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# **Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Monday, February 22, 2016**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Judy A. Sgro**



## Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

Monday, February 22, 2016

• (1535)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Judy Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)):** The meeting is called to order. This is the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. This is our second meeting. I welcome you all here today.

Go ahead, Mr. Hardie.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I'd like to move that the committee undertake studies into the following matters during this session—

**The Chair:** Mr. Hardie, one moment. I have to deal with one other part of business before I open the floor. I have to report back from the subcommittee that I have nothing to report from our subcommittee meeting.

Now that this report is done, I can refer to Mr. Hardie.

Is it something to do with the previous...?

**Ms. Dianne Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC):** Yes. Sorry, I wasn't there. I was in the House. I understand there was a meeting. Can you elaborate a bit on that?

**The Chair:** We had our steering committee last Wednesday from 3:30 to 5:30 and discussed issues in camera. This means we cannot discuss anything pertaining to the meeting we had last week. Nothing that was discussed at the in camera meeting is to be shared with anyone else.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** I have a subsequent question. I understand what in camera means. We've all been around the block here as mayors or whatever, but what are the criteria? I know there has been this move for openness and transparency, so I'm curious about what is public and what goes in camera and is not shared with the public.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clerk, perhaps you would like to answer that.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Andrew Bartholomew Chaplin):** One has to use veiled speech. One can speak from one's own point of view—of hypotheticals, of what one might have liked to see come out from the meeting—but when it comes to the actual events, especially what was not decided or what was up for debate, generally you're not allowed to disclose it. Of course, whatever is actually decided will be reflected in the minutes

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Thanks. That wasn't my question. I get that. I was a mayor for a decade, so I get what in camera means.

What are the criteria that determine what's not to be public information? I know as a former mayor that it was any legal opinion, personnel issues, or confidences disclosed in a criminal matter.

**The Clerk:** It's all those and more. It's everything.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** So whatever—

**The Clerk:** If it happened in camera—

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** I understand. I'm just trying to determine what the criteria are. What you're saying is there are no criteria.

**The Chair:** It's at the call of the chair. It has been used in the past when an informal working group was put together. They would go in camera, and so on, but it doesn't have to happen.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** I have a point of order.

**The Chair:** What is it?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** My point of order is this: are we going to have six Liberals at every committee meeting?

**The Chair:** We will have the appropriate committee members as agreed upon by the committee. It's not our committee. It's the standard for all of the—

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** We currently have six Liberals at the table.

**The Chair:** That's the appropriate number. Thank you.

Mr. Hardie, please continue.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Chair, I move:

That the Committee undertake studies into the following matters during this session: infrastructure, rail safety, the Emerson report and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) regulations; and

That the Chair, in consultation with Committee staff and members, establish and coordinate appropriate resources, plans and schedules to accomplish the aforementioned, in addition to matters referred directly to the Committee by the House.

**The Chair:** Ms. Block, would you like to speak to the motion on the table?

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I would like to say that the official opposition definitely agreed with the comments you made at our very first meeting regarding the importance of consensus and working respectfully together to advance the needs of Canadians, specifically in the area of transport and infrastructure. Accordingly, I think that in principle we're willing to accept the Liberal motion that's been presented by Mr. Hardie.

As a starting point for our discussions as a committee, as we plan future business, we've also introduced a number of motions. I think the motion made by Mr. Hardie has encapsulated some of the motions that we've made, and we know that they do touch on very important issues for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. I think we should carefully consider all of the above as part of the motion.

After the last meeting that I was at, I was asked if we would be prepared to present some suggestions on how we might move forward and look at a calendar and start to actually plan, so I took the liberty of putting a calendar out there and would suggest that one of the things that we would be perfectly happy to support, for the next three meetings—it will take us to the end of March and all the way up to when the budget is presented—would be looking at rail safety and any issues that have been raised through the motions of our colleagues in regard to rail safety.

● (1540)

**The Chair:** Are there any further comments?

Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Thank you very much.

I'm a little bit troubled with the second part of the motion. I can't reveal all the details of what went on in the subcommittee, but all the members have received my proposed motions. It's no secret that a number of us have put forward a number of suggestions, particularly under the topic of rail safety and infrastructure, and I continue not to be comfortable with simply voting on whether this committee will study infrastructure. Clearly we're going to study infrastructure, and it's fairly evident, probably, that we'll also look at rail safety, because that's under the mandate of the minister.

What I would feel more comfortable with is if you'd be open to my amending this motion. We did discuss that those are the general areas where we might see priorities coming forward, but I have some discomfort with then spending more committee meetings talking about what we would talk about under infrastructure and safety. I agree with what you said previously, Madam Chair, that what we would really like to do is to find some distinct topics that we could review in a shorter period of time and maybe come to some conclusions and recommendations to present to the government.

I have a real problem with a broad-based look at infrastructure and rail safety, and I am also not comfortable with simply leaving the specific aspects of what we'd look at to the chair. I think that should also be up to the committee, so rather than going through this motion and then going back to all the specific motions, I think one way we could expedite this process is if I could put forward a couple of ideas as amendments to the motion that is before us right now.

Those two amendments would be as follows. First of all, under the topic of infrastructure, I would like to recommend that we consider a report that has recently been brought forward to the government by...

Oh, procedurally I have to just table the amendment and then explain it.

**The Chair:** Yes, just table the amendment, please.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** My amendment would be to the part about infrastructure. It is that in studying infrastructure, our first study

would be that the committee undertake a review of northern infrastructure challenges and opportunities, including, as outlined in the report, the recommendations on northern infrastructure to support economic development, as issued January 2016 by the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board.

I understand everyone has been sent that in English and French.

**The Chair:** That's the motion you tabled today.

● (1545)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I haven't tabled it yet.

**The Chair:** Sorry, you haven't tabled it; you gave notice for it. You're moving that motion as an amendment to Mr. Hardie's motion.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** That's correct. It's an amendment.

That would be my first amendment to Mr. Hardie's motion.

My second one would be on rail safety:

That the Committee undertake a review of potential safety issues related to use by rail companies of remote control devices to move locomotives and to assemble trains.

On the second part of that, I don't know if you want me to read into the record the full other motion, but I could read it into the record. It reads, "In October 2012, the advisory council on railway safety, the ACRS, struck a working group to examine concerns that inadequate action had been taken to address fatigue management despite a series of inquiries—for example, into the 2008 Hinton train collision killing 23 people—and studies—"

**The Chair:** Ms. Duncan, is that specifically part of your amendment?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Yes, that is my amendment.

**The Chair:** All right. Are you finished?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** No. Well, I just asked if you wanted me to read the full thing.

**The Chair:** I don't think you need to read the full thing. Does the committee feel Ms. Duncan needs to read the whole thing into the record?

Ms. Watts.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Just procedurally—and I don't know, and this is why I'm asking the question—if a motion is not tabled in due course, then how can we make an amendment to an existing motion that's on the table when it hasn't gone to the clerk—or does it matter?

**The Chair:** Do you want to answer that?

**The Clerk:** Amendments to motions can be made on the fly. No notice need be given of an amendment, and if a member can shape the bits of a motion of which they have previously been given notice into an amendment that remains within the scope of the original motion, then it's in order.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Thank you.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** That's what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to expedite—

**The Chair:** Usually amendments are two lines, three lines—

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I will be happy to make that discrete, since everybody has received my prior motion.

The second part to my amendment on the discussion of rail safety, then, would be:

That the Committee undertake an examination of measures taken or identified as necessary by Transport Canada to address the outstanding concerns with fatigue management with implications for rail safety.

What I would also like to do is strike the last part of Mr. Hardie's motion. My comment on that is that I think it appropriate that the committee members themselves, with the assistance of the clerk and the analyst and the chair, focus in on exactly what we'll be examining and who the appropriate witnesses are.

**The Chair:** Mr. Hardie is next, and then Ms. Block.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Chair, with respect to the amendments proposed, I presume this is what we're speaking to now. Was that a motion?

**The Chair:** It was an amendment to your motion, so at this moment you have the floor, Mr. Hardie. You can speak to both the motion that you've placed and to the amendment that Ms. Duncan has placed.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to back up and really look at some of the principles we're trying to operate under here. Based on the number of motions that have come forward, it's very clear that there's a broad range of issues that people wish to cover. From that I certainly took, and I believe my colleagues certainly took, the feeling that there was a clear desire to really focus on things on which we could make a measurable difference by coming up with a decision or a result on a study rather than to have broad-brush studies that perhaps led to not very many clear places. I believe this is reflected in all of the motions we've seen brought forward so far, including those by the member opposite. At this point in time I would argue that although there is that focus, there are other very meritorious motions on the floor that should also be considered for attention in the proper course of the committee's work.

In addition, I think one of the other principles we discussed was balance. We have transportation and we have infrastructure. Obviously, we need to attend to both of them. There was a general desire, particularly in the early stages, to ensure that we had the appropriate background from the ministries responsible, and with minister and staff available. This speaks against going directly into some, but not all, of the motions brought forward until we have an opportunity to get our wheels under us and move forward.

The other matter is that we have supplementary estimates coming forward, which will consume some time. While I don't disagree with the member's motions and the notion on which she'd like to go forward, I don't think we should necessarily lock ourselves into that right off the bat, before we actually have a chance to go through the preliminaries that this committee needs to go through, particularly with the ministers, when we hear from them and talk about their mandate letter. Then, given the range of motions that we have in front of us now, we should not lose any of them, but we should have a discussion as to where we should start.

● (1550)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Hardie.

Ms. Block is next, and then Ms. Watts.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I would like to speak to the amendment that has been put forward.

We would agree that the last statement of this motion may be somewhat inappropriate when you think about the work of the committee and what we are charging you as the chair as well as the clerk with doing, which is much of the work that we should be doing around this table in terms of providing the clerk with names of witnesses we would like to have come forward. Those would be the resources that are being referred to.

We should also be establishing plans and schedules. This committee should be sitting down and looking at a calendar and asking what the priorities are that we want to look at and looking at the days that we have in between break weeks. Also, we should look at some of the other things that are on the calendar, such as the budget and the estimates, and then figure out what makes sense to tackle within the time frames we have in between break weeks, even going beyond when the budget is presented.

I would agree with Ms. Duncan in terms of that last statement. I don't know if removing that part of the motion was part of her amendment, but I think doing so would be appropriate, because that really is the work of the committee to do. We will provide direction to the clerk through the chair in terms of how to make it happen, so to speak, once we've determined the calendar.

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

**Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.):** It seems there's a lot happening. I'd like to speak to Ms. Duncan's amendment and perhaps touch on a theme that's a bit broader.

One of the things I'm cognizant of is that the most precious resource that I believe we have as a committee is time. It's hard to get all of us in the same room, and I'd like to be very efficient in our activities.

There seems to be an air of general agreement on the themes we're touching on, and I actually quite like some of the specifics mentioned in the different notices of motion we've received. One of the ways that it might be more effective to deal with the language in order to make sure we don't get lost in the weeds on a particular issue is, for example, with regard to the study of fatigue in rail safety, to perhaps agree to the main motion. Then, on the motion that you put forward properly with notice, we can say that we adopt the motion as part of the formal study on rail safety. I'm very nervous about getting caught up in 10 different issues and doing independent studies of each, which may cause us to lose track of the greater issue of rail safety. Also, we may miss out on other issues that, through our interviews of witnesses, we may discover to be equally important.

I'd propose, perhaps for a discussion before I put forward a motion to amend, that we agree on the language put forward, on those four categories, and then deal with the specific motions on fatigue as part of the formal study on rail safety and so on.

**The Chair:** Ms. Watts.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** On that point, because these categories are broad-based and I'm thinking the intention was an overall framework, we do have a number of motions. Is it the intent to put those motions underneath each of these categories? If that's the case, we can do that all at once, I would expect.

• (1555)

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Chair, that was precisely the intention. It was to create some categories into which the motions we've received so far—and likely will receive—can find a home, not get lost, and be brought up. I believe an effort to calendarize our approach is sound.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Speaking to the amendment, we're only picking some of those motions, right?

**The Chair:** That's right.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** I'm wondering if the motions that have been put thus far are slotted under each one of those categories. I would expect that as we move forward, others will be added as well, as you were saying.

**The Chair:** Next is Mr. Berthold, and then Ms. Block, Ms. Duncan, and Ms. Block.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll just give the witnesses a few moments to put in their earpieces. It won't be long.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Could you give us all a moment, Mr. Berthold?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** I'd just like to acknowledge the interpreters who are with us today. It's important to highlight the tremendous job they do. I've seen their skills in action at every meeting I've attended since I've been at the House of Commons. My sincere thanks to them.

Madam Chair, I think we're heading in the right direction, given that we're starting to clarify our intentions under each of the broad categories.

Our goal is to take action and to be able to say what we're going to do Wednesday. The idea is to be able to have discussions and set to work quickly on a given topic. But, as it is, even the motion doesn't get us working on a topic.

With all due respect to Mr. Hardie, there's a lot involved here. We are talking about including the motions. We could decide to include the motions put thus far within each of the categories and prioritize them, in accordance with the priorities of all the parties represented here, of course. That way, we would be able to get things going quickly.

Mr. Hardie, I would also point out that I'm a bit uncomfortable with the last part of the motion. It's always been my understanding that it's the committee's job to decide on the topics it deals with and the agenda. We can't give the chair carte blanche. In any case, she would have to bring it all back to the committee to have us approve the whole agenda. If we were to drop that part of the motion and move forward with specific topics, we could finally make some

progress. I think people expect us to examine specific topics, so we need to stop chasing our tails.

Motions were put forward for very specific reasons. So let's include them and adopt a motion setting out the specific topics, in accordance with our priorities. Then we could finally get to work. I think that's how all the parliamentarians here today would like to proceed.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Duncan is next, and then Ms. Block.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Thank you very much.

I'm in an awkward position. We can't talk about what happened in the subcommittee, even though most of the people in the room on that side were at that meeting anyway.

I have a level of discomfort with spending more time or having witnesses in to talk in general about rail safety. The reason for that discomfort is that this committee and many other committees struck by Transport Canada have already done extensive reviews and have already identified problems with rail safety.

As a result of those previous reviews, two of the topics I raised have been identified as areas requiring more expedited action. That was why I came forward with the specific topics. Yes, they fall under rail safety, but I am not favourable to bringing in a number of witnesses to talk to us vaguely about railway safety. That's what troubles me.

I'm glad that Mr. Hardie likes the general area of the topics, and that's encouraging. I have looked at reports that have been done previously, including the ACRS report, and I have heard from the teamsters. I did provide copies—in fact, I have additional copies here in French and English—and I think Mr. Hardie might also have had a chance to meet with the teamsters on their concern with the automated movement of locomotives.

It troubles me because we now know that the estimates have been referred to us. We are hopeful that the Emerson report will be tabled sooner rather than later, and we think that possibly some of the budget may well come to us, probably a fair bit, if we get infrastructure referred to us. My concern is that further and further down the line those issues, which have been brought to my attention by concerned Canadians, are not going to be acted on quickly.

If I could have the confidence that the members, after voting on this motion, will move expeditiously to look at other specific motions that we have sent around, and if we could vote on whether or not we will move forward and which of those we will review quickly, I'd be willing to remove that part of my amendment and simply keep the last part of the amendment, which we seem to have some unanimity with on this side.

I want to be clear about my level of discomfort in the need to move forward. There have already been many general studies on rail safety that identified the critical issues. I don't think we'd be well advised to start all over on that again and start examining what the issues might be.

We'll wait and hear what the other members have to say, but if that's the case, I'd be amenable, after we vote on this motion to move into the specifics, to deleting that part of my amendment.

• (1600)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Ms. Block.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Thank you very much.

Madam Chair, I don't know when it's appropriate to hand to you a calendar that takes us to the end of April. It's pretty blank, except for perhaps a couple of meeting dates between now and the end of March. It's in English and French, and I'd be happy to circulate it to all members so we can begin to look at the days that we have between now and then.

We have one meeting and then we go to break week. Then we have the ministers and then we go to a break week. Then we have two meetings, and then have two break weeks.

We have three meeting days before we go to the two-week break. It takes us to the first week in April. If there's a plan for this coming Wednesday to call departmental officials in on something, those are likely the only people who are going to be able to appear before this committee at short notice.

I think if I could—

**The Chair:** I think it might be advisable to hold that until we have dealt with the... I appreciate it as the chair and I welcome that assistance. At the end of the day, we're all talking about the same issues. We're quite specific about issues to do with rail safety and infrastructure; it's just that we can't seem to get over getting a calendar together when we seem to be a fair group of people.

I have Mr. Hardie down next, and then we should get on with what we're doing.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Chair, perhaps there's an opportunity here, and certainly the comfort of all members is called for.

We do have a number of motions that have been put forward. I think there's been some notion that if it was demonstrated that each of those motions had a home in this framework, it would provide some comfort that could perhaps ensure everybody's issues are on the table and have not been discarded. I would presume at the appropriate time each one of those motions could be moved and dealt with accordingly.

I'll speak personally: it's not in my interest to see them go away. If there's a mechanism we can use to give them a home within this framework, then we can turn to the necessities facing us in terms of meeting with ministers and the estimates and all the rest, and then deal with the calendar. We can pick the ones that require more immediate attention and move on them.

**The Chair:** Mr. Hardie is suggesting that if this motion were adopted, he would be favourable to members tabling their motions today one by one. Specifically, they would be part of this work plan.

Does that sound like something that the committee would be in favour of?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Does that mean, then, that I will remove the first part of my amendment, but retain the third part? I would remove "That the Chair in consultation with Committee staff and members", this last clause, because there is general consensus on this side of the table that they want that part removed.

I'm willing to remove my specific recommendations for infrastructure and rail safety for the purposes of voting on the motion, but I wish to retain that part about removing the final clause of Mr. Hardie's motion.

• (1605)

**The Chair:** Just so we've very clear, we're finally getting somewhere, maybe.

We are referring to "That the Chair in consultation with committee staff and members". That's the part you're talking about. You'd be deleting that whole part at the end. It would be "That the committee undertake the studies into the following matters".

Mr. Iacono.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.):** Madam Chair, the motion very clearly states that "the Chair, in consultation with Committee staff and members, establish and coordinate appropriate resources..." It's very clear that the chair is not the one making the decisions but that she must consult the committee. I think it's time to vote.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Are there any further comments?

Just to ensure that everybody is clear here with the amendment that is on the floor from Ms. Duncan, her amendment is that we delete the final paragraph. We would need to vote on that amendment first and then vote on the motion.

We have an amendment by Ms. Duncan. Does everyone understand the amendment?

Mr. Berthold.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Chair, I have a question about the amendment. It says that "the Chair...establish and coordinate appropriate resources, plans and schedules to accomplish the aforementioned..."

If we adopt that motion, will the clerk of the committee have the authority to act in response to a simple request from the chair? It doesn't specify whether the committee members would be consulted here. The wording leaves a lot of questions unanswered, so I have a lot to say about it this afternoon.

The amendment involves legal processes and committee expenditures. It says that the committee's agenda would be established by the chair without any committee members being consulted. That's what troubles me about the amendment, Madam Chair. I'm trying to be constructive, here. I don't want us to relive the past. We are on the verge of agreeing on how to proceed. We shouldn't vote hastily and, once again, break any agreements that are about to be reached.

I would sincerely ask the government party to think about its request for a vote. I would ask my colleague to immediately withdraw his request for a vote so that the committee can come to an agreement on the matter.

I don't believe that you, Madam Chair, are at ease with the vast authority that the motion would give you, either. In all sincerity, this really troubles me. I've talked with other people, and they have never seen a motion like this at any committee. It would set a precedent that I don't think any of us wants.

[English]

**The Chair:** Can I clarify what I, as the chair, view here? It says that the chair, in consultation with committee staff and members, establish and coordinate appropriate resources, plans, and schedules, together with the analysts, after consulting with members of the committee as to their priorities.

I need to clarify how I see this. I would consult with all of you as to your priorities to start tackling first, second, third, or whatever. Then I would prepare a plan, together with the analysts. The appropriate resources would be recommended through the analysts' plans and schedules, which Ms. Block has already put together for us to accomplish the aforementioned. Then it comes back to the committee for adoption. That would be the work plan put forward after consulting all of you and the analysts.

Mr. Sikand, you have the floor.

• (1610)

**Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** I believe everyone's had an opportunity to have their say, so if I could, I'd like to continue with a motion to adjourn debate on this amendment.

**The Chair:** We have a motion on the floor from Mr. Sikand to adjourn the debate.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** In that case, can I retract that? I thought it would only be on the amendment.

**The Chair:** Good. Right from the beginning, we all wanted the same thing, I believe, and we're all trying to work together in a non-partisan way to move this agenda forward. I'd like us to end all the discussion.

Does anybody have some more constructive thoughts to add?

Mr. Hardie or Mr. Fraser, and then we're going to move forward.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** It would appear that what lies behind the objection to that particular paragraph is to some it would seem to give the chair a lot of power. I don't think that was the intention.

I think the chair really wants to be in a position to enable the resources and the focus and the scheduling in order to do what the committee would like to do.

We could certainly go forward on that understanding without getting into wordsmithing that could burn up an awful lot of time.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** I think Mr. Hardie's approach is good, considering what the interests are here. I don't think there is a lot of separation on what we're trying to achieve.

I think running it through the chair is for the purpose of efficiency so that we don't have to get caught up in every one of these meetings every time we want to schedule something.

I think there's an amendment on the table, but if it were withdrawn, I'd be open to language that indicates the chair would propose appropriate resources, plans, and schedules to accomplish the aforementioned to be brought back to the committee.

That's my understanding of what the table is trying to achieve here. Nobody's trying to put the power in the central seat of the chairperson.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fraser.

Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I think in essence the problem is that Mr. Hardie is combining substantively what we think we'd like to discuss with how we're going to govern our affairs. I think that's why it's not appropriate to put that last clause in.

A lot of the difficulties that we're facing in this committee are simply due to the fact that the vast majority of us are brand new to the House and to committees. Those who have been here before simply trust that we know what the processes are and always have been.

I would suggest that we stick with voting on my amendment to remove that clause, on the understanding that at some point in the discussion, we simply reiterate a common understanding of how parliamentary committees work. I am simply assuming that given the way parliamentary committees always work, it's not necessary to put it in, and it's probably varying from the way parliamentary committees have historically worked.

Historically the committee itself has decided on its priorities. We will often quibble on the number of days, because different people have different priorities. They may want more days for their study, or they may argue that it would cut out two witnesses who they feel are important.

The discussion about how many days are assigned actually is an important part of what the committee talks about. In the end, on what we agree to, usually the clerk works with the chair to make sure that in fact the schedule is set forth. The clerk is directed to start making the phone calls to the witnesses. That's generally the way the committee works. It isn't really necessary to sit here and....

We agreed in our first meeting on all the routine motions and the procedures and so forth. Those of us who have been here before just understand that committees always work in this way.

I would suggest that we remove this clause, and then at some point, either at the end of this meeting or at the next meeting, simply talk about how parliamentary committees generally proceed. We can, of course, pick our own rules, but if we don't think we need to reinvent the wheel and operate totally differently from other parliamentary committees, we could just have somebody—possibly the chair or the clerk—lay out how committees generally operate.



I think that's why you're seeing that two of us who have been here a while are having trouble with adding that into a substantive motion on what we're going to discuss. Then I think we can just have a more friendly discussion on our understanding of how committees proceed and who does what and so forth.

That would be my suggestion, and that's why we're suggesting that it be removed.

• (1615)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Hardie.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** We could spend a lot of time doing precisely that. I think if there is a sense of urgency to move forward on substantive issues that require our attention and the attention of the government, it would be no great mischief—to quote a book—to basically take it on good faith that the chair's job here is to facilitate the will of the committee. A committee votes. The committee will vote, and can have a final say as to what goes forward.

We're masters of our own fate here, as the member opposite said. We can set rules. Let's set them. Let's get going. Let's move forward.

**The Chair:** The clerk, in his years of experience, has suggested one way to resolve the issue. We might want to separate the motion and vote on the motion minus the second part, which talks about the chair in consultation.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** We usually vote on the amendment. Won't that solve it?

**The Chair:** I know what we usually do, but we have to deal with the amendment first. The clerk was suggesting that this might be a way of resolving it.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Then I have to withdraw my amendment.

**The Chair:** You need to seek unanimous consent to withdraw your amendment.

All those in favour of Ms. Duncan withdrawing her amendment—

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Then are we going to vote on that full motion?

**The Chair:** No, we can separate it. The clerk has suggested—

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** He has to amend his own motion, then.

**The Chair:** Well, the clerk has suggested that Mr. Hardie might want to separate the two.

I think it will get terribly complicated. We have to start, so...

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I think that voting on my amendment solves everything.

**The Chair:** Okay. Are you asking the committee for permission to withdraw your amendment?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Well, if somebody asks me, I'll see if I consent.

**The Chair:** There needs to be unanimous consent if there is.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Well, I'm not comfortable, then, with what we're going to do.

**The Chair:** You have a choice. You can put your hand up and you can vote whichever way you choose when the appropriate time comes.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Then is he going to amend his thing and divide it into parts 1 and 2?

**The Chair:** It's up to Mr. Hardie. It's his motion.

Do you wish to divide it into part 1 and part 2?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Do I have his word he's going to do that?

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** No, I don't wish to.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** He doesn't agree with that?

**The Chair:** I think we've had enough discussion.

I have to share with the committee that there are items that have come up today that we also need to discuss, so I'm going to ask that we now vote on Ms. Duncan's amendment first.

I'm going to ask Ms. Duncan to read that amendment, or would you like to read it, Mr. Clerk?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** You want me to read it into the record again?

• (1620)

**The Chair:** It's just so that everyone here is clear.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** My amendment is that the portion of the motion by Mr. Hardie that begins "That the Chair" and ends with "Committee by the House" be deleted from the motion.

**The Chair:** All right. That's clear.

All those in favour of Ms. Duncan's amendment to delete the second part of Mr. Hardie's motion, please signify.

(Amendment negatived: yeas 5; yeas 4)

**The Chair:** We will now vote on the motion by Mr. Hardie, and you all have it.

We're in the middle of a vote, Mr. Berthold. I cannot change—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

Earlier, Mr. Hardie proposed an amendment that the various motions of the opposition members be added to his motion. I remember him saying that. So he practically made it an amendment.

I just want to be sure that—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Berthold, I have to stop you, because we have started towards the voting, and I cannot entertain any other comments while we're in the middle of a vote, but your point is well taken.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** It's a point of order, Madam Chair. An amendment was put forward.

[English]

**The Chair:** Okay. Right now we have to deal with this, but I think we all heard those earlier comments as well.

We are dealing with Mr. Hardie's motion.

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

**The Chair:** There was reference earlier by Mr. Hardie about the motions that had been tabled. They very much pertain to the issues of the work plan. Does anyone want to move those motions to the floor?

Ms. Watts.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Thank you.

I've submitted the entire motion, but I'll just read this portion of it. It reads:

That the Committee undertake a rail safety study of the section of the BNSF Railway line that runs between the United States border through the Semiahmoo First Nation land, the City of White Rock and the City of Surrey (Crescent Beach/Ocean Park) British Columbia.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We have Ms. Watts' motion.

Are there any comments? Does everyone have Ms. Watts' motion?

Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I haven't had the chance to sit down with her, but I have passed along to Ms. Watts my suggestions.

I'm glad that she has brought this matter to the attention of the committee, and there certainly are a number of examples of concerns in communities, including first nations, over not well-maintained tracks and concern that action be taken.

I've shared my concern with Ms. Watts. I think that she is, on behalf of her constituents, trying to look for some kind of intervention and action to address the concerns raised in that very detailed motion. The problem is this committee doesn't have any directive ordering powers, and it appears to me that the Canadian Transportation Agency would be the appropriate body to be seized with this matter.

I don't know if it has been before them or if it's been referred to them, but they have the power to compel witnesses. They can be directed by the government to look into matters, and at the end of it they can actually order directive action to address any problems that are identified.

Given the significance of the issues that Ms. Watts is raising, they may well be matters that should be addressed sooner rather than later, but given the number of matters before us, including ministers coming before us and estimates and budgets being referred to us, I have some difficulty with agreeing that this committee may be the appropriate place for that issue to be referred to.

When I'm speaking to it I share her concern with the issue, but I just raise the question of whether or not this committee is the appropriate venue to address those concerns.

• (1625)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Duncan.

I believe our analyst is going to clarify that issue for us.

**Ms. Allison Padova (Committee Researcher):** Transport Canada is indeed the safety regulator of the railways. The Canadian Transportation Agency, while a quasi-judicial tribunal that has a lot of authority, is the economic regulator. They would not weigh in on a matter of rail safety.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I would like to speak to that. I'm reading section 26 of the act:

The Agency may require a person to do or refrain from doing any thing that the person is or may be required to do or is prohibited from doing...

That's pretty all-encompassing. It may have been in practice that they just look at disputes to do with financing, but that's pretty all-encompassing.

**The Chair:** I think our analyst is pretty well researched on this matter. If there are any other comments, we can bring them at a later time. For the moment we are perfectly able to deal with this issue, because it's a safety issue.

Go ahead, Mr. Hardie.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** I'll speak in support of the motion, because my colleague and I share the concerns that these particular issues raise. What I would like to do, though, is suggest an amendment. I suggest adding "as part of the committee's formal study on rail safety". This then nests it in that portion of the framework and ensures that it isn't lost and will go forward.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** All those in favour of that amendment?

(Motion as amended agreed to [*Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Are there any other motions that you would like to bring forward that you have already tabled?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I would like to move the motion that I put on the notice:

That the Committee invite Dwight Duncan to discuss his objectives in his role of Chair of the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority.

I'm sure all of you will know that the authority's 2015-2016 corporate report was just referred to us by the clerk of the committee, and so I think it would be good for us to put that on the agenda as well.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** A point of order, Madam Chair, did we not have to dispense with the first motion?

**The Chair:** Yes, we did.

We voted already on—

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** We voted on my amendment, or was that taken as friendly?

**The Chair:** It was a friendly amendment to Ms. Watts' amendment.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Okay, sorry.

**The Chair:** All right, Ms. Block.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** That was my motion.

**The Chair:** Is everyone clear with that?

Go ahead, Mr. Fraser.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** In keeping with the theme of trying to slot things under the initial motion, I think we can probably do the same exercise with this and the other motions that may come forward by amending the motion by adding the words “as part of the committee's formal study on infrastructure”. Is that similarly friendly?

**The Chair:** Are there any other motions that have been tabled?

Go ahead, Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Yes, I would like to table my motion, Madam Chair, the motion that I put forward. I have material that I can share in relation to it.

On the first one, do you want me to read it into the record? It's the one dealing with—

**The Chair:** Which of your many motions is it?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** —fatigue management.

**The Chair:** Yes, raise it.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Do you want me to read the whole...? I'll just put forward my motion—

**The Chair:** We all have copies of it, I believe. They've been circulated.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** The motion reads:

That the Committee undertake an examination of measures taken or identified as necessary by Transport Canada to address the outstanding concerns with fatigue management with implications for rail safety.

**The Chair:** Yes, we have that.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Okay. The reason I brought it forward is that it's been brought to my attention in doing research, after being appointed as critic into this committee, that a good number of attempts to examine this issue have reached a deadlock. My understanding is that the matter was considered by the working group from ACRS, and they didn't reach any agreement. The matter was referred over to the minister, and then there was a change of government.

**The Chair:** Could you elaborate on “ACRS”, so that everybody knows who you're referring to?

• (1630)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I'll read it all out. ACRS is the advisory council on railway safety. A working group of that government organization was struck specifically to try to resolve the issue of fatigue management.

The Transportation Safety Board has identified fatigue management in just about every serious derailment and accident in the last while. That certainly includes the Hinton disaster way back 30 years ago, and certainly Lac-Mégantic, and I think the recent incident in British Columbia. A directive just for that part of British Columbia was issued by the Transportation Safety Board.

Therefore, it looks to me like a mounting issue. The teamsters I met with, as I think a number of you have, are raising that as one of their two priorities. We'd like to have consideration of some action that could be taken by the government.

That's my first motion.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Did anyone want to speak to that?

**The Chair:** Okay. Is there discussion on Ms. Duncan's motion?

Mr. Berthold.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Chair, I would just like to make sure of something. To that end, I would like to propose an amendment to the motion. In fact, I'd like to add my motion to the same motion to make sure that we hear from Transportation Safety Board of Canada representatives, given all the insight they have. They identified a myriad of causes that contributed to the Lac-Mégantic disaster. Any steps we can take towards rail safety will help to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Just to make sure the committee hears from the people at the Transportation Safety Board of Canada and to make things easier, I would add the same wording that the others added, at the beginning.

[*English*]

as part of the subject.

[*Translation*]

The amendment would include both elements since we are all in favour of that addition.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Block.

**Ms. Kelly Block:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

This is a very friendly point of order and can be dealt with after the vote on Ms. Duncan's motion.

I don't think we voted on my motion. I think we agreed to add what was suggested by Mr. Fraser, but I don't think we actually voted on the motion, so we can deal with it when Ms. Duncan's motion has been dealt with.

**The Chair:** Okay, let's make sure.

Ms. Duncan, we're going to—

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Can I speak to that?

I think that's a good suggestion. My concern with it is that it needs to be written in a way that doesn't limit the witnesses.

I have absolutely no concern with bringing something forward. If your amendment was “...and hear testimony from the Transportation Safety Board and other witnesses, as deemed necessary”, does that sound okay? Are you okay if that would be the amendment?

Mr. Clerk, is that okay?

Should I repeat that on his behalf?

**The Chair:** We can also do it separately.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** It's a friendly amendment. I've no problem. I'm just suggesting some wording.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Including—

[English]

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** It would be “implications for rail safety and hear testimony from the Transportation Safety Board and other witnesses, as deemed necessary.”

**The Chair:** We have Ms. Duncan's motion on the floor, with a friendly amendment from Mr. Berthold.

Would you like to speak to Ms. Duncan's motion?

**Mr. Angelo Iacono:** Yes, I'd like to make an amendment to add at the end “as part of the committee's formal study on rail safety”. That will be to the second paragraph.

**The Chair:** All right.

All those in favour of the amendment?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Actually, it's a friendly amendment, so we can just vote on the whole thing, right? I have no problems with this friendly amendment.

**The Chair:** All those in favour of the amendment?

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

**The Chair:** Then we have Ms. Block's amended motion. We kind of voted on it, but we need to have hands raised by those in support of Ms. Block's motion to call Mr. Dwight Duncan in regard to the Detroit-Windsor bridge.

All those in favour of the amendment?

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

**The Chair:** Are there any other motions before we move on to other business?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Can I ask for clarification on that? Is that not a matter that's being referred to us in the estimates anyway?

**The Chair:** There will be a lot of things referred to us.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Well, I'm just wondering if they can be discussed together.

I don't know precisely what Ms. Block is suggesting, but that is the estimates matter that's referred to us. Will it be covered by that?

•(1635)

**The Chair:** She has suggested that Mr. Dwight Duncan, the chairperson, appear before the committee, so certainly, if that's possible—

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Do you mean as part of that review?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Yes.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I'm just wondering what we are amending.

**The Chair:** Well, that's up to Ms. Block. She's moved her motion, and it has been adopted at this point.

I'm going to move to Mr. Fraser.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** On quick point of order, I believe you said “all those in favour of the amendment”, but were we voting on the main motion of Ms. Block and Ms. Duncan as amended?

**The Chair:** Yes, as amended.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Okay, thank you.

**An hon. member:** It was a friendly amendment.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** They're all friendly.

**The Chair:** Thank goodness. We're going to be a friendly hard-working committee here.

All right, are there any other motions before we have other business?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I have another motion.

**The Chair:** Ms. Block, I have you down next.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** I understand that any motions we tabled that we think will fit into a plan going forward to the end of June would be good to get on the—

**The Chair:** You're welcome to introduce those motions.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Okay, then I would like to move the motion that I put on notice:

That the Committee invite officials from Transport Canada to appear in front of the Committee to discuss Marine Atlantic.

**The Chair:** Is there any discussion on the motion from Ms. Block?

Mr. Hardie.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** I propose an amendment to say, “during the minister's next appearance before this committee”.

**The Chair:** Could you say that again, Mr. Hardie?

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** I'm sorry, is this the Marine Atlantic motion? Oh, dear...

**The Chair:** Do you want to repeat the motion? You also have a motion on marine safety on the west coast.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** I do. I have put two motions on notice.

One is:

That the Committee invite officials from Transport Canada to appear in front of the Committee to discuss Marine Atlantic.

The second one is:

That the Committee invite representatives from the Marine Safety Division of Transport Canada to appear in front of the Committee to discuss maritime traffic safety on Canada's west coast.

It is talking about Marine Atlantic and ferry services in Atlantic Canada, and then the marine traffic on Canada's west coast. It's both.

**The Chair:** You're covering off both sides.

Okay, Mr. Hardie, go ahead on Ms. Block's motion.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** In the interest of focus and ensuring that we make best use of time, that amendment that I thought was in the wrong place probably is in the right place. I would amend by saying, “during the minister's next appearance before this committee”. We could signal that to the minister so that he brings the appropriate people to speak to this issue.

**The Chair:** The infrastructure minister, Minister Sohi, is coming on Monday, March 7, and Minister Garneau is coming on March 9. You're suggesting, Mr. Hardie, that they bring appropriate officials who can also discuss Marine Atlantic and issues of marine safety on the west coast, at least in a preliminary way.

Is that your motion?

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Yes, that's correct.

**The Chair:** Are there any comments?

Ms. Block.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** With regard to inviting officials to discuss Marine Atlantic, I'm not favourable to that amendment to having just a conversation with the minister. I'm sure there are many things that we're going to want to talk to the minister about on that day, and perhaps not the officials from Transport Canada.

I recognize that the other motion, which I've also read, is in his mandate letter. I would be very open to that with the second motion, but not on this motion.

• (1640)

**The Chair:** Mr. Fraser.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Can you remind me, please? Do we have the ministers for the full two hours of our meeting when they've agreed to come?

**The Chair:** Yes, it's my understanding that they will be here for two hours, which is a rarity, on both March 7 and 9. We will have them here for plenty of time, as well as their officials.

Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Given that we have two hours with the minister, and I agree that it's a rarity, we don't want—

**The Chair:** And officials.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** No, my understanding is that it's the minister. If he wants to turn to one of his officials to elaborate, that's different, but it's two hours with the minister. I don't want that time to be watered down by meeting with the officials. The meeting with the officials is different from asking the minister questions. If the ministers have agreed to be here for two hours, it's the ministers who are taking our questions, not the officials.

I think Ms. Block is looking for a more detailed briefing and conversation with a specific entity in Transport Canada, or whoever else, during which we would spend a concerted amount of time looking at her issue.

I don't see that it makes sense to combine the two. She might want to ask a one-off question, but I'm hearing her saying.... I mean, that would take away from questions that the other members might want to ask of the minister in terms of the minister's mandate letter.

**The Chair:** I'll just go back. For the 17 years that I've been here, ministers.... When I was a minister, you came, and you also had the officials with you to add additional information. It doesn't matter who's in the government: the minister comes with various officials—and I'm sure Ms. Duncan is aware of that—so that the committee can get the maximum amount of information they want on a particular issue.

The suggestion that Mr. Hardie is making is about time, probably, because there are only so many meetings between now and June. If the departmental officials came as well for at least some of your questions and then come back at a later date, would that be helpful at all, Mr. Hardie?

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Well, I suppose that if the officials came with the minister by pre-arrangement or prior arrangement, there would certainly be an opportunity that something could be substantially addressed. I don't know how deep this issue actually is. Certainly it would get on our agenda more quickly, because we're going to be seeing ministers before we have a chance to dive into some of the other issues. I presume it wouldn't preclude keeping the issue alive and then bringing officials in a little bit later on to get into more depth, if that's required.

Again, this is simply an amendment to expedite the discussion and get something going.

**The Chair:** Ms. Block.

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** I'll speak just one more time to this.

I think that actually we keep it alive by not linking it to the minister's visit. If we have some questions about Marine Atlantic and ferry services in Atlantic Canada, or if something comes up about tanker traffic or marine safety on the west coast, those questions can certainly be asked when the minister is here, but I don't want to say that this motion is simply to be addressed when the minister is here. I see it staying on the books, parked for whenever we may want to discuss it down the road if our questions haven't been satisfied through whatever may come up when the minister appears before the committee.

**The Chair:** Are you suggesting that at this time you want to leave the motion tabled until a later date, or do you want us to vote on your motion now?

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** There's an amendment, so it sounds to me as though we have to vote on the amendment. It's not a friendly amendment at this point in time, but at least then we have some direction to work with when it comes to setting up the agenda.

**The Chair:** We have an amendment by Mr. Hardie. Once you get into a vote, you have to vote. All members know that. Any comments you wish to make before I call a vote have to be made beforehand, because once the vote has been called, there is no further discussion.

Go ahead, Ms. Watts.

**Ms. Dianne Watts:** Briefly, I'm not going to support the amendment, only because there are many questions that everybody may have of the minister. I certainly wouldn't want to dedicate it to just one topic.

• (1645)

**The Chair:** Mr. Hardie is next. Then we're going to call the vote.

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** I'd be prepared to withdraw the amendment, simply on the basis that it's probably going to come up anyway and would be dealt with subsequently, so this is simply sand in the gears.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** That's a friendly decision.

**The Chair:** We'll now vote on Ms. Block's motion:

That the Committee invite officials from Transport Canada to appear in front of the Committee to discuss Marine Atlantic.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The second motion reads:

That the Committee invite representatives from the Marine Safety Division of Transport Canada to appear in front of the Committee to discuss maritime traffic safety on Canada's west coast.

(Motion agreed to)

Go ahead, Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I have circulated several more motions that I would like to table.

First of all, I'd like a point of clarification from you, Madam Chair. I did circulate a motion for this committee to review the Emerson report, the report that was required under the Canada Transportation Act.

I'm not sure, given that we've agreed to review it, if I need to retable that motion or not.

**The Chair:** If you would like to retable it, please go ahead right now.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** If we have already agreed to it, I don't think it's necessary to retable that motion.

I have two others. The second motion dealing with rail safety is the one I've circulated to you. As well, the clerk could distribute copies of a report from the teamsters that I've brought for all committee members. The teamsters have been trying to make this report available to all committee members. It's related to my motion, which reads:

That the Committee undertake a review of potential safety issues related to use by rail companies of remote control devices to move locomotives and to assemble trains.

I'm advised that Canadian Pacific has served notice to rail workers that they are expanding the unregulated use of remote control locomotive systems to 13 major communities, including Calgary, Toronto, Winnipeg, and many other cities.

There is an issue that these devices be used by "qualified operators", which is not defined in regulation, and there is no prescribed identification or training standard for these officers who are using these remote control devices. Some 405 incidents have been reported by the Transportation Safety Board relating to these remote control devices in the last decade. Of the 20 incidents since September of last year, 10 involved dangerous commodities.

The Americans are apparently concerned with this issue as well. They have commissioned reviews and they are moving forward with potential new regulations to ensure these devices are used in a safe manner.

My motion is to simply bring in the appropriate witnesses, which would obviously include the Transportation Safety Board, possibly Transport Canada, the rail companies, and some representatives of the workers. We would hear about the issue, and then we could decide if we have any recommendations that we would want to make.

That's my motion. I think it could be a pretty discrete review. It would be a maximum of two meetings. Potentially it could be done in one.

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

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** In keeping with the approach earlier, I had the chance to chat with at least one railroad about this issue, and it is interesting.

To slot it into the first motion we adopted, I'd propose an amendment that adds the language, "as part of the committee's formal study on rail safety".

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** That's a friendly amendment, and I accept that.

**The Chair:** All those in favour of Ms. Duncan's motion as amended, please signify.

(Motion as amended agreed to)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I have a second motion that I would like to table. This issue has been brought to my attention just recently. The motion is:

That the Committee undertake a review of northern infrastructure challenges and opportunities, including as outlined in the report, Recommendations on Northern Infrastructure to Support Economic Development, issued January 2016 by the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board.

I would think that would clearly fit within our first topic, infrastructure.

• (1650)

**The Chair:** Is the motion you are referring to the one that was circulated this morning, Ms. Duncan?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** That's correct.

**The Chair:** I think it's inappropriate to move that motion today, unless you have unanimous consent.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Can I not move a motion on the floor?

**The Chair:** No. You have 48 hours. We're entertaining the other motions you put on the table because you gave us sufficient notice. Prior notice of 48 hours is required.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Sure, no problem.

**The Chair:** You've tabled whatever ones you had. My apologies, but this one is not on the table as of yet.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Okay. That's fine. I'm happy to move it at another meeting—

**The Chair:** We will be happy to deal with it next week.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** —unless there is unanimous consent. Do we have unanimous consent?

**The Chair:** No, we don't have unanimous consent. Do we have unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** At least we'd be doing something on infrastructure.

**The Chair:** Clearly we don't.

Have we dispensed with all the motions that anyone had tabled and wanted to dispose of? I gather we have.

As I mentioned earlier, two issues came up this morning that I wanted to bring to the committee for some direction.

The supplementary estimates are available, and it's possible that we could deal with them on Wednesday, since we have nothing on our agenda at the moment.

Is the committee in favour of dealing with the supplementary estimates (C) on Wednesday, February 24?

All those in favour?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I wanted to speak to that. I thought we had already invited some government officials to come in, had we not?

**The Chair:** No. It was suggested, but it was...

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** It hasn't happened?

**The Chair:** No. Nothing was resolved on that issue.

• (1655)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I just want to make sure nobody is being uninvited.

**The Chair:** No. Ms. Block had put forward a wonderful motion and made a suggestion that we have the officials from PBO and the Treasury Board come in and talk to us in advance, given that we have so many new committee members, but unfortunately we have run out of time for that right now.

The suggestion would be that we deal with the supplementary estimates this coming Wednesday, but at some point in our committee meetings I would very much like to see us bring in the proper officials so that everyone gets a full understanding of what the estimate process is, and so on.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Madam Chair, may I speak to that?

I thought that there had already been a special briefing offered to everybody by the government officials on how to understand the estimates and the budget process. Are we repeating something? I don't know if people attended.

**The Chair:** Quite often it doesn't matter how many meetings you have. The estimates process is a convoluted, complicated issue, and the more information and understanding you have of that process, the better off we all are.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I wanted to check if people did attend that briefing.

**The Chair:** Of course. It was all part of the mandatory....

I will ask that we deal with supplementary estimates on Wednesday. Are we in agreement?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** All right.

I have one other question. I have been informed this morning that the committee has the ability to review order in council appointments. There are three appointments that the committee has been asked if it wants to review.

The first is Danièle Dion, vice-chairperson and member of the Great Lakes Pilotage Authority.

The second is Robert Bruce Ellis Hallsor, member of the board of directors for the Prince Rupert Port Authority.

The third is Stephen Mallory, a director with VIA rail.

These appointments were made towards the end of the mandate of the previous government. It is up to the committee whether they choose to invite one or two or all three members to come before the committee to talk about exactly what they do and their qualifications and so on. It will be up to the committee to decide what you would like to do with this.

Because of the timing, one suggestion might be to ask the analyst to come forward with a bit of information on all three of these authorities, plus some information on the process and on the individuals. At that time we could decide whether or not to invite them to come before the committee. That was one suggestion.

What is the will of the committee?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Is there a time constraint?

**The Chair:** Well, the individuals are currently serving in this capacity, so it's up to the committee if they choose to have these individuals come. Do we want to get some information from the analyst first so that we go into this exercise fully knowledgeable about everything?

Can you do that kind of a report for us?

**Ms. Allison Padova:** Yes, I can.

**The Chair:** Okay, so that's the direction of the committee. Is there unanimous consent to do that? I see there is. All right.

Is there any other business?

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** At what point, Madam Chair, are we going to decide when we will be discussing each of these various subjects and how much time it will take to discuss them? We've now agreed that there's a lot of good stuff we need to discuss, but I think we need to be slotting these in; otherwise, we're going to lose days when nothing is scheduled.

**The Chair:** I really appreciate that motion, because it now means that I have some more work to do.

I am going to end our meeting now. I will immediately be in contact with all of the members with regard to which issues are a priority so on and so forth. After I have discussed it with all of you, I will also meet with the analyst and the clerk to put a program together, which I will bring back to you. I will be calling each and every one of you to get your priorities and suggestions.

I appreciate very much, Ms. Block, that you have put together a calendar. We will work on putting that together with the analyst and we will come forward.

I suggest the following for our meetings. On March 7 and March 9, we would have the ministers here. I realize we have the minister for two hours on March 7, but what if we left the last half-hour to review that report? As the analyst, would you be able to put some reports and recommendations together for us by that time?

Okay. The analyst will put forward her suggestions in terms of the number of days needed for the process, and I will be in touch with all of you.

There is no further business, and it's five o'clock. The meeting is adjourned.

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