



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Special Committee on Pay Equity

ESPE • NUMBER 001 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Monday, March 7, 2016

Chair

Ms. Anita Vandenbeld

Special Committee on Pay Equity

Monday, March 7, 2016

• (1740)

[English]

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Julie Lalonde Prud'homme): 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, cannot entertain points of order, nor participate in the debate.

[Translation]

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.

[English]

I am ready to receive motions for the chair.

Ms. Gladu.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): I'd like to nominate Anita Vandenbeld for the position of chair.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. Gladu that Ms. Vandenbeld be elected as chair of the committee.

Are there further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

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

[English]

I invite Ms. Vandenbeld to take the chair.

The Chair (Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.)): Thank you very much, everybody. I'm very happy to be chair of this very important special committee.

Is there consent for us to proceed with the election of the two vice-chairs? I see consent.

[Translation]

The Clerk: 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.

[English]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Chair, I would like, in the same spirit of collegiality, to nominate Shannon Stubbs to be vice-chair.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. Dzerowicz that Ms. Stubbs be elected as first vice-chair of the committee.

Are there any further motions?

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried, and Ms. Stubbs duly elected first vice-chair of the committee.

[Translation]

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

• (1745)

[English]

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

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Chair, I would like to nominate Sheri Benson as the second vice-chair.

The Clerk: It has been moved by Ms. Dzerowicz that Ms. Benson be elected as second vice-chair of the committee.

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

(Motion agreed to)

The Clerk: I declare the motion carried, and Ms. Benson duly elected second vice-chair of the committee.

The Chair: Congratulations.

If the committee consents, given that we have some time, I'd like to move on to routine motions.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Chair, I'm starting to speak too much, but I would like to make a motion with respect to the services of analysts from the Library of Parliament.

I move:

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.

The Chair: Is there consensus? No.

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): On the surface I do, but I was just going to raise a point about some of the routine motions and get some clarification from the other side. Maybe we could get some agreement to do an omnibus to cover most of the plates here. I think what we have here is pretty much boilerplate. I have just one concern.

The Chair: We were going to move each motion one by one, and we can do that fairly quickly if there's no debate.

Mr. Dan Albas: We can do it however you like, Madam Chair.

The Chair: We can adopt all of the routine motions in one go, as long as there's unanimous consent.

Mr. Dan Albas: I just have one small change to propose. You can let me know, Madam Chair, how you'd like to conduct the business of the committee.

The Chair: Which motion is it?

Mr. Dan Albas: In regard to the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, I've been on committees where, if everyone is working and in good spirits, you don't really need to have a subcommittee. Most of the planning can be done right here with the body of the committee. We found that in the public accounts committee. That was an opposition-chaired committee and it was very effective. It all depends on what members want. Again, a subcommittee just means that people are going to make decisions, negotiate things, and then bring them back for ratification.

We have a very short timeline. I believe that we have to report in June. Given that, we may want to just say that we can plan our business as a group fairly well, lay out our work between now and June, and do away with the whole concept of a subcommittee altogether.

Again, that's just food for thought. I'm happy to go with the majority will here.

The Chair: Might I propose, then, that we move all of the other routine motions, other than the one on the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure? We can dispense with them quickly, and then we can go to that motion as a separate motion.

Mr. Dan Albas: I agree that it's a good way to conduct it.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent for all of the motions—other than the one on the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure—that have been handed out to all members of the committee?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Seeing no objection, I declare all of those motions passed.

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

The Chair: If anybody wants to put a motion regarding the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, I would welcome that. Or is there debate or discussion?

Does anyone wish to put the motion?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I'm sorry, but what motion?

The Chair: We've passed all of the motions on the page except for the one on the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, which is the second one.

If somebody wishes to put that motion, I would entertain that motion. Then there can be debate on that motion. If nobody wishes to put the motion, that's also okay. It depends on the will of the committee.

Mr. Sheehan.

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): On the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure, Madam Chair, I'll put it forward for discussion. I'm going to read it and move it. That way, we can have a discussion. I move:

That the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure be established and composed of the Chair, the two Vice-Chairs and two members of the government party to be designated by the Whip; and that the Chair of the Committee be the Chair of the Subcommittee.

Did you want me to put reasoning with that as well?

• (1750)

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: There's a reason that I'm motivating this and putting it there. I understand the honourable member's points in the discussion. I think those are very admirable, but I think we also need to have it there just in case. We may not use it, but if it's there, we have the opportunity to use it if need be. If we do not support this now and we go and do our work and come to a point where this subcommittee would be very useful, then it won't be there.

I think it's good to have. If we don't use it, that's fine, but if we do find that we need to use it, then there we go. I think it's a win-win.

The Chair: Ms. Gladu.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: I can go either way on this one, but I would share my brief experience as chair of the status of women committee, where we did go ahead and create a subcommittee and we did have a meeting. What we found was that when we brought it back to be ratified, there was a disagreement on support of the steering committee anyway, so we ended up deciding that it just put in an extra step, because we wanted to have the full discussion.

The other thing is that I don't think there is anything that precludes you in the future from appointing a subcommittee if you decide you need one. That's something to keep in mind as well.

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Thank you, Madam Chair.

To the good members, I'm glad you brought it up for discussion. Really, it may make sense in certain committees. I get the sense from the discussion in the House that we're all in agreement on the subject and that we're here for much the same reason, which is how we can improve in these things.

Also, we have very limited time. As my colleague suggested, you can add this at any time. If the government side feels at any point they need to take a step back and install a subcommittee because maybe things are getting acrimonious, I would totally understand that. I would simply suggest that from the discussion I've had so far with my colleagues from the Conservatives, we're looking very much at serving on this committee and working with all sides.

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Chair, I very much appreciate the comments made by members on the opposite side. Because I'm anxious and excited to delve into the meat of the issues moving forward, I would rather get all the administrative items out of the way now.

My preference would be to agree with my colleague Terry and vote to allow the subcommittee to exist. We may decide not to use it, but I'd like to deal with all the administrative details at this meeting. Then we can move on to what we're really here to do.

The Chair: Are there any other comments?

Yes, Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: I don't want to belabour the point, but what we mean when we say let's create a subcommittee is that, before every one of our meetings or before we come here to plan out a schedule, there will be two or three people meeting to discuss what the schedule should be and then bring it back to a meeting to be ratified.

I'm not sure whether the parliamentary secretary is going to be doing this, but a number of people end up having to add extra time. If we're all going to be working together, then as I said earlier, not having a committee just means that we decide here, and that's one less meeting for everyone.

However, I'm very happy to report to everyone that I would not be on the subcommittee, if there were one, so it would not be my time and energy; it would be the chair's and the vice-chairs' respectively, and that of some government members.

For me, it's whatever the committee is comfortable with. I just think that if we install a committee right now, then it has to meet, and whether that works or not, I'll leave it up to them.

The Chair: Mr. Sheehan.

Mr. Terry Sheehan: Thank you very much.

The purpose of introducing this motion is to have it there. We don't have to use it if we don't need it, but it's there. It's just one more tool in the tool box.

I agree that the work ahead of us is of extreme importance and that we have a very short time frame. We have an aggressive agenda and schedule and we're all committed to working together on this going forward.

I say again that the reason for putting it forward with the others this evening is to get it done and over with. Let's move on. It's just a tool in the tool box, if we need to look at it in the future.

The Chair: Are we ready for the vote?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Chair, I don't think anyone will be opposed to this going forward. I'm fine with it, as long as the group is, so I don't think we need to vote.

• (1755)

The Chair: Seeing no objections, I declare the motion carried.

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

The Chair: Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Again, Madam Chair, I appreciate that everyone has a different workload, schedule, and whatnot. What might be helpful at this point is that, when the subcommittee meets, it perhaps look at another special committee that was formed in the 41st Parliament. The Special Committee on Violence Against Indigenous Women set out almost at the beginning a very simple schedule that gave members a lot of certainty. We can basically plan the time between now and when we wrap up our duties in June in such a way that we all have that certainty. I would be very much in favour of our representative agreeing to a solid work plan.

I'm not saying it's the only plan, Madam Chair; I'm simply pointing out that, given the short-term nature of this committee, it's very possible and would allow the clerk and the analysts plenty of time to make sure that we have enough witnesses and can plan out our work between now and June. Then maybe that committee will only have to meet once.

The Chair: Is there any other committee business we wish to discuss, or perhaps the timing of our next meeting, which hasn't been established?

Ms. Dzerowicz.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I'm actually a very shy person, Madam Chair, so this is a little bit out of order for me.

Recognizing that we have a lot of work to do and that this is a very important topic and we have a short period of time, I also want to recognize that a lot of work and many reports have already been done.

I would like to move that we ask the Library of Parliament to provide a summary. I know there was a 2004 pay equity task force, as well as recommendations, and I know there have been several reports since then over the last 10 years. I would love to get a summary of those reports, if we can.

I'd also like to move that we get a presentation on them at our next meeting and have a chance to ask some questions.

Because we have to move with haste, I'd like to propose that we meet this Wednesday evening, if the committee agrees, from 5:30 to 7:30 and spend the first hour on a presentation of what work has already been done. In the second hour maybe we could look at suggesting the first two or three witnesses we might want to hear from.

I'd like to move all of that, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Would you like to phrase the motion so that everyone is clear on exactly what the elements of that motion are?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Absolutely. I move three things. First, I move that the Library of Parliament provide a summary of the 2004 pay equity task force work and recommendations, in addition to a summary of all the reports that have been done on this topic, pay equity, over the last 10 years. The second part of the motion is that we have our next meeting this Wednesday evening from 5:30 to 7:30. Third, I move that in the first hour of the meeting we get the summary presentation of all the reports on pay equity and in the second hour we have a discussion about the first two to three witnesses we would like to entertain.

The Chair: Is there any debate on that motion?

I have Ms. Gladu first, and then Mr. Albas.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: I have a couple of comments. I don't disagree with getting all the information from the library analysts, but I will tell you that I looked at the 2004 report. It's 400 pages long with a lot of recommendations in it. Five hundred, yes.... Thanks for the correction.

I think it is a lot to look at in a day and come back and ask questions. I think we need longer than that, not to mention the fact that I am co-chairing the Parliamentary rail caucus, which meets with all members of Parliament at 7 o'clock on Wednesday night.

The Chair: As the chair, I have information from the library that even if they did the research tomorrow, they would not be able to have it translated by Wednesday, unless it were just a summary of the report.

Mrs. Tonina Simeone (Committee Researcher): The pay equity task force is quite big. Translation has its own service-level guidelines, and we are bound by that as well.

We could certainly provide something that the committee might find useful by early next week, but because of the translation guidelines, I think it would be very difficult for us to research it, write it, and get it into translation in a format that's useful for the committee.

• (1800)

The Chair: Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Thank you.

The point I was going to raise is that it does put a lot of... I am happy to get started on this as well, but I think we also have to plan out our work.

Which would give the analysts enough time to be able to put together what the member opposite has asked for, next Monday or Wednesday?

The Chair: It will be a constituency week next week.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: If they could give it to us, we could read it.

Mrs. Tonina Simeone: I think it would give the analysts some time to read it, to write it, and to get something to the committee. Absolutely, by next week we could have something the committee can digest, but the day after tomorrow would be a bit of a challenge for us.

The Chair: I have Mr. Albas next.

Mr. Dan Albas: I appreciate the clarification from the analysts, because at the end of the day we are only as good as the information we have.

My simple suggestion would be that perhaps we should not meet on Wednesday but meet on the next available date. I am more than happy to suggest that the chair be able to pick that, whether it be the Monday or the Wednesday we return after talking with the clerk and analysts. I appreciate the contribution by the member.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I used to work in a library. It was my very first job, so I know it does take some time, and I am very open.

Perhaps I could withdraw my motion, Madam Chair, and maybe put a new one.

Maybe this is a point of order. Do we need a motion to ask our library analysts to give us a report and a summary? Perhaps this is just a discussion.

Madam Chair, I think we should just get a summary report and all the information, all the reports that have been out, as well as a summary of the opus 2004 task force report, which I do not plan on reading through, although I started reading through the recommendations and they're long enough.

I like the suggestion that we meet the first time we possibly can, which is probably the Monday when we get back from constituency week.

I'm fine with that.

The Chair: I am told that for a briefing note we do not need a motion, but if we were to set something for somebody to come to the next meeting, that would require a motion. If we want a minister, the librarians, or any witnesses to come, we would need a motion for that, but not for a briefing note.

Mr. Albas, go ahead.

Mr. Dan Albas: Another consideration I would ask regarding the witnesses is that it be either the Monday we return as the time we can start submitting them, or perhaps the Wednesday after. I've no problem with the other parts of the motion. I don't even think that technically we need that other than to say let's give it to the chair to be able to put a motion, working with the clerk and our analysts, and we'll go from there.

The Chair: Ms. Benson.

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): I like the idea that at our first meeting we have a chance to reflect on what's been done already. I support the idea of having a summary.

I'm wondering if another good way to kick it off would be to have the minister speak to the committee as a way to frame the government's view of this issue and the mandate letter. Those two pieces could be the agenda for our first meeting,

The Chair: I'm getting information from the library that if for instance we wanted to have the authors of the 2004 report come in, we could entertain a motion and then invite them for the next meeting after the break. Is there any discussion on that?

Ms. Dzerowicz.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Chair, I have a question. I know there have been a series of reports since 2004. While it seems like yesterday, it was 12 years ago. I don't mind that. If there's another more recent one, I'm also open to that. So I'd like to put that on the table for all of us. It could be a lot of the same things.

[Translation]

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

[English]

The Chair: What I'm hearing would be an amendment to your motion that would then say we would bring whoever is available.

• (1805)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: If they're both available, I'm fine with that too, unless there's any disagreement.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: That was the motion I was going to make.

The Chair: We have an amended motion. If you could clarify exactly what that motion is, then everybody will be clear.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: It changed so much, but let me try.

I move that at our next meeting we have a presentation from the authors of the 2004 pay equity task force, and/or any of the authors who might be available from one of the more recent studies on pay equity.

The Chair: Is there any further discussion? Are there any objections to the motion?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Before we adjourn, is there any other business that the committee wishes to discuss?

Regarding the next meeting, what I heard was that after the constituency week, the chair and the clerk will see the first available time for our meeting. Is that correct?

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Since we do have a subcommittee, perhaps if they want to have a discussion before then when we could ratify our work plan, that would be helpful. I'm going to leave it to you, Madam Chair, and the subcommittee to determine that.

The Chair: Okay, and that doesn't require a motion.

Ms. Benson.

Ms. Sheri Benson: We should make this in the form of a motion, and I'm going to try to do that. I would like to make a motion that we invite the Minister of Status of Women to present to the committee as soon as she is available

The Chair: I hear a motion to invite the Minister of Status of Women to come before the committee, depending on her availability. Is there any discussion on Ms. Benson's motion?

Ms. Gladu.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: I don't have an objection to having the Minister of Status of Women here, because obviously she's been to our committee—I'm the chair—but it makes me wonder again why we need to have a second committee if it's going to be the same minister.

The Chair: Is there any other discussion?

Ms. Benson.

Ms. Sheri Benson: She has a big job. I think it's important. She has a large mandate, and the focus isn't going to be at another committee, so that's why [Technical difficulty—Editor].

The Chair: Are there any other comments or discussions on that before we put it to a vote?

Mr. Albas.

Mr. Dan Albas: Simply, we seem to be working quite well. Does the other side feel we should bring the minister or not?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I'd have no objections to that. I'm fine.

Mr. Dan Albas: I don't see any issue.

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): I have no objections.

The Chair: An invitation to Minister Hajdu to come before this committee at the earliest convenience.... Okay, thank you.

Is there any other committee business?

Ms. Dzerowicz.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: The only question I want to ask is if we have time at the next meeting whether or not we should already be having a discussion on the initial two or three witnesses we may want to have. Again, it's not deciding now, not deciding next week, but having a discussion on two or three witnesses at the end of the first meeting. I think by then we'll probably have an idea about who it is we may want to bring before this committee.

Madam Chair, it's a point of information. I'm not sure if I need a motion for that, or whether I'm just suggesting it so we're already starting to think about it.

The Chair: I'm hearing from the Library of Parliament that they may be able to do a work plan for us, I would imagine in consultation with the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure. We would then be able to invite suggestions for names of witnesses. The Library of Parliament would then be able to prepare a work plan that could be discussed at the committee at the next meeting, after we have the witnesses.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: That's great.

The Chair: It's a briefing note and therefore it doesn't require a motion. We will work on that with the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure and the Library of Parliament.

Is there any other business for the committee?

Okay, then I declare—I've always wanted to do this—this committee adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>