

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

February 18, 1998

MINUTE NO. 31

9:30 a.m. — Room 10

1. **PRESENT:** Ms. Draude in the Chair and Members, Gantefoer, Hillson, Jess, Koenker, Stanger, Tchorzewski, Thomson and Whitmore.

Provincial Auditor's Office

Wayne Strelloff, Provincial Auditor
Fred Wendel, Assistant Provincial Auditor
Mobashar Ahmad, Executive Director
Mike Heffernan, Executive Director
Dale Markewich, Principal
Andrew Martens, Principal
Mark Anderson, Manager
Carey Robertson, Communications Intern
Rita Schiller, Librarian

Provincial Comptroller's Office

Terry Paton, Provincial Comptroller
Chris Bayda, Director, Financial Management Branch
Bev Hungle, Analyst, Financial Management Branch
Jane Borland, Financial Management Branch

2. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 13 (Department of Health) of the *Fall 1996 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. Mr. Markewich of the Provincial Auditor's office provided an overview of the chapter and responded to questions put by Members.

The following Department of Health officials appeared before the Committee and responded to questions put by Members:

Witnesses

Neil Yeates, Associate Deputy Minister
Barry Lacey, Acting Executive Director, Finance & Management Services Branch
Rod Wiley, Director of Administration, Finance & Management Services Branch
Gord Sisson, Financial Analyst, Finance & Management Services Branch

3. Mr. Tchorzewski raised a point of order concerning the appropriateness of questions being posed by Mr. Gantefoer to the departmental officials. The Member asked the Chair to rule

whether the questions related to matters outside the Committee's mandate, especially with respect to matters of governmental policy. The Chair cautioned all Members that questions should not delve into matters of government policy and should relate to the year under review.

4. In consideration of the recommendation made at paragraph 13.46, concerning the funding of laboratory services and a dispute resolution as required by the Rural Health Coalition Agreement, it was moved by Ms. Stanger:

The Public Accounts Committee moves that we note the spirit and interest of the rural Health Agreement, with regards to dispute resolution and review of funding for laboratory and X-ray services, has been met by DHB/affiliate, and we move compliance.

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

5. The Committee agreed to bring forward the Saskatchewan Government Insurance agenda item.
6. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 16 (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) of the *Fall 1996 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. Mr. Wendel of the Provincial Auditor's office provided an overview of the chapter and responded to questions put by Members.
7. The Committee recessed at 11:20 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.
8. The Committee resumed consideration of Chapter 4 (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) of the *Fall 1996 Report of the Provincial Auditor* (re: Minute 27, May 13, 1997). The Provincial Auditor and Mr. Martens provided an overview of the chapter and responded to questions put by Members.

The following corporate officials appeared before the Committee and responded to questions put by Members:

Witnesses

John Wright, President & Chief Executive Officer
Sheldon Schwartz, Vice-President, Finance & Administration
John Amundson, Corporate Controller

9. The Committee resumed consideration of the recommendation at paragraph 4.18, that the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan and its subsidiaries should provide lists of persons who receive public money to the Legislative Assembly. It was moved by Mr. Thomson:

That the Public Accounts Committee notes the Auditor's recommendation in paragraph 18 and asks that the Legislative Assembly refer this recommendation to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations for their review and consideration.

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

10. In consideration of the recommendations made at paragraphs 4.23, 4.31, 4.38, 4.53, 4.104 and 4.109, it was moved by Mr. Thomson:

That the Public Accounts Committee notes the Auditor's recommendations in paragraphs 23, 31, 38, 53, 104 and 109 of Chapter 4 of his Fall 1996 report and the issue of disclosure generally in a competitive environment and asks that the Legislative Assembly refer these recommendations to the Standing Committee on Crown Corporations for their review and consideration.

A debate arising and the question being put, it was agreed to.

11. The Committee concurred with the recommendation made at paragraph 4.45, that the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan (CIC) should obtain Lieutenant Governor in Council approval for increasing its participation in a joint venture, for providing financial assistance, and for acquiring shares in a corporation. The Committee noted that CIC has complied with this recommendation.
12. The Committee recessed at 3:17 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.
13. The Committee proceeded to consider Chapter 14 (Department of Municipal Government) of the *Fall 1996 Report of the Provincial Auditor*. Mr. Wendel provided an overview of the chapter and responded to questions put by Members.

The following department officials appeared before the Committee and responded to questions put by Members:

Witnesses

Ken Pontikes, Deputy Minister

Larry Chaykowski, Director, Financial & Strategic Support

14. The Committee concurred with the recommendation made at paragraph 14.09, that the Department should publicly report its financial activities to the property owners of the District (as specified in paragraph 14.07) as required by *The Northern Municipalities Act*. The Committee noted that the Department has complied with this recommendation.
15. The Committee agreed to revise its Thursday February 19th, 1998 agenda by moving consideration of Chapter 9 (How we are accountable) so that it is taken into consideration immediately following conclusion of consideration of Chapter 6 (Accountability Information Required).
16. At the request of the Committee, the Provincial Auditor prepared a proposal to deal with the 1997 reports of his office, which was tabled for the consideration of Members as follows:

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PAC 32/23 – Office of the Provincial Auditor: Proposal to Deal With the 1997 Reports of the Provincial Auditor, February, 1998.

17. It was moved by Mr. Thomson:

That this committee do now adjourn.

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

18. The Committee adjourned at 3:46 p.m. until Thursday February 19th, 1998, at 9:30 a.m.

Gregory A. Putz
Committee Clerk

June Draude
Committee Chair