



Record of Proceedings of the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform January 9-11, 2004

January 9, 2004

A successful reception for Assembly members was held Friday evening from 7:30 to 9:00 PM. Many members continued well past the closing time.

Registration of Assembly members took place from 4:00PM on Friday with the last members completing the registration Saturday morning. In all, 158 members registered for the weekend sessions. R. Vanderbilt and D. Cochrane were unable to attend for personal reasons.

January 10, 2004

- Procession of Members

159 members of the Citizens' Assembly were piped into the Asia Pacific Hall at 9:00 AM by Simon Fraser University Piper Sylvia DeTar. Following a few opening comments, the Chair introduced all members of the Assembly. Special guests in attendance were recognized and followed by staff and facilitator introductions. Following the introductions, the Chair addressed the delegates regarding the uniqueness and importance of the Assembly and the process it was undertaking.

The Chair then opened a question and answer period for the Assembly members. R. B. Herath addressed the Assembly about his own experiences and his pleasure in participating in this process. Several other members made similar positive comments.

- Assembly Business

The Chair introduced the Policies and Procedures that were to be adopted by the Assembly, emphasizing the importance of informal structures and procedures. The first set of Policies and Procedures were considered "mandated," that is, they reflected the directions contained in the Orders in Council establishing the Citizens' Assembly. The Assembly was asked to consider the Policies and Procedures – Developed by the Chair.

Recommendation #1: Policies and Procedures – Developed by the Chair

That the following policies and procedures be adopted, recognizing that, as we learn to work together, these policies and procedures may be amended or amplified.

A member suggested that majority be stated as 50% plus one. The Chair clarified matters respecting motions and voting procedures. In the absence of further debate and comment, the Chair declared, by consensus, that the Policies and Procedures – Developed by the Chair be adopted. (The suggestion made by the member was incorporated into the document in article 7).

Recommendation #2 – Shared Values

The Chair outlined the task for the members to consider during the discussion groups. Specifically, members were asked to meet in discussion groups and to identify the three most important values, that is, determining what matters most to the members in how they work together. A member from each discussion group reported back to the Assembly the suggestions of their respective discussion groups. S. Haas, Project Coordinator, projected a synthesis of the values developed by the discussion groups. Several changes were suggested by members during the plenary session.

The Chair proposed the following recommendation:

“That the following shared values will guide our work together, recognizing that all the values suggested in the discussion group reports are important to some members and that this set of shared values will be adopted today and may, at any time, be reviewed and changed.”

- Respect people and their opinions
- Open-mindedness; challenging ideas not people
- Listening to understand
- Commitment to the process
- Focus on mandate; preparedness
- Simple, clear, concise communication
- Inclusivity: all members are equal
- Positive attitude
- Integrity

The Chair declared, by consensus, that the Shared Values be adopted until such time as they are amended.

- **Learning Session One**

Politics in British Columbia – What do we want?

K. Carty, Chief Research Officer, provided a presentation on the subject and concluded with a set of questions for the discussion groups to consider.

Discussion groups met and concluded their deliberations at 5:00PM.



January 11, 2004

The Chair made a few announcements and opened the floor for questions and comments.

- **Lesson Session Two**
C. Sharman, Associate Research Officer provided an Internet supported overview of the submission process via the Citizens' Assembly website.
- **Presentation – Assessing Electoral Systems**
Following the presentation by K. Carty, discussion groups met to consider the issues and questions raised.
- **Plenary Round-Up**
Following the discussion period, members returned to the Asia Pacific Hall for the concluding session. The session provided members with an opportunity to raise questions and make observations. Many members took the opportunity to commend staff for their support, assistance and competence.

The first session of the Citizens' Assembly adjourned at 12:15 PM