

Minutes of a meeting of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Elections held in the House of Assembly library on Tuesday, February 4, 2013 at 1pm.

**PRESENT**

**Mr. C. Walton Brown, Jr., JP, MP—Chairperson**

**Mrs. Jeanne J. Atherden, JP, MP**

**Mr. Glen C. Smith, JP, MP**

**Ms. Kim N. Wilson, JP, MP**

**Ms. Susan E. Jackson, JP, MP**

**Ms. Meredith Ebbin—Committee Clerk**

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 1pm.

He presented an outline of his proposal of the key points that should be covered in the Committee's final report.

All were in agreement with the establishment of an Electoral Commission to oversee elections.

It was also agreed by all that the report would contain summaries of testimonies of those who appeared before the Committee: Messrs. Alex Scott, Kim Swan, John Barritt, David Burt and Michael Branco.

Transcripts of the full testimonies would be in the appendix along with the legal opinion of QC Mr. James Goudie as well as the minutes of Committee meetings.

There was agreement on all other points listed with the exception of points 4f and 6.

Ms Jackson said she did not see the point of identifying those who refused to attend the hearings (4f).

Mrs. Atherden said she did not think it necessary for the report to make any reference to the candidacies of Mr. Jeff Sousa and Mr. E.T. "Bob" Richards.

Mr, Brown said that it was relevant as Mr. Sousa and Mr. Richards did not disclose their interest in a government contract prior to the 2013 election. In previous elections, all candidates had disclosed their interest. The failure of Mr. Sousa and Mr. Richards to disclose was the reason the committee had been established.

Ms. Jackson said there were inconsistencies in every election. She said the focus should be on the recommendation for a central body to provide oversight of future elections. That body would address all aspects of an election including voter intimidation, which was one of her concerns.

Mr. Smith said the Committee was trying to improve the system: looking at processes so there was no ambiguity.

Ms. Wilson said the Committee could not produce a report without making reference to the circumstances that led to the committee to being established in the first place.

Mr. Brown asked whether the position of the Committee was: that candidates were required to make a declaration; that they were not required to make a declaration; or that the law was ambiguous.

Ms. Jackson and Mrs. Atherden said the law was ambiguous.

Following a period of discussion, Mr. Brown said there appeared to be an impasse. If that was the case, there would have to be a majority report and a minority report.

He said he would write a draft report with the goal of completing it by Friday February 14.

The draft would then be circulated to all members for review. He said he would like all members to agree on the final report and urged them to be non-partisan in their assessment of the facts.

Mr. Brown said if there was no agreement, there would be two reports, but the minority report would make reference to the two matters that were in contention.

The meeting concluded at 2.05 pm.

**CONFIRMED THIS**

**DAY OF**

**2014**

**CHAIRPERSON**