

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
Wednesday, October 10, 2018

MINUTE NO. 20
1:01 p.m. — māmawapiwin náyati room (Room 8)

1. **Present:** Trent Wotherspoon in the chair and members David Buckingham,* Mohamad Fiaz,* Todd Goudy, Don McMorris, Warren Michelson, and Vicki Mowat.

Substituting Members

David Buckingham for Lisa Lambert
Mohamad Fiaz for Randy Weekes

Provincial Auditor's Office

Judy Ferguson, Provincial Auditor
Tara Clemett, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Kelly Deis, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Carolyn O'Quinn, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Trevor St. John, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Kim Lowe, Principal
Jason Shaw, Principal
Rosemarie Volk, Principal
Melissa Yanyu, Senior Manager

Provincial Comptroller's Office

Jenn Clark, Director, Financial Management
Amanda Glowka, Analyst, Financial Management

2. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 1, chapter 18, Economy — Regulating Pipelines.

The following Ministry of Energy and Resources officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Laurie Pushor, Deputy Minister
Bryce Jardine-Pelletier, Executive Director, Field Services
Eric Johansen, Director, Pipeline Regulatory Enhancement Program
Brad Wagner, Director, Liability Management

3. The committee concluded consideration of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 1, chapter 18, Economy — Regulating Pipelines.
4. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 4, Energy and Resources — Regulating Oil, Gas, and Pipeline Industry Incidents.

The following Ministry of Energy and Resources officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Laurie Pushor, Deputy Minister

Bryce Jardine-Pelletier, Executive Director, Field Services
Eric Johansen, Director, Pipeline Regulatory Enhancement Program
Brad Wagner, Director, Liability Management

5. The committee concurred with recommendation 1 made at page 48 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 4, Energy and Resources — Regulating Oil, Gas, and Pipeline Industry Incidents:

We recommend that the Ministry of Energy and Resources document its classification of risk of reported incidents in relation to oil and gas wells, facilities, pipelines, and flowlines, and its expectations on the nature and timing of Ministry involvement.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Energy and Resources has complied with the recommendation.

6. The committee concurred with recommendation 2 made at page 51 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 4, Energy and Resources — Regulating Oil, Gas, and Pipeline Industry Incidents:

We recommend that the Ministry of Energy and Resources set expectations for documenting key activities for regulating reported incidents of spills or other incidents relating to oil and gas wells, facilities, pipelines, and flowlines.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Energy and Resources is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

7. The committee concurred with recommendation 3 made at page 53 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 4, Energy and Resources — Regulating Oil, Gas, and Pipeline Industry Incidents:

We recommend that the Ministry of Energy and Resources consistently inform industry operators that the Ministry is satisfied that industry operators have resolved reported incidents of spills or other incidents relating to oil and gas wells, facilities, pipelines, and flowlines.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Energy and Resources is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

8. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 17, Energy and Resources — Managing Future Cleanup of Oil and Gas Wells.

The following Ministry of Energy and Resources officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Laurie Pushor, Deputy Minister
Bryce Jardine-Pelletier, Executive Director, Field Services
Eric Johansen, Director, Pipeline Regulatory Enhancement Program
Brad Wagner, Director, Liability Management

9. The committee concluded consideration of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 17, Energy and Resources — Managing Future Cleanup of Oil and Gas Wells.

10. The committee recessed from 2:23 p.m. to 2:29 p.m.
11. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 6, Labour Relations and Workplace Safety — Implementing Strategies to Reduce Workplace Injury Rates.

The following Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Richard Murray, Deputy Minister
Ray Anthony, Executive Director, Occupational Health and Safety
Louise Usick, Executive Director, Corporate Services
Dustin Austman, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Minister

12. The committee concurred with recommendation 1 made at page 84 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 6, Labour Relations and Workplace Safety — Implementing Strategies to Reduce Workplace Injury Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety issue its summary offence tickets under occupational health and safety legislation consistent with its policy.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

13. The committee recessed from 2:52 p.m. to 2:55 p.m.
14. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 4, Government Relations.

The following Ministry of Government Relations officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Greg Miller, Deputy Minister
Keith Comstock, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Relations and Northern Engagement
Laurier Donais, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Disaster Recovery
Duane McKay, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Division
Norm Magnin, Director, Property Assessment and Taxation

15. The committee concluded consideration of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 4, Government Relations.
16. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 5, Government Relations — Northern Municipal Trust Account.

The following Ministry of Government Relations officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Greg Miller, Deputy Minister
Keith Comstock, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Relations and Northern Engagement

Laurier Donais, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Disaster Recovery
Duane McKay, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Division
Norm Magnin, Director, Property Assessment and Taxation

17. The committee concurred with recommendation 1 made at page 45 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 5, Government Relations — Northern Municipal Trust Account:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations provide the Northern Municipal Trust Account's annual report to the Legislative Assembly in accordance with timelines set in *The Executive Government Administration Act*.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

18. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates.

The following Ministry of Government Relations officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Greg Miller, Deputy Minister
Keith Comstock, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Relations and Northern Engagement
Laurier Donais, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Disaster Recovery
Duane McKay, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Division
Norm Magnin, Director, Property Assessment and Taxation

19. The committee concurred with recommendation 1 made at page 165 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations give staff guidance on when to investigate changes to assessed property values used in proposing education property tax mill rates.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

20. The committee concurred with recommendation 2 made at page 166 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations document its rationale for decisions made on which education property tax mill rate options to propose.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

21. The committee concurred with recommendation 3 made at page 168 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations document the factors it considered and their impact when making assumptions about growth in assessed property values as part of its determination of education property tax mill rate options.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

22. The committee concurred with recommendation 4 made at page 169 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations formalize its process for confirming the reasonableness of estimated assessed property values used in proposing education property tax mill rates.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

23. The committee concurred with recommendation 5 made at page 171 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations include the impact of potential changes in key assumptions (property growth rates) and more information on economic and social impacts when proposing education property tax mill rate options to decision makers.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

24. The committee concurred with recommendation 6 made at page 172 of the Provincial Auditor's 2017 report volume 2, chapter 24, Government Relations — Proposing Education Property Tax Mill Rates:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations formalize which levels of management need to review and approve proposed education property tax mill rate options, and when.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

25. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 5, Government Relations — Recommending Infrastructure Projects for Funding.

The following Ministry of Government Relations officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Greg Miller, Deputy Minister

Keith Comstock, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Relations and Northern Engagement

Laurier Donais, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Disaster Recovery

Duane McKay, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Division

Norm Magnin, Director, Property Assessment and Taxation

26. The committee concurred with recommendation 1 made at page 64 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 5, Government Relations — Recommending Infrastructure Projects for Funding:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations make publicly available the factors it uses to determine which eligible projects to recommend for federal-provincial infrastructure funding.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

27. The committee concurred with recommendation 2 made at page 67 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 5, Government Relations — Recommending Infrastructure Projects for Funding:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations require an independent review of project rating scores used to select projects to recommend for federal-provincial infrastructure funding.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

28. The committee concurred with recommendation 3 made at page 68 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 5, Government Relations — Recommending Infrastructure Projects for Funding:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations consistently document rationale for key decisions made when recommending infrastructure projects for federal-provincial infrastructure funding.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

29. The committee concurred with recommendation 4 made at page 70 of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 5, Government Relations — Recommending Infrastructure Projects for Funding:

We recommend that the Ministry of Government Relations determine a written strategy for notifying, within a reasonable timeframe, applicants who are unsuccessful in obtaining funding under federal-provincial infrastructure programs.

The committee noted that the Ministry of Government Relations has complied with the recommendation.

30. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 21, Government Relations — Co-ordinating Emergency Preparedness.

The following Ministry of Government Relations officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Greg Miller, Deputy Minister

Keith Comstock, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Relations and Northern Engagement

Laurier Donais, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Disaster Recovery

Duane McKay, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Division

Norm Magnin, Director, Property Assessment and Taxation

31. The committee concluded consideration of the Provincial Auditor's 2018 report volume 1, chapter 21, Government Relations — Co-ordinating Emergency Preparedness.
32. The committee recessed from 3:58 p.m. to 4:01 p.m.
33. The committee considered the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work.

The following Workers' Compensation Board officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Peter Federko, Chief Executive Officer

34. The committee concurred with recommendation 1 made at page 225 of the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work:

We recommend that, for claims requiring recovery and return-to-work plans, Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board consistently record its communications with injured workers, employers, and health care professionals.

The committee noted that the Workers' Compensation Board is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

35. The committee concurred with recommendation 2 made at page 226 of the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work:

We recommend that, for claims requiring recovery and return-to-work plans, Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board actively obtain requested reports (e.g., injury and recovery progress reports) from injured workers, employers, and health care professionals.

The committee noted that the Workers' Compensation Board is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

36. The committee concurred with recommendation 3 made at page 228 of the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work:

We recommend that, for claims requiring recovery and return-to-work plans, Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board verify the completeness and currency of those plans and the agreement of injured worker and related employer with the plan.

The committee noted that the Workers' Compensation Board is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

37. The committee concurred with recommendation 4 made at page 230 of the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work:

We recommend that, for claims with recovery and return-to-work plans, Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board identify and address impediments to timely recovery of injured workers within a reasonable timeframe.

The committee noted that the Workers' Compensation Board is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

38. The committee concurred with recommendation 5 made at page 231 of the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work:

We recommend that Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board educate injured workers, employers, and health care professionals to increase their submission of properly completed injury and progress reports for the return-to-work program.

The committee noted that the Workers' Compensation Board is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

39. The committee concurred with recommendation 6 made at page 232 of the Provincial Auditor's 2016 report volume 2, chapter 31, Workers' Compensation Board — Co-ordinating Injured Workers' Return to Work:

We recommend that Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board track and analyze key information about the quality and timeliness of its return-to-work program.

The committee noted that the Workers' Compensation Board is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

40. It was moved by Mr. Buckingham:

That this committee do now adjourn.

The question being put, it was agreed to.

41. The committee adjourned at 4:27 p.m. to the call of the Chair.