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## Standing Committee on Public Accounts

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**Thursday, March 5, 2009**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Shawn Murphy**

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• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Shawn Murphy (Charlottetown, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order. *Bienvenue.*

We will start with a public meeting, and then we will go in camera. The first item of business is to review the balance of the minutes—we approved one item at the last meeting—from the subcommittee on agenda and procedure of the steering committee, which was held Tuesday, March 3. There are five paragraphs. Perhaps I'll just spend a minute.

Paragraph 1, when the May report is tabled—tentative date is May 12—the Auditor General, who is part of this report, is going to have approximately six chapters. In addition, she is going to have seven or eight special examinations of crown corporations and agencies. We are recommending that three of them be chosen at a future time and at one meeting—not one meeting each, but one meeting with the representatives of the three crown corporations to explain the nature of a special examination and whether or not there are any deficiencies, etc.

Just very briefly, a special examination is an examination by the Auditor's office that every crown corporation and agency has to undergo once every five years.

The second item on the minutes is tied into our whole initiative on follow-up and asking the departments and agencies to take the recommendations. The recommendations come from the Office of the Auditor General, seriously, and we're asking in all cases—even in cases where we do not have a hearing—that the department or agency prepare an action plan to address the findings and recommendations they have accepted from the Auditor General and table that with this committee within six months of the audit being tabled in the House of Commons.

The third item is to retable, or put on the back burner, Mr. Christopherson's motion on the parliamentary budget officer. For some reason, on which I'm not entirely clear, the Library of Parliament committee is not being constituted until today, so we'll not know until next week whether they're going to take that item up or not. Hopefully they will. They have been asked by a number of people.

The fourth item is just for information purposes. This is to announce that the annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees is taking place in Edmonton, Alberta, September 13 to 15. This committee will pay the accommodations and lodging for that.

Again for information purposes, after the start in May we'll probably be having a hearing in a week on reports, because by that time we may be a little backed up on the reports, but that depends on how we get along.

So those are the highlights of the minutes from the steering committee. Any discussion?

Okay, then, the chair will entertain a motion for their adoption. So moved by Mr. Kramp.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** The next item in the public hearing is totally procedural, colleagues, just for the record. At the last hearing we did have a number of witnesses who presented written texts, but because of the abbreviated meeting they shortened their submissions. They asked that their statements be read into the record, and I indicated they would be. Apparently, upon reflection, according to the clerk, this requires a motion. So I'm going to read the motion. The motion is that the text of the opening statements of Sheila Fraser, Auditor General of Canada; Rob Wright, Deputy Minister of Finance; Rod Monette, Comptroller General; and Dr. Nola Buhr, Chair of the Public Sector Accounting Board, be appended to the official transcript of the committee's meeting of March 3, 2009, at which they appeared.

It is so moved by Mr. Shipley.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1535)

**The Chair:** Going back to the steering committee meeting minutes, you'll see appended to that the draft agenda, and you can see that when we come back next week we have two hearings. We have a break week and then we have two more hearings on the week starting March 24. Then I should point out that on March 31 we have the tabling of the March report of the Auditor General in the morning. That afternoon we're going to do reports. On April 3 we'll have the Auditor General herself and her officials dealing with the findings of all the chapters in the March report. Then we have a two-week Easter break. On April 21 we're going to have a hearing with the Auditor General, the Secretary of the Treasury Board, and the Comptroller General. On April 23 we will be dealing with the main estimates, the departmental performance reports, and the reports on plans and priorities from the Office of the Auditor General. That takes us to April 23, and then depending on what is tabled in March we'll have other recommendations.

We are now going to suspend this part of the meeting and go in camera.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

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