

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 2

Monday 12 August 2013

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

SPORT AND RECREATION

The Committee met at 12.15 p.m.

MEMBERS

The Hon. M. A. Ficarra (Chair)

The Hon. J. Buckingham
The Hon. D. Clarke
The Hon. J. A. Gardiner

The Hon. P. Green (Deputy Chair)
The Hon. L. Voltz
The Hon. S. Whan

PRESENT

The Hon. Graham Annesley, *Minister for Sport and Recreation*

CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:

**Budget Estimates secretariat
Room 812
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

CHAIR: I declare this hearing of the inquiry into the budget estimates for 2013-14 open to the public. I welcome Mr Graham Annesley and his accompanying officials to the hearing. Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Sport and Recreation. In accordance with the Legislative Council's guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings only Committee members and witnesses may be filmed or recorded. People in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photographs. In reporting the proceedings of this Committee the media must take responsibility for what they publish or the interpretation they place on anything that is said before the Committee. The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available on the table by the door. I note that today's hearing is open to the public and is being webcast live via the Parliament's website.

Before we commence I will make some comments about procedural matters. Any messages from advisers or the Minister's staff seated in the public gallery should be delivered through the chamber and support staff or the committee clerks. Minister, I remind you that you and your officers are free to pass notes and to refer directly to your advisers seated at the table behind you. Transcripts of this hearing will be available on the web from tomorrow morning. The House has resolved that answers to questions on notice must be provided within 21 days. I remind everyone to turn off their mobile phones or to have them in silent mode away from the microphones. All witnesses from departments, statutory bodies or corporations will be sworn prior to giving evidence. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn in because you have already sworn an oath to your office as a member of Parliament. All other witnesses should state their full name, job title and agency and either swear an oath or make an affirmation.

PAUL DOORN, Executive Director, Sport and Recreation, Office of Communities, and

JANETT MILLIGAN, Executive Director, Venues NSW, Office of Communities, sworn and examined:

DONNA RYGATE, Chief Executive Officer, Office of Communities, and

DEBRA BOCK, Director Finance, Office of Communities, on former oath:

CHAIR: As Government members have foregone their period of questioning there will be 15 minutes for the Opposition and 15 minutes shared by the crossbench. I declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Sport and Recreation open for examination.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Minister, did the Premier ask you to appoint Mr Nihal Gupta to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: All appointments to government boards are made by Cabinet and are confidential. The discussions around those appointments are confidential to Cabinet.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: What are Mr Gupta's credentials for appointment to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Mr Gupta is an experienced businessman. He has been associated with sport for a significant period of time, particularly through Cricket NSW and his involvement with the Sydney Sixers. He has a wide business and sporting background.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Has Mr Gupta ever attended a fundraiser in support of your campaigns?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Not that I am aware of or can recall.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Do you think it is appropriate that a person who has donated approximately \$9,000 to the Liberal Party before the last election and is the chief executive officer of a company that gave further donations to the Liberal Party should be appointed to a taxpayer funded board?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I think it is appropriate that someone who is suitably qualified for a position is appointed to a board that their qualifications make them appropriate for.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Is it not a breach of the Premier's pre-election commitment that he would not appoint mates to these sorts of boards?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Mr Gupta was appointed on merit.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: He has been a significant donor to the Liberal Party and he has been on a number of trips to China and India with the Premier some of which have been taxpayer funded trips. Had you worked with Mr Gupta before his appointment to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: No.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Minister, I will now ask you about the appointment of Mr Chris Downy to the Combat Sports Authority of NSW. What were Mr Downy's qualifications for appointment to the Combat Sports Authority? Mr Downy is from the Australian Wagering Council.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: He was appointed to the Combat Sports Authority on the basis of his background in sport as a previous Minister for sport, just as Kevin Greene was also appointed to that authority.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Does it concern you that he is also the chief executive officer of the Australian Wagering Council? Does that not strike you as a potential conflict of interest?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: He was not at the time of his appointment.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: He was not the chief executive officer of the Australian Wagering Council at the time of his appointment?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: To the best of my knowledge he was not but I will check that.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Minister, would it concern you if he had been?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: He was appointed on merit just as Mr Greene was.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Mr Downy is also president of the New South Wales branch of the Liberal Party. Does he have the numbers in your seat for your pre-selection?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I am not too sure what that has to do with my role as Minister for Sport and Recreation.

CHAIR: It has nothing to do with it.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: It has a lot to do with it if you are appointing him to boards.

CHAIR: I am being fairly lenient on the line of questioning but that one is really a little much. Take it from me he does not control it. The Minister receives support from all factions because he is a nice person.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Thank you for that great defence of one of your local members.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Who approves amateur permits under the Combat Sports Act?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The department approves those permits under delegation from me as Minister.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: It does so on your delegated authority. As part of that approval the application must be according to the approved form.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: That is correct.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: I have an application here lodged by Mr Tony Favuzzi from Muay Thai Australia relating to a bout held on 13 August 2011. It consists of one page containing four lines of text. Is that the approved form?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I obviously do not have that form in front of me.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: I am happy to provide it.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I will take the question on notice and establish whether this was the only form or whether there were other aspects to it.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: I made a freedom of information application requesting copies of any applications he made and this is what I received. Given that that is what the department provided in response to my freedom of information application both for professional and amateur bouts, do you now accept that that is not the appropriate form for an application?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: You would be aware based on the answers I provided during the budget estimates hearings last year that we are in the process of completely rewriting the Combat Sports Act. A number of deficiencies have been recognised throughout the combat sports industry, including in the legislation governing it. That process is almost complete and legislation will be introduced very soon.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: The current Act requires the application to be lodged in a particular form. I have a copy of a section 55 form with me. It requires the names of the medical practitioners, the sanctioning organisations and the combatants. None of that detail was provided on that application.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The incident is the subject of a coroner's investigation and report, and that process has not yet been concluded.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: During last year's budget estimates hearings you said that the incident was the subject of both an internal investigation and a coroner's investigation. It is two years since Mr Fowler died in the bout that is covered by that application. The last time I spoke to anyone at the Coroner's office I was told that a police brief had still not been received. Have you ascertained whether the Coroner's office has received a brief about this matter?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I am not responsible for the Coroner's actions.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: So you are not—

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I am not responsible for the Coroner's actions or how she undertakes her investigations.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: During last year's budget estimates hearings you said that you were undertaking an internal review into how your department handled the case. Have you finished that review?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: We have been undertaking a review of the Combat Sports Act and its deficiencies. I was not responsible for the introduction of that legislation; I inherited it from the previous Government. It has a number of deficiencies and they have been identified. We are in the process of completing our preparations for the introduction of completely new legislation that addresses the deficiencies that were identified in the report.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Is the review of the Combat Sports Act part of a Council of Australian Governments review with a view to introducing national legislation covering combat sports?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: As Minister I have been responsible for raising the need for national uniform legislation covering combat sports with the Council of Australian Governments. It has received general support across the country and a subcommittee has been appointed to identify common issues. That process is continuing.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Was your review of that Act a result of the Council of Australian Governments meeting?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: No.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Did it predate that meeting?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The review of the Combat Sports Authority of NSW?

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Your announcement of the review.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: New South Wales raised the need for uniformity in combat sports legislation.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Is that why you are undertaking the review?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: No, the review had already commenced.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Last year I asked you about the number of full-time equivalent staff employed by the Department of Sport and Recreation and you undertook to clarify whether the 318 full-time equivalents included Olympic Park and Sydney International Equestrian Centre staff. I also asked how that related to the 404 staff referred to in the 2011-12 budget papers. I have subsequently also asked a question on notice about the current full-time equivalent staff in the Department of Sport and Recreation. I have been informed that the department has 358 full-time equivalent staff, including casuals. Can you clarify whether the number of staff has increased from 318 to 358, whether the casuals included are actually casual staff and whether it includes the Olympic Park staff who were included in the 404 figure? Is it an increase of 50 staff or a decrease from 404?

Ms RYGATE: The number published in the budget papers relates to the staff who are funded under the Sport and Recreation service group in the budget. That includes the staff of the Sport and Recreation Division—which includes the normal Sport and Recreation staff—and the staff of the former Olympic facilities, the equestrian centre at Horsley Park, the regatta centre at Penrith and the shooting centre. It also includes the staff at the Office of Communities who are funded through the Sport and Recreation part of our budget. We appeared before the Committee earlier today during the hearing dealing with the Citizenship and Communities portfolio.

Historically, the staff of the chief executive officer's office, the corporate staff and a proportion of the staff in our policy area who do not deal with Citizenship and Communities responsibilities, funded under the Sport and Recreation services group, are included. That excludes those involved in that policy area. That excludes from the policy area veterans affairs, youth, volunteering and those types of things. As to the number that you received in response to your question on notice—the 358.8—your question was specifically about the staff in the Sport and Recreation Division so we gave you the number for the staff in the Sport and Recreation Division. We also included the administrative support to the Combat Sports Authority, because they are collocated and essentially part of the same group. So it all adds up.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: How many casuals are included in that 358?

Ms RYGATE: I will have to take that on notice. It varies.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Last time you took on notice that you would come back to me with accurate figures on the ex-Olympic venues and corporate support areas, and you did not. Of that 318, do you still stand by the 404, if you include the ex-Olympic venues and corporate support areas?

Ms RYGATE: I am happy to take it on notice and give you a detailed dissection of those—

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: You took it on notice last year and the response I got was the response to the question on notice provided the actual full-time equivalent [FTE] figures for the Sport and Recreation Division only. You did not give me any figures at all. Will you give me actual figures?

Ms RYGATE: If you ask for the figures we will give you the figures.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: I asked for the figures last time. My question was: Can you explain the exact figures? You said that you would take it on notice and give me accurate figures because you did not have the number in front of you.

Ms RYGATE: I just tried to give you an explanation of the numbers as they stand now. I am happy to give you a dissection of those.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Can you tell me now what the numbers are?

CHAIR: Ms Rygate has just said that she is going to take that on notice and give you detailed figures.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: I would like to know: Can you tell me the numbers of full-time equivalent figures for Sport and Recreation, and ex-Olympic venues and corporate staff.

Ms RYGATE: The number for Sport and Recreation, including the Combat Sports Authority, is 358.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: But that is not FTE, is it?

Ms RYGATE: Yes, it is FTE.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: But you are including casuals.

Ms RYGATE: The FTE is full-time equivalent staff. If you are talking about head counts, that is a different question.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: You are talking about full-time equivalent staff but you are including casuals in full-time equivalent staff.

Ms RYGATE: The number that we have is 358. The number in the corporate areas is the difference between that and the published number in the budget papers.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Minister, what is the allocation in the budget for the New South Wales Institute of Sport [NSWIS] this year?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The allocation is \$10.825 million.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: After the Olympics we saw a great deal of controversy about the axing of sailing from NSWIS. You said at the time that the NSWIS budget had kept up with the consumer price index. For 2012-13 that was \$10.587 million. I would have thought that \$10.8 million was just under the consumer price index. Does that indicate that you are not keeping up with your commitments?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I would have to get out the calculator to work out the exact figure.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: NSWIS has been pretty much starved of funding, has it not? It is just going along at a similar or slightly lower level of funding. That is not really a very good commitment to elite sport.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: An allocation of \$10.825 million is not being starved of funding.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: Considering the job, it is. How is NSWIS affected by the new Federal sports funding model?

CHAIR: This will be the last question, because Opposition time for questions is finished.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: I did hear the beep. How is NSWIS going to be affected by the new elite funding model? How will it fit into that new network?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I will continue with the funding topic. Minister, how much funding have you allocated in the forward budget to ensure that New South Wales defeats Queensland in next year's State of Origin series?

CHAIR: Good question!

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I will go to a more serious question, Minister.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Why does he not give some more money to women's sport, instead?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Given recent controversies reported in the news involving doping in sport, can you comment on the true impact of drugs on New South Wales sport?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The issue of drugs in sport has been a serious issue for a long period of time—well beyond the current controversy. Obviously, the World Anti-Doping Agency has been in place to deal with the impacts of performance-enhancing drugs on elite-level sport, particularly the Olympic sports, for a long period of time. The current issue that is playing out nationally goes deeper than the Olympic sports; it goes to our professional sports. Obviously, I received a briefing from the Crime Commission not long after the initial announcement by the Federal authorities. I am unable to discuss most the details of that publicly, but only last week I received an additional briefing from the Federal Government and also from the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority [ASADA].

That reconfirms that the issue of doping in sport is significant, and that the investigation is ongoing. There is no perceived time frame for resolving it. They are receiving cooperation, I was very pleased to hear, from the Australian Football League and the National Rugby League—the two sporting codes that have been predominantly linked to the current investigation. It is my hope, as I have stated publicly on many occasions,

that, if there are people who are not playing within the rules in relation to drugs, they be identified and punished as quickly as possible. And those who are innocent—I believe they are in the vast majority—can have the veil of suspicion lifted from them so that they are cleared to do their wonderful work.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: What specific steps is the Government of New South Wales taking to address this issue? What sorts of programs are you implementing?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: It is primarily a Federal issue, because it is controlled by ASADA, which is the Australian drug testing authority. All of the major sporting codes are subject to regular drug testing, and also drug education. But it is primarily a Federal issue.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Are there certain sports that seem to be more prone than others, or is it just the way that the media seems to be reporting the Australian Sport Anti-Doping Authority? Is it a few codes, not all codes?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I think it is fair to say—I am not betraying any confidence—that the current investigation is focusing on a couple of the football codes, not all of them. But there is also evidence—particularly international evidence—that doping is not restricted entirely to the football codes. Some of the things that are happening overseas in relation to performance-enhancing drugs, illicit drugs and the involvement of organised crime in importing and distributing those drugs are very serious. Hopefully, what is happening at the moment in Australia will act to restrict that kind of impact in this country.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Is your department trying to do something to quicken the outcomes of this process? It seems the longer it goes on the more damage it is doing and the public's confidence in fair play seems to be dropping basically. Is there a role that you can play to quicken up the ASADA findings?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: There is no direct role. I have been at pains to try to make it very clear publicly that I certainly support this matter being resolved as quickly as possible. That was one of the reasons I asked for the additional briefing last week from the Federal authorities to try to get a handle on where they were at with this. But ultimately the quickest way to get the current controversy resolved is for complete cooperation from the sporting codes involved. The more they cooperate the quicker the investigation will be complete and they will be in a position to hand down their findings.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I note that some really good news stories have come over the media about the sort of revenue we have been able to get from different sporting events that we have been able to enjoy. Have you got any news of new sporting events that have been secured for 2014 that New South Wales can look forward to—major events?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Major events is not part of my portfolio.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Major new sporting events—if you tack it together.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Even the major sporting events are handled by Minister Souris. But I guess the highlight for next year, based on the events already announced by Destination NSW, would be the opening of the Major League Baseball season next year, which will be two competition games as opposed to exhibition games. They both sold out extremely quickly. On top of our regular football events that we receive every year, baseball will be significant.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Obviously a lot of sporting events do not reach major event status; for example, the Hobie 16 World Championships are to be held in beautiful Jervis Bay, and are expected to be attended by an estimated 550 international visitors and competitors representing some 20 separate countries. What role does New South Wales Sport and Recreation play and what strategies does it have to ensure that we make good use of a global event like this?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: That is a very good question. I am of the view that although the major sporting events are not part of my portfolio any number of events around New South Wales, particularly at regional levels, have a significant impact on local tourism and obviously underpin business confidence in those areas. So we introduced the Sport and Recreation Events Program, which provides funding grants for events that are either international or national in focus but they can also be regionally focused. In 2012-13 there were 144

applications and of those applications 70 projects received funding of over half a million dollars. So those programs that allowed regional events to take place were very significant for those regional areas.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister, and thank you to your advisers. The time now is concluded because the rest of the crossbenches have not shown up.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: We do not have an agreement about that.

CHAIR: There is no crossbench; there is no provision to go back to the Opposition.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: There is a provision for a certain amount of time for questions.

CHAIR: It is crossbenches, and the crossbench are not here.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: There is a provision for time. There is not a provision to—

CHAIR: We have already decided.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: When you say "we", we have not decided anything.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: The Opposition agreed to the Government not asking questions.

CHAIR: It was voted on this morning during the deliberative. The time allocation was set for the Opposition and the crossbenches, and the Government forwent its time; therefore, that time has been voted on and you cannot change it.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: To help this process: obviously this is crossbench time so I am quite happy to ask some further questions.

CHAIR: There is a remaining five minutes. It can be allocated to the Hon. Paul Green because this is crossbench time.

The Hon. DAVID CLARKE: But it can be pointed out, Madam Chair, that other representatives of the Opposition were here this morning when we decided this.

CHAIR: That is right, and they voted on it.

The Hon. STEVE WHAN: I note the Hon. David Clarke's point but I just note that The Greens have failed to show to this hearing.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: I also make the point that allocation of time is about equity.

CHAIR: Order! You are not members of this Committee permanently and your Opposition members voted this morning for the allocation of time. The Hon. Paul Green is being very conciliatory and he now has the call. He has an additional five minutes.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Minister, will the State Government be matching the Federal Government's commitments to Brookvale Oval?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: At this stage the only funding that I am aware of that has been made available to Brookvale Oval is that recently announced by the Federal Government. We—when I say "we" I am referring to the Treasurer and me—have been in discussions with representatives of the Manly Warringah Football Club in the past about how the New South Wales Government may be able to assist it in some way in the future, subject to availability of funds. It has been preparing a case to come back to the New South Wales Government with. At this stage we have not received that. Obviously we are always happy to talk to any organisation about proposals that it might have but it is always subject to the availability of funds and budget approval.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Has the grants allocation grown in the last two years' budget period and if so by what percentage?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The Sport and Recreation grants program in 2013-14 is \$16.415 million compared to \$16.499 in 2012-13—that is a slight reduction of \$84,000.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Why is that?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: The minor reduction in the total grants funding is due to a decrease of \$200,000 for the Safe Shooting Program and an increase of \$116,000 to the Sport and Recreation Fund. The Safe Shooting Program has been returned to its average funding level following a boost in 2012-13; it took into account the program was not offered in 2011-12.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: In terms of sport and recreation facilities across New South Wales, is the Asset Maintenance Program ahead of schedule or is there a deficit in the funding going forward to address the asset maintenance?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Of the venues that the Government directly controls?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Yes.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: I might ask Mr Doorn to answer this.

Mr DOORN: We are currently doing a condition audit report across all our sport and recreation centres to determine what the future needs are so that we will be better placed to be able to look at what the costs and requirements are going forward.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Are you suggesting that there was no audit report from previous governments? Is there no benchmarking of what the New South Wales Government owns and where it is up to in terms of assets and maintenance?

Mr DOORN: I will have to take that one on notice to determine what has happened in the past.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Can you tell us how much the assets are worth right now? What have they been valued at or where do they stand?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: We will have to come back to you on that.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Can you also in that address what proportion or percentage is allocated to maintaining those facilities?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Yes. We will take that on notice.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: That would be helpful. In terms of those facilities, do they have to apply for grants to run their facilities?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: In terms of—

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Or is a set sum given across every year to those particular facilities to do what they do?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: For maintenance?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: No, across the board, operating costs. What percentage does the Government contribute?

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Are you talking specifically about the sport and recreation centres?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Yes, owned by the New South Wales Government.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: Including the stadium venues or just talking about—

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: No, just the sport and recreation centres.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: You asked about the operating budget?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Yes.

Mr GRAHAM ANNESLEY: In 2012-13 it was \$1,590,306.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: And the maintenance side of that. Did you have a maintenance line item for that?

Mr DOORN: We will have to take that question on notice. [*Time expired.*]

(The witnesses withdrew)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.
