence in my community, in Toronto Centre, than I've seen before. And because the role that you're applying for—being the record of employer for principals, vice-principals, means that if your classrooms are not well resourced and the teachers are not supported, it's going to make the jobs of the principals and vice-principals much more difficult. How would you support the principals in order for them to support the teachers?

**Mr. Scott Sincerbox:** I appreciate the question.

Certainly, as my career in many different areas with many different roles and responsibilities, as I talked about—we need to meet the needs of all students, and we need to meet them to the best of our abilities.

As it pertains to the role of PSA chair and the idea of collective agreements and looking at resolving differences, I think when you look at the mandate, the idea of compliance with collective agreements and educating people around collective agreement stipulations, as it pertains to classrooms and what have you that could ultimately lead towards understanding and having some assistance around understanding what the issues are, looking at potentially avoiding grievances—or, if necessary, there is a grievance and having a resolution to it. And what might happen with that is, in the PSA chair—the idea of education, listening, the understanding. That is within the scope of what the PSA does, and that is within the scope of what the role of PSA chair does.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** You have 40 seconds left. Any further questions? No further questions from the opposition.

Thank you very much, Mr. Sincerbox, for joining us today. Thank you for your career of service and for your willingness to continue to serve. You are welcome to hear the rest of our committee. And I would urge you to have a look around the building before the next couple of years, when it gets shut down for a decade or so for a rebuild.

Members, we will now consider the intended appointment of Alan James Pittis, nominated as member of the Landlord and Tenant Board.

Do we have a motion by member Holland?

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Alan James Pittis, nominated as member of the Landlord and Tenant Board.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by member Holland. Is there any discussion on that motion? Seeing none, are members ready to vote? All those in favour? Any opposed? Carried.

We will now consider the intended appointment of Scott Sincerbox, nominated as chair of the Provincial Schools Authority.

We have a motion from member Holland.

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Scott Sincerbox, nominated as chair of the Provincial Schools Authority.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Concurrence in the appointment has been moved by member Holland. Is there any discussion on that motion? Seeing none, are members ready to vote? All those in favour? Any opposed? That is carried.

The deadline to review the intended appointments of Rachel Curran and Lynda Carpenter, selected from the February 16, 2024, certificate is March 17, 2024. Is there unanimous consent to extend the deadline to consider the intended appointments to April 16, 2024? I heard a no.

Any further business? Member Glover.

**1010**

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I'd like to bring forward the following motion:

I move that the committee conduct a study of the Ontario Place Corp. and meet for public hearings on the following dates:

—Monday, March 25, 2024, from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—Tuesday, March 26, 2024, from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

—Wednesday, March 27, 2024 from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

That the Clerk of the Committee be authorized to immediately post notices regarding the hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel and on the Legislative Assembly's website; and

That the deadline for requests to appear for hearings be 12 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2024; and

That the Minister of Infrastructure be invited to appear as the first witness at 9 a.m. on Monday, March 25, 2024, and that the witness shall have one hour to make an opening statement, followed by two hours of questions and answers, divided into two rounds of 25 minutes for the government members, two rounds of 25 minutes for the official opposition members, and two rounds of 10 minutes for the independent member of the committee as a group;

That witnesses shall be scheduled in groups of three for each one-hour time slot, with each presenter allotted seven minutes to make an opening statement, followed by 39 minutes of questioning for all three witnesses, divided into two rounds of seven and a half minutes for the government members, two rounds of seven and a half minutes for the official opposition members, and two rounds of 4.5 minutes for the independent member of the committee; and

That witnesses appearing be permitted to participate in person or participate remotely; however, a maximum of two individuals may appear in person on behalf of an organization, and any additional representatives of that organization shall participate remotely; and

That the Clerk of the Committee shall provide a list of all interested presenters to each member of the subcommittee on committee business and their designate as soon as possible following the deadline for requests to appear; and

That if all requests to appear cannot be accommodated, each member of the subcommittee on committee business or their designate may provide the Clerk of the Committee with a prioritized list of presenters to be scheduled, chosen from the list of all interested presenters for those respective hearings by 2 p.m. on Thursday, March 21, 2024;

That the deadline for written submissions be 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 27, 2024; and

That legislative research provide the committee members with a summary of oral presentations and written submissions as soon as possible following the written submission deadline; and

That the committee meet for report-writing on Monday, April 8, 2024, from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.; and

That the subcommittee on committee business be authorized to revise hearing dates and deadlines if necessary.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** I take it you drew the short straw.

Would you care to make a statement regarding your motion, sir?

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Yes. The mandate of this committee is to review appointments as well as agencies of the government. The Ontario Place Corp. is an agency of the government, and there are a number of questions that I think the public should have an opportunity to review.

There are issues around the business case that has been made for some of the private, for-profit corporate deals that have been made at Ontario Place. There's the issue of the long lease—what has been reported to be a 95-year lease with Therme and with Live Nation. There's the bidding process of those contracts and how that bidding process was conducted, and some irregularities in that business process, that I think the public should have an opportunity to comment on and present to the committee. There's also the natural destruction—the destruction of 850 trees on the west island—and also that this project is proceeding without an environmental assessment.

The goal of this motion is to give the public an opportunity to review the Ontario Place Corp. and some of the deals that have been made so that they have an opportunity to speak.

**The Chair (Mr. Will Bouma):** Unfortunately, that concludes our time for today, so we will resume that at the next appropriate time.

Thank you, committee members. That concludes our business for today. This committee now stands adjourned.

*The committee adjourned at 1015.*









## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

### **Chair / Président**

Mr. Will Bouma (Brantford–Brant PC)

### **Vice-Chair / Vice-Président**

Mr. John Fraser (Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud L)

Mr. Will Bouma (Brantford–Brant PC)  
Mr. John Fraser (Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud L)  
M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy (Newmarket–Aurora PC)  
Mr. Chris Glover (Spadina–Fort York ND)  
Mr. Mike Harris (Kitchener–Conestoga PC)  
Mr. Kevin Holland (Thunder Bay–Atikokan PC)  
Ms. Sarah Jama (Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre IND)  
Mr. Graham McGregor (Brampton North / Brampton-Nord PC)  
Mr. Billy Pang (Markham–Unionville PC)  
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