



Province of Newfoundland and Labrador

FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Volume LI

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

HANSARD

Speaker: Honourable Paul Lane, MHA

Monday

November 3, 2025

Members met in the Assembly Chamber on the afternoon of November 3, 2025, for the Election of a Speaker.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise.

The Lieutenant Governor has arrived.

CLERK (Hawley George): Admit Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: It is the wish of the Lieutenant Governor that all present be seated.

CLERK: Members of the House of Assembly:

A proclamation has been issued by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, under the Great Seal of the Province, which reads as follows:

“TO: Kim Hawley George KC, Clerk of the House of Assembly and Kimberley Hammond, Principal Clerk of Proceedings and Bobbi Russell, Principal Clerk of Committees

GREETING

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS a General Election of the Members of the House of Assembly of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador was held on October 14th, 2025;

AND WHEREAS I, as Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, think fit to summon the Fifty-First General Assembly for the dispatch of business and for the Members of the House of Assembly to proceed to elect their choice of Speaker;

NOW THEREFORE I, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, do authorize and direct you, the said Kim Hawley George KC, Kimberley Hammond, and Bobbi Russell, or any of you, to signify to the Members of the said House of Assembly to assemble for the dispatch of business on Monday, November

3rd, 2025, at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, and that it is my pleasure that they should proceed to choose some person to be their Speaker and to present such person for my approbation.”

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise.

(Sergeant-at-Arms escorts Her Honour from the Chamber.)

CLERK: Please be seated.

At the close of nominations for the Office of the Speaker at 4:30 p.m., on Friday, October 31, 2025, one candidate put their name forward.

Accordingly, further to Standing Order 4(4), I declare Paul Lane, Member for the District of Mount Pearl - Southlands, as Speaker for the 51st General Assembly.

(Applause.)

(The Premier and the Leader of the Official Opposition escort the new Speaker to the Speaker's Chair.)

SPEAKER (Lane): Thank you.

This is the point in time where I'm supposed to bring a few brief remarks. The Clerk had underlined the word "brief," which anyone who has served with me over the years knows that that's going to be a challenge in and of itself.

For Members who are new to the House of Assembly and to those in the gallery, what you witnessed here as they were bringing me in, it goes back to an old parliamentary tradition from many years back.

Basically, how it worked was that, in the early days of a House of Assembly or a people's assembly over in England and so on, once the people's House sat, it would be the role of the Speaker to bring forth the discussions that were had in the House. He would bring it forth to the king as to what the people wanted or what the people demanded. Let's just say that there were probably cases back in those days that the

Speaker may have walked in, but he didn't necessarily walk out so hence the tradition of, I guess, pretending that you don't want to hold this particular seat.

I would say to my two colleagues, the Leader of the Official Opposition and the hon. the Premier, that if I actually didn't want this seat, you'd have to bring your whole caucus to drag me in here, but you did a great job.

It is such a pleasure to be here. I just want to take a moment, first of all, to welcome my special guests, that being members of my family, some of my best, I'll say, supporters; leaders in my community, where I've served for many years, and it's an absolute honour to have you all here. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for people like the people in this gallery who have supported me and have led by example through all the great community work that happens.

Special mention, of course, to my wife Charmaine, my two daughters – I'm not normally like this, you know that, b'ys – Chantal and Chelsea. Over the years, it's not easy, as everyone here can attest to. Public life is not easy, and you can't do it unless you have the support of your family. They've been nothing but supportive to me. I love them dearly, and I'm so glad that they're here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: I also want to recognize some of our House of Assembly staff, not just our Table Officers, but there are other House of Assembly staff that are here in the galleries and some of our statutory Officers.

I just want to say that I truly look forward to working with you all. I do truly appreciate the work that you do. A lot of the work that's done is done behind the scenes. The general public don't necessarily see or totally comprehend the work that's done by these staff, but I know all Members here do. We appreciate you. I appreciate you, and I intend on having a very positive relationship as my term as Speaker of the House.

Certainly to our statutory Officers as well, you play such a tremendous role, a very, very important role, and likewise, I want to have a very positive relationship moving forward and to support you in any way I can so that you can do the important work that you do for the people of this wonderful province.

Sometimes, I guess, when you get a little older – more mature, I suppose, in some ways – and you have more years behind you than you think you might have in front of you, you start to reflect on things. I think of the road not taken. I'm sure many of us know that, and we would have learned it in school, and you think about all the twists and turns in your life, decisions you made, decisions you (inaudible) where it lead you.

For a moment, as I reflect on this, I'm kind of thinking of the road taken actually, not the road not taken. I would remiss if I never mentioned this but if you were to ask me many years ago about public life, I probably would have said to you at that time that it wasn't something that I had much knowledge of; certainly never pictured myself involved or standing here today, for sure.

But I made a decision, back a number of years ago, to get involved politically. I had just been new to the community, to Mount Pearl. I moved in and I decided to get involved. I won't get into the reasons but I did, and I can remember for the very first time walking into the old Paint Shop on Topsail Road, the corner of Topsail Road, Commonwealth Avenue and there I met a gentleman who was running in the provincial election by the name of Harvey Hodder.

I hadn't known that gentleman at the time. It was the first time I had ever met him, but I would say I was probably one of his strongest volunteers. We became great friends. He became not just a friend to me, but a mentor to me. I've always taken the learnings that he's taught me and have tried to apply it to how I operate in my community and in this House.

He was a true gentleman. He's pictured here on the wall in the House of Assembly and it really feels like a full-circle moment for me that, all these years, after getting involved in the political process for the very first time, to gain him as a friend and a mentor and, all these years later, I'm actually Speaker of the House of Assembly, the same as my good friend Harvey Hodder.

I only wish – I only wish – he were here today but I feel like he's here in spirit and I hope I can be half the Speaker and person as he was. I truly do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SPEAKER: This, as I've said, is an absolute honour and a privilege for me. We should all be honoured. We should all be privileged.

If you think about it, we have over 500,000 people living in this province and, of those over 500,000 people, they chose 40 of us to represent them. Just think about what an honour and what a privilege that is for each and every single one of us. We owe it to them. We owe it to all of our constituents, not just to represent them well outside of this House of Assembly, not just to be present in the community, not just in ministerial duties – if that's the case if you're a minister – not just in Opposition duties, but in this House of Assembly, in this place which should be a place of respect, a place of dignity and of treating each other with respect. The people of this province expect and deserve no less.

I want to work with all Members in a very fair and unbiased manner. It doesn't matter to me what side of the House that you sit on, we are 40 equals in this House. I will guarantee you, each one of you, you will have my co-operation as required and you will have my respect but, in return, I expect this House and this Chamber to be respected and to be respected at all times.

I understand that we're all passionate people. I understand sometimes in the heat of debate things get said. From time to time, a little bit of levity is not a bad thing, I would say, and I'm sure most Members would

agree, but from an overall perspective in terms of decorum and in terms of how we conduct ourselves in this House of Assembly, we owe it to the people to do it in a professional and a respectful way.

I'm placing the challenge on every Member to do just that. I don't want to be someone who has to come down on Members. That's not my goal. I shouldn't have to quite frankly, but I will ensure we have order in this House of Assembly. I will utilize the tools at my disposal, when required, to make sure that happens.

With that said, again I just want to congratulate all Members on their re-election. I thank everybody for coming, my special guests, those in the gallery. This is, again, an absolute honour and privilege for me. I intend on making sure I do not let my family down, I do not let my constituents down and I do not let the people in Newfoundland and Labrador down in this role. I'm sure everybody else feels the same way.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise.

SPEAKER: Admit Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

(The Speaker leaves the Chair.)

(Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor takes the Chair.)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: It is the wish of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor that all present be seated.

PREMIER WAKEHAM: May it please Your Honour, the House of Assembly, agreeable to Your Honour's command, have proceeded to the choice of Speaker and have elected MHA Paul Lane of Mount Pearl - Southlands to that office and by their direction, I present him for Your Honour's approval.

HER HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT

GOVERNOR (Joan Marie J. Aylward, ONL): On behalf of His Majesty, I assure you of my sense of your efficiency and I do most fully approve and confirm you as Speaker.

SPEAKER: Your Honour, having approved the choice of this House in constituting me as their Speaker, it now becomes my duty in the name of the representatives of His Majesty's loyal subjects, the people of this province, respectfully to claim of Your Honour their accustomed rights and privileges, especially that they shall have freedom of speech in their debates, that they may be free from arrest during their attendance in Parliament and that I, as Speaker, have full access to Your Honour's presence at all reasonable times and that they have confirmed to them all their ancient rights and privileges which have been confirmed to them by Your Honour's predecessors

HER HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT

GOVERNOR: Speaker, I do confirm this House, on behalf of His Majesty, in the enjoyment of all its ancient and undoubted rights and privileges.

I'll have a few words.

Good afternoon. Congratulations to each of you on being elected to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Each of you sits in this hon. House having been selected by the people of your individual districts. Truly, you are an embodiment of our democracy.

Being chosen as a Member of this House is an enormous privilege. Newfoundland and Labrador has a unique and storied past. The deliberations and debates that have unfolded within this Chamber and in the Chambers that preceded it have shaped the province that we hold so dear.

You, the Members of the 51st General Assembly, will help guide the next chapters of our shared history. The responsibilities before you will be substantial.

At the opening of the 45th Parliament of Canada in Ottawa last May, His Majesty King Charles III, said to the assembled Members, Senators and people of Canada: "We owe it to this generation, and those who succeed us, to think and act for the greater good of all."

In this House of Assembly, know that your actions, your deliberations, your votes in this Legislature will impact the people of our province. You are here for the greater good and to honour those who sacrificed for our freedom and our democracy.

In this year of the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote and to hold public office, we are also here to remember the struggle of those women for a more inclusive society. Without that right, this Assembly would be looking very different today. Without that right, some of you wouldn't be here. But because of the steadfast effort and commitment of those leaders, those changers, those doers who worked so hard, that right was granted 100 years ago in 1925, following a unanimous vote in the House of Assembly.

We must never forget that we stand on the shoulders of giants who went before and we must never take for granted the rights and privileges that we enjoy.

As you embark upon this journey, the 51st General Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador, I wish you all the very best and I invite you to continue discussing the issues that we face as a society while modeling open-mindedness, collaboration, empathy and respect. Remember to take time to appreciate this enormous privilege you have been granted: to serve the people of our province in this hon. House of Assembly.

I would also ask that you acknowledge and also appreciate the family members and the family members of the heart that have helped you along the way as you begin this new journey.

Thank you very much.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise.

(Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor leaves the Chamber, the Speaker returns to the Chair.)

SPEAKER: Please be seated.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

L. PARROTT: Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Cape St. Francis, that this House do now adjourn to the call of the Chair.

SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded that this House now do adjourn to the call of the Chair.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

SPEAKER: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

The House is now adjourned.

On motion, the House adjourned to the call of the Chair.