



Nunavut Canada

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2nd Session

6th Assembly

HANSARD

Official Report

DAY 2

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)

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Minister responsible for Labour*

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(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqqummiut)

Karen Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Hon. P.J. Akeegok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

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Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible
for Immigration; Minister responsible for
Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for the
Utility Rates Review Council*

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(Rankin Inlet South)

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*Minister of Culture and Heritage;
Minister of Languages; Minister
responsible for the Qulliq Energy
Corporation; Minister responsible for
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Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide
Prevention*

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield
Inlet)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Education;
Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)
*Deputy Chair, Committee of the
Whole*

George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of
the Whole*

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for
Homelessness; Minister of Human Resources;
Minister responsible for the Status of Women;
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Michael Chandler

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Michel Albert

Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, April 20, 2022

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasi, Mr. Joellie Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Hon. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): Before we begin, Mary Killiktee, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Killiktee. (interpretation ends) Welcome to the members back to the House, and people watching and visitors in the gallery, welcome.

I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to proceed directly to Item 13 on the order paper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed directly to Item 13 on the order paper. Are there any nays? There are none. We

shall proceed to Item 13. Item 13. Tabling of Documents.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 002 – 6(2): Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Concerning the Possible Conflict of Interest Respecting the Appointment of the Acting Deputy Minister of Human Resources

I have one document to table today, which is the Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Concerning the Possible Conflict of Interest Respecting the Appointment of the Acting Deputy Minister of Human Resources. Thank you.

Item 14. Notices of Motions. I recognize the Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 001 – 6(2): Extended Sitting Hours and Days – Notice

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, April 22, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist

with the business before the House during this present sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will ask to deal with my motion for the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Notices of Motions. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Motion 002 – 6(2): Acceptance of the Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut Concerning the Possible Conflict of Interest Respecting the Appointment of the Acting Deputy Minister of Human Resources – Notice

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, April 22, 2022, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that the recommendations contained in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner be accepted; and, consequently, that the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak be reprimanded by the Legislative Assembly and acknowledge his conduct.

At the appropriate time I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. I recognize the Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Item 16: Motions

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Malliki.

Motion 001 – 6(1): Extended Sitting Hours and Days

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I move, seconded by Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during the present sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 16. Motions. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with her motion today. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

Motion 002 – 6(2): Acceptance of the Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut Concerning the Possible Conflict of Interest Respecting the Appointment of the Acting Deputy Minister of Human Resources

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly has tabled the *Report of the Integrity Commissioner of Nunavut Concerning the Possible Conflict of Interest Respecting the Appointment of the Acting Deputy Minister of Human Resources*;

AND WHEREAS the *Integrity Act* requires that the Legislative Assembly shall consider a report laid before the House within 10 sitting days after its tabling, and shall respond to the report before the end of the session in which the report is laid before it;

AND WHEREAS the Integrity Commissioner has made two recommendations in her report;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly may either accept or reject all of the Integrity Commissioner's recommendations;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, that the recommendations contained in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner be accepted; and, consequently, that the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak be reprimanded by the Legislative Assembly and acknowledge his conduct.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, members, Iqalumiut, and Nunavummiut.

It is very difficult for me to be standing before you all today. I would like to apologize to this Assembly, Iqalumiut, and Nunavummiut for allowing this situation to occur. I do recognize the concerns surrounding the situation.

I would like to thank the Integrity Commissioner for her due diligence in conducting a thorough investigation. I think the Integrity Commissioner's report speaks for itself, as it clearly states that I did not take advantage of my position.

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify matters. I did not request this acting assignment; it was initiated by the Deputy Minister of Human Resources. At that time I raised my concerns that this may pose a conflict of interest situation. The deputy minister assured me that these concerns would be addressed through a dual acting situation whereby an alternative reporting mechanism would be utilized to prevent any potential conflict of interest.

There is no substance to the allegations that I behaved unethically. However, I recognize that some may have perceived that I had and in hindsight, I recognize that I should have sought the advice of the Integrity Commissioner.

While there may have been a perception of conflict of interest, I would like to reassure you all that the Integrity

Commissioner's investigation confirms that there was no evidence of collusion, corruption, inappropriate benefit, nor nefarious actions or directions associated with these circumstances. This is not a scandal. It is a perception of conflict of interest. Nepotism is a matter which every government takes seriously, in which the Government of Nunavut has policies in place to protect any conflicts that may arise.

I would like to add that human resources is an under-appreciated profession in Canada as well as here in Nunavut. It is a profession which requires qualifications and rigorous testing to achieve a designation. It is a profession just like medicine, law, or accounting.

If it were not for the Department of Human Resources and all of the HR staff in our departments and territorial corporations, our government would likely crumble. You see, managing people is a very difficult task. The potential challenges that HR professionals face in the course of their work is limitless. On one end of the spectrum, HR staff deal with hiring, performance reviews, training, and career development, and on the other end of the spectrum, HR staff must deal with fact-finding meetings, progressive discipline, and, in extraordinary situations, termination.

As I mentioned, human resources is an under-appreciated profession. The *Public Service Act* gives considerable authority to the Deputy Minister of Human Resources. Only a handful of people in Nunavut can truly meet those requirements of the role and almost all are working within the Department of Human Resources.

Now I would like to turn your attention to the unfortunate events which occurred in December, mere weeks after the leadership forum. The pandemic has had a significant impact on public servants, including the Deputy Minister of Human Resources, who has gone above and beyond to ensure the safety and meet the needs of our public service.

Over the last two years of the pandemic, Ms. Kolola has not been able to take sufficient time off. In recognition of this situation, I had approved the deputy minister to take a leave of absence a week in advance of the holiday closure. Since the acting assignment was scheduled for the days preceding the holiday closure, many employees were on leave and there were very few alternatives.

As in any organization, there is a hierarchy amongst the senior management team which must be considered when deciding on DM acting assignments. Within the Department of Human Resources, the ADM of operations is typically positioned to act in the deputy minister's absence. At this time they were out of the territory. Next is the ADM of strategic human resource management, and they were also unavailable. Like most departments, the director of policy is the next in line of seniority, and they were out of the country. In the Department of Human Resources, the next most senior position is the director of employee relations, following that is the director of corporate services, and they were also unavailable.

Given the authority provided to the deputy minister under the *Public Service Act*, you can't delegate this responsibility to someone who is not

ready to accept it, especially when the executive management team is unavailable to provide support. On the afternoon of December 15, only hours before the leave was set to begin, the Deputy Minister of Human Resources came to my office and recommended that the director of employee relations be assigned the acting assignment in a dual role.

I was alarmed and I did voice my concern and the deputy minister then explained the rationale for her decision. As I mentioned, the Government of Nunavut has a policy to prevent nepotism in the Human Resource Manual Directive 206 on Preferential Treatment and is also cited in the GN Code of Values and Ethics. With an alternative reporting arrangement in place, I was assured by the deputy minister that this situation would not breach the HR policy or the GN Code of Values and Ethics.

The fact of the matter is that I did not behave in unethical fashion. I do recognize that it was a mistake that I made and one that I fully accept the consequences for. I felt the actions being recommended to me were reasonable given the unique circumstances. I realize now that that was a lapse in judgment. I realize that there were steps that could have been taken before the acting assignment that may have prevented this situation from escalating.

I realize that this was a perceived conflict and is a serious matter and for that, I apologize. It was never my intention to create a perception of conflict of interest. The confidence of my colleagues and Nunavummiut is important to me. The work of this

government is important to me and it is regrettable that any actions of mine would distract from the very important work we need to do as an Assembly.

I would like to add that I have been very busy over the last few months. There are many gears in motion. Most legacies of the previous government as well as new initiatives were recently initiated under the new government.

One of the biggest accomplishments which are solely attributed to the new government is the tentative agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union. I cannot take full credit as recognition must be given to the tremendous work on behalf of the GN negotiating team as well as the Nunavut Employees Union. However, a significant amount of work was required on our part to give the negotiating team the tools they needed to put an end to the three and a half year ordeal. In addition, there are many other significant items in the works which will be revealed in the coming months.

I would like to thank this Assembly for your confidence in selecting as a member of the Executive Council. It has truly been an honour. As it can be imagined, the last month has been strenuous, to say the least, and the challenges have not ceased at the office and of course has spilled onto my personal life.

I cannot fully accomplish my duties without a solid foundation. In order to fulfill my duties and obligations as an MLA, I need the strength of my biggest supporters, my family. It is for that reason that I am resigning from Executive Council effective immediately. I will continue to represent

Iqalummiut and Nunavummiut as an MLA, but in order to do so effectively, I must ensure that my foundation, my family, remains intact.

Now speaking as an MLA, as I am no longer a member of the Executive Council, I would like to add a few closing comments.

We all know that being a politician is difficult and it takes a toll on us and our families. We make great sacrifices to be in our positions and our families do as well. We can expect to receive personal attacks, and unfortunately quite often our families get dragged into it as well.

It is obvious that there are members who hold a grudge against me and that is fine. You can target me all you want, but bringing my wife into the public arena in such a way is a line that should not have been crossed.

If members truly had concern, they should have immediately raised it with the Integrity Commissioner or the Premier's Office. Alternatively, if the members were not comfortable in bringing these matters to the Premier's Office or the Integrity Commissioner, a more appropriate avenue would be to raise the matter at one of our Full Caucus meetings.

I by no means intend to try to limit any member's ability to question issues in any way, but certain matters should be addressed tactfully.

When departments can't handle tough HR situations, it is escalated to the Department of Human Resources' Employee Relations Division. Working in employee relations is a challenging

job. Having to participate in fact-finding meetings and conduct investigations into serious incidents day in and day out is not easy, especially when terminations are involved. This is an incredibly stressful job.

My wife has been working in the Employee Relations Division for nearly ten years. She has been there to handle the GN's most difficult situations. Over the years I have heard numerous senior civil servants express their gratitude for Hilary's professionalism and expertise.

After all that she has done for our government, members of this legislature have brought her into the public arena and questioned her integrity as well as mine in an attempt to discredit me. I feel that this was a shameful attack on a dedicated public servant and is beneath the dignity of this Assembly.

We are here to work for the benefit of Nunavummiut and should remain focused on that goal. To that end, I express my deepest regret over this situation and hope that the Assembly and Nunavut will recognize my good intentions and hard work. I have endeavoured to fulfill the duties assigned to me to work as a part of this government to achieve our goals and to improve the lives of Nunavummiut.

I hope that I have demonstrated the contributions I am making, my honest and sincere intentions that I will retain your confidence in my abilities and good character to continue to serve alongside you. I care very much about Nunavut and I look forward to continuing to work towards improving the lives of our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: To the motion. Members, I have no more names on my list. We will now vote on the motion. All those in favour, please stand. Mr. Lightstone.

Hon. Adam Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you.

Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please stand and sit down when I call your name.

Member Ms. Brewster.

Member Mr. Hickes.

Member Mr. Anavilok.

Member Ms. Killiktee.

Member Mr. Savikataaq.

Member Ms. Nutarak.

Member Mr. Qavvik.

Member Mr. Simailak.

Member Mr. Malliki.

Member Mr. Sammurtok.

Member Mr. Quqqiaq.

Member Mr. Kaernerik.

Member Mr. David Akeeagok.

Member Ms. Quassa.

Member Ms. Nakashuk.

Member Mr. Joanasié.

Member Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Member Ms. Gross.

Member Mr. Kusugak.

Member Mr. Main.

Member Mr. Lightstone.

For the record, all 21 members present have voted in favour of the motion and therefore the motion has passed unanimously.

Members, pursuant to Motion 1 – 6(2), this House will now recess and we will reconvene later today at the call of the Chair.

All members are to gather at the Chambers at 2:30 for the commencement of the Nunavut Leadership Forum.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 13:57 and resumed at 15:44

Speaker: Welcome back, members. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to Item 14 on the order paper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to return to Item 14 on the order paper. Are there any nays? There are none. We shall proceed to Item 14. Item 14. Notices of Motions. I recognize the Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Revert to Item 14: Notices of Motions**Motion 003 – 6(2): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut – Notice**

Ms. Nutarak: I give notice that on Friday, April 22, 2022, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Uqqummiut, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Craig Simailak, Member for Baker Lake, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

At the appropriate time I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. I recognize the Member for Tununig, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with her motion today. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Ms. Nutarak.

Motion 003 – 6(2): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) WHEREAS section 60 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that the

Executive Council of Nunavut shall be composed of persons appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to recommend an appointment;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Uqqummiut, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Craig Simailak, Member for Baker Lake, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

>> *Applause*

Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask to return to Item 5. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. The member is asking to return to Item 5. Are there any nays? None. We go back to Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Ms. Nakashuk.

Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also appreciate that we are now able to recognize visitors in the gallery. I would like to recognize members of my family who are visiting the House, my husband, Andrew Nakashuk, my grandson Felix, my younger sister Annie Karpik, and my best friend, Ooleepeeka Arnaqaq. I would like to welcome them to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Back to the orders of the day. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. There are no items in the committee. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. There is no report. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that the Regular Members' Caucus meets tomorrow at nine o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for May 25:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. In accordance with Motion 11 – 6(1), this House stands adjourned until May 25 at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House adjourned at 15:50

