



**Senate Governance and Nominating Committee
Report to Senate
April 29, 2014
Motions regarding Public Posting of Minutes and Timeline for Agenda Distribution**

Rationale:

On February 25, the Senate Governance and Nominating Committee (SGNC) received a referral of two motions for consideration and report back to the Senate.

Motion 1

That the Rules of Procedure of the Senate be amended to insert the following Subsection 34(6):
6. The provisions of Section 23 subsections 1 through 6 shall apply to each Standing and Special Committee of the Senate, and to each of their respective subcommittees, applying the necessary changes in terminology to meet the context.

Committee Conclusion regarding Motion 1

The SGNC sought the opinion of all standing committee chairs regarding the posting of approved minutes and all but one of the respondents stated that the posting of the minutes would pose no concerns.

The SGNC also met with Senators Beauchemin and Christie to discuss their rationale for proposing the motion. It was identified that the application of the current standards utilized in the development of the minutes of the Senate would require additional effort on the part of the committees due to the practice of attribution. The proponents clarified that they were not seeking anything more than access to committee minutes in the form in which they currently exist. The desire was simply to see a record of the key points discussed, which would help to enhance the understanding of the decision making process and the research conducted on issues being considered by Senate standing committees.

SGNC agrees that the publication of approved committee minutes will enhance transparency of the work of the Senate and increase the accountability of the Senate to the members of the Queen's community. SGNC is therefore in support of the sentiment behind the motion but respectfully requests that the Senate consider making amendments to the proposed motion as follows to ensure that workloads remain manageable and that confidentiality around extremely sensitive issues which do arise in the consideration of candidates for honorary degrees and which may arise in the reviewing of programs is protected.

In consultation with the mover and seconder of the original motions, Senators Beauchemin and Christie, who consider the revisions friendly amendments, the Senate Governance and Nominating Committee recommends:

Proposed Revised Motion

That the Rules of Procedure of the Senate be amended to insert the following Subsection 34(6):

6. With the exception of the Honorary Degrees Committee and the Cyclical Program Review Committee, minutes of all Standing and Special Committees, and each of their respective Subcommittees, except portions which contain confidential or personal information, shall be published on the Governance Portal.

Motion 2

That Section 22, subsection 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Senate be amended to delete the phrase “at least 48 hours before the meeting” and to insert in its place the phrase “not less than seven days prior to the day of the meeting”.

Committee Conclusion regarding Motion 2

Senators Beauchemin and Christie met with SGNC to express the need for further time to review Senate Agendas, which can be quite lengthy. The Senators agreed that should seven days prove to be an obstacle to the production of a complete agenda, a shorter yet reasonable timeframe would likely be acceptable as a compromise. However, the current standard of 48 hours was not enough time to review the material and be prepared to discuss and make decisions on actionable items. As the proposed motion would not change the deadlines in place for standing committees to provide their materials to the Secretariat, some adjustment of the timeline for provision of the agenda materials to Senators would be feasible provided those deadlines were strictly adhered to.

The SGNC respectfully requests that the Senate consider making amendments to the proposed motion as follows:

Proposed Revised Motion

That Section 22, subsection 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Senate be amended to delete the phrase “at least 48 hours before the meeting” and to insert in its place the phrase “not less than five days prior to the day of the meeting, not including the day of distribution”.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynda Colgan, Chair
Senate Governance and Nominating Committee

Members 2013/2014:

E. Berkok; M. Blennerhassett; P. Hart; T. Krupa; P. Martin; I. Reeve; A. Tierney