

**The Chair:** — We'll get started now this morning, as you see before us our agenda. First on the paper is to consider the draft of our second report of our Public Accounts Committee. And as is the tradition of considering these draft proposals, I'm told that we usually do so in camera. So if there would be somebody who would at this time place such a motion forward, then we could get underway in terms of looking through this draft.

So it's been moved by Mr. Thomson that we go in camera to consider the draft proposal of this second report of this Standing Committee on Public Accounts. Is that agreed? Carried.

**The committee continued in camera.**

**The Chair:** — So getting back to the balance of our agenda and consideration of regular meeting times, I've spoke with a number of members of the committee in the past while, and it seems that Tuesday meetings perhaps might suit us best in terms of other timetables that we're trying to keep. There's no conflict with, for example, with the Crown Corporation Committee meetings that take place on Thursdays if we stay on the Tuesdays and with the various caucuses meetings as well.

So I'd like to hear some other ideas at this point in time, but failing that I would just propose that we keep our regular meeting times during in session as weekly on Tuesdays from 9:30 until 11 or 11:30. So if somebody might want to make any comment about that. Whether we'd shorten it up to the 11 o'clock rather than 11:30 and have them on a weekly basis or would you prefer to keep them 9:30 until 11:30?

**Ms. Stanger:** — I would prefer to have it from 9 to 11 because we have caucus at 12:15 so it's really hard to go all the way to 11:30 unless . . . I could do that if you really insist but it would be better from 9:30 to 11.

**The Chair:** — Could I just . . . from 9:30 to 11 is what . . . okay.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — I guess I would like to have a little bit of flexibility and I know that we'll always have enough to fill an agenda but I think if we could have the time frame 9:30 to 11:30 to accommodate finishing something. But if we exceed that, there's natural closure at 11. I don't think we should be, you know, absolutely nailed to our chairs always. I would like us to use the time well and be expedient in getting things over. So I think the combined thing might be in order.

**The Chair:** — So if there's no further comment then . . .

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Well I think there's some suggestion from this side of the room that they're interested in Thursdays at this same time period. Not in addition to, but rather than. That's what I'm hearing from them.

**The Chair:** — Oh, would any members of the committee that have that idea, would they care to mention it at this time?

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Maybe I wasn't hearing that.

**Mr. Jess:** — I would prefer Thursday, but . . .

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Is there a majority here that would like it on Thursday?

**Ms. Stanger:** — I don't care. Tuesday or Thursday.

**The Chair:** — How about a quick show of hands? Tuesday, is that the preference of the group?

**Ms. Haverstock:** — It really wouldn't matter that much to me but Ms. Stanger kind of put them in my book already. With the exception of May 6.

**The Chair:** — I know personally I've built the rest of my schedule around it — the Tuesday — as well. It suits myself the best.

**Mr. Pringle:** — Well I'm just . . . (inaudible) . . . notion, but it doesn't matter.

**The Chair:** — Tuesdays it is. So could I have somebody then move that the committee will meet each Tuesday from 9:30 until 11:30 for the remaining of the sitting days of the session? That's carried.

So if we can now get on to what future business we intend to tackle in our upcoming meeting next Tuesday. We've had some discussion surrounding the fact that some of the remnants of the spring '96 report in fact could be or would be better dealt with in conjunction with the '97 report, given that some of the matters that were brought up or that remain in the '96 report have in fact been since resolved and so noted in the '97 report; or else they're repeated again in the '97 spring report. So if the committee wishes, we might consider to take a look at the fall '96 report first or move into the two spring reports concurrently.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Just a question and then a comment. I thought . . . in the list of outstanding business I thought that we had dealt with Social Services in its entirety. Is that not accurate? I'm guessing that it probably isn't accurate, but I thought we had because there's references to it in our report even. And I thought we dealt with all the recommendations because we were doing it concurrent with the spring '96 report, I understood

**The Chair:** — If the Provincial Auditor would make a comment.

**Mr. Strelloff:** — Members, I recommend you move to the '96 fall report, because the items in the '96 spring report that you haven't addressed are either fixed or are brought forward in our spring 1997 report. And that includes if there's anything related to the Social Services as well. I can't . . .

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Yes, just really I have no fixed opinion on this still. I thought that the natural flow would be to go through the list of unfinished issues in spring 1996, and where there was duplication in spring 1997, address those. Then that way you

would have finished 1996 in its entirety in the spring, and then move to the fall, and then finish off the spring '97 wherever there was a duplication. But I think, do whatever works the best, I don't . . . doesn't matter to me at all.

**The Chair:** — Any other members of the committee have some thoughts about this, as to how we approach it?

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Well I would like the Provincial Auditor's opinion on what would be most expeditious.

**The Chair:** — If you would maybe just elaborate a little bit more on that.

**Mr. Strelieff:** — Members, remember in the past year we've tried to catch up a lot, quickly, and we went through a lot of different reports, trying to go to the most current report. And we've looked at it internally in our office and think that if you move to the fall of '96 report, that gets you to a more current report. And then again if there are items that have not been addressed in the 1996 spring report, they either have been fixed or they are included in the '97 report.

So with a view of trying to get you to the most current report as quickly as possible, we thought that moving to the '96 fall report would be the most expeditious. And as we move through the '97 spring report, if we want to pull you back in terms of history as to where the issue started, we will do that. And if it started in the spring report of '96, we would do that.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Will we have . . . if we go fall '96, spring '97, and deal with the spring '97, and after the completion of spring '97, will we have then completed all of the outstanding issues in spring '96 as well?

**Mr. Strelieff:** — Yes. Yes.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Okay. Okay, well that makes sense to me.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Pringle, you had a question?

**Mr. Pringle:** — Well I think that's just been answered. My question was, I suppose technical, in that we have to sign the spring '96 report off, don't we? Don't you think, as a committee?

**The Chair:** — If you'd refer to that draft proposal on line 18, we could change the wording to "have concluded."

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Well I don't think we can because we have not concluded it yet. And won't, apparently, for some time yet.

**Mr. Pringle:** — Mr. Chair, I was just trying to understand the process myself. We have to formally sign off each report, right? Like spring '96, fall of '96? We have to sign them off formally, don't we?

**The Chair:** — So in a subsequent report we would be addressing that. So if we could move along then, having heard the auditor's opinions on how to proceed, and if anyone else of the committee has any other ideas they'd like to express at this

time.

But I'd just throw this out for discussion, that would we consider to engage the auditor in developing a framework, as he has in the past, as far as how we would approach looking at the fall 1996 report. Or is this something that the committee would prefer be left to the Chair and Vice-Chair to establish an agenda from meeting to meeting?

**Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Chair, I suggest that the steering committee should meet and work out a work plan for us.

**The Chair:** — Okay.

**Ms. Stanger:** — The Chair and Vice-Chair.

**The Chair:** — So to expedite the process then in the meantime, for the next Tuesday's meeting, would we want to take a look now and consider and decide what we would like to have on our next week's agenda then?

**Mr. Sonntag:** — I don't have the report here.

**The Chair:** — If the committee would prefer, we can — through the steering committee — we could arrive at that next week's agenda as well, if that would be your preference.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — I would think logically you and I, and whoever wants to, we'd come to the conclusion that we'll just sort of run the book and go through the book.

**The Chair:** — There might be some particular burning issues for some members of the committee. If they wish to show that, express that right now.

**Ms. Stanger:** — We should let the two of you decide that.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Do you have any comments about that?

**Mr. Strelieff:** — No. It's up to you. I have . . . (inaudible) . . . other sessions from beginning to the end.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — Boy oh boy. Well I don't know if they want to all . . .

**Mr. Thomson:** — I'm sure there must be an exciting chapter in the highway revolving fund together we can review.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — That would seem logical to me as well.

**Ms. Haverstock:** — Well let's be logical and throw everything off whack.

**The Chair:** — I don't think that as a committee that we can ever get enough of topics like understanding the finances of government. So I certainly would agree with the balance of the committee on that. So if that is the case then . . .

**Mr. Strelieff:** — What we will do is be prepared to go into chapters 1 and 2 for next meeting.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — That's good. That will not require any witnesses obviously, for 1 and 2.

**Mr. Strelloff:** — You may want to have an official at the table who might be able to address whether there should be a complete plan. I'm not sure which officials that will be.

**The Chair:** — Just one other item is that we also, just so the rest of the committee is aware, we have two reports of the Provincial Auditor to deal with additional to the spring and fall reports that we have before us. And one is the *Report of the Provincial Auditor* on Executive Council and SaskPower. And the other one is on the financial statements of Crown agencies.

So again, if it's the wishes of the committee, the steering committee would be making some decision as to when these would be on our agenda, for what future meeting these will come up.

**Mr. Sonntag:** — I'd say for now we should deal with the fall '96 and try and get through that.

**The Chair:** — Having wrapped up all of the business that we had intended to today, I would just like at this point, unless there's anything else . . . Oh, if the Provincial Auditor would . . . just a comment.

**Mr. Strelloff:** — Now that you've approved your report to the Assembly, I'd certainly like to thank you for your support. I look forward to ongoing meetings. And particular thanks to Greg for putting together this report. And once again I think it will make sure that the management of public money continues to improve. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** — I'd just like to add my words of thanks as well to all the work that went into preparing the report. And with that, could I have a motion to adjourn.

**A Member:** — So move.

The committee adjourned at 10:15 a.m.