

## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

**March 28, 2006**

### **MINUTE NO. 30**

**10:30 a.m. - Room 8**

1. **PRESENT:** Mr. Hermanson in the Chair and Members Borgerson, Crofford, Gantefoer\*, Iwanchuk, McMorris\* and Trew.

#### **Substituting Member**

Mr. McMorris for Mr. Cheveldayoff

Mr. Gantefoer for Mr. Chisholm

#### **Provincial Auditor's Office**

Fred Wendel, Provincial Auditor

Judy Ferguson, Deputy Provincial Auditor

Kim Lowe, Manager

#### **Provincial Comptroller's Office**

Chris Bayda, Executive Director, Financial Management Branch

Larry Boys, Manager, Financial Management Branch

2. The following document was tabled:

**PAC 32/25 – Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan:** Correspondence from Fred Wendel, Provincial Auditor to Elwin Hermanson, Chair, re: Parameters of its investigation into the Oyate's Safe House, dated March 21, 2006.

3. The chair advised the committee of two letters he had received regarding the Meadow Lake Pulp mill, which he then tabled:

**PAC 33/25 – Liberal Party of Saskatchewan:** Correspondence from David Karwacki, Leader of the Liberal Party to Elwin Hermanson, Chair, re: request for investigation by Provincial Auditor into Meadow Lake Pulp, dated March 22, 2006.

**PAC 34/25 – Investment Saskatchewan Inc.:** Correspondence from Eric Cline, Minister to Elwin Hermanson, Chair, re: Investment Saskatchewan's 2005 annual report and the inclusion of the Meadow Lake Pulp Limited Partnership in it, dated March 21, 2006.

A discussion ensued and it was moved by Ms. Crofford:

That the letter from Liberal Leader David Karwacki, regarding his letter on auditing Meadow Lake Pulp mill be referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies for response, with a letter to Mr. Karwacki indicating the change.

The question being put, it was agreed to.

4. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2005 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)*. Ms. Ferguson of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Department of Learning officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Bonnie Durnford, Deputy Minister  
Larry Steeves, Associate Deputy Minister  
Rob Cunningham, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Karen Allen, Executive Director, Corporate Services  
Naomi Mellor, Executive Director, Education Finance and Legislative Services  
Brady Salloum, Executive Director, Student Financial Assistance Branch  
Raman Visvanathan, Executive Director, Institutions Branch.  
Nelson Wagner, Executive Director, Facilities Branch  
Trina Fallows, Director, Finance, Corporate Services

5. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-1 made at page 89 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2005 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department Learning should use a department-wide risk assessment to guide the nature and extent of its evaluation activities. The committee noted that the Department of Learning is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
6. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-2 made at page 90 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2005 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that the Department Learning should provide staff with written guidance on situations unique to the Department to help staff avoid conflicts-of-interest. The committee noted that the Department of Learning is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
7. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-1 made at page 91 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2005 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 3)* that management of the Department Learning should review written support (including the method, assumptions, and source of key information used to determine the estimate) for all significant estimates prior to recording them in its financial records. The committee noted that the Department of Learning is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
8. The committee adjourned at 11:47 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 4, 2006.

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Margaret A. Woods  
Committee Clerk

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Elwin Hermanson  
Committee Chair