

**Meeting of the Election Advisory Committee**  
**1:00 p.m., August 22, 1995**  
**Elections BC**  
**1075 Pendergast Street, Victoria, British Columbia**

**Attending:**

Committee Members (alpha by Party):

British Columbia New Democratic Party: Brian Gardiner, Bruce Ralston

British Columbia Social Credit Party: Larry Gillanders, Lorraine Hinton (for Ben Hume)

Green Party of B.C.: Steve Kisby

Liberal Party of British Columbia: Ann Balogh (for R. Hector MacKay-Dunn), David George

Progressive Democratic Alliance: Theresa Newhouse (for Ron Harvey), Jerry Walter

Reform Party of B.C.: Bruce Hallsor

Absent: David Osselton, Reform Party of B.C.

Elections BC:

Robert Patterson, Chief Electoral Officer

Synneva Leonard, A/Deputy Chief Electoral Officer

Ken Maskell, Manager, Registration Operations

Deidre Wilson, Senior Policy Analyst

Linda Stagg, A/Administrative Assistant (Recording Secretary)

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Chair Robert Patterson called the meeting to order and welcomed the members of the Committee. The Committee members, as well as Elections BC's representatives, introduced themselves.

**The following documents were distributed:**

- the Agenda
- the *Election Act* - 1995, with Sections 14, 15 and 16 dealing with the establishment and role of the Committee
- Order in Council 1008/1995 concerning political contribution regulations under the *Income Tax Act*
- a draft of an election financing regulation under the *Election Act*
- an organizational chart of Elections BC
- an expense claim and tariff of fees, with notes on travel status and expense claims
- an address lists of Elections BC's Voter Registry Coordinators and Registrars of Voters
- a draft of a new F200 - Application for Registration as a Provincial Voter.

Robert Patterson then reviewed the agenda and addressed the role of Election Advisory Committee as prescribed by the *Election Act*-1995. He noted that meetings can be initiated by Committee Members. By consensus, it was determined that a Committee membership list would be compiled based on data contained in the representatives' respective appointment forms. The list will consist of name, business address, telephone and fax numbers.

With regard to the role of the Committee, its attention was directed to Section 16 of the *Election Act*-1995, with particular mention of the advisory nature of the Committee and that the Chief Electoral Officer is required to consult with the Committee, however, the CEO is in no way bound to recommendations by the Committee.

The Committee agreed that there would be no formal votes and that it would be guided by consensus.

**Agendas and Minutes of Meetings:**

In advance of each meeting, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer will canvass the members for topics of discussion to be included on subsequent agendas.

Section 15(4) of the *Election Act* prescribes that minutes of the Committee's meetings be made public. A copy will be forwarded to each member of the Committee, who will, in turn, distribute them throughout their Parties as they deem appropriate.

A copy will also be sent to their respective Party headquarters, to the offices of other registered political parties not represented on the Committee and to each independent MLA. Also, the Minutes will be open to public inspection at the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (Elections BC).

The Minutes will be a record of issues discussed; in particular the outcome of discussions.

**Structure of Elections British Columbia:**

To facilitate future discussions of the Committee with respect to services provided by Elections BC, Synneva Leonard, Acting Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, outlined Elections BC's operational and administrative structure and functions.

**Alternates:**

The Committee agreed that members would ensure the office of the Chief Electoral Officer would be advised if an alternate is to attend a meeting in place of an appointed Committee member. No formal list of alternates will be prepared.

**Observers:**

As a Committee policy, meetings will be closed. There may be exceptions made to this policy, however, to permit someone other than a Committee member or Elections BC staff to attend.

**Reimbursement of Expenses:**

Synneva Leonard advised the Committee members regarding procedures for reimbursement of expenses as per Elections BC's Tariff of Fees. The rates in the Tariff are equivalent to government rates set for Group 1 employees.

**Regulations Pursuant to Section 283:**

Robert Patterson reviewed Section 283 of the *Election Act*-1995, which gives the Chief Electoral Officer authority to make regulations in the areas addressed by that section. It was noted that Section 16(1)(e) requires that the Election Advisory Committee review the substance of any proposed regulations before they are brought into force. For regulations to be proposed pursuant to Section 283 (j) thru (m), which address election financing, Elections BC will review the current practises of other Canadian jurisdictions and subsequently bring recommendations back to the Committee.

As a matter of procedure, proposed Regulations will be circulated prior to subsequent Committee meetings.

**Election Financing Regulation:**

An election financing regulation proposed for implementation September 1, 1995 was presented. It will require that candidates at an election must include with election financing reports the place in the Province where the financial records relating to their campaigns are kept, and advise the Chief Electoral Officer within 30 days of any change of location.

**Political Contribution Regulations:**

For the information of the members, the new Political Contribution Regulation, effective September 1, 1995, pursuant to Section 8.1 of the *Income Tax Act*, was reviewed. The new Regulation addresses information which must be included on income tax receipts, what makes a receipt invalid, requirements for distribution and retention of receipts, transfer of tax credits between spouses, and definitions of what portions of conference and convention fees constitute

political contributions, i.e. that portion of a fee that covers food and/or accommodation is not a political contribution.

**Political Party and Constituency Association Registration Process:**

Elections BC's role is to assist parties and their constituency associations to comply with the registration and financial requirements. Discussions clarifying the registration process brought to the forefront the role of candidates' official agents and financial agents at an election. It is mandatory that each candidate have a financial agent. Candidates themselves, however, may act as their own financial agents.

It was confirmed that unregistered constituency associations cannot issue tax receipts for money received nor can they incur election expenses or make a political contribution; that money receipted by a registered political party may be given to an unregistered constituency association and recorded as a party expense; and that an unregistered constituency association could not undertake election advertising by registering as an election advertising sponsor as the advertising could be an expense equivalent to an election expense which is prohibited by section 194 (1).

**Standing Nominations:**

Under Section 57 of the *Election Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer will accept Standing Nominations at any time up to and including the fifth day after a Writ is issued. Standing Nominations will then be forwarded to the respective District Electoral Officers. All political parties will be advised as soon as standing nomination packages are available.

**Political Party and Constituency Association Election Finance Training:**

An offer was made to all political parties that staff from Elections BC would be available to provide training for party representatives on any aspects of the new *Election Act*. Committee members were asked to have their Parties advise Elections BC if they wished to accept the offer and to advise of specific issues they would like addressed in training sessions for political parties.

**District Electoral Officer Training:**

Elections BC advised of plans to undertake a major training program this fall for its District Electoral Officers and their Deputies.

**Handling of Applications for Registration as a Provincial Voter (F200) by Political Parties and Constituency Associations:**

A draft of a re-worked F200 was presented. This form no longer contains fields to capture 'occupation' or a witness's signature. Following a discussion on the issue of requesting a voter's Social Insurance Number, with the concurrence of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner, a unique personal identifier will be created by capturing only the last six digits of the number. A notation on the protection of personal privacy has been added to the F200 regarding the restricted access to the Voters List under the *Election Act*.

The members were made aware that during debate on *Bill 28 - Election Act*, concern was expressed regarding quality control measures surrounding the completion and tracking of voter registration forms which would be provided to registered political parties and constituency associations.

A general discussion followed on alternatives for distribution and quality control measures. It was determined that the implementation of this program should recognize that different Parties have different structures, therefore 'tailored' programs will be required.

Forms will be supplied on request and accepted only outside of a Writ period to allow Elections BC's registration operations an opportunity to process them for inclusion on the preliminary list.

The Committee members were cautioned that access to the Voters List is restricted to electoral purposes. They were further advised that municipalities and Elections Canada have access to the

list for electoral administration purposes.

Political parties and constituency associations have an obligation to the public to protect the use of the Voters Lists in their possession. The individual who signs a declaration on behalf of their organization and the organization are responsible for restricting access to it. There are significant penalties for non-compliance.

The Act also provides that, for the purpose of tracing unauthorized use of Voters Lists, the Chief Electoral Officer may have fictitious voter information included in a Voters List.

**Next Meeting:**

The Committee will reconvene in late October or early November at a location on the Lower Mainland.

**Attachments:**

- Political Contribution Regulations (OIC 1008/95)
  - CEO Regulations
  - Interpretation and Financing Reports
  - Voter Registration
  - Membership List
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