



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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# Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 001**

Friday, December 3, 2021

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Chair: The Honourable Bardish Chagger





## Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Friday, December 3, 2021

• (1235)

[*English*]

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Justin Vaive):** Honourable members of the committee, I see a quorum.

I must inform members that the clerk of the committee can only receive motions for the election of the chair. The clerk cannot receive other types of motions, entertain points of order or participate in debate.

We can now proceed to the election of the chair. Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the government party.

I am now ready to receive motions for the chair.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** I nominate the Honourable Bardish Chagger as chair of this committee.

[*English*]

**The Clerk:** Are there any other motions?

Seeing none, it has been moved by Mr. Fergus that Bardish Chagger be elected as chair of the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Clerk:** Pursuant to the House order of Thursday, November 25, I declare Ms. Chagger elected. I invite Ms. Chagger to take the chair.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**The Chair (Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.)):** First of all, thank you for the warm welcome. It is indeed an honour and a privilege to be with you, and I look forward to our getting some good work done.

If the committee is in agreement, I will invite the clerk to proceed with the election of the vice-chairs.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Clerk:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the first vice-chair must be a member of the official opposition.

I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

**Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC):** I nominate Eric Duncan.

**The Clerk:** Are there any further nominations?

Seeing none, it has been moved by Mr. Barrett that Mr. Duncan be elected as the first vice-chair.

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

**The Clerk:** Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the second vice-chair must be an opposition member from a party other than the official opposition.

I am now ready to receive motions for the second vice-chair.

Mr. Fergus, you have the floor.

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Mr. Clerk, I nominate Alain Therrien.

**The Clerk:** Thank you, Mr. Fergus.

It has been moved by Mr. Fergus that Mr. Alain Therrien be elected as second vice-chair.

Are there any other motions?

Seeing none, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Sherry.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm delighted to see you as chair of this committee.

As it's the first time I'm on this committee, I'd like to propose some routine motions.

**The Chair:** Could I do some routine business before that? I just need to put some words on the record.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Yes. Thank you.

**The Chair:** These are really serious responsibilities of the chair, which I must do diligently. I want to make sure that everyone is welcomed to meeting number one of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of November 25, 2021. Members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application. The proceedings will be made available on the House of Commons website. So you are aware, the webcast will always show the person speaking rather than the entirety of the committee.

Today's meeting is also taking place in the webinar format. Webinars are for public committee meetings and are available only to members, their staff and witnesses. Members enter immediately as active participants. All functionalities for active participants remain the same. Staff will be non-active participants and can therefore view the meeting only in gallery view.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all participants in this meeting that taking screenshots or photos of your screen is not permitted, even though I know that you probably want every single memory possible, but they will have to live in your hearts and minds.

Given the ongoing pandemic situation and in light of the recommendations from health authorities, as well as the directive from the Board of Internal Economy on October 19, 2021, to remain healthy and safe, all those attending the meeting in person are to maintain two metres of physical distancing and must wear a non-medical mask when circulating in the room. It is highly recommended that the mask be worn at all times, including when seated. Proper hand hygiene must be maintained by using the provided hand sanitizer at the room entrance.

As the chair, I will be enforcing these measures for the duration of the meeting. I thank members in advance for their co-operation.

To ensure an orderly meeting, I would like to outline a few rules to follow.

First, for members participating on Zoom, you may speak in the official language of your choice. Interpretation services are available for this meeting. You have a choice, at the bottom of your screen, of floor, English or French. If interpretation is lost, please inform me immediately. We will ensure interpretation is properly restored before resuming the proceedings. The “raise hand” feature at the bottom of the screen can be used at any time if you wish to speak or to alert the chair.

For members participating in person, proceed as you usually would when the whole committee is meeting in person in a committee room.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you are on the video conference, please click on the microphone icon to unmute yourself. For those in the room, your microphone will be controlled as normal by the proceedings and verification officer. When speaking, please speak slowly and clearly. When you are not speaking, your microphone should be on mute. I will remind you that all comments by members and witnesses should be addressed through the chair.

With regard to a speakers list, the committee clerk and I will do our best to maintain a consolidated order of speaking for all members, whether they are participating virtually or in person.

Now we can go to other business.

I acknowledge Mrs. Romanado.

You have the floor.

• (1240)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I would like to go through the routine motions. I will do them one at a time, if it is the pleasure of the committee.

I will start with “Analyst Services”:

That the Committee retain, as needed and at the discretion of the Chair, the services of one or more analysts from the Library of Parliament to assist it in its work.

Do you want me to continue with each motion?

**The Chair:** Let's do them one at a time. We'll finish this one first.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** All right.

**The Chair:** Is there agreement or any discussion?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** I would like to welcome the analysts to join us at the table. Thank you.

I just want to make sure that we're all on the same page, because I really do want to do my best at being a committee chair by having us able to function among ourselves in a co-operative way. For the purpose of passing these motions, are we okay with giving a thumbs-up or nodding our heads? Or would you prefer to speak into your microphones and say “yes” or “no”?

Are we okay with thumbs-up? Okay. That's perfect. Thank you.

We'll go to number two.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Chair, congratulations on your selection. I look forward to working with you, at least today, as I am a temporary replacement.

I think there will be some motions where there will be some discussion, so you can judge that accordingly.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** I now present the second routine motion, entitled “Delegation of Authority to Whips (Striking Report)”.

That the four whips be delegated the authority to act as the striking committee pursuant to Standing Orders 104, 113 and 114, and that they be authorized to present to the chair, in a report signed by all four whips, or their representatives, their unanimous recommendations for presentation to the House, on behalf of the committee.

• (1245)

[*English*]

I just want to mention that in the English version, on the fifth line it, says “for” whips, but it should be “four”.

**The Clerk:** We'll get that corrected. Thank you.

**The Chair:** That is noted.

Go ahead, Mr. Duncan.

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair, and congratulations. I look forward to working with you.

On this motion to strike other committees and so forth, there's an amendment that we would like to propose for this.

I move that the motion be amended by adding the following: "provided that the recommendations for the report referred to in paragraphs (e) and (g) of the Order adopted by the House on Thursday, December 2, 2021, shall be presented to the Chair no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8, 2021, and that the Chair be instructed to present the report to the House no later than Thursday, December 9, 2021".

I have, for the clerk, copies of that amendment for colleagues.

Just to speak to that, we all want committees back, and I think we want to do it in as reasonable a way as possible. The time frame of the dates provided in the amendment will allow the House administration not to be jammed in the work of getting committees struck. It will have the time and resources to reasonably do so.

I put forward that amendment to the government's motion.

**The Chair:** Is there any discussion on the amendment?

Go ahead, Mr. Fergus.

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** It's more for procedure, Madam Chair.

I just want to make sure that this is also distributed electronically.

[*Translation*]

In this way, those who attend virtually will also have an opportunity to read the amendments moved by Mr. Duncan.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Gerretsen.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I just want to let you know that Ms. Sahota and I have our hands up in the virtual world.

Just as it was raised by Mr. Fergus, I would like to see a copy of this, because Mr. Duncan referred to two items by letter only. I just need a second to digest all of this.

Can we get this sent to us by email and have a few minutes with it before we vote on it, please?

**The Chair:** We understand that it is being emailed shortly.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** It's part of our hybrid world. It's on its way to the clerk to be sent to you.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** We're all friends around here. You could have sent it to us in advance, Eric.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** I just don't like bugging you any more than I have to, Mark.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** That's fair.

**Ms. Ruby Sahota (Brampton North, Lib.):** I want to ask a question.

**The Chair:** Yes, Ms. Sahota.

**Ms. Ruby Sahota:** Thank you.

I just wanted to ask Mr. Duncan and opposition members whether the whips have been in discussion on this item, since it re-

lates to them. Have all of the whips had a conversation about this amendment? Is there any knowledge of that?

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** I would say it's part of the ongoing conversations back and forth. I think there have been conversations about establishing committees, and there have been discussions on the time frames of how best to do that.

I don't think there has been specific consultation on the specific date, but the general will is to make sure that we can get committees up as soon as possible and to make sure, by this time frame, that we have the House resources to accommodate that request. It's in the effort of both getting committees up and also making sure that the House administration is not jammed.

One of the unique things about opening meetings is that it takes two clerks, for example. Is that correct, Justin, in terms of resources?

**The Clerk:** Madam Chair, I can answer that.

Generally, Mr. Duncan, you're correct. It would usually take two clerks, but that's for the purposes of conducting the chair's election when it's an in-person meeting, because we have a secret ballot. However, because we're under the hybrid rules, one clerk can do it, because we do the election differently. Had there been more than just one candidate for chair or vice-chairs, I would have put each motion separately until one was adopted.

The requirement wasn't in place to have two clerks for this meeting.

**Mr. Eric Duncan:** Thank you for the clarification.

Still, in terms of other House administration resources required, I think having this deadline would accommodate and respect being able to do it in an organized manner for the House administration as well.

• (1250)

**The Chair:** Mr. Gerretsen, I see that your hand is still raised. Go ahead.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I lowered my hand, and then I raised it again.

I don't know if Mr. Duncan answered the question that Ms. Sahota asked, which was whether discussions had happened between the whips' offices. As we know, a lot of this stuff is worked out and ironed out between the various offices in advance. Then we come here and we have all of that background before doing this.

My take on this is that we're taken a little offside on this, so we're not in a position to vote on this right now. Perhaps we should move on. We can suspend on this particular item, move on to the rest, and then come back to this after our whips' offices have had an opportunity to chat about this and to look at it. Hopefully, there aren't any more surprises like this. Otherwise, unfortunately, this is going to drag on. I was half joking when I said you could have sent this stuff to us in advance, because then it gives us an opportunity to look at it. We're certainly not going to vote on something until we fully understand it and the implications of it.

Madam Chair, perhaps you will ask the committee if we could move on to the next item and then come back to this.

**The Chair:** I will definitely do that. Thank you, Mr. Gerretsen, for that intervention.

I do want to acknowledge that in order for us to proceed with committees—I know the conversations that have taken place with regard to most parties wanting committees to advance—this is a motion that we do want to see advanced or adopted before we finish.

Mr. Barrett, go ahead.

**Mr. Michael Barrett:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Congratulations on your election. I'm looking forward to working with all members of the committee.

With respect to the amendment proposed by Mr. Duncan, this allows us only to achieve exactly what the order of the House has prescribed and is consistent with discussions among the House officers of all recognized parties in the House. I appreciate that the specific language in front of us may be new to some of the members at the table, having just seen it for the first time. We'll undertake to provide amendments at the earliest possible opportunity to all colleagues at the committee, going forward. I expect that this language will be supported by the other party whips, because this is in keeping with the order from the House and allows us to have all committees stood up before Christmas.

If it is possible for us to continue on and deal with the other items, that's perfectly fine, but it's certainly imperative that we ensure that the order of the House is fulfilled in spirit and in writing.

Thanks.

**The Chair:** Unless there are any dissenting thoughts, I think it's okay, then, for the whips to go offline with this. We'll continue with the next point.

Mr. Gerretsen, go ahead.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I was just going to say that I believe during our discourse on this they have had an opportunity to do that. I think we are in a position to vote on it now.

**The Chair:** Do you want to lower and raise your hand again one more time right now?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** It depends on whether or not Mr. Barrett is going to speak.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** It sounds like there is some agreement.

Are we okay with having the amendment adopted?

(Amendment agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**The Chair:** Excellent.

Mrs. Romanado, go ahead.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The third routine motion is on the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(1), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business be composed of one (1) member from each recognized party and

a Chair from the Government party; and that Ruby Sahota be appointed Chair of the Subcommittee.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** As regards the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, I move:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and be composed of five (5) members; the chair, one member from each party; and that the subcommittee work in the spirit of collaboration.

• (1255)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Meeting Without a Quorum”:

That the Chair be authorized to hold meetings to receive evidence and to have that evidence published when a quorum is not present, provided that at least four members are present, including two members of the opposition parties and two members of the government party, but when travelling outside the Parliamentary Precinct, that the meeting begin after 15 minutes, regardless of members present.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Time for Opening Remarks and Questioning of Witnesses”:

That witnesses be given five (5) minutes for their opening statements; that whenever possible, witnesses provide the committee with their opening statements 72 hours in advance; that, at the discretion of the Chair, during the questioning of witnesses, there be allocated six (6) minutes for the first questioner of each party as follows: Round 1: Conservative Party, Liberal Party, Bloc Québécois, New Democratic Party. For the second and subsequent rounds, the order and time for questioning be as follows: Conservative Party, five (5) minutes; Liberal Party, five (5) minutes; Bloc Québécois, two and a half (2.5) minutes; New Democratic Party, two and a half (2.5) minutes; Conservative Party, five (5) minutes; Liberal Party, five (5) minutes.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Regarding document distribution, I move:

That only the clerk of the committee be authorized to distribute documents to members of the committee, only when the documents are available in both official languages, and that witnesses be advised accordingly.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Working Meals”. This one is everyone's favourite.

That the clerk of the committee, at the discretion of the Chair, be authorized to make the necessary arrangements to provide working meals for the committee and its subcommittees.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** If there are any allergies or concerns, please submit those. If there are ever members who are swapping at meetings, please give us a heads-up so that we can ensure we can accommodate.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Thank you.

[Translation]

Regarding accommodation and living expenses of witnesses, I move:

That, if requested, reasonable travel, accommodation and living expenses be reimbursed to witnesses not exceeding two (2) representatives per organization; provided that, in exceptional circumstances, payment for more representatives be made at the discretion of the chair.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Access to In Camera Meetings”:

That, unless otherwise ordered, each Committee member be allowed to be accompanied by one staff member at an in camera meeting and that one additional person from each House officer's office be allowed to be present.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** As for transcripts of in camera meetings, I move:

That one copy of the transcript of each in camera meeting be kept in the committee clerk's office for consultation by members of the committee or by their staff; and that the analysts assigned to the committee also have access to the in camera transcripts.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Notice of Motion”:

That a 48-hour notice, interpreted as two nights, be required for any substantive motion to be moved in committee, unless the substantive motion relates directly to business then under consideration, provided that: (a) the notice be filed with the clerk of the committee no later than 4 p.m. from Monday to Friday; (b) the motion be distributed to Members in both official languages by the clerk on the same day the said notice was transmitted if it was received no later than the deadline hour; (c) notices received after the deadline hour or on non-business days be deemed to have been received during the next business day; and that when the committee is holding meetings outside the Parliamentary Precinct, no substantive motion may be moved.

**The Chair:** Mr. Fergus, go ahead.

[Translation]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I wish to move an amendment to part (b) of the routine motion regarding notices of motion. I would like to add, after the words “the motion be distributed to members”, the following: “and to the office of the whips of each recognized party”.

**The Chair:** Are we agreed on the amendment?

(Amendment agreed to)

(Motion as amended agreed to)

[English]

Excellent.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Orders of Reference from the House Respecting Bills”:

That in relation to orders of reference from the House respecting Bills,

(a) The clerk of the committee shall, upon the committee receiving such an order of reference, write to each member who is not a member of a caucus represented on the committee to invite those members to file with the clerk of the committee, in both official languages, any amendments to the bill, which is the subject of the said Order, which they would suggest that the committee consider;

(b) Suggested amendments filed, pursuant to paragraph (a), at least 48 hours prior to the start of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill to which the amendments relate shall be deemed to be proposed during the said consideration, provided that the committee may, by motion, vary this deadline in respect of a given bill; and

(c) During the clause-by-clause consideration of a bill, the Chair shall allow a member who filed suggested amendments, pursuant to paragraph (a), an opportunity to make brief representations in support of them.

• (1300)

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next motion is entitled “Technical tests for witnesses”.

That the clerk inform each witness who is to appear before the committee that the House administration support team must conduct technical tests to check the connectivity and the equipment used to ensure the best possible sound quality; and that the chair advise the committee, at the start of each meeting, of any witness who did not perform the required technical tests.

[English]

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** The next one is “Linguistic Review”:

That all documents submitted for committee business that do not come from a federal department, members' offices, or that have not been translated by the Translation Bureau be sent for prior linguistic review by the Translation Bureau before being distributed to members.

**The Chair:** Is that agreed?

(Motion agreed to)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** That's all I have, Madam Chair.

Thank you.

[Translation]

**Mr. Greg Fergus:** If the trend continues, Madam Chair, we will only have unanimous reports.

[English]

**The Chair:** I like this. I would like this to stay.

Is there anything else that we need to discuss today?

Mrs. Romanado, go ahead.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** I'm new at this committee, Madam Chair. I just want to make sure that I understand correctly that the next meeting of PROC will be on Tuesday at 11 o'clock.

**The Clerk:** Mrs. Romanado, I can answer that.

PROC meetings tend to be on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 to 1:00. Today being Friday, the next logical one would be on Tuesday at 11 o'clock.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** That's perfect. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Excellent.

With that, I hope everyone keeps well and safe.

I adjourn the meeting.

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