

[Chairman: Mr. Oldring]

[2:05 p.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Maybe we can call the meeting to order. I want to begin by welcoming everyone to this the first meeting of the 10th session of the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act. I might point out that of the current 15 members, six have previous experience on this particular committee and nine of us are new members. As well, we have with us Robert Bubba, who is, of course, our Clerk of Committees and our procedural counsel for this committee, and also Ann Conroy, the secretary of our committee. Welcome, everyone.

The meeting this afternoon was called strictly for organizational purposes. The first item on our agenda is the discussion of the schedule of appearances. I'm assuming all members picked up a copy of this on their way in. I would suggest that to avoid any confusion, you throw away all previous copies that you've received.

I want to begin by thanking all members for their co-operation and assistance in putting together this schedule of appearances. I know that there has been a number of changes. I apologize for the changes and the delays that have occurred. There were some unpredictable delays. We've been awaiting the release of the 1985-86 annual report of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund. We originally anticipated that it would be out by the middle to the end of September, and it now appears that it will be out this Friday. I will see to it that all members receive a copy just as quickly as possible. Again, my apologies, and I appreciate your co-operation and understanding on this.

I'd like to quickly review with everyone at this time the schedule of appearances. I'll quickly run down it. Beginning next Monday, October 27, 1986, at 2 p.m., we'll be hearing from the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. I understand that Dr. McLeod and Mr. Geddes will be with us for that. Tuesday, October 28, 1986, from 10 a.m. till noon, we have the Premier, the Hon. Don Getty, with us, and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., we have the Hon. Dick Johnston, Provincial Treasurer. Wednesday, October 29, 1986, from 10 a.m. till noon, Mr. Donald Salmon, our Auditor General, and from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m., we've tentatively arranged a tour of the Walter

C. Mackenzie centre. We'll have a chance to discuss other tours and visits a little later on the agenda.

Monday, November 3, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., is being left open at this time to facilitate any possible changes along the way. Tuesday, November 4, 10 a.m. till noon, the Hon. Larry Shaben, Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., the Hon. Jim Dinning, Community and Occupational Health. On Wednesday, November 5, and Thursday, November 6, we've tentatively scheduled a tour of Kananaskis Country. Friday, November 7, 10 a.m. till noon, we've again tentatively scheduled the Hon. Norman Weiss, Minister of Recreation and Parks.

Wednesday, November 12, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., we have the Hon. Neil Webber, Minister of Energy. Friday, November 14, from 10 a.m. till noon, we have the Hon. Ken Kowalski, Minister of the Environment.

Monday, November 17, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., the Hon. Marvin Moore, Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. Tuesday, November 18, from 10 a.m. till noon, the Hon. Neil Crawford, minister responsible for housing, and from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m., the Hon. Don Sparrow, Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Wednesday, November 19, from 10 a.m. till noon, the Hon. Peter Elzinga, Minister of Agriculture, and the Hon. Shirley Cripps, Associate Minister of Agriculture, and from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m., we have the Hon. David Russell, Minister of Advanced Education.

Monday, November 24, from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m., we have the Hon. Al Adair, Minister of Transportation and Utilities. Tuesday, November 25, from 10 a.m. till noon and from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m., and Wednesday, November 26, from 10 a.m. till noon and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., are all tentatively scheduled for discussion of recommendations. Thursday, November 27, is again left open to facilitate any changes that may occur along the way. We have tentatively scheduled a tour of the Prince Rupert grain terminal for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, December 15, 16, and 17.

This brings forward all the ministers who appeared at the last schedule of hearings, with the exclusion of two. At the last sitting we had the minister responsible for tourism and small business. Because of the changes in that ministry it's no longer appropriate to have the

Minister of Tourism appear. We have the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, which small business falls under. Also, as yet we have not scheduled a hearing date with the Hon. Les Young; we'll be assessing that in the next week or two. Other than that, we have recalled all the ministers who appeared last time. The dates are all confirmed with the exception of the Hon. Norman Weiss on Friday, November 7. That's still tentative, but we don't anticipate that that will be a problem.

MR. PIQUETTE: Do you mean November 5?

MR. McEACHERN: November 7.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Friday, November 7. On November 5 and 6 we'll be touring Kananaskis Country.

MR. R. MOORE: It's a heavy agenda, but I think it's very responsible. I like the idea of the Kananaskis tour just prior — we look at that, and then we go back and ask Norm Weiss the questions. It ties in very well. I think it's an excellent arrangement, and I make a motion that we adopt the schedule.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion to adopt the schedule.

MR. McEACHERN: I guess you need a seconder first, but I want to ask a couple of questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Actually, we don't need a seconder in this committee.

MR. McEACHERN: When the minister appears, does he usually bring with him one or two of his top aides to make sure he's got lots of backup for questions? Obviously, one is going to do much more research specifically than I've had to do till now, and as we go through, suppose I want to ask some of Mr. Moore's aides or some of the hospital officials something more detailed. Is there any time that the ministers bring in some of their top people?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, it's at the discretion of the minister, but in most instances the ministers are inclined to have some of their senior department people with them.

MR. McEACHERN: I want to ask a second

question. We have quite rightly -- I think it's a good idea -- put the Premier and the Treasurer on very early. After we've been into some of the areas in more detail and have had a little more time to work on this -- being new on it, of course, I intend to learn quite a lot as we go along -- we might like to ask them more questions again later in the sitting.

I know you have a couple of blanks, but the November one is very early. Perhaps on Friday the committee would want to follow up on something that went on on Tuesday or Wednesday and make a date with one of those two for that day. On the other hand, further back there don't seem to be many openings to fit in anybody for a second or third appearance. I'm aware that at other times -- I think the Treasurer came back three or four times the last time around.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think last time the Treasurer was recalled a couple of times.

MR. McEACHERN: It seems to be kind of filled up, and I was wondering if there wasn't another date or two further along that could be left open with the idea that we would decide who we wanted a little closer to the time. Of course, I'm not sure that the Premier and the Treasurer would be available later. Obviously, we would have to check that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?

MR. McEACHERN: Well, they might very well be on holiday or something.

MR. GOGO: I agree with Mr. Moore's suggestion, Mr. Chairman. You have obviously done a lot of work on this. What I will do now if it's accepted -- I have many, many commitments lying ahead, and now I'm going to fit them to this schedule. I would be uncomfortable if I accepted them to fit with this schedule and then had to change them again. So I would agree with Mr. Moore. If we can adopt this -- I'm not saying we shouldn't change it, as Mr. McEachern said. But if we had the understanding that this is pretty well firm, then we could schedule our other commitments around these meetings.

MR. McEACHERN: I think you may have misunderstood me. I wasn't suggesting we

change the dates on here, particularly, although if it were not possible — suppose we wanted to talk to the Treasurer, say, three times? We could fit him in twice, but we couldn't fit him in three times.

MR. PIQUETTE: When there's only a morning session, you could have an afternoon session if you wanted to call anyone back, and adhere to the same schedule.

MR. McEACHERN: I guess there's no way of anticipating that if one of these sessions only went 15 or 20 minutes, we could then call somebody else in. But you can't do it on that short a notice, can you?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. As you pointed out, last year at least one minister was called back a couple of extra times. As I understand it, those particular dates were not set well in advance; they were arranged at the time it became necessary.

MR. McEACHERN: I see.

MR. PIQUETTE: This is the first meeting we have in terms of organization. As a rookie sitting in on my first trust hearing, I'd like to get a bit of an idea as to how the hearing will be — let's say we have about two hours. What's going to be happening in those two hours on a daily basis?

MR. CHAIRMAN: One of the things I could suggest is that you might want to take the time to pick up a copy of the Hansards from the last sitting and go through them. I think that will give you a pretty good feeling for the process in the hearings themselves.

MR. PIQUETTE: So you basically have an address from the individual invited, the minister, and then . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Usually we open and give the minister an opportunity for some opening remarks and comments. Then we turn it over to the committee for questions. Perhaps we can come back to that a little further on the agenda. You'll note that item 4(a) is format of meetings.

MR. HYLAND: Just to partly comment on what

Alex said. I think it's hard to judge how much time we'll need. Before, it was scheduled one session per minister except on one occasion. The reason a person is called back is that we run out of time. If you think of something new you want to ask, we could literally keep the trust fund busy year-round.

MR. McEACHERN: I've got enough to do.

AN HON. MEMBER: Could I say amen to that?

MR. HYLAND: Normally, it's been if we couldn't get it all in, if we run out of time.

MR. PIQUETTE: Or you could extend the hours.

MR. HYLAND: Yes, we've done that once or twice, extended it more than two hours if it hasn't been enough.

MR. McEACHERN: Or once in a while fit in another day sometime?

MR. HYLAND: Yes.

MR. McEACHERN: With that proviso, I'm happy with the schedule. I'm sure we can work with it.

MR. HYLAND: Because you can't prejudge it.

MR. McEACHERN: That's what I was saying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any further discussion then?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. I'll call the question. All those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of visits to heritage fund sponsored projects. As noted in the schedule, we have already made provisions to visit Kananaskis Country and Prince Rupert. There are a number of other projects that I'm sure the committee will want to consider for visitations. Might I suggest that if there's a project you feel would be appropriate for the committee to tour, you might just take a

moment, jot it down, pass it on to me, and I'll see what I can do to facilitate that.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, on that point, perhaps you or the vice-chairman could indicate which projects are funded. I think the children's hospital in Calgary is one, and the Pine Ridge tree nursery. Is there a list of those available?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can certainly make that available to you. Again, on Friday the annual report will be coming out, and a number of the projects will be listed in that as well, with a little bit of information on them. We'll make sure that all members receive a copy.

Is there any further discussion?

MR. HERON: Well, along the lines of what Mr. McEachern said, is it flexible early into the new year, as the irrigation systems fill up again, to schedule a tour through this committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it would certainly be more appropriate to tour some of the facilities in the springtime. Certainly we could assess that towards the end of this session or the beginning of next year.

MR. McEACHERN: This committee is for the whole 21st session, the four years?

MR. HYLAND: No, it's reorganized every session.

AN HON. MEMBER: Every sitting.

MR. HYLAND: You're right about every sitting. Bob can clarify this, but the only committee is Members' Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This committee is renamed at the beginning of each session.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I thought the vice-chairman just made the relevant comment, which was overlooked, that although the members of the committee are appointed each sitting, traditionally there has not been a significant change in the membership of the committee over the course of the term.

MR. R. MOORE: Over the four years. Usually the same committee ends up that starts out, but they're reaffirmed every session.

MR. HYLAND: According to the Act, it's reappointed every session. Isn't that right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: According to the Standing Orders, it has to be appointed each session.

AN HON. MEMBER: We could make some changes and probably will.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. HYLAND: If you want to get rid of Leo, you have to do that inside your own caucus. If he wants to get rid of you or we want to get rid of one of our guys . . .

MR. McEACHERN: I've been undermining him for quite a while. I'll have him gone soon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion on item 3? As I said, if you want to submit suggested projects to me, I'd be happy to see what I could do to facilitate and make arrangements for the committee to tour them.

MR. McEACHERN: You're saying that at this stage we have two tours for sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Three.

MR. McEACHERN: Three with the December one. These are already set up. I thought you said something about it being tentative when we get on the list.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, we have to finalize the arrangements on Kananaskis Country and the Prince Rupert terminal. But I'm not anticipating any problems doing that in either instance.

Moving on to item 4, procedures and format of meetings. It has been the practice of this committee, and I understand that it has worked very well, to make provisions for each member to initially ask one question followed by two supplementary questions. I would assume that the committee would want to continue that practice. Is there agreement on that?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. R. MOORE: It worked out well in the past.

MR. McEACHERN: Can I ask a question? I've

got lots of questions. If the time were such that every member had asked their question and there were still more time available, would . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Automatically, yes.

MR. McEACHERN: Then if you have a question, you ask it, and you just have to keep some kind of order.

MR. R. MOORE: Just a point of information on that one. How it has worked in the past is that you get your first question -- well, not necessarily your first question -- just by the way you raise your hand and are recognized by the chairman. Once you've asked that and your two supplementaries, if you raise your hand again, you go to the bottom of the speaking order. You keep coming up. It doesn't say that everybody is going to, because you may not have raised your hand until halfway through. By that time, whenever you raise your hand, you go by speaking order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It just assures everybody of a fair opportunity to get at least one question in.

MR. McEACHERN: Okay; no problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Also in the past, the chairman has abstained from voting except when there has been a tie. I plan to continue that practice, and when I do vote, I won't be stating my reasons.

MR. PAYNE: If I disagree with your vote, can I ask you after?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further discussion under format? Mr. Piquette, did you have any further questions that you wanted to bring up?

MR. PIQUETTE: No.

MR. McEACHERN: I do have a question that I guess should be raised in this section. I understood also that any MLAs or, for that matter, the public can come into the hearings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. McEACHERN: I think MLAs have the right to ask questions or express opinions. Where would they fit into this? I assume that you

would give your committee members first opportunity for that one question before you would fit in other people, or what?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, the practice has been that MLAs receive the same recognition as the members and are able to participate but they can't vote.

MR. PAYNE: I don't have a particular quarrel with that position, Mr. Chairman, but I would like to go on record as indicating that if a half dozen or a dozen MLAs happened to come in because there was a particularly interesting subject and they were prompted to raise a number of questions and the members, myself included, were being squeezed out of the process, then I would hope that the chairman would exercise due discretion as to how liberally he treats the nonstatus members, if you like.

MR. PIQUETTE: I think we might have the critic from our party coming in. I don't think you would have 10 or 12, unless they come in from your party.

MR. McEACHERN: I would agree that if it came to that, if it looked like it was going to get crowded and be a particularly boisterous session or something, members should get first choice to speak until you're done with those before you get too far into the other group.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The chairman will be happy to take that under advisement. Are there any items under that?

If not, we'll move on to item (b), the claim forms. Ann Conroy, who I introduced to you earlier this afternoon, will have the claim forms here. If you can please make sure that you pick one up after each meeting and then turn them in at the end of the week, we'll see that they're processed right away for you and that your expenses are reimbursed.

MR. PIQUETTE: Could you perhaps provide information on the out-of-town . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure. If you do have any questions, Ann can certainly review them with you afterward. It's pretty clearly spelled out in the form itself. I'm sure that after you've had a look at it, it will answer all your questions. If

not, I'm sure Ann would be more than happy to.

MR. HERON: You ask that they be submitted every day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Every week.

MR. HERON: Every week? Surely in the interests of bookkeeping you could accumulate these until the end of the session if you wanted to. Could you put them in on one pad?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Certainly it's your choice. I think Ann asked if we could do it that way; it would be a little quicker and a little easier. They have to be signed by myself as chairman and by Bob.

MR. GOGO: Every week is probably the most suitable, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It just facilitates it a little easier, but it is up to the members.

Moving on to item 5, other business.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, I'm well aware that you've met with a variety of these ministers and the Premier to schedule their appearances and to construct this schedule of meetings. I know you've also met with the former chairman and done a lot of reading. I talked to you this morning; I understand you spent about four days getting ready for this. I would hereby move that the chairman be paid four days of honorariums and expenses for the work he has put in in getting ready for this meeting.

MR. R. MOORE: I'll second that motion.

MR. GOGO: Obviously, you wouldn't raise it, Chairman; that's why I'm raising it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any discussion on that item?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'll put the question to you then. All those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, if any? Carried unanimously.

Is there any other new business that needs to be brought up? If not, the date of the next meeting is October 27 at 2 p.m. We'll be hearing from the Alberta heritage medical foundation.

MR. BRADLEY: I'd just like to indicate that I'll be absent for that meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I would appreciate it, if you have a chance to know ahead of time that you won't be in attendance, if you can let myself or Ann know. It would be helpful.

Is there a motion then to adjourn?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Chairman, just before that motion, if I could draw your attention to the 29th again, the Walter C. Mackenzie hospital. Is that on or tentative?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. GOGO: It is on. It might save time, with everybody talking to Ann -- would your view be that we get over there ourselves, or are we going to have a bus to go?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll provide you with instructions on that, but there's a possibility that we might even be able to move it up to a luncheon together over there or something and then a tour afterward.

MR. PIQUETTE: Let's go there together so we don't get lost.

MR. GOGO: That was my point, Chairman. If there were some way after the meeting in the morning that we could all go in a group and come back...

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll make arrangements for transportation over there from here. We'll finalize the time and send instructions out as soon as we have them.

Is there any other new business? A motion to adjourn by Mr. Moore. All those in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much.

[The committee adjourned at 2:34 p.m.]