

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

October 4, 2006

MINUTE NO. 35

9:00 a.m. - Room 8

1. **PRESENT:** Mr. Hermanson in the Chair and Members Borgerson, Cheveldayoff, Chisholm, Crofford, Iwanchuk and Trew.

Other Member

Mr. McMorris

Provincial Auditor's Office

Fred Wendel, Provincial Auditor
Bashar Ahmad, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Judy Ferguson, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Mike Heffernan, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Ed Montgomery, Deputy Provincial Auditor
Rod Grabarczyk, Principal
Kim Lowe, Principal
Jane Knox, Principal
Victor Schwab, Principal
Rosemary Volk, Principal

Provincial Comptroller's Office

Terry Paton, Provincial Comptroller
Chris Bayda, Executive Director, Financial Management Branch

2. The following documents were tabled:

PAC 42/25 Department of Community Resources and Employment: Response to questions raised at the May 16, 2006 meeting of the committee, re: funding to the First Nations Child and Family Services agencies, dated June 15, 2006.

PAC 43/25 Department of Finance: Reporting of public losses for the period from April 1, 2006 to June 30, 2006, dated August 17, 2006.

3. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 2 (Health) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)*. Mr. Heffernan of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

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

Witnesses

John Wright, Deputy Minister
Lauren Donnelly, Assistant Deputy Minister
Bonnie Blakley, Executive Director, Workforce Planning Branch
Ted Warawa, Executive Director, Finance & Administration Branch
Rod Wiley, Executive Director, Regional Policy Branch
Garth Herbert, Financial Management Consultant / Internal Auditor, Finance & Administration Branch
Lynn Digney-Davis, Chief Nursing Officer, Workforce Planning Branch
Jill Raddysh, Masters of Public Administration Intern Student

4. The committee concurred with recommendation 2-1 made at page 28 of Chapter 2 (Health) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that the Department of Health should present information on significant shortfalls or surpluses in human resources in its health sector human resource plan. The committee noted that the Department of Health is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
5. The committee concurred with recommendation 2-2 made at page 29 of Chapter 2 (Health) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that the Department of Health should present information on succession planning and development strategies for its current workforce in its health sector human resource plan. The committee noted that the Department of Health is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
6. The committee concurred with recommendation 2-3 made at page 36 of Chapter 2 (Health) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that the Department of Health and other health agencies should publish adequate information about the condition and potential volume of service of their facilities and key equipment.
7. The committee concurred with recommendation 2-4 made at page 37 of Chapter 2 (Health) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that the Department of Health and other health agencies should publish performance measures, targets, and results that show the extent to which the use of their key infrastructure achieved their operational and financial plans. The committee noted that the Department of Health is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
8. The committee concurred with recommendation 2-5 made at page 38 of Chapter 2 (Health) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that the Department of Health and other health agencies should publish adequate information about the strategies used to manage major risks facing their actions to reduce those risks to an acceptable level.
9. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 8 (Government Relations) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)*. Mr. Ahmad of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

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

Witnesses

Lily Stonehouse, Deputy Minister

Maryellen Carlson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Relations Division

Wanda Lamberti, Executive Director, Central Management Services

Tony Bunz, Manager, Financial Services, Northern Municipal Services

Irma Molner, Manager, Financial Services, Finance and Administration

10. The committee concurred with recommendation 8-1 made at page 101 of Chapter 8 (Government Relations) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that the Department of Government Relations should monitor fuel product prices in the northern community to ensure they are consistent with the prices set out in the fuel supply contract. The committee noted that the Department of Government Relations is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

11. The following document was tabled:

PAC 44/25 Department of Government Relations: Response to questions raised at the October 26, 2005 meeting of the committee, re: 2006 Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account's Business Plan and Budget, dated October 3, 2006.

12. The committee recessed from 10:38 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.
13. The committee proceeded to consider Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)*. Mr. Montgomery of the Office of the Provincial Auditor provided an overview of the chapter.

The following Departments of Learning and Advanced Education and Employment officials appeared before the committee and answered questions:

Witnesses

Department of Learning:

Ms. Wynne Young, Deputy Minister
Ms. Karen Allen, Executive Director, Corporate Services
Dave Tulloch, Director of Finance, Corporate Services
Mr. David Barnard, Executive Director, Teachers Superannuation Commission
Mana Chinichian, Masters of Public Administration Intern

Department of Advanced Education and Employment:

Ms. Bonnie Durnford, Deputy Minister
Mr. Rob Cunningham, Assistant Deputy Minister
Mr. Raman Visvanathan, Executive Director, Institutions Branch
Mr. Gary Mearns, Associate Vice President, Human Resources, SIAST
Kathryn Beaton, Vice President, Administrative Services, SIAST
Reiko Nakatsuchi, Masters of Public Administration Intern

14. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-1 made at page 44 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Teachers' Superannuation Commission should approve an information technology plan. The committee noted that the Teachers' Superannuation Commission has complied with the recommendation.
15. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-2 made at page 44 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Teachers' Superannuation Commission should approve information technology policies and procedures. The committee noted that the Teachers' Superannuation Commission has complied with the recommendation.
16. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-3 made at page 45 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Teachers' Superannuation Commission should prepare a written disaster recovery plan for its critical information technology systems and regularly test that plan to ensure it works. The committee noted that the Teachers' Superannuation Commission is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.

17. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-4 made at page 51 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology should analyze competency gaps for its entire workforce and provide periodic updates to the board. The committee noted that the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
18. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-5 made at page 51 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology should identify barriers to its current and future human capacity and provide the board with a plan to address the significant barriers. The committee noted that the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
19. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-6 made at page 52 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology should regularly inform staff involved in the recruiting process about trends in workforce gaps across SIAST and effective strategies to overcome barriers to human capacity. The committee noted that the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
20. The committee concurred with recommendation 3-7 made at page 57 of Chapter 3 (Learning) of the *2006 Report of the Provincial Auditor (Volume 1)* that Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology's board should work with management to identify the content and frequency of reports necessary to monitor human resource risks and evaluate progress towards its human capacity objectives. The committee noted that the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology is making progress towards complying with the recommendation.
21. Members of the delegation that attended the 27th annual conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees reported on the business discussed.
22. The chair advised the committee that representatives of the CCAF had offered to provide a briefing and lead a discussion on the issues confronting public accounts committees. The committee agreed that an invitation would be extended to the CCAF to meet with the committee during the fall session.
23. The committee adjourned at 12:30 p.m. until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 5th.

Margaret A. Woods
Committee Clerk

Elwin Hermanson
Committee Chair