



Office of the Speaker - Bureau du président

January 2, 2025

Open Letter to Members

Re: The Speaker's Role as Chair of Members' Services Board

Recent media coverage surrounding my letter to the Minister of Finance regarding the budgets of Elections Yukon, the Child and Youth Advocate and office of the Office of the Ombudsman suggests that I am concerned with political interference. I am not.

I feel it necessary to provide insight into the role I serve as the Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly and as Chair of Members' Services Board (MSB). My position is one of neutrality and impartiality. As Chair of MSB I will only vote in the event of a tie by providing a casting vote that ensures the status quo is maintained. I take no position on issues that come before me in my capacity as Speaker or Chair of MSB.

MSB is comprised of 5 members: Yukon Party Leader Currie Dixon, Yukon Party MLA Brad Cathers, Yukon New Democratic Party Leader Kate White, Yukon Liberal Party MLA Honourable Richard Mostyn, and myself as Chair. Decisions made by this committee are made by a majority of members and are not necessarily unanimous. The balance of decision-making power is held by opposition MLAs. As Chair, I must convey the decisions of the committee as I am directed by the committee. I do not provide insight or direction into the contents of messages conveyed. I am, however, the required signatory as Chair.

Traditionally, Members' Services Board meetings are held in confidence. The committee is responsible for the operation of independent offices and must examine and decide these matters in a forum that is not subject to external political motivations or influence.

The decision to take the meetings out of camera and publish the letter to the Minister of Finance was directed by Members' Services Board, using the balance of power held by the Official Opposition and Third Party.

I am compelled to clarify my role as Chair of Members' Services Board given the recent media coverage and comments made by some Members of the Legislative Assembly about the purpose and intention of the letter that carries my signature.

I am troubled by the political nature of these actions and I am concerned that the decisions being made by members are for political gain and are not respecting the best interests of the offices we are responsible for.

I urge all Members of Members' Services Board to respect the positions we hold as elected officials. I will continue to remain fair and neutral while executing my duties and responsibilities on behalf of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Harper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeremy Harper
Speaker
Yukon Legislative Assembly