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Monday, February 3, 2014



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• (1530)

[Translation]

The Clerk of the Committee (Mrs. Julie Geoffrion): Honourable members of the committee, I see we have quorum.

I must inform the members of the committee that the clerk of the committee may only receive motions pertaining to the election of the chair. The clerk may not receive any other motions, may not hear points of order, nor participate in debate. We may now proceed to the election of the chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 106(2), the chair must be a member of the official opposition. I am now ready to receive motions for the position of chairman.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Madam Clerk, is that new? The chair is normally not from the government party on this committee.

The Clerk: No, I said official opposition.

I'm ready to receive motions for the chair.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): I nominate Hélène LeBlanc.

[Translation]

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. O'Neill Gordon that Ms. LeBlanc be elected chair of the committee.

Are there any other motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried, and Ms. Hélène LeBlanc duly elected chair of the committee.

[English]

Before inviting Ms. LeBlanc to take the chair, if the committee wishes, we will now proceed to the election of the vice-chairs.

Pursuant to standing 106(2) the first vice-chair must be a member of the government party. I am now prepared to receive motions for the first vice-chair.

Madame Sellah.

[Translation]

Mrs. Djaouda Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): I nominate Ms. O'Neill Gordon as vice-chair.

[English]

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. Sellah that Ms. O'Neill Gordon be elected as first vice-chair of the committee. Are there any further motions?

Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Ms. O'Neill Gordon duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

Pursuant to standing order 106(2) the second vice-chair must be a member of an opposition party other than the official opposition. I am now prepared to receive a motion for the second vice-chair.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you, Madam Clerk.

I'm assuming that Kirsty is still on our committee so I would like to nominate Kirsty Duncan as the second vice-chair.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. Truppe that Ms. Duncan be elected as second vice-chair of the committee. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried and Ms. Duncan duly elected second vice-chair of the committee in absentia.

[Translation]

I now invite Ms. LeBlanc to take the chair.

• (1535)

The Chair (Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP)): Good afternoon everyone. I'd like to congratulate the first vice-chair, Ms. O'Neill Gordon, again, as well as the second vice-chair, Ms. Duncan.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year as well as a Happy Chinese New Year. This is the Year of the Horse. I'm sure that in 2014, the committee will continue the good work it began in 2013. I am sure that we are going to do good work together. And without further ado, we can continue our meeting.

If you are in agreement, during this meeting we could discuss the business of the committee so that next Wednesday we can resume our study on eating disorders.

As you know, the report on sexual harassment could not be tabled last December. I would like to inform you that this will be done according to procedure.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Sorry I think I was going to do that on my list, Madam Chair. Last time we made a motion to bring back the report so that you could table it.

Madam Clerk, does it require a motion again?

The Clerk: We don't need a motion.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Okay, great. I know you were going to table it on the day the House rose, so we're in agreement to bring that back, if that's your question.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you. That will be done when the reports are tabled in the next few days, probably tomorrow. I will try to be here. It will depend on my availability.

I will also ask the clerk to distribute the budget for our study on eating disorders among girls and women. These funds will come from our committee's operating budget. We can have a look at it and discuss it if necessary.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Madam Chair, just while that's being passed around, maybe the clerk could enlighten us and let us know if there are some witnesses booked. If you're out of witnesses to call, then we need to send five more from each, perhaps. It's just on where we stand with the witnesses.

[Translation]

The Clerk: We currently have a list of 15 potential witnesses. Each party has provided five suggestions. The committee has only heard one witness, Dr. Woodside. We have enough witnesses for the next meetings. Wednesday, witnesses will be appearing before the committee.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Okay, you have lots. Perfect.

[Translation]

The Chair: Are there any questions or comments on the proposed budget?

Mr. Young, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC): I'm sorry, Chair, I was just thinking of the previous comment made by the clerk. I wonder if we can find out who you have booked for the upcoming meetings.

The Clerk: For Wednesday—

Mr. Terence Young: Who is already arranged to come, whether it's Wednesday or for next week?

The Clerk: Technically, I was not able to send formal invitations because we didn't have a chair, so I didn't have instructions to invite people. But informally, I have contacted witnesses only for Wednesday.

Would you like to know who was invited?

•(1540)

Mr. Terence Young: Yes, I would.

The Clerk: The National Eating Disorder Information Centre, the Canadian Foundation for Women's Health, Dr. April Elliott, and the Mental Health Commission of Canada are the four witnesses that were contacted for Wednesday. I'm waiting to hear from them to confirm if they will be able to attend. We should be able to have three or four witnesses for Wednesday.

Mr. Terence Young: I'm sorry, the second was the Canadian Foundation for Women....

The Clerk: The second one was the Canadian Foundation for Women's Health.

[Translation]

The Chair: We have to understand that those four witnesses have not quite confirmed that they will be here, but there is a good likelihood that we will be able to hear four witnesses Wednesday. Briefing notes prepared by the researchers will also be distributed. I am talking about the general briefing notes. At a certain point, we did not have a chair, as you will recall. However, everything was done and we will be able to resume our study on Wednesday.

Ms. Sellah, you have the floor.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Madam Chair, when will those notes be sent? We are talking about the parliamentary briefing notes...

The Chair: The notes prepared by the researchers.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: The notes prepared by the researchers and that relate to the witnesses who are to appear before us, correct?

Ms. Laura Munn-Rivard (Committee Researcher): They are sent to you 24 hours before the meeting.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: You send them 24 hours...

Ms. Laura Munn-Rivard: Yes, we send them 24 hours before the meeting.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: You give us time to read them and to prepare accordingly.

The Chair: Yes, we proceed as usual.

Ms. Truppe, you have the floor.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

I just want to ask the clerk whether we are giving them until a certain time. Today is Monday, so would we give them until noon tomorrow, and then if we don't hear back we can maybe quickly email some others to ask if they are available by video conference? It's very short notice, then, to try to replace them, but we don't want to waste our time either by not having anyone since time is so precious.

The Clerk: Actually, right after the meeting, they're going to receive their formal invitation, but they're all expecting the invitation. They all know it's coming.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Good, perfect.

Thanks.

[Translation]

The Chair: I am pleased to note the committee members' level of motivation. In addition, I think that the clerk rose to the occasion, as did the researchers. It is clear that you really want to continue this study and I think that they have responded to the call, despite the small constraints we encountered. In summary, everything is ready for Wednesday's meeting.

I would like to direct your attention to the budget which was submitted to you. It was prepared by the clerk who based her work on previous studies and on the number of witnesses we are expecting to hear for this study, while taking into account some of the members' suggestions, such as holding videoconferences when that is possible. Are there any questions or comments?

Ms. Sellah, you have the floor.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I took a look at it and as you said, these are approximate figures. I see that there may be a videoconference to hear five people from outside of Canada.

The Chair: Simply if some of the experts are from abroad. That is not a fixed amount.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: I did say that these were approximate figures. When we refer to outside of Canada, does that mean that people are from abroad?

The Chair: Yes, we could for instance have a videoconference to hear people in the United Kingdom, in Australia or elsewhere, who might have information to impart. They could talk to us about innovative practices in their country, or provide us with enlightening information on our topic.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: How very interesting. This is the first time I have seen a committee consider inviting witnesses from outside of the country. That could be a good idea; why not?

The Chair: Yes. Committee members may suggest that we hear expert witnesses they know in other countries.

Thank you, Ms. Sellah.

Ms. Truppe, you have the floor.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you, Madam Chair. I also have just a couple of questions for the clerk.

If we end up having 25 witnesses, I know we could probably use the video conference funds from the "outside Canada" if we don't utilize that. But say that we did and we're over, do you have to go back and request funding from somewhere else and bring it back here, then, if we're over our \$15,000 for the video conferences and the witnesses?

•(1545)

The Clerk: No, the amount....

[Translation]

The amounts may be transferred from one item to another. We don't need to ask for additional funds. The important thing is to not go over the total amount requested here.

The Chair: We must not spend more than \$22,500, but the other amounts may be moved from one item to another. If we go beyond the \$22,500 limit, we are going to have to make another request.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Right, that's what I thought. Okay.

My final question is that I see "Working Meals (3)", so that means that three meetings are covered. Is that correct? What happens to the rest of them after that? I guess we don't get our fruit, because I know people will be asking.

The Clerk: No, the regular snacks that we receive are not covered. They are part of another budget. This is just in case we have meetings at a different time, or we need a dinner or something to eat.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thanks for clarifying that. We didn't know that. Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Is the committee ready to adopt the budget for the study on eating disorders?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Ms. Truppe, you have the floor.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I'm sorry, Madam Chair, I just have one more thing.

I'd like to make a motion to amend the routine motions to take off five minutes at the end, one from the opposition and one from the government, to reflect the two members that we each lost.

You know, with our seven minutes...the seven, seven, five, five. We need to take off five from there and five from here, and then that reflects the two that we've just lost.

[Translation]

The Chair: That is a relevant remark. Since there is one less member on each side, both from the government party and the official opposition, we are going to have to amend the general rules and shorten the time limit for statements and questions to witnesses. We are going to have to shorten it by five minutes.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: At the end....

[Translation]

The Chair: Yes, at the end of each round.

[English]

The Clerk: Do you have the motion?

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Would you like me to read the motion?

The Clerk: Yes, please.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I'd like to make a motion to amend the routine motions, to remove five minutes from each—the opposition, official opposition, and the government side—at the end of the rotation. That's the word I'm looking for.

[Translation]

The Chair: This only shortens things by five minutes, and then we can start a new question period.

Is everyone in agreement with this change?

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: May I ask for some further explanations on this? There's a point I'm not getting.

Will the five minutes be cut from the intervention time, or are we simply talking about proceedings generally?

The Chair: The proceedings. The purpose is to be able to start a new round and to make our proceedings more representative of the members who are present. This will not shorten the meeting. We will simply have another question period after the first.

Is everyone in agreement with this change?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: So we will see each other again next Wednesday at 3:30 p.m.

● (1550)

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Oh, good.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We have already reserved the room for several meetings.

Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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