

Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act

Wednesday, June 8, 1983

Chairman: Mr. Kowalski

7 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd like to call the committee to order, and I'd like to welcome all members here. This is the first, organizational meeting of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. This series of meetings in 1983 will be the seventh annual series of meetings of the Select Standing Committee of the Legislature on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act.

I believe one member present here tonight has had some experiences with this committee in the past. As a result of the fact that the vast majority of members on the committee have had no experience with the committee we're currently serving on, I thought perhaps it would be important at this time that we take a few minutes to do an overview in terms of the formation of the committee and spend a few minutes talking about the major functions of the committee. To that end, I'll ask the secretary, Mrs. Louise Empson, to assist me in the circulation of some paper. There are two Acts I'd like to draw your attention to. One is the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Act, 1980, and the other one is Bill 18, which was approved this spring. Louise, would you please circulate them to all members of the committee?

At the outset, ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to draw your attention to the Act known as the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. I'd like to draw your attention to pages 8 and 9 and to two sections within the Act. Under section 13(3), the clause reads:

When an annual report is prepared under subsection (2), the Provincial Treasurer shall forthwith furnish copies of it to all members of the Legislative Assembly and to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and on doing so shall make the report public.

In essence, what that particular clause in the Act is referring to is the annual report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund that will be issued under the name of the Provincial Treasurer. By tradition in the province, that report is generally issued in the month of July. Section 13(3) basically points out that at that time, the Provincial Treasurer shall issue a copy of that report to all Members of the Legislative Assembly through the office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

The next section that is of importance to members of this committee is section 14, on page 9 of the Act. Section 14(1) basically talks about the appointment of the committee, as does section 14(2). I think section 14(3) is the key section for us, and I'd just like to read it at this time:

When a copy of an annual report is furnished to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly pursuant to section 13(3) the annual report shall be deemed to be referred to the Select Standing Committee for review and a report concerning the investments of the Trust Fund which may contain any recommendations of the Committee concerning those investments or any alternative investments.

And 14(4):

When a motion is made in the Legislative Assembly for second reading of a Bill for a Special Act relating to a fiscal year, then, unless the Assembly by resolution otherwise directs, the debate on the motion shall be proceeded with only if the report of the Select

Standing Committee relating to the preceding fiscal year has been tabled in the Assembly.

In essence, those two sections of the Act give us our marching orders and are very clear.

My understanding is that again this year, in the middle part of July, it is the intent of the Provincial Treasurer to issue the report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund for the year 1982-83. At that time we'll all receive it and then, in essence, it'll be able to assist us in getting started with our work, which we'll talk about a little later this evening, in terms of the months of August and September and the first part of October, so that our report can be written and submitted to the Legislative Assembly at that time.

At the outset, ladies and gentlemen, I think it's important to also your attention to the other Bill that I've just finished circulating, Bill 18, the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Amendment Act, 1983, which was approved on Monday of this week. It basically amends certain sections of the 1980 Act. I think those specifics are there for you, and you might wish to retain that as part of your record, basic background, as we continue our work with respect to the committee.

While those various clauses I have just read and raised with you may appear to be very narrow in scope, in looking through the minutes of the activities of this committee in recent years, I think there has been an opportunity for members of the committee to in essence raise issues within the committee and raise issues with people who have been invited to appear before the committee that perhaps go beyond the Act. But I think there's a certain degree of openness attached to it and a certain degree of interpretation that all members of the committee would like to approach and give to it.

In the past as well, in looking at the previous minutes of the operations of this committee, it appears that a number of ministers who have projects under the capital projects division have been invited to appear before the committee. One of the items I'd like to raise with you by way of the organizational meeting tonight is to ascertain the interest of members of the committee in meeting with various ministers who have activities funded under the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. As well, in addition to ministers themselves, this committee has in the past had representations from departments of the government, always led by a minister. No doubt it may be of interest to various members of the committee that we should want to continue with that again.

There are a number of other items that, by way of this organizational meeting, I'd like to see addressed tonight as well. I would like to get a view from the members as to which departments, which ministers, the committee would like to meet with. In a couple of minutes, I'll be circulating a little document which identifies all the ministers and departments that have projects funded under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. As well, I would like us to address ourselves to dates in the months of August, September, and October when the committee might meet. I've got a little calendar I'll circulate in a few minutes as well, which we might look at in that regard.

In previous years, the question of field trips has been associated with the work of the committee. That's another item I think it's important to raise tonight, to see whether or not there's an interest among members of the committee. In the past, there's also been discussion with respect to the possibility of public hearings. I think that's a matter of considerable interest and importance that we might want to address, to a fuller degree perhaps when we begin to meet in August.

Mr. Gogo, would you like to get in now, or would you like me to complete my overview of comments?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, you just tripped my faculties when you mentioned field trips. I wondered at what point it would be appropriate to raise questions. As a new member of the committee, if this is an organizational meeting I would like to seek the views of those who have been on the committee before with regard to field trips.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That would be one of the items we would want to address, John, perhaps after we take a look at what interest there would be in the committee meeting with various ministers, and perhaps looking at the time frame members might be available in the three months I talked about. Perhaps we could raise the question of field trips as well.

MR. GOGO: With respect, I wasn't going to suggest field trips; I thought I might raise it from the point of view that members of the committee could include the parameters of work the field trips involved last time, in terms of geography. For example, was the power corporation in Quebec one? I don't think it was.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm a little nonplussed at the suggestion that we would decide which ministers we meet. Since its inception, it's always been the position of the committee that all ministers who have a dime from the heritage trust fund come before the committee. That has always been the position. As an individual member of the committee, I would certainly be opposed to anything other than a full examination of each minister's responsibilities, one by one. Sometimes they go very quickly; sometimes just a matter of an hour or so. In 1977 or '78, I think it was, we must have spent about six meetings with the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It depends on the issue. But we have always taken the approach that every minister would come before the committee, and I think that should be followed without question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Mr. Moore and then Mr. Anderson, and then I want to get back to my concluding remarks in the overview, if that's okay with the members

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, on the point raised by Mr. Notley. I would think the number of ministers involved and the number of days we have to spend -- you know, we'd have to make a selection somewhere, wouldn't we? How many ministers are involved? Do you have a list?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I do have a list of all them, which I was going to circulate as soon as I completed by overview remarks. Then I thought we would raise that as the first item. Would that be fine with you, then? Dennis.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, if you have overview remarks to continue, please do so before I comment.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just getting back to Mr. Moore's position. The argument you presented would have been just as relevant in the past. It's always been the position that we have each minister come. Some ministers don't take a long time. We've had several sessions where a minister has only been there 10 or 15 minutes. But every minister comes, and that's been a situation that's worked very well. We've never had any difficulty with it. I think it would be a very serious error not to pursue that policy.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I was going to speak in favor of that position in fact, but I suggest we allow you to complete your remarks before we . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll be very brief.

The last two overview comments I want to make, ladies and gentlemen, basically continue on the subject matter of the purview or mandate of the committee. It's my understanding, in looking at the minutes and in looking at the past history of the select committees that have held meetings on an annual basis, there are a number of things the committee does do and a number of things the committee has not done in the past, simply because they do not fit within the mandate of the committee. At the overture, I thought it would be important to indicate that what the committee does not do is delve into the area of the general Public Accounts Committee of the Legislature. There is a committee for that. Basically this committee only deals with those matters funded by the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Nor is it a committee of the estimates of the trust fund. There is another provision for that happening at the fall sittings, when ministers have to present their estimates for projects under the capital projects division. And of course, other estimates of the Legislature are dealt with during the general budget debate in the spring of each year, following the submission of the provincial budget by the Provincial Treasurer.

I would like to conclude by repeating that the purpose of tonight's meeting is essentially organizational. I would like all members to know that they'll find that the chairman of this particular committee will be very flexible in attempting to meet the various concerns of the various members of the committee. I particularly wanted to say that, because I think on the basis of the brief interchange we've had in the last few minutes, with the interest shown by some members in meeting with certain ministers, that may lead us to another little discussion and debate with respect to the actual dates on which this committee will be meeting over the next three months. I hope all members will appreciate that if five can attend one day and four can't attend another day, there will have to be some discretion utilized by the chairman of the committee in trying to accommodate all requests. But there may be the odd occasion when it just will be that not all members will be able to attend a scheduled meeting that day, but we'll still have to proceed.

So on that point, ladies and gentlemen, let me just reiterate welcome again, welcome to the first in a series of meetings to be held in 1983 with respect to the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. Basically I outlined a number of things that I thought we should be looking at tonight. The first one we might begin with is this whole question of who the committee would like to meet. We've already had some views, but I'd just like to circulate to you a memo which identifies the various ministers. As well, I'd like to circulate to you a quarterly investment report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, which will assist you in identifying those ministers and departments. The third thing I'd like to circulate to you is a copy of the 1981-82 annual report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that the chairman be empowered to contact all the ministers who have responsibilities under the heritage trust fund, to find convenient dates for their submission, as is the custom of this committee.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I would like the guidance of the Chair with regard to the format and conduct of the committee. Am I to believe that it is the same as any committee of the House? I think it's important now: do we -- and I don't want to say "not entertain motions" -- deal here by formal motions, vote

on them and so on? I guess I need the guidance of my colleagues. Or do we tend to operate more by a consensus. I've just heard Grant make a motion, and that's a very formal way. Could I have your guidance, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: My interest would be to operate on the basis of consensus as much as we can but recognize that we are a committee of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Alberta and, in the final analysis, will have to operate under the rules that would pertain to all committees of the Legislative Assembly. But I would like to emphasize the word "consensus" and would very much like to guide our dealings as much as possible on the basis of that arrangement, Mr. Gogo -- in fact, even be rather informal at times, if I'm permitted to call you John.

MR. GOGO: Due to your age, I would think that's allowed, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ANDERSON: On a point of order. Does that mean that because of my age, I'll have to call him Mr. Gogo?

MR. HYLAND: Grant, does what you're saying mean that we ask the ministers for the dates? Or should we set ours and say: here's a number of dates. Which way do you want to go?

MR. NOTLEY: We're obviously going to be setting our dates. But what the chairman is going to have to do in this case is that Ken is going to have to contact each of the ministers. It's going to be fairly time consuming for the chairman. But what we've always done is attempted to find out -- once we've set out our dates, then the chairman works out a time schedule.

MR. HYLAND: If we don't, we have to change.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes. Then some of us can make it and some of us can't, and that suggests a fair amount of work on Ken's part.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Grant, we have your motion. If there are some typing errors on the memo I drafted this afternoon, please accept that it was done late in the afternoon. Basically it identifies which departments have funding areas. I would point out that there have been a few minor changes. As an example, before we used to have the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower, and libraries somehow came under that one. It's my understanding that libraries now come under Culture. I don't have Culture on here, so it should be added because of the assistance to libraries. If I understand what you're saying, you would want Mary LeMessurier as well.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's one agency that's not on this list, and it's my understanding that this individual who fills the position has been invited to come before, and that's the Auditor General. I take it that would also be . . .

MR. NOTLEY: That's right. Dennis will bear this out, but I do think there are certain areas where we can cluster them and move quite quickly. There's no real reason that we need to spend two hours with each minister. It may in fact be half an hour or a short period of time, but a certain amount of discretion by the Chair has always been a sort of common-sense rule.

MR. ANDERSON: I would just speak in support of the motion. I agree with Mr. Moore's point that it is quite time consuming, but it is true that at times we move through several in a day. I hope that would continue to happen. Indeed this decision undoubtedly limits, to some extent, our ability in things like field trips. But I do think this is the prime purpose of the committee, to make sure we have an understanding of each of the heritage fund investments and deal with that appropriately. So I support Mr. Notley's motion on that basis.

MR. MARTIN: Just a point of information more than anything, to try to tie the motion in. In the past, what has been the format? Have we met once a week, for five hours at a time? Can you just fill us in?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Basically I think there has been a variety of alternatives. As Mr. Notley indicated, some meetings have been as short as 20, 30, and 40 minutes. But no one would know that. Indeed the chairman would not know that either in setting up the meetings. As an example, if one had a meeting scheduled at ten o'clock in the morning and it terminated at 10:20, while it may seem like an incredible waste to everyone, there would be no way any member of the committee, nor the chairman, could know he could have plugged somebody else in at 10:30. But I'm sure there will be occasions. We have the whole list here, and looking at the interests -- of course, some areas and activities may prompt more interest than others, and we would attempt to use a judicious approach in providing more time, as well as having perhaps two or three.

MR. MARTIN: So once a week?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I think it'll be more frequent than that, when I outline some of the concerns.

MR. ANDERSON: Perhaps I could help in that regard -- and Grant has been on the committee much longer. In the last couple of years, we've usually met for a couple of days at a time, starting in the August time period, and tried to go through a couple of ministers. It also has been helpful when we've been able to have a minister on deck to follow if one only takes 20 minutes. It's not always possible, of course, because of the ministers' schedules. But where it can be organized, I think that's been most helpful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. We do have a motion. Any further discussion on it? Question?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, the motion is . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Louise, would you read it?

MRS. EMPSON: I didn't finish taking it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Basically the intent of the motion is that the chairman of this committee should effect a schedule that would have the committee meeting with all hon. ministers who have a project or program funded under the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, in addition to the Auditor General -- I guess basically the people listed on the memo of June 8, that I circulated a few minutes ago. All these names and departments come directly out of the blue pamphlet. I don't think I've missed anybody.

Everybody agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's unanimous. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

Having done that and having ascertained an interest, the second thing I've circulated for you is three sheets of paper which basically cover the months of August, September, and October. Don't look at my artistic ability. I certainly have never prided myself on that. But I have looked at the calendar in those three months, and I would like to make a recommendation. Please recognize that it's only a recommendation. I'm sure all members have their own schedules in front of them. I would like to point out that there is another select committee, appointed on Monday of this week. That committee has not yet had an opportunity to have its organizational meeting. But I talked to the chairman of that committee today, because it was of concern to me to find out what he might be planning in terms of the activities of the members of that committee, primarily because four members of this committee are also members of the other committee. There are some time commitments and time constraints on the Select Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. We do have a time frame that we have to meet. We do have to have a report in during the fall session.

On the basis of my discussions with Mr. Diachuk, he basically told me what his plan was but asked me, out of politeness to the members of this committee, not to divulge those dates until he had had an opportunity to meet with the committee. But I know those dates. So having worked around those dates, I'd like to provide the following suggestion of dates which this committee might look at.

So perhaps if you'd like to check the following, we can have a discussion on it. We'll begin with August. I'd like you to check August 9, 10, and 11, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; as well, August 15 and 16, Monday and Tuesday; August 23 and 24, which is Tuesday and Wednesday; August 30 and 31, Tuesday and Wednesday; September 6, which is a Tuesday; September 12, 13, and 14, which is Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; September 19, 20, and 21, which is Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; September 26, 27, and 28, which is Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday; and October 3 and 4, which is Monday and Tuesday.

Now, before we have a discussion on this matter, I'd just like to point out again why I selected these dates. Basically it's a result of the information provided to me by Mr. Diachuk. Secondly, while there are two political parties which make up the membership of this committee, no doubt some caucus dates will be required through those months. Thirdly, I would like to see the committee work toward a conclusion, a final writing of the report and completion of the report no later than October 4, 1983, if at all possible. In the past, sometimes the committee has not finished its work when the fall session begins. Everybody has certain responsibilities, and I think it's rather troublesome and difficult for all people. So that basically is the reason I have that.

I'd like you to look at this for about three minutes. We'll have a brief intermission while we all get coffee and while you all study your documents, and then we'll get back to a discussion on it.

Perhaps if everyone has had their coffee, we could reconvene.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I realize you've had some problem in setting the dates. But I see you have five Mondays, and I normally have my office in Drayton Valley open every Monday and have for the last three and a half years. So if we could schedule those meetings as late as possible Monday afternoon, I would appreciate it. Then I could at least go in in the mornings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, because of the fact that we have a number of members of this committee who live outside Edmonton, perhaps I could make the suggestion that that's a very good suggestion of Mrs. Cripps. Perhaps if we were to have meetings on Mondays, we might go the two thirty to five o'clock time frame.

MR. NOTLEY: I think it might be useful. In past sessions we have talked about that, and we've actually looked at the schedules from Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, or the Peace, for example. We've normally found that if we're going to have Monday meetings, they are scheduled such that it's better to have them in the afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So on that point, if Mondays are okay, the time frame I should be looking at is two thirty to five o'clock?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. NELSON: Not having seen the other schedule, Mr. Chairman, I hope these things are going to fit in. If you need a motion to move these dates, I would move it for discussion purposes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think a motion is necessary, because you may find that when I go and contact people, we may have to adjust from one day to another. So a motion would just tie us down. I would point out to you that there are some conflicts between this committee and the other committee, but I tried to minimize them in setting this one up. I'll point out to you which dates those are. Again, I have this commitment of protocol to the members of the other committee not to do it, so would you accept it on that basis? Don't be mad at me if you go to the next meeting and say you already know about it and your chairman gets mad at you?

MR. MARTIN: We'll protect you, Ken. All the other people will be against you, but we'll fight for you.

MR. NELSON: Maybe if that's the case, you shouldn't give them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's rumored that . . .

MR. MARTIN: Well, how many affect us? We'll just make an agreement that we won't discuss it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It would affect four days.

MR. MARTIN: It would be helpful for us to know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, there are four.

MR. NELSON: As soon as you talk about it here, it's public.

MRS. CRIPPS: There are four days that conflict?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's my understanding that Mr. Diachuk is looking at -- and this would have to be confirmed next week -- August 30 and 31 and September 14 and 21. Those would apparently conflict with this committee.

MR. NOTLEY: If you can narrow it down to four days where you have conflict, Ken, you're very lucky indeed.



MR. ANDERSON: I think the dates generally look pretty good. Just in terms of your planning, if it helps, I have a conflict on August 15 and 28. Certainly if everybody else doesn't, we should proceed with those dates regardless. I suppose we all could indicate any conflicts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's another valid point. Perhaps in the next seven to 10 days, if you might just look at this plan and get back to me, by way of memo, and say that if it's Monday and you have a problem at four o'clock, we'd excuse you at four o'clock, type of thing. That would probably be the easiest way.

MR. HYLAND: We're just assuming now that we're going to hold all these meetings here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I think a part of the discussion basically falls into the next one, which is field trips. Not all the meetings of this committee have to be here. As an example, we're going to meet with the Minister of Agriculture. He is responsible for a number of activities, some capital projects. He's also responsible for the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation. It may very well be that it would be advantageous for us to have the committee meeting in Camrose at the offices of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation. But what we'd do on the way to Camrose is a field trip to Leduc, where this new agricultural food processing plant is under construction. In essence, that may be of interest to the members. Anyhow, I'm ahead of myself. Shirley, you wanted to get in?

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes. In view of the fact that we're meeting a number of ministers, and we've got seven -- Dennis, how did you meet the ministers on Tuesdays? Ken, do you know?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think they make themselves available.

MR. ANDERSON: They made themselves available, depending on the topics they needed to discuss.

MR. MARTIN: Is that the cabinet meeting?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. I think they view this committee to be of sufficient importance to come.

MR. ANDERSON: In fact, in some cases it worked out fairly well, because they were at least here. So if we went through one in an hour, we could break the other one loose right after that.

MR. NOTLEY: It worked out very well.

MRS. CRIPPS: It did?

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, Tuesdays were our best days, Shirley. We could move along very easily.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there general agreement, then, on this time frame? The approach I'll basically be taking is that on Monday the hours would be 2:30 to five o'clock; on Tuesdays probably ten o'clock to twelve o'clock and, say, 1:30 to 3:30; and perhaps Wednesdays in the morning -- again, out of

convenience to some of the members from out of town who may have to go home on Wednesdays. Would that be okay?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

The third question is the one to see what the interest would be on the whole question of field trips.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I don't know as you experienced it up until really this year, outside of the Capital City Park and Fish Creek Park, which are major projects under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. We have the urban parks project, which I think covers 10 cities. I would like to put on the table considering visiting the communities that have urban parks under the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. I can only speak from the one point of view, the half of the city I represent, but it's in my riding. I just put this on the table, and I'd like the views of the committee. I think that would be worth while, and to talk to the people involved in the project within the community -- not a hearing. So urban parks policy on site.

MR. HYLAND: Going along with that, I suppose -- John is suggesting Lethbridge. If we did something like that, we could probably pick some areas -- Lethbridge may be a good one -- where we can look at the urban parks and also look at irrigation upgrading, because there's a good portion of the trust fund on that. Those two things -- and I guess even the inland terminals come out of there, don't they? So you can pick a lot of those things up if we picked certain places to go, where we could work it in and make a loop.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I'm sure all members would like to see the Battle River dam.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, on the general topic of visits, in the year and a half or two years that I was on the last heritage trust fund committee, we did visit one or two places. I thought that was quite helpful. We found a great deal of difficulty, though, in fitting much into the time frame we've just talked about. I liked your suggestion of possibly meeting with the Minister of Agriculture in conjunction with a project, or that kind of thing; perhaps we can consider some of that. But I'm wondering if we shouldn't take a look at the possibility of having field trips in the winter break period rather than the summer break, where we're compelled to deal with recommendations and write a report. Just a thought.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Chairman, certainly I don't think you're going to be able to visit all the sites you might want to in the time frame between now and October. But there are certainly other periods of time when you can do so, after the fall session.

There are a couple of areas that are major expenditures by the government. One is Kananaskis, and the other one of course is the grain terminal in Prince Rupert. Those are major expenditures, to the tune of some \$.75 billion in total between the two projects. I think they are a very large investment of behalf of the citizens of this province that we should examine, both with the minister and, to some great extent, also go out and ensure that those projects are proceeding in the manner they are supposed to.

I have some other thoughts, but this is not the time to present those, so I won't. But I think that where we have major expenditures of this nature, we should examine them properly.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have some sympathy for Stan's suggestion, especially about Prince Rupert. I should just say that there have been only two field trips in our history as a committee. One was to Kananaskis in 1981, and the other was to Airdrie, which is quite a place to have a field trip. That finished the field trip for some years.

The only caveat I'd register, just to sort of second what Dennis has said, is that it's a lot of work to arrange a field trip for a committee of a dozen or so people, and that work normally falls on the chairman of the committee, to make sure it's done. So I think we should be reasonably cautious in the number of things we want to take on. We can have all kinds of ideas about where we want to go, but it's going to be the chairman who has to make the arrangements.

MRS. CRIPPS: Would the two of you like to give us an evaluation of those field trips?

MR. ANDERSON: From my perspective, the one to Kananaskis was very good. I wasn't on the one to Airdrie. There was one other that I considered a field trip, Grant. Maybe it wasn't because we didn't leave the city. That was to the investments and how those proceeded, down the hill.

MR. NOTLEY: That's true.

MR. ANDERSON: I considered that a field trip, although it was in the city.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, I guess that's true.

I think, Shirley, both were quite useful. The one in Airdrie took a lot of work. It was a trailer park that had been quite controversial and came out of the hearings. We met with various residents in the trailer park, toured the facility, and then had an open, public forum. A number of people came and made submissions, and it was a fairly useful exercise. The trip through the Kananaskis was useful, as well.

I think the idea of a field trip, or trips, is certainly a good one, but the only caution I have is that it takes a lot of work to get organized, and we had -- one thing in 1981 we found was that we had problems with members who said they were going to come and didn't show up. We were waiting for them, and this kind of thing. It did create some problems, and I had some sympathy for the problems of the people who had to organize the logistics of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: John, did you want to get back on this point? You raised it quite a while ago.

MR. GOGO: About field trips?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. GOGO: I think what I'm hearing now, what time is available, is what I wanted to hear. I liked the suggestion I heard from Stan that because of the pressure, at least in the calendar you spelled out, that we look at field trips in the winter months, perhaps, following the House rising in November.

MR. NELSON: If you have a problem, Mr. Chairman, you should delegate the organization of some of those things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have not had much experience chairing committees, although I did chair the select committee on surface rights. We travelled extensively

and considerably, but we had a couple of rules. One was that if we were to depart at eight o'clock, we departed at eight o'clock. Those who were standing on the doorstep at 8:05 -- well, they just waved. The second thing was that the chairman never put any wake-up calls to anybody at 6:15, 6:40, or whatever it was, and neither did the secretary or any other person who accompanied the committee. Mr. Blain may disagree with that, but that traditionally was our approach and it worked quite well.

MRS. CRIPPS: Having travelled with the chairman, he's pretty capable of getting a committee moving.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alan Hyland, did you want to get back in this?

MR. HYLAND: Just to say I suppose there are probably some we could do in the city. There may be the occasional ones once you've talked to the minister, if it works into his schedule, where it could be elsewhere and we could do something and deal with the minister, too. But that's going to be something that would be a thing of scheduling. It's not going to be something we can decide on till we get something like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dennis and one or two others, I think, raised the possibility of field trips during the winter months. I sense there was a good feeling about that. Perhaps we could leave this item, then. I appreciate your interest in this. When you get back to me about any concerns you have over the time frame, after you've looked at the blue book to see which specific projects are funded, would you put another paragraph in there saying the ones you might want to take a look at. Then we'll try to work on some kind of draft plan.

Basically, the approach I want to take is that about the middle of July -- we've basically designated the first meeting we'll have in August. About the middle of July, I would send you all a memo saying that this is the schedule for these ministers, so you'll have as much warning to prepare yourself in any way that you want, and perhaps make a suggested outline if there are one, two, three, or four field trips. Then we could verify and determine that when we first meet in August.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, ladies and gentlemen, that basically covers the issues I wanted to raise with you, except for one last point. What additional information would members like to have with respect to what has happened in the past in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund? I provided you with some information. I would like to point out to you that transcripts are available; a recorded transcript is being kept of this meeting and all of our meetings. Transcripts from previous years are available to you, if you want them. In 1982 the Standing Committee on Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act had 10 meetings, and the transcripts ran to 314 pages. If you want them, we can have them made available to you. This is just one year.

However, you might find it more useful to have just the minutes of 1982. They're not quite as lengthy -- 84 pages. In 1981, the committee met 23 times, and the actual minutes are only 75 or 76 pages. If you'd like that kind of information made available to you -- the past minutes or transcripts, perhaps previous reports of select committees when they file them; one was not filed in 1982, but certainly there was one in 1981 and 1980 -- would you please indicate your interest to me now, and Louise will get some.

MRS. CRIPPS: Suppose we didn't necessarily feel we needed that material, what would the availability be? Where could we pick it up? You have one. Could we take it out for two or three days?

MRS. EMPSON: I imagine so. If you want any pages of interest to you, we can photocopy them if you mark it with paper clips, or whatever.

MRS. CRIPPS: There's a paper war around here. I don't know that I want 300 pages.

MR. HYLAND: Yes, that's a good idea.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, so that covers the availability of it.

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like a copy of the '82 minutes, plus the 1981 report, if I could.

MR. NOTLEY: I'd like to suggest, following up Shirley's point, that we are -- I gather there are two Independents are on the committee as well. It would be useful if we have -- we should probably have one set of the transcript for each of the different groups represented, but I don't know whether it's necessary that we have two sets for Ray and me. I think that would be unnecessary. I don't know what the government members want to do. I think it's probably not necessary to have the entire 300-page transcript for everybody, but each group should have access to it and the minutes.

MR. ANDERSON: Just a suggestion, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps members might want to indicate individually what they require, and that should be provided, rather than circulating all of the documents to all of us, who might put them on the shelf.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Paragraph three, then, in the memo that will come in about seven or eight days: would you indicate what your interest would be. I think Louise has Ron Moore's interest, the 1982 minutes and the 1981 report. The other information is available, going back to the first year of the select committee as well, and may be available through the office of the Clerk. Undoubtedly, we probably all have them some place in our files, anyway.

Okay, ladies and gentlemen, that covers that item. Are there any other items members want to raise at this first organizational meeting?

MR. GOGO: Ken, with reference to the reports that have been tabled in the House, were all recommendations made by the committee listed in those reports? I can't recall. I would like a copy of recommendations made by the committee in the past. If they are in those annual reports, notwithstanding '82 is not there, that's fine; but because there's no report for '82, I'd like the recommendations made by the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think one of the easy things is the annual reports, because they're not very long. They generally tend to be about 20 pages in length. Would you like to go back three years, 1981, 1980, and 1979?

MR. GOGO: Well, I could have my girl dig it out. I think it would be good if -- I'll have a file with all those reports in there, I guess.

MR. NOTLEY: I should say, too, that the normal approach has been -- it won't be relevant this time, because the committee did not finalize any

recommendations -- for the Provincial Treasurer to table with the committee, before he meets with the committee, the government's response to all the recommendations from the last year. That becomes a focal point of the discussion with him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a little difficulty with this year, because there wasn't one last year.

MR. NOTLEY: No, it's not possible this year, because the committee report last year wasn't finalized.

MR. HYLAND: But did you receive the report from the previous year from the Provincial Treasurer?

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, we did. The previous year's was done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other items, ladies and gentlemen?

MR. ANDERSON: I move we adjourn, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARTIN: He wants to get to Ottawa.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we adjourn, just one little update point. Mrs. Empson has circulated these little administrative documents. If you would kindly fill them in, you'll note there are new provisions as a result of the new Legislative Assembly Act. Forward them to me, and I shall sign them. This will apply to all members of the committee. You'll note that one of the new provisions dealing with the daily expense allowance is that receipts are not required now, as I understand.

I would like to close, ladies and gentlemen, by saying that I hope we can arrive at most conclusions by way of consensus, and I'll set myself up to some of these other activities. I certainly hope the traditional approach is that if the chairman is forced to spend the odd day or two or three or four working on behalf of the committee, that after he presents his little request for the administrative adjustment, it will generally be viewed as being that way. If not, I won't begin till August 8.

MR. GOGO: Ken, I understand that the committee last year had about 12 meetings. I notice there are 21 this year. I don't know whether you put them out so that you end up with a compromise of 13, 15, 17, or in fact 21. But your suggestion of these meeting dates total 21. In your view as chairman, then, would we need 21 days to do the business?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, perhaps not. What I wanted there was really maximum days. Remember the other thing: last year they did not write a report; they did not finish. I went back to the previous year, 1981, and it had 23 meetings. If anything, I think we're trying to be a couple of days more efficient this year. The other one was a time frame to end prior to the beginning of the fall session.

MR. HYLAND: I think what Ken is telling us is that if we don't accept his proposal, he's not going to accept our expense allowances.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's hardly so. No way.

We look forward to a motion for adjournment.

MR. HYLAND: Dennis made it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Seconded? Carried.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. If anything comes up, any additional information you want in terms of the committee, would you please see Louise? If there's anything else you want to add to me, just give me a call.

*The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.*

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