



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

**Nunavut Leadership Forum:
Election of Ministers of the Nunavut Legislative
Assembly**

Official Report

Monday, November 9, 2015

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Members Present:

Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Monica Ell, Mr. Joe Enook, Mr. George Hickey, Mr. David Joanasie, Hon. George Kuksuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Hon. Johnny Mike, Mr. Simeon Mikkungwak, Hon. Paul Okalik, Hon. Keith Peterson, Hon. Paul Quassa, Hon. George Qulaut, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Tom Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Isaac Shooyook, Hon. Peter Taptuna.

>> *Meeting commenced at 19:00*

Prayer

Chairman (Hon. George Qulaut)(interpretation): Good evening, my fellow Nunavummiut, members, ministers, and (interpretation ends) Premier, (interpretation) as well as the visitors. Welcome to the House.

Can you say the opening prayer, please, Mr. Mikkungwak.

>> *Prayer*

Adoption of Agenda

Chairman (interpretation): Do members agree with the agenda that is before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Members have before them the procedures for the Nunavut Leadership Forum. Do members agree that we can proceed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Nominations for Cabinet Positions

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I now open the floor for nominations to the Executive Council. We are filling two seats today. One seat is being filled as a result of the decision of Caucus to adjust the size of the cabinet to nine. The other seat is being filled as a result of the decision of the Member for Netsilik to resign her seat.

I remind members that if you are nominated, you must immediately accept or decline the nomination. Are there any nominations? (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Member for (interpretation) Rankin Inlet, Mr. Tom Sammurtok. I'm sorry. Alexander Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: I would like to nominate the member for Naujaat and Coral Harbour, Steve Mapsalak.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Member for Aivilik, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, do you accept?

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are there any other nominations? Member for Tununiq, Mr. Joe Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, George Hickes.

Chairman: Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. George Hickes, do you accept?

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are there any other nominations? Member for Qamani'tuaq, Mr. Simeon Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate the Member for (interpretation ends) Arviat South, Joe Savikataaq.

Chairman: Member for Arviat South, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, do you accept?

Mr. Savikataaq: Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are there any nominations? (interpretation) Thank you. There are no more nominations. We will now proceed to speeches from candidates. Each candidate has up to 10 minutes to make a speech. The first one will be Mr. George Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Enook, for nominating me. To all members and my constituency in Iqaluit here in Tasiluk, I would like to welcome you to the proceedings.

Colleagues, as the Premier stated on Saturday, cabinet is chosen and members are placed on the Executive Council by the will of the House. I have the utmost respect for the integrity of our role as Members of this Legislative Assembly. I have spoken to many of my constituents, friends, family, and colleagues over the last while, and when asked if I would consider putting my name forward for consideration to join the Executive Council, my answer was consistently no.

My hesitation in doing so was that I felt I was doing a good job in bringing forward concerns and issues on behalf of my constituents and all Nunavummiut. My dedication and commitment to this work is not even close to being done. In the last 24 hours after discussions with colleagues and people with whom I respect, I have come to realize that I

don't need to stop doing that as a member of cabinet. In fact, instead of just bringing focus to issues, I can play an important role in bringing action to solutions to those issues.

I have worked with most of you for more than two years now and you more than anyone outside this building know my work ethic and attention to issues that matter. This will continue no matter what my role is in this House. I will always continue to put my heart into my role in whatever capacity you decide.

Contrary to some political structures, consensus government can be compared to a team sport, and any time I have been a part of a team, I played for the crest on the front of the jersey, not for the name on the back. You know I will carry out these values, whether as a member of cabinet or Regular Caucus, to the absolute best of my abilities.

With that, I leave the decision in your hands. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. You may now make your statement, Member for Aivilik, Mr. Steve Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank Mr. Alex Sammurtok for nominating me for this position.

Also, let me begin firstly with remembering my beloved family in Naujaat whom I am thinking of presently, as well as our extended relatives.

Indeed, I wanted to express my interest in this process due to my belief in having the abilities to succeed in this capacity. I would be able to be professional in conducting my duties as part of the cabinet, in collaborating with the cabinet, and to represent the people of Nunavut honourably. Obviously, I represent two smaller communities in my current role, but I know we have to take into consideration the entirety of Nunavut. I am sincere in wanting to do a good job.

Additionally, if I was to be successful in my efforts to be elected, I would immediately enclose ranks around the group and work hard to develop close working relationships with my staff. This would include working with the various organizations and the issues required to address the working relationships. I would work to the limit of my ability if I were to be chosen in.

There are many items that Nunavummiut are expecting from us and whose expectations we have fallen short of, and this is painfully obvious. I am well aware of it and in my personal self-belief in being able to be a part of a team when deliberating the difficult decisions for all of Nunavut and for all our residents.

With that being the situation, if I were to be elected in this process we are undertaking in Iqaluit, I would use every ounce of my capability to fulfill the responsibilities given to me, as well as the strategic plans and to try to comprehend their purpose. That would be to prepare myself to fully be able to explain and assist my colleagues with. I would also

have an open door policy to any and all of my colleagues for any reason or request for assistance. I also have the desire to serve the public and Nunavut in a large way for every resident.

I am aware that by applying for this position, I would force my family to endure long periods of my absence and though that may be the case, I wouldn't consider it without my wife's support to whom I am extremely grateful for. She is also aware of my capabilities and desires to assist others and lends me her everlasting support. Due to her continual support, I am always thankful for that.

You also know who I am personally and all members here know how hard I can work, and I reiterate my commitment to work hard in any way if I were to be selected.

As well, my family all understand my requirement to travel for long periods in my current role and if I were chosen, they are aware of the greater travel requirements I would face in the upcoming two years of our mandate. That is the way it is and as a family, we have agreed to face this challenge if I am successful, so I have to express my thanks to them all.

Due to these reasons, I am aware of my abilities and of my ability to be part of a team comprising the cabinet and I would deliberate with the cabinet on whatever difficult issue we have to face. I want to assist all the people of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We will go to the next candidate. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Joe Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I would like to thank Mr. Mikkungwak for nominating me. If he didn't nominate me, I wouldn't be a candidate.

Back when we got elected in 2013, I was asked by many people if I would run for minister and I told people, my constituents, and our fellow MLAs here, I said, "No, I just want to be a regular member and learn." Things change in life and after being a regular MLA for two years, I figure I have learned a lot; it gives you experience. I believe it's good to be a regular MLA first because then you feel what it's like on this side. If you go straight to a minister, I believe you have no concept of what it feels like to be a regular MLA.

I have been working with everyone here for two years now, both the ministers and regular MLAs, and people know me and people know what I stand for. I believe everyone should be treated fairly and everyone should be constant in their position and their attitude. Everyone here knows that I'm approachable and if I'm elected as a minister, I still will be approachable; I'm still going to be me.

I believe I don't mind doing the extra work and that shows being on the special committee for education, it was lots of hard work, but I was willing to do it for the betterment of Nunavut. I believe that if our recommendations are followed through by the

government, which I hope to be a part of, then these recommendations will be good for Nunavut.

As a regular MLA, I have worked with everyone on this side, the regular MLAs. I worked with the ministers and the Premier as an MLA on issues that concern my constituency and Nunavut. If I'm elected onto the executive, I will continue to work with the MLAs and I will work with the Premier and the ministers at a different level. I will continue to work hard as a minister and if I'm not elected, as an MLA.

I hope that I will be elected as a minister and I would feel privileged and humbled if I was elected to the Executive Council. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Election for Cabinet Positions

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We will now proceed to voting. The ballots are now being distributed to members and after they have been distributed, I will ask all members to proceed from my left to the voting stations. We will move from Joe to his left and also Mr. Keith Peterson will be the first on the right side and the people on his right will vote after he does, and then we will proceed right down the line. After everyone has voted, I will be the last one to cast my ballot. Please proceed to go and cast your ballots now. Mr. Enook and Mr. Peterson are first.

>>Meeting recessed at 19:15 and resumed at 19:28

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, members, ministers, and (interpretation ends) Premier. (interpretation) Thank you all. I wanted to inform all members here that the two successful candidates for cabinet are Mr. George Hickes and Mr. Joe Savikataaq, who have been elected to serve on the Executive Council. (interpretation ends) Congratulations!

>>Applause

I invite minister-designate, Mr. George Hickes, to say a few words.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They will be a few words. I just want to thank everyone for entrusting me with this responsibility and I promise I won't let you down. Thank you very much.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I now invite Mr. Savikataaq to say a few words.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank all of you for believing in me and voting me in. Like I said in my speech earlier, I will be humbled and I feel privileged that you guys voted me in. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Members, do you want the ballots destroyed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Members, the House will convene at 8:00 p.m. in order to formally consider the appropriate motion. We are adjourned.

>>*Meeting adjourned at 19:30*

