



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 004

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Chair: Mr. Ken McDonald



Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

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• (1110)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.)): Good morning, everyone. I'm now ready to start the meeting.

I want to welcome everybody to meeting number four of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

I ask everybody today to be a bit patient, because we're doing it in a hybrid format. I've got a screen in front of me with people who are doing it online and we have committee members here in the committee room. If anybody is saying something, try to say it really slowly for translation and so we can hear it on the computer.

I'm not going to go through the full—

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

I don't know about anybody else, but I'm getting a French translation on my English service. I'm not sure if anybody else is getting that as well.

Mr. Serge Cormier (Acadie—Bathurst, Lib.): It's the same for me too, Mr. Chair. It's not working either in French or English.

The Chair: We'll take a moment and get that checked out before we go any further.

How is it now?

Mr. Mike Kelloway: I still have the same issue, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: It's in French, even though you have English selected.

We'll let the individual staff check on that to make sure it gets corrected. We certainly don't want to continue unless we can participate fully.

Serge, are you hearing it in French now?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier: Yes, I can hear the French interpretation, but the problem is that you can still hear it even when you've disabled that option.

[English]

We still hear the interpretation.

[Translation]

I hear it sometimes when I use the English channel, but not always. The same is true when I use the French channel.

• (1115)

[English]

The Chair: I think everything is straightened out. We will continue.

For the benefit of those joining by Zoom, and I know you can see everybody on your screen who is doing that, I'll let you know who is here in the actual committee room. We have Mr. Morrissey, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Arnold, Mr. Zimmer, Mr. Small and Ms. Barron. Everybody else is by Zoom.

I want to say to everybody that to some extent, at the last meeting we held, there was a bit of confusion as we went through the motions. I think part of that is when you're doing an amendment and then a subamendment to the amendment and a subamendment to the sub, it's a bit hard to keep it straight. I do apologize if it was confusing. If people could keep that in mind, we could deal with a subamendment to an amendment and if there's another subamendment to that, let's do it afterwards. Trying to keep it all in a regular flow takes a bit of coordination at this end. If everybody could cooperate in that regard, I would appreciate it.

As I said at the start, I'm not going to read through all of the normal opening remarks. We all know about the requirements for COVID, the spacing, the masking and the speaking and everything else. I want to get down to business right away so we can get as much done as we can in our time frame.

I would just let everybody know that when we finished up at the last meeting, we were actually at the end of a motion by Mr. Arnold. He had spoken extensively to the motion. As well, Mr. Morrissey had spoken to that particular motion. It was on DFO scientific studies and advice.

Mr. Arnold, I don't know if you were going to respond to Mr. Morrissey at that particular time, when we adjourned. If you were, I'll leave that up to you.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): I don't know if you have a speaking list for others. I had no direct response to Mr. Morrissey, other than, if they had amendments to the motion, they've had time to put those forward.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Hardie.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Based on having a couple of days to think about it, I do have an amendment to Mr. Arnold's motion that I'd like to put forward, if I could, please. This will be provided to the clerk right away for distribution, and I believe in both languages.

The amendment would add “and how the Department applies this science in its decision making”, so that the amended motion would read as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of at least six meetings to examine how the Department of Fisheries and Oceans prioritizes, resources and develops scientific studies and advice, and how the Department applies this science in its decision making; and that the committee call witnesses including the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, senior department officials from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and persons who have directly contributed to the department's science and science processes to testify; that the committee hear from no fewer than 20 witnesses; and that the committee report its conclusions and recommendations to the House.

• (1120)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Just for a quick clarification, I haven't seen it yet, but you're proposing an addition and no deletion of anything that's in the current motion. Is that correct?

Mr. Ken Hardie: No, that's not correct, Mr. Perkins. The following would come out of the original text: “and how the minister applies data and advice provided by the department and other government departments to ministerial decisions”. The original motion puts the focus entirely on the minister, whereas I think it would be far more useful for us to determine what the department does, how it structures its studies and how it's used.

There are probably infinitely more circumstances where the department will make decisions on regulations or other matters, perhaps even in advice to the minister, but there are many other instances where the department will employ science. I think it's worth our while to find out what that process is, because it will cover a lot more ground than the wording in the original motion suggests.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): I would support the motion as it was initially brought forward, with the wording exactly as we understood it to be before today. I would support that it remains as is. I would not support the amendment.

Thank you.

The Chair: All right. Seeing no more interventions on the proposed amendment, Tina, could we do a recorded vote, please?

(Amendment negated: nays 6; yeas 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: We'll now go to the motion in its original form. Tina, could we do a recorded vote on the motion as it stands, please?

Ms. Barron.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

I want to put forward an amendment to the motion as it stands. Am I able to do that?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Can I do that right now? Thank you very much.

There is an amendment that is being circulated, at least that's my understanding. The proposed amendment reads:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of at least six meetings to examine how the Department of Fisheries and Oceans prioritizes, resources and develops scientific studies and advice for the department, how the results of scientific study are communicated to the Minister and Canadians—,

The remainder of the motion is exactly as it read before. I can continue reading if that's helpful.

• (1125)

The Chair: No, I think if we can see the copy of that, we know exactly what you're omitting and what you're adding.

When the clerk tells me she has it, I'll know everybody else has it as well.

Mr. Arnold, you wanted to speak.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I support this amendment from the NDP member. I believe it will add clarity and information that we'll gather through this study.

The Chair: Mr. Cormier.

Mr. Serge Cormier: Can we have a two or three-minute recess, please, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Can we make it as short as possible, because we'd like to get through a lot today, and of course, with Zoom and in person, it makes it difficult to stay on time.

I'll allow a short recess.

• (1125)

(Pause)

• (1125)

The Chair: The meeting will resume.

Go ahead, Mr. Cormier, if you want to speak to the amendment.

Mr. Serge Cormier: No, it's okay.

The Chair: Thank you.

Not hearing any further discussion on the amendment as proposed by Ms. Barron, can we go to a vote?

I know it has been accepted by Mr. Arnold as a friendly amendment. Is there any dissension?

We'll do a recorded vote.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 6; nays 5 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: I think that's all we had on notice of motion from our last meeting, so I'll move ahead now.

Mr. Cormier wanted to speak.

• (1130)

Mr. Rick Perkins: Can I have some clarification? Did we pass the safety at sea motion that was put on notice? I don't recall.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tina Miller): Yes, it was adopted.

The Chair: Thank you for that clarification, Tina.

Mr. Cormier.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cormier: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to move the following motion.

As you know, since the committee has requested that the Minister appear before the end of February, I would like to move the following, to be prepared in accordance with the Minister's availability:

That the following regularly scheduled meetings of the committee be programmed as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee conduct the study proposed by Mr. Hardie and adopted, concerning the risks posed to wild salmon runs by flood control/mitigation systems in British Columbia, and that the committee hear from officials from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada no later than February 8, 2022;

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee conduct the study proposed by Ms. Desbiens and adopted, concerning the traceability and mislabelling of seafood products; that the first witness appear no later than February 17, 2022; and that the committee report its findings to the House no later than April 8, 2022; and

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee conduct the study proposed by Ms. Barron and adopted, concerning the impact of marine cargo container spills; that the first witness appear no later than April 5, 2022; and that the committee report its findings to the House no later than June 14, 2022.

• (1135)

[*English*]

Mr. Chair, as I said at the beginning, this is taking into account that the minister will come in February also. On the first study, we'd really like to hear from officials for Mr. Hardie's study. The next meeting is February 3. I understand it might be short notice, but I think the clerk can probably make some arrangements with them and see if it's possible, or February 8 is also acceptable.

[*Translation*]

Once again, after completing Mr. Hardie's study, we will begin Ms. Desbiens' study on labelling. We will also need to make sure that the witnesses have everything they need, such as headphones, and that their Internet connection works.

[*English*]

Our first meeting can be with officials in the week of February 14 and after that we will continue with Ms. Barron later on with her study. I'm not sure if everybody received the motion.

[*Translation*]

In any case, this is what we propose.

[*English*]

The Chair: I see Mr. Morrissey has given a thumbs-up here in the room that he has received it. We're going to take a short recess. I would ask for it to be as brief as possible so we can get on with committee business.

• (1135)

(Pause)

• (1140)

The Chair: We're back.

Mr. Perkins, you asked for a moment to discuss it.

Please continue.

Mr. Rick Perkins: I appreciate the committee's indulgence.

You will be surprised to learn that I have an amendment to propose, but also perhaps a clarification. I will talk about the clarification and then propose the amendment.

The clarification is that we are still obviously targeting the minister's appearance. We passed, in the last committee, that she will appear before the end of February. With that in mind, we propose an amendment that we add an additional section at the end of the amendment that's been put forward that says:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) the committee conduct a study proposed by Mr. Arnold concerning the use of science in DFO decision-making and that the first witness appear April 26, 2022.

• (1145)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Cormier.

Mr. Serge Cormier: Mr. Perkins, I just want to make sure. You also want a clarification on the minister's appearance. Is that right?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes.

Mr. Serge Cormier: Just like I said, it was voted that the minister will come in February. We have some wiggle room there. There's no way in this motion that we want to do something so that the minister doesn't come in February. I think we all agree with that.

Regarding your request to add something, was it the motion of Mel Arnold?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes.

Mr. Serge Cormier: I think we can agree with that.

Mr. Perkins, the only reason I maybe didn't mention some of your studies is that there are so many studies on your side, we didn't know which one was important to you. If you want to add that at the end of the motion, I think we can agree with that.

Mr. Rick Perkins: It's a busy agenda.

Thank you for that clarification. That's exactly our first priority.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Arnold, you had your hand up.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just for more clarification on the appearance by the minister, the parliamentary secretary was indicating that he maybe had conversations with the minister about an appearance. I'm just wondering if we could get an update as to where the communications are in requesting that the minister appear. Has there been a communication sent or received back in this case?

The Chair: Mr. Kelloway, do you have an answer for that question for Mr. Arnold? I know I don't, but I understand that the minister is committed to coming before the end of February.

Mr. Mike Kelloway: The communiqué has been sent to the minister. I haven't heard back. I will certainly follow up on Mr. Arnold's question.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

Mr. Hardie, you have your hand up.

Mr. Ken Hardie: I was just noting the date of April 26 proposed in the amendment. Given the time we need to carve out for Ms. Desbiens' and Ms. Barron's studies, I'm wondering if May 5 would perhaps be a little bit more accurate as the date for the Conservative study to start. That way we wouldn't get in the way of the conclusion of those two other studies.

The Chair: I'm going to recess for a moment to deal with that suggestion, as a request by Mr. Perkins.

• (1145) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1145)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mel.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I believe that leaving the start date for that study at April 26 would be advantageous to the committee. We've often seen that because of time crunch the analysts need additional time to prepare drafts for the committee. If we need to, we can adjust as we get closer to that time to allow one study to start as we're waiting for the draft or the redrafts of the previous study.

Thank you.

The Chair: Are there any other interventions?

Mr. Hardie.

• (1150)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Mr. Chair, perhaps we could make the suggestion that the Conservative study start no later than May 5, which would then give us whatever cushion we need to ensure that the other work is concluded in line.

The Chair: I think if we're in the middle of something, something might happen to bump us and it might not happen on April 26 by any motion that we move. As Mr. Cormier mentioned, the appearance of a minister or the availability of officials or witnesses as we go through might demand that we change the schedule. You have to cut the cloth sometimes to fit the table and we have the means to do that as a committee, as we go forward.

Saying "April 26" to start this motion or this particular study is great in a perfect world, but we know we don't live in that perfect

world at this particular juncture of time. We could be interrupted by God knows what to throw it off that.

If you keep that in mind when you're trying to decide to vote on this or which way things are going, yes, it's a schedule, but that can get knocked off the rails pretty easily and we won't be able to stick to that exact schedule.

As chair, I think we would know as we go along if we're getting in trouble in terms of meeting that deadline or not meeting it, so we might have to adjust as we go.

Ms. Desbiens.

[Translation]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like some clarification, because I missed some of what Mr. Perkins proposed. So I am having trouble following the rest of the discussion.

Would it be possible to repeat Mr. Perkins' proposal and go back to the order of Mr. Cormier's proposal?

Do I understand that Mr. Perkins' motion would be the third or fourth to be considered?

I'm a bit confused, I'm sorry.

[English]

The Chair: I'll ask Mr. Perkins to go through it one more time, nice and slow.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madame Desbiens, your interpretation is right. It's essentially adding the science study to the motion at the end, so that would be the next study we follow.

I will try to reread my handwriting and see if it comes out the same:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) the committee conduct a study proposed by Mr. Arnold concerning the use of science in DFO decision-making and that the first witness appear April 26, 2022.

The Chair: Madame Desbiens, is that okay? Do you have any questions?

[Translation]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: That's fine, thank you. So we were discussing when the first witness would appear. Is that correct?

[English]

The Chair: Yes.

[Translation]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: All right. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[English]

The Chair: You're welcome.

Mr. Cormier.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier: I'd like to add something for Ms. Desbiens.

Ms. Desbiens, the proposed motion follows the same order. Mr. Hardie's would be first, followed by yours, followed by Ms. Barron's. Mr. Perkins has just moved that we add theirs, where the witnesses would appear as of April 26. So the order remains the same. The amendment only concerns the date for the first witness for the study requested by the Conservatives.

Are you okay?

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Thank you very much, Mr. Cormier. Yes, I'm fine.

I just wonder if we are able to set dates, since we don't know how things are going to work out, as the chair was saying earlier. Does setting dates really change anything?

• (1155)

Mr. Serge Cormier: We have set dates to ensure that our studies will take place. Maybe we'll find other important studies to do along the way, but for now, we're setting dates to try to meet them while taking everything else into account.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Okay. Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you everyone.

I'm reminded that it's like hoping for the best and expecting the worst. I think that's the way we've got to ride it.

Hearing no further discussion on the amendment by Mr. Perkins, we'll go to a recorded vote.

(Amendment agreed to: yeas 10; nays 0 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

(Motion as amended agreed to: yeas 10; nays 0 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Mr. Kelloway, you have your hand up.

Mr. Mike Kelloway: I'm just wondering, Mr. Chair, if you have enough information now to set the calendar. Could the clerk draft a calendar, if possible, and circulate it to the members in due course?

The Chair: Certainly, Mr. Kelloway, as soon as we can get it all put together, we'll send it out to the members, so we'll know what we're doing in a number of meetings going forward.

Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Chair, just to be clear, to the clerk, can you recognize all the studies that are going to be included in that calendar that Mr. Kelloway just referred to, so we are all clear on what to expect that calendar to include?

The Chair: I know Ms. Barron had her hand up as well before I get the clerk to respond.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: It feels a little out of order now, but I was hoping to put forward—and not take a lot of time on it hopefully—a motion, and was wondering if I could do that now.

The Chair: You can. We're in committee business, but we have to answer Mr. Zimmer's question first, I think, as to what the calendar would look like. We don't want to overlap too much. I'll get confused, and I'll fool up something that shouldn't be fooled up.

Mr. Zimmer, Tina's looking at our calendar now.

• (1200)

The Clerk: We would begin with Mr. Hardie's study on risks posed to wild salmon runs by flood control mitigation systems, followed by the study proposed by Madame Desbiens on traceability and mislabelling of seafood products. After that, it would be Ms. Barron's study on marine cargo container spills, and then we would move to the study proposed by Mr. Arnold on the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' science.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins: I have another motion to make, if that's in order at this point.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Can I follow through with the clerk on the question I just asked?

Madam Clerk, I put forward a study on illegal and under-reported and unregulated fishing. That was passed by this committee. You didn't include that as part of the schedule. It should be included, because it was passed by the committee.

The Chair: Actually, Mr. Zimmer, if it wasn't included, it just means that it will follow what's in order. Once we see what the schedule looks like with this in it, if you want to bring forward a motion to start your study on a certain date, or at the end of another study, that's not a problem. We can do that.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: I think for clarity, though, it was passed in committee, which means it should be attached to the schedule at some point.

The Chair: It would have to be in a motion.

If I'm correct on what Mr. Cormier moved, it was to make sure we knew what we were doing in the next short order. I don't think his intent was to include every motion that had already been adopted by the committee, to get it done in a schedule. As I said a couple of times, the schedule will fall out of line. There could be legislation, for example, come in that we can't start something at a certain date, and everything will get pushed back.

I don't think there was any intent to ignore the fact that this study is there as well, waiting to be scheduled.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: I think I'll pass it back to my colleague Mr. Perkins, who wanted to speak to this, I believe.

Thank you.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins: I would propose the following motion:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), and following the study on Mr. Arnold's motion with regard to science and DFO, the committee conduct the following studies, in the following order, at dates to be determined in the future: the study by pinnipeds proposed by Mr. Small; the study on corporate concentration and foreign ownership proposed by Madame Desbiens; the study on IUU proposed by Mr. Zimmer; the study on safety at sea proposed by myself and Mr. Perkins; and then finally the study on small craft harbours proposed by Madame Desbiens.

The Chair: That's all fine, Mr. Perkins, but before we started discussing Mr. Zimmer's question, Ms. Barron had put her hand up about wanting to put forward a motion. Could we deal with that first?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Sure. I'll try to remember how to say that again, if I have to propose it—unless you have it recorded.

The Chair: I don't.

Go ahead, please, Ms. Barron. I do apologize.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, committee, for your time. I want to bring forward a motion that I believe everybody should have.

The motions is as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of the state of Pacific Salmon; That the evidence and documentation received by the committee during the Second Session of the 43rd Parliament on the subject be taken into consideration by the committee in the current session; That the committee adopt the report entitled Pacific Salmon: Ensuring the Long-Term Health of Wild Populations and Associated Fisheries adopted during the Second Session of the 43rd Parliament; That the Chair present the report to the House; and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response to this report, and that the committee set a deadline for dissenting or supplementary opinions.

I'm bringing this forward. Again, I don't want to take up a lot of time, but quite a bit of time was spent on this work, with a lot of great recommendations brought forward by experts in the field and so on. We want an opportunity to ensure that we have an official comprehensive response to this report provided as we continue to work in this area, and to be part of this important body of knowledge. It's been nine months since this report was concluded. We feel that this is an important quick study for us to put forward so that we can have this response in place.

Thank you.

• (1205)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Barron.

Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Mr. Chair, perhaps I could just seek some clarification from Ms. Barron. Is she asking for another study or is she asking for the report from the previous study to be resubmitted and a response requested?

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: That's a great question.

Following the recommendations of the clerk, we have called it a study as that is the process, I am told, but of course I can get clarification from the clerk.

The intention of this is to receive a comprehensive response to the report and not to undertake a new study. We already have done a lot of work in this area and just want to have that official response.

The Chair: Thank you for that clarification because it's obvious, as Mr. Arnold's question showed, some of us were thinking we were going to restudy the Pacific salmon study. It was a little bit scary at first, but no, there's no problem with asking for it to be retabled and presented in the House as we know.

I guess that's a motion by Ms. Barron.

Mr. Serge Cormier: Mr. Chair, could we have the motion circulated?

The Chair: The clerk has it, so you'll all have it very shortly. We'll just take a moment to give you a chance to get it and look at it.

Mr. Morrissey.

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it refers to undertaking a study of the state of the Pacific salmon.

Could we get clarification? Is it simply retabling the original study, the report?

The Chair: The text is formulated that way just so we can table that report. That's the way it has to be written.

Mr. Robert Morrissey: This is an administrative text to allow the original report, the original study, to be tabled.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Robert Morrissey: Okay, thanks, Chair.

The Chair: I'm trusting the clerk on this one.

Okay, from the clerk, it appears that in order for us to re-present it in the House and ask for a response, you have to recreate the study. You're not actually doing a study but you're recreating the fact that the committee did do the actual study. If we present it in the House, it's like we just did the study per se.

Mr. Perkins.

• (1210)

Mr. Rick Perkins: I believe in the last meeting we dealt with several of these, both tabled the studies and not, but they were not worded this way. They were worded strictly pursuant to Standing Order 108 that the report tabled in whatever Parliament was read-opted. This looks to me like—

The Chair: I believe the clerk corrected us in the—

Mr. Rick Perkins: Well, I agree with Mr. Morrissey. It sure looks to me like the first two paragraphs are looking for a new study.

The Chair: Yes. My understanding is it's only on paper and sometimes what we have on paper is not what's actually happening. The clerk is telling me that in order to retable a study, it has to look like we actually did a study. Whether that rule will change somewhere along the way or whatever, we're only following the rules set down by the House. If this is the way it has to be done, if Ms. Barron was told the way to ask for this study to be re-presented in the House, she has done exactly that, from what the clerk is telling me, and that's what has to be done.

The ones that were done previously, that we did when we didn't know they had to be done this way, will be dealt with in the same way. I think the committee would agree that we'll put the word "study" in place, in front of all of those as well so that we can re-present them, if that was the intent of the committee.

Yes, Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Could we recess for two minutes to consult on this?

The Chair: Yes.

• (1210) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1215)

The Chair: We're back.

Mr. Arnold, go ahead.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I've spoken to Ms. Barron and she has no intention of this being a long study. She's quite open to having a time frame put on this. I would propose that the motion be amended to "That the committee undertake a study of not more than 30 minutes of the state of Pacific salmon."

The Chair: It's your turn, Ms. Barron.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you.

In response to the amendment, I'm happy to do what is necessary to have this go forward. It's out of context for me, so I was hoping that somebody might be able to clarify. What is an appropriate amount of time for something like this? I wouldn't anticipate that it would even require half an hour to bring forward a report. I just wanted to confirm, due to being new to this committee, that it is not an unrealistic expectation to set that timeline attached to this motion. I don't want to set the motion up for failure.

The Chair: I somewhat agree with your statement. As the clerk just explained, we don't need to recreate another study. It's just that the wording you used may leave the impression that we're doing another study. The clerk has stated that isn't the intent of what you read out; you're doing exactly what was suggested. We don't need a time frame from anyone to say we'll have a five-minute study or 30-minute study or an hour.

Madame Desbiens, do you have your hand up?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I would just like to know if we have access to this report. Has it been published and tabled? Can we obtain it?

[*English*]

The Chair: Yes, I think the report is from 43-2 and it was tabled in the House. I think it was Mr. Hardie who tabled it, and I don't know whether or not there was an official response back, because, of course, Parliament was dissolved.

That, basically, is all it's asking—that we have a chance to retable it in the House and get an official government response to the actual study. I do agree with Ms. Barron that there was a lot of time spent on it. It was a pretty detailed study, and well participated in, and a good report at the end of the day.

Yes, that can be tabled and we will now deal with any debate or question for Mr. Arnold and his proposed amendment.

All right, Mr. Morrissey, go ahead.

Mr. Robert Morrissey: Could you clarify what it is we're voting on?

The Chair: I'll ask Mr. Arnold to read it out again and if he has a short explanation, to do that as well.

Go ahead, Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Mr. Chair, I'll just withdraw my amendment and we can move directly to voting on the motion.

The Chair: All right. We'll go to a vote and the motion by Ms. Barron. I'm sure everybody has their copy now in both official languages.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 11; nays 0)

The Chair: The motion is carried. Obviously, let that be a lesson to everyone. If they want to get a motion carried unanimously, make sure it's a little bit confusing and everybody will just say yea.

Yes, we have Mr. Perkins.

• (1220)

Mr. Rick Perkins: I'm sure this won't be repeated the exact same way I did it last time, but I'll do my best.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: There was some discussion earlier about what Mr. Perkins was proposing for the way forward.

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Perkins: I'd like to move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), and following the study on Mr. Arnold's motion with regard to science and DFO, the committee conduct the following studies, in the following order, at dates to be determined in the future: the study by pinnipeds proposed by Mr. Small; the study on corporate concentration and foreign ownership proposed by Madame Desbiens; the study on IUU proposed by Mr. Zimmer; the study on safety at sea proposed by myself and Mr. Perkins; and then finally the study on small craft harbours proposed by Madame Desbiens.

The Chair: Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: I support the motion. Just for clarity for me and for us, I think I understand that we might not know the exact date or even month that a study starts or when it finishes, but I think we still need to hear from the clerk on what she has in her sequence. Just for those of us who have seen our motions passed in committee, it would give us a bit of confidence that they're on record and part of the schedule, but again with some of those details forthcoming. It would just give us confidence that they've been heard.

Thank you.

The Chair: Okay, perhaps I could make a suggestion. Could we ask maybe the clerk to provide us, in an email, a list of the studies that are scheduled to start at certain dates or have so many meetings? Then at the end of that, don't attach dates to Mr. Perkins's motion, but just list the studies in the order that they will be done on our agenda as we see fit as a committee to fit them in along the way.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: I think that's what we're looking for, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. I thought if the clerk just read it out now, all of us still wouldn't get it, and I'm probably the one who wouldn't get it. But at least, then, by getting it in an email, if we want to print it off or if we want to pin it up on a wall somewhere, we have it, and we can hold the committee to it as best we can.

Is that all right?

Madame Desbiens.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: My microphone didn't open at the right time. It is open when it should be closed and it is closed when it should be open. I'm sorry, Mr. Chair.

I might have suggested an amendment to Mr. Perkins' proposal, but I no longer intend to.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Kelloway, you have your hand up.

Mr. Mike Kelloway: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

There are just a couple things.

When I look at the format that we had proposed, it was one for one: one Liberal study, one Bloc study, one NDP study, the Conservatives. Then, in the intermediate or near term, we would have our study done.

There's a song by Queen that says "I want it all, and I want it now." That's what this motion seems to be. It seems like we're flooding this all with a lot of Conservative studies. I think it impedes us from being able to be flexible, nimble, adaptable and responsive to other things that might come up.

I don't get the sense of collegiality here in terms of working with each other to get studies from each of the parties out. When I look at what was originally proposed—the one study, the second study, the third study, the fourth study, and then we would certainly have enough there for a calendar to be put out, and then to work collec-

tively to repeat that cycle—that seems to be collegial. It seems to be fair; it seems to enable us to not be chained by things that might come up that we might not be able to address.

That's not to say these studies are not important. Of course, they're important. Every one of them is important. However, I think it impedes our ability to be flexible should something, God forbid, happen on the west coast and we want to be able to double and triple down our efforts in terms of doing a study.

This particular motion really handcuffs us in a lot of ways. If we go the original route, it provides greater flexibility and adaptability and it's also fair. I think that's what Canadians are looking for us to do in this Parliament.

• (1225)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kelloway.

All I will say is that, during committee business, motions can come forward to set the schedule as we intended to do today. Yes, it might seem heavy-handed from one side to the other, depending on where you sit, but I can't influence committee members to put forward studies just to get them in as one, one, one. Everybody had an equal opportunity to some degree to present motions of study, to give notice of motions of study. If there are more one-sided studies, then it suits somebody else. We can't control that.

If these are the ones we're looking at doing, they're the ones we're looking at doing. If there's nothing else in the docket to add for another party, regardless of who it might be, I don't control that.

One thing we do is control our schedule as we go. As we know, there are no dates assigned to these during order of preference to be done. Other than that, it's the will of the committee, unless there's something else somebody wants to present to fit in somewhere.

On that, I'll go to people who had their hands raised. First I'll go to Ms. Barron, who has been waiting.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you, Chair. That's helpful clarification around the process undertaken around this.

I'm just trying to wrap all these details around in my brain. First and foremost, the motions were passed so that these studies are now in the queue per se to be looked at. I have some apprehensions of us setting a clear schedule of priorities from now up until 2023 and beyond, because I do think it will bind us and prevent us from being able to respond to issues as they are occurring. I think of the spot prawn issue, which was very timely and pertinent; we would have had the opportunity to talk about that.

I agree with us setting priorities as we've done with the motions currently. I don't agree with us setting priorities for all the motions that have been brought forward. I realize it's not realistic to go one to one, because it does depend on what has been brought forward, but I also think it's not realistic for us to set those priorities so far in advance and therefore take away the flexibility for us to respond to issues as required and be able to add studies that are perhaps more timely than others.

The Chair: Just to respond to that, Ms. Barron, I think you'll find things change here on the fly. We can all set whatever schedule we like and it is going to change as we go forward. There is nothing etched in stone in anything we are doing as a committee because it can be thrown off the rails and turned upside-down and inside-out in five minutes.

• (1230)

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Could I ask a question around that then? What would be the intention of this motion if, in fact, we can change everything on a moment's notice? Could I understand a little bit more around the intention of having these motions set?

The Chair: They can change. For example, if there was some piece of legislation done through the Minister of Fisheries, that takes precedence over everything this committee is doing. An emergency might come up on the west or east coast or somewhere else that requires the committee to look at something immediately. Some member may bring it forward and ask for unanimous consent or a majority of consent to do something different at some given time. If it's voted to do that, the schedule changes.

Like I said, it's not etched in stone. This is a guide that we'll try to follow as best we can, but I learned quickly that it doesn't stay as it was intended.

The Chair: Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins: While I'm new to the committee and there are more experienced committee members here, I'd like to start by saying to Mr. Kelloway that, of course, we are collegial. That's why we adopted your motion with the order in which you proposed it. To make a statement that we're not being collegial is unfair.

Second, in terms of the questions about flexibility, we know, for example, that in the minister's mandate letter she's been asked to table a bill and legislation on amendments to the Oceans Act. We expect legislation, Mr. Chair, as you have said, and that takes precedence over anything—even the first motion.

In the order of collegiality we are always open to amending the committee's order of study because of legislation, other urgent things, or as the ground shifts over time and something comes up. Obviously we can't predict even past June what we all will be facing, so that flexibility is always there, as Mr. Kelloway says.

In the interests of collegiality, as I understand, that's the way the committee has operated in the past and this motion does not change that.

The Chair: Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: I just want to respond to Ms. Barron.

My colleagues are tired of me saying this, but I'm a former chair of a committee as well.

This doesn't in any way impede a committee from deciding what its future holds.

The reason we are wanting to make sure that what we had already passed is recognized and respected as such is that we all supported the motions that Mr. Perkins referred to in the schedule. Again, as the chair so eloquently said—I couldn't say it any better—the committee can decide to do whatever it wants in the future.

This doesn't impede the committee from making changes if necessary.

It is just kind of a signal that your studies have been heard and they are on the schedule, but again it's always up to the committee to decide what changes it would propose. It doesn't really hamstring us in any way.

The Chair: I'll now go Mr. Hardie.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In response to Mr. Perkins and Mr. Zimmer, this motion then is really not necessary. What they are doing, of course, is signalling to us the priorities that they put on the number of motions that they put forward.

I don't think committing to a schedule—even though it could be changed—is necessary at this point. After we conclude Ms. Barron's study that's already on the schedule we've agreed to and before we launch into Mr. Arnold's, we could certainly sit down then and look at the rest of the calendar for the spring session and decide what comes next. We need to have that discussion not just based on emergent things that come up, but to ensure that the voices of all of the participants in this committee are heard in a reasonable balance and fair order.

I don't really see the value of Mr. Perkins' motion except to signal to us what's important to the Conservative Party. Those are good studies and we can get to them in turn, but they shouldn't necessarily stack up and dominate our schedule going forward for the remainder of this year.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Hardie.

Go ahead, Mr. Hanley.

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Thank you.

I want to add to Mr. Kelloway's and Mr. Hardie's comments, which I heartily agree with. I just want to say that if there was an intention at the beginning to set the calendar for the next two or three years, then I think there would have been a different approach to putting all motions on the table at the time, to be sorted appropriately. I do think committing to a schedule means that in order to have another motion in place that may not be an emergency motion but that may be an important motion, one would then have to change or undo a process.

Respectfully, I think there are other motions being conceived at this time. One motion is very dear to me and to my constituency. I think Canadians expect a collaborative approach. Following what we have set for the next four studies, I believe...and it's great to know these fine studies, and the priority the Conservative Party puts to them, but there are other studies as well to consider in the near future.

So I certainly would not support either the text or the intent of this motion.

Thank you.

• (1235)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Small.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): I'd like to speak in support of MP Perkins' motion. I'm sure the way he has that schedule laid out there reflects consultations with industry stakeholders.

I think we should soon have a vote. We can just imagine, if we're paying the salaries here today...

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Zimmer.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: I want to speak to some of the comments made by our Liberal colleagues. Quoting “two or three years” in advance—that's hardly the case. This is just putting the committee's studies in the fall. There will be lots of room in the future. Saying that is just inaccurate. We're talking about setting up the schedule so that we have a good picture of what this year is going to bring.

I think we've been working collegially with all our colleagues and have shown support and goodwill toward all members of the committee. I would just put that on the record.

Thank you.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is just a clarification on one of the comments earlier. There are five studies, I believe, in the first motion that we passed, and that's the order in which the committee is going to study them.

I'd like to raise a point of order, Mr. Chair. I'd like to notify you that we don't have unanimous consent to end the meeting at 1 p.m., since we started at least 15 minutes late today. I propose that the committee extend its sitting time to finish our business to 1:30 p.m.

The Chair: You're asking for an extension of 30 minutes?

Mr. Rick Perkins: That's because of the delay today, at the beginning.

The Chair: Because of the 15-minute delay—

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes—and where's we're going here.

The Chair: Some of the delay was that we were waiting on members to show up.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Yes, I know that some were not here, but most of it was because of translation.

The Chair: I will check with the clerk to see if—

Mr. Rick Perkins: But you don't have unanimous consent, I'm just saying right now, to conclude at 1 p.m.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Serge Cormier: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, first of all, the meeting was not delayed by 30 minutes. I think it was more like five or 10 minutes, or maybe 15 minutes at the most. I'm not in Ottawa, but I'm pretty sure there were some members maybe not on time, just as Mr. Perkins said.

We'd better check to see how much time we were delayed. It wasn't 30 minutes, for sure.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've almost lost my train of thought here.

On the order of precedence for these studies to be done and the study motion put forward by Mr. Zimmer, I believe this may be the third time this motion has been put forward. It's been delayed by elections and other procedures that have taken place. It's high time that this motion was studied. It's been identified in multiple parliaments now. I'd like to make sure that it is recognized as a priority.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

There are no further hands up on the motion by Mr. Perkins on the order in which he would like to see us continue with studies once we get through the ones that we now have assigned to the calendar.

• (1240)

Mr. Rick Perkins: I do have the other point of order motion on the floor without unanimous consent.

The Chair: We have to have a vote to extend. I understand that, because normally I would ask for unanimous consent to extend the meeting, but first I'll ask the clerk if we know if staff and officials are available.

To your question, Mr. Perkins, you can't propose a motion on a point of order. When the clock hits one o'clock, you can then propose a motion to ask for unanimous consent to extend.

Mr. Rick Perkins: My understanding is you can raise a point of order and remove unanimous consent to adjourn at any time during the meeting.

The Chair: It's still a motion. You can't raise a motion, from my understanding, on a point of order.

I read that this past week in that big, fat green book that we're all told to study.

Mr. Small.

Mr. Clifford Small: Point of order.

Thick book.

The Chair: It is a thick book. It's green though.

Mr. Clifford Small: Remove the word “fat”, please.

The Chair: Anyway, we'll go to the motion we were dealing with on the actual proposed schedule.

Tina, would you do a recorded division, please?

The Clerk: Could I just confirm, please, that this is the motion by Mr. Perkins to add—

An hon. member: On the order.

The Clerk: On the order, so pinnipeds, foreign ownership, safety at sea and then small craft harbours. Is that correct?

Mr. Rick Perkins: It was pinnipeds, corporate concentration and foreign ownership, IUU, safety at sea and then small craft harbours.

The Clerk: Thank you for clarifying.

Mr. Rick Perkins: We could, in the order of collegiality, add, if you wanted to, the previous motion on climate change that was proposed by the government at the end of that.

The Chair: That's doing an amendment. Are you doing an amendment? No. Okay.

(Motion negated: nays 7; yeas 4 [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Who wants to go next?

Mr. Zimmer.

• (1245)

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Getting back to my original question, I would like the clerk to recognize that at some point this study will be on the calendar.

That's all I need to hear. I'm not asking for dates, as in the previous motion. It would have been great if it had passed, but just for certainty. You did mention the first part of the schedule. The motions are passed to study these different topics. Is that part of the calendar?

The Clerk: I don't have specific dates for the studies. Based on Mr. Perkins' motion that was just adopted—and this is following the motion that was adopted by Mr. Arnold—I have the study on pinnipeds and then your study on IUU. After that it's foreign ownership by Ms. Desbiens, then Mr. Perkins' safety at sea, followed by Ms. Desbiens again, on small craft harbours.

That's the list.

I'm sorry. This is what was just defeated.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: So noted.

Thank you, Madam Clerk, for clarifying that they are in the queue, so to speak, but we just don't have specific dates attached yet.

The Clerk: Those motions are adopted.

The Chair: Mr. Perkins, you wanted to discuss extending the meeting. We seem to be out of any ideas now and we have 15 minutes left.

Mr. Rick Perkins: If there is no further motion, I'm happy to go to lunch.

The Chair: Perfect.

Mr. Serge Cormier: Let's move to adjourn.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Cormier.

The meeting is adjourned.

Thank you everyone. Thank you, Tina.

Thanks to the clerk, the translation team and staff for your participation today.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Mel Arnold: I was trying to get my hand in before you moved to adjourn.

Is there an agenda for Thursday this week?

The Chair: Ignore that quick adjournment. Say it didn't happen.

I'm sorry.

Mr. Mel Arnold: I did have my hand up before you said “adjourned”.

• (1250)

The Chair: I wanted to identify that we need the deadline for witnesses on the seafood labelling. I suggest 5:30 p.m. on Thursday. We also need a deadline for dissenting opinions, if there are any.

I'll recess for a couple moments to let you guys have a little conversation.

• (1250)

(Pause)

• (1250)

Mr. Rick Perkins: That's fine with me.

Could we get a little bit of clarification on the second part of what you said, about deadlines for dissenting? We haven't even started the study, so we don't know if there's a dissenting opinion or not.

The Chair: Is it all right if we don't set a deadline for the dissenting opinion?

The Clerk: Three reports were readopted by the committee on January 20. Standing orders provide the option for members to file dissenting or supplementary opinions. A deadline, as stated in the standing orders, must be set by the committee to receive those. After that, the report may be presented to the House. This would also apply to the motion adopted today by Ms. Barron.

Mr. Rick Perkins: That's not about the new study we're about to do; it's about the ones that are being retabled. I understand, then.

The Chair: My note didn't clarify that.

Do we need the deadline set now for dissenting reports on those? They've already been presented to the House and we going to readopt them, are we?

The Clerk: If there's no interest, you could set a deadline of today.

The Chair: Okay. We'll set a deadline of tomorrow at 4:00 p.m. How's that?

Madame Desbiens, you have your hand up.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Actually, I didn't understand the last intervention about the reports and studies adopted on division, which we could review.

I am sorry, Mr. Chair, but I did not understand. We need to be clear, because otherwise we won't get anywhere.

I had understood that Mr. Hardie's motion on the lower Fraser River would be dealt with first. Now, we were talking about dealing with the labelling issue on Thursday.

I would like to better understand what is going on. Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Now I'm confused as well.

Mr. Serge Cormier: Mr. Chair, on Ms. Desbiens' point, I think what was not clear for her was.... Like we said, the number one study will be Mr. Hardie's and then her study. I think what she wants to know is the deadline for the list of witnesses and everything.

[*Translation*]

Is that what you wanted to know, Ms. Desbiens?

Mrs. Carline Desbiens: Yes, that sounds like what I asked for. There were also the old dissenting reports linked to an old study. I didn't catch what was being talked about at all, but it seems to me—

I want to know the deadline for filing my witness list. That is very important. I was under the impression that the committee was going to conduct the labelling study on Thursday. So I want some clarification on that.

Also, I would like to have clarification on the dissenting reports from the past study. Are they retabled as they were or do we need to...? I didn't quite understand what that was about.

[*English*]

The Chair: I'll try to answer that for you, Madame Desbiens.

On Thursday, of course, we're starting Mr. Hardie's study on the effects of the flooding on infrastructure, salmon and whatnot. We're having the officials in, so we don't need to have a witness list for that right now. According to Mr. Hardie, it's to talk to the officials. It will give us time for questioning and whatnot for what he wants to do on Thursday with his study.

For the dissenting opinions around the three reports that we're going to readopt in the House, they wanted to know a deadline. I understood from everybody here in the room that we're readopting studies that were previously done and naturally, if there were any dissenting reports on those, they would have been done when they were done the first time. If anybody wanted to add a dissenting report to it, we would set a deadline. Nobody seemed to have one, so we said we'd make it four o'clock or 5:30 tomorrow just to deal with that piece of information that we need to deal with in order to retable these motions back in the House again.

Mr. Perkins.

• (1255)

Mr. Rick Perkins: I'm sorry. This is confusing to me as well, Madame Desbiens, so I just want to make sure of things.

We are having a meeting this Thursday to have officials on Mr. Hardie's motion, if I heard you correctly. We will also deal with a deadline—I believe you said for this Thursday—for witnesses for that study.

The third thing, for clarification, is the dissenting reports from the previously tabled reports that will be retabled. If there were dissenting reports on that, are they automatically retabled, or do they all have to be separately sent in to you?

The Clerk: Standing Order 108(1)(b) states that a member has the option to file dissenting or supplementary opinions to a report. The three reports that were readopted on January 20 would not include supplementary opinions from the previous session.

The point is that there is still the option to file dissenting and supplementary opinions and the committee needs to set a deadline to file those. There were reports that were readopted on January 20, and again another one today by Ms. Barron. The committee would need to set a deadline for any member to submit those dissenting or supplementary opinions.

Mr. Rick Perkins: For the report Ms. Barron wanted retabled today, were there dissenting reports in the previous Parliament when that report was done? Do we know that?

Mr. Ken Hardie: Mr. Chair, I do believe that Mr. Arnold filed a dissenting report. I could be wrong.

Mr. Rick Perkins: That's the head shaking or agreement I was getting.

The Chair: Mr. Arnold, do you intend to file that again? If you do, I will have to give you a deadline.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Yes, I do.

The Chair: Okay.

I think we're close. We're getting close. What we don't know yet, though, is when that's going to be retabled, right? We don't know the date.

Could we get that dissenting report that's expected as soon as possible, Mel, let's say by next Wednesday at 5 p.m.?

An hon. member: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

The Chair: Okay. Perfect.

As well, I did mention it, and I want to be clear, that the deadline for witnesses on the seafood labelling, even though that's not the one we're doing Thursday, is Thursday at 5:30 p.m. for the list of witnesses. We have to get in touch with those proposed witnesses and make sure they have the proper headsets and whatnot if they're doing it by Zoom. We need some time for that.

Is everybody in agreement?

Go ahead, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Well, could we have a little more time on that one? There's a lot to do in the next 48 hours, between the new study and the deadlines. Maybe sometime next week could be the deadline for the witnesses on the labelling study.

The Chair: How about 5:30 p.m. Monday?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Sure.

The Chair: Okay.

It will be 5:30 p.m. Monday, which is February 7.

The clerk tells me that she needs at least three days to have witnesses prior to the study starting. Can we make it Friday instead of Thursday?

Would Friday at 4 p.m. give you time, Tina? Okay.

So Friday at 4 p.m. is the deadline for witnesses for seafood labelling. Please get them into the clerk. If they are in at 4:01p.m., we won't take them.

Go ahead, Tina.

• (1300)

The Clerk: Could I please confirm dissenting or supplementary opinions for the three reports that were readopted on January 20, as

well as the one that was readopted today, by Ms. Barron, on Pacific salmon? The deadline set for receiving dissenting opinions is tomorrow at 4 p.m. Is that correct? Could I reconfirm the deadline?

Mr. Ken Hardie: Mr. Chair, I believe you said next Wednesday at 5 p.m.

The Clerk: Next Wednesday? And that's for all four, right?

A voice: Yes.

The Clerk: Okay.

Thank you.

The Chair: Seeing no other intervention, the meeting is adjourned.

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