



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS No. 36

THIRD SESSION, FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

PRAYER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

10:00 O'CLOCK A.M.

MLA CORBETT, Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs, presented its Fourth Report, which was read as follows:

Meetings

Your Committee met *in camera* on the following occasions in the Legislative Building:

- November 20, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. (3rd Session – 43rd Legislature)
- March 26, 2026 at 3:30 p.m. (3rd Session – 43rd Legislature)

Matters under Consideration

- The hiring process for the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator

Committee Membership

Committee Membership for the November 20, 2025 meeting:

- Mr. BLASHKO
- MLA CORBETT
- Mr. GUENTER
- MLA LOISELLE
- Mr. OXENHAM
- Mrs. ROBBINS

Your Committee elected MLA LOISELLE as the Chairperson.

Your Committee elected Mr. OXENHAM as the Vice-Chairperson.

Committee Membership for the March 26, 2026 meeting:

- Mr. BLASHKO
- MLA CORBETT
- Mr. JOHNSON
- Mr. KING
- Hon. Min. SCHMIDT
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Your Committee elected MLA CORBETT as the Chairperson.
Your Committee elected Mr. BLASHKO as the Vice-Chairperson.

Motions

Your Committee agreed to the following motion at the November 20, 2025 meeting:

- *THAT a sub-committee of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs be struck to manage the process of hiring the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator, under the terms and conditions as follows:*
 - (a) the sub-committee consist of four Government Members and two Official Opposition Members;*
 - (b) the sub-committee have the authority to call its own meetings, the ability to meet in camera, and be able to undertake duties it deems necessary in order to fulfil its responsibilities in the hiring process;*
 - (c) the sub-committee may only report back to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs with a recommendation that has been agreed to by all members; and*
 - (d) the Clerks as well as the Legislative Assembly Administration staff be authorized to attend all meetings of the sub-committee.*

Your Committee agreed to the following motions at the March 26, 2026 meeting:

- *THAT the report and recommendations of the Sub-Committee be received.*
- *THAT the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs recommends to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that Sherri Walsh be appointed as the Ethics Commissioner.*
- *THAT the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs recommends to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba that Sherri Walsh be appointed as the Information and Privacy Adjudicator for a term of five years from date of commencement.*

REPORT FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Your Sub-Committee presents the following as its First Report.

Meetings

Your Sub-Committee met on the following occasions:

- December 19, 2025 at 12:30 p.m.
- March 3, 2026 at 3:30 p.m.
- March 23, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

The December 19, 2025 meeting was held *in camera* in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.
The March 3, 2026 meeting was held *in camera* in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.
The March 23, 2026 meeting was held *in camera* in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration

- The hiring process for the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator

Sub-Committee Membership

Sub-Committee Membership for the December 19, 2025 meeting:

- Mr. BLASHKO
- MLA CORBETT
- Mr. GOERTZEN
- Hon. Min. SCHMIDT
- Mrs. STONE
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Your Sub-Committee elected Mr. BLASHKO as the Chairperson.

Your Sub-Committee elected MLA CORBETT as the Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received prior to Committee proceedings:

- Mrs. HIEBERT for Mr. GOERTZEN

Sub-Committee Membership for the March 3, 2026 meeting:

- Mr. BLASHKO (*Chairperson*)
- MLA CORBETT (*Vice-Chairperson*)
- Mr. GOERTZEN
- Hon. Min. SCHMIDT
- Mrs. STONE
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Substitutions received prior to Committee proceedings:

- Mrs. HIEBERT for Mr. GOERTZEN

Sub-Committee Membership for the March 23, 2026 meeting:

- Mr. BLASHKO (*Chairperson*)
- MLA CORBETT (*Vice-Chairperson*)
- Mrs. HIEBERT
- Hon. Min. SCHMIDT
- Mrs. STONE
- Hon. Mr. WIEBE

Staff present for all Sub-Committee meetings

- Deanna Wilson, Executive Director, Legislative Assembly Administration Branch
- Katerina Tefft, Clerk Assistant/Clerk of Committees (except March 23, 2026)
- Melanie Ching, Clerk Assistant/Clerk of Committees (March 23, 2026)

Officials Speaking on Record at the December 19, 2025 meeting

- Jeffrey Schnoor, Ethics Commissioner, Information and Privacy Adjudicator, and Lobbyist Registrar

Agreements by the Sub-Committee

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on December 19, 2025:

- Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will draft all paperwork involved in the hiring process for the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator, including the Advertising Plan, Selection Criteria, Paper Screening Criteria, and Advertisement, for the Sub-Committee's consideration and review.
- Human Resource Services may work in consultation with Jeffrey Schnoor in drafting the criteria and advertisement.
- Following the closure of the advertisement, Human Resource Services will conduct the paper screening of applications received and provide the Sub-Committee a list of all qualified candidates for review in advance of its next meeting.
- The Sub-Committee will then meet to review the list of qualified candidates and determine which applicant(s) will be interviewed.
- To adopt the following Terms of Reference:

***Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
Terms of Reference for Hiring of Independent Officers of the Assembly
December 19, 2025***

Purpose:

On November 20, 2025, the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs passed a motion to strike a Sub-Committee to manage the process of hiring the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator. The Sub-Committee, consisting of four Government Members and two Official Opposition Members, has the authority to call its own meetings, the ability to meet in camera, and be able to undertake duties it deems necessary in order to fulfil its responsibilities in the hiring process. The Sub-Committee must report back to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs with a recommendation that has been agreed to by all Members.

The Sub-Committee will be assisted in their duties by the staff from the Committees Branch and the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services who are authorized to attend all meetings of the Sub-Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. *The Sub-Committee assigns the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services to deal with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process for the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.*
2. *The Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services will:*
 - (a) *devise a hiring process which includes an advertising plan, a paper screening process, an interview process and a selection process;*
 - (b) *draft an advertisement, paper screening criteria and selection criteria;*
 - (c) *print the advertisement as set out in the advertising plan;*
 - (d) *conduct the paper screening of applications received;*
 - (e) *report to the Sub-Committee all qualified candidates for review and selection to interview;*
 - (f) *conduct interviews on candidates selected by the Sub-Committee;*
 - (g) *report to the Sub-Committee, the interview rating results on the candidates selected by the Sub-Committee; and*
 - (h) *conduct reference checks on candidate(s) and report to the Sub-Committee any issues or concerns identified.*
3. *The Sub-Committee Members will individually have the ability to view the list of qualified candidates along with their background paperwork confidentially at the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services Office prior to the Sub-Committee's review.*
4. *The Sub-Committee will review the list of qualified candidates and select which applicant(s) will be interviewed by the Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services.*
5. *Each Member of the Sub-Committee shall be entitled to observe the interviews while having participation in the scoring process.*
6. *The Sub-Committee will review the interview rating results and, pending successful reference checks, determine the candidate to be recommended for the position of Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.*
7. *The Sub-Committee must provide a report to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that includes a recommendation for the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.*

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on March 3, 2026:

- *To interview three candidates selected for review by Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services.*
- *To adopt the interview questions prepared by Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services as amended.*

Your Sub-Committee reached the following agreements during the meeting on March 23, 2026:

- Pending successful reference checks, the Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that Sherri Walsh be appointed as the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.
- In the event that the chosen candidate declines the offer or the reference checks are unsuccessful, the Sub-Committee agreed to meet again to discuss further options.

Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services Activities:

As agreed to by the Sub-Committee on December 19, 2025, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services was tasked with all the logistics and paperwork involved with the hiring process of the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator.

On March 3, 2026, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services reported to the Sub-Committee a list of one qualified candidate and six candidates who met the selection criteria to a certain degree for review and selection to be interviewed.

On March 16, 2026, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services was notified that one of the candidates who met the selection criteria to a certain degree and was selected by the Sub-Committee for interview had withdrawn from the competition.

On March 18, 2026, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services was notified that one of the candidates who met the selection criteria to a certain degree and was selected by the Sub-Committee for interview had withdrawn from the competition.

The Sub-Committee considered applications for the position of Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator as follows:

- 60 applications were received for the position.
- One individual was interviewed for the position on March 20, 2026.

On March 23, 2026, Legislative Assembly Human Resource Services reported to the Sub-Committee the interview rating results of the candidate interviewed.

On motion of MLA CORBETT, the Report of the Committee was received.

Hon. Mr. KINEW tabled:

Annual Progress Report of *The Path to Reconciliation Act* for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025.

(Sessional Paper No. 19)

Hon. Min. ASAGWARA tabled:

Chief Provincial Public Health Officer's Report on the Health Status of Manitobans, 2025.
(Sessional Paper No. 20)

Hon. Mr. KINEW, the First Minister, made a statement regarding March 31, 2026, being National Indigenous Languages Day.

Mr. KHAN commented on the statement.

Pursuant to sub-rule 28(1), Mr. KHAN, MLAs DELA CRUZ, BEREZA and LOISELLE and Mrs. COOK made Member's statements.

As previously agreed on March 26, 2026, Hon. Min. FONTAINE moved:

WHEREAS a Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs was struck to manage the hiring process for the Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator; and

WHEREAS the Sub-Committee, following an open competition and consideration of applicants, recommended to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs that Sherri Walsh be appointed Ethics Commissioner and Information and Privacy Adjudicator; and

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to subsection 11(1) of *The Lobbyists Registration Act*, a person shall be appointed as the registrar by resolution of the Assembly.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to subsection 33(1) of *The Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act*, Sherri Walsh be appointed as the Ethics Commissioner effective May 1, 2026; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, pursuant to subsection 58.1(1) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, Sherri Walsh be appointed as the Information and Privacy Adjudicator effective May 1, 2026, for a term of five years from date of commencement; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, pursuant to subsection 11(1) of *The Lobbyists Registration Act*, Sherri Walsh be appointed as the Lobbyist Registrar effective May 1, 2026, for a term of five years from date of commencement.

And a debate arising,

And Hon. Min. FONTAINE and Mr. JOHNSON having spoken,

And the Question being put. It was agreed to.

The House resumed the debate on the proposed motion of Hon. Min. SALA:

THAT this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

And the proposed amendment by Mr. KHAN as follows:

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after "House" and substituting:

therefore regrets that this budget fails to adequately address the current cost-of-living crisis by:

- (a) failing to take action to mitigate the escalating cost pressures on Manitobans, while simultaneously generating hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenues from families already facing financial hardship; and
- (b) cancelling the indexation of the Basic Personal Amount and personal income tax brackets, thereby denying the ability of Manitobans to keep more money from their paycheques and earn more before paying income tax; and
- (c) failing to uphold its commitment not to raise taxes, as evidenced by increases to school taxes, education property taxes, and the termination of income tax indexation; and
- (d) allowing education property taxes to skyrocket to 19.5% since last year without presenting a plan to meet the growing needs of the education system or offer meaningful long-term relief for homeowners; and
- (e) abandoning 4,600 students and 500 staff by refusing to provide the necessary funding to support the transition of learners displaced by the defunding of the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology; and
- (f) failing to support agriculture producers, who are essential to addressing rising food prices and driving economic growth; and
- (g) failing to provide effective stewardship of Manitoba's public utilities, thereby contributing to annual increases in Hydro rates and MPI premiums; and
- (h) failing to bring forward or execute an economic plan designed to stimulate economic growth and lessen the burdens imposed on Manitoba families and businesses by trade wars and increasing fuel prices; and
- (i) failing to take necessary measures to restore public safety in communities across Manitoba, as this budget contains no plan to address rising property crime or to advance reforms to the bail system aimed at keeping violent offenders and repeat criminals in custody; and
- (j) adopting a tax policy that places additional burdens on physicians and other critical skilled professionals, diminishing Manitoba's competitiveness in recruiting and retaining the expertise necessary for a strong health-care system and economy; and

- (k) failing to enact and enforce necessary measures to address repeat violent offenders and armed drug traffickers who continue to endanger and victimize hardworking Manitobans; and
- (l) refusing to take decisive action in response to grave safety concerns raised by staff and patients at health-care facilities, including multiple sexual assaults, resulting in three hospitals being grey-listed by nurses for the first time in the province's history; and
- (m) failing to take meaningful action to resolve the growing diagnostic and surgical caseloads, thereby forcing Manitoba families to endure unprecedented delays in accessing essential care; and
- (n) neglecting the mental-health needs of Manitobans by failing to expand access to primary mental-health services and failing to establish a single Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine clinic to support those struggling with addictions; and
- (o) failing to present a balanced budget in its first term and failing to present a credible plan to balance the Public Accounts or reduce the Province of Manitoba's deficit and debt; and
- (p) refusing to acknowledge or act on the reality that half of Manitoba families are within \$200 a month of being unable to pay their bills; and
- (q) failing to take meaningful action to address inflation and the escalating costs of groceries, fuel, and housing; and
- (r) implementing the job-killing "Manitoba Jobs Agreement", which arbitrarily selects winners and losers and overrides the choice of the 88% of Manitoba construction workers who have chosen to not be associated with a union, thereby driving up the price of schools, hospitals and other infrastructure.

As a consequence, of these and many other failings, the Provincial Government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

And the debate continuing on the amendment,

And MLA DEVGAN, Mrs. COOK, MLA CORBETT, Mr. GUENTER and MLA LOISELLE having spoken,

And Mr. BALCAEN speaking at 12:30 p.m. The debate was allowed to remain in their name.

The House then adjourned at 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 7, 2026.

Hon. Tom LINDSEY,
Speaker.