



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hansard Verbatim Report

No. 50 – May 15, 2007



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

Twenty-fifth Legislature

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
2007**

Mr. Elwin Hermanson, Chair
Rosetown-Elrose

Ms. Joanne Crofford, Deputy Chair
Regina Rosemont

Mr. Lon Borgerson
Saskatchewan Rivers

Mr. Ken Cheveldayoff
Saskatoon Silver Springs

Mr. Michael Chisholm
Cut Knife-Turtleford

Mr. Andy Iwanchuk
Saskatoon Fairview

Mr. Kim Trew
Regina Coronation Park

[The committee met at 10:40.]

The Chair: — Good morning, committee members and everyone here at the Public Accounts Committee meeting. We have a different agenda. We are going to consider tabling the second report with the legislature. We have a draft before us that we will review. We've made arrangements for a committee photograph, something that hasn't happened for quite a number of years, and that will occur as well. And not on your agenda but if we want to just maybe briefly discuss when we would deal with subsequent chapters after the session ends, which I understand will be this week, we can do that as well.

Colleagues, it has been tradition in the past, if need be, that the committee would go in camera to discuss the committee report. The Chair is certainly willing to do that if the committee wants to. If the committee would rather go through the Public Accounts Committee second report on the record, certainly that's fine as well. And I certainly don't have a problem with that. I don't think there's too much that's of controversy in the report. It's a pretty straightforward report. I think it's complete. We trust it's complete. So I am at the will of committee members to do as you please.

We will deal with the first item, consideration of the second report. Mr. Borgerson.

Mr. Borgerson: — Well I'm a believer in tradition, Mr. Chair, so I'll move that we go in camera for consideration of the report.

The Chair: — Okay. There's a motion that we go in camera for consideration of the report. Is there a seconder? I guess we don't need a seconder. All in favour? That's carried. All right, we will go in camera.

[The committee continued in camera.]

The Chair: — All right, colleagues, we are resuming our Public Accounts Committee meeting. We have had some deliberation on the second report by this committee, the report to the legislature, and there was consensus around the table that the report is accurate and complete. For that reason then I would entertain a motion. Ms. Crofford.

Ms. Crofford: — I will move:

That the draft second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

The Chair: — All right, we have a motion to adopt and report the second report of the Public Accounts Committee. Mr. Borgerson.

Mr. Borgerson: — And I would add for the record what I also said in camera — our appreciation to Ms. Woods for the fine work in putting all of this together. I also will take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. Chair, for your good work, and the Deputy Chair as well for steering us through quite a lot of productive work.

I notice that . . . I would also acknowledge that there's been good work in terms of the officials. Pretty well all the recommendations here have had progress or compliance, and as I read through it I see that there has been good progress across government.

So anyway, kudos to you, Mr. Chair, and to Ms. Woods and to the Deputy Chair and to my fellow committee members.

The Chair: — Are there any other comments to the motion? Mr. Cheveldayoff.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to echo those comments made by Mr. Borgerson. I'd like to congratulate Ms. Woods on putting together a fine document. I think it's an accurate depiction of the work that we accomplished this year, which is substantial. And also I'd like to echo the comments to you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the work that you've done with this committee. I've been on the committee for a couple of years now, and I felt I've learned more about government, and it's helped me do my job outside of this committee as well. So thank you and to the Deputy Chair as well.

I can't forget the deputy Chairs. That's how this committee works, and I think there's a couple of individuals that have served as deputy Chairs while I've been on this committee, so thanks once again. And I feel it's an important part of the overview process of government, and I think we are making progress. We are doing our job. And I had a chance to talk about that yesterday with the media that I do think we are moving in the right direction. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Cheveldayoff. Further comments? Seeing none, if the Chair could be permitted I would like to thank my colleagues on the committee for their work over the past year, faithful attendance by most members, or all members actually with a few substitutions. Many times we had visits from other members, but still the accredited members of the committee were present. And I want to thank you for the co-operative work that you've done in allowing the committee to get through so much material. The Chair has encouraged that we stay current, and through the co-operation of both government members and opposition members, we have been able to do that.

At this time I'd also like to thank, even though they're not here, officials from the various departments who we've contacted and for the most part have co-operated so that we could have the proper officials here at the proper time. I also want to thank the Provincial Auditor and his many staff members who have appeared before our committee. They've done a great job. We particularly appreciate the way they're able to concisely report the work of each chapter and allow us time to delve into the areas that we really wanted to get into. That means a lot to us.

And I also want to thank the comptrollers for being here. Every once in a while we have questions about Finance department policy and how they view the world, and we appreciate Mr. Paton and Mr. Bayda being here on a regular basis.

And lastly but certainly not least, I want to also thank Ms.

Woods for the excellent support she's been to this committee. If the Chair ever has a question he doesn't know the answer to, he certainly knows who to ask, and it's the Clerk. And the Clerk always has the answer, and it's always the right answer. So we want to thank you very much for the excellent work you've done on behalf of the committee.

[The committee adjourned at 11:03.]

That being said, I think we have a motion on the floor, and if there is no more discussion — and I believe there isn't — I would call the question. All in favour of the motion to adopt the report? That's carried unanimously.

All right, that takes us to the last item on the agenda. But I think before we get to that, because I think we'll probably conclude the formal part of the meeting, there was some discussion in camera about dates for our next committee meeting after the end of the session. Some thought about some dates in June. I think June 18 and 19 were thrown out. Should we pursue those dates, or are there other . . . You don't want to pursue those dates? I think that was considered before you arrived, that's why you weren't aware. Okay so the 18th and 19th is not a good time, Mr. Borgerson.

Mr. Borgerson: — I'll just propose that we'll let the Deputy Chair know the available dates that we have.

The Chair: — All right.

Mr. Borgerson: — And the steering committee can find suitable dates.

The Chair: — All right. Ms. Crofford and I will try to determine a date that suits us all. And now that the auditor has another volume out, of course we've got to push to clean up the remaining work in the old one so that we in fact stay current. I believe that is everything. I think that we can adjourn the meeting and then go to the photo session. Ms. Crofford.

Ms. Crofford: — Well I just think it would be good if we could get this date thing maybe resolved this afternoon because it's very hard to hold all of June open just in case. So let's try to really get to our calendars and look at June while we're still all together.

The Chair: — Okay so if . . .

Ms. Crofford: — We'll meet and figure out which ones work for us, and then we'll give them to you and you guys can . . .

The Chair: — All right. Okay we will try to determine before the House breaks as to what dates are available. Hopefully we'll figure it out today . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Are you on the Economy Committee because they are meeting all that week?

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Is it all that week? I am on the committee, but my attendance is not required at every day at every meeting so . . .

The Chair: — Okay. We will consider all those things, and we will determine as a steering committee when we'll hold the next meeting. Nothing else? All right, I declare the meeting adjourned. Thank you very much.