

Title: Wednesday, April 30, 2003 Public Accounts Committee

Date: 03/04/30

[Mr. MacDonald in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, everyone. I would like to call this meeting of the Public Accounts Committee now open. We're a few minutes late. We were waiting for the minister, Mr. Clint Dunford, Minister of Human Resources and Employment, to join us. We have been told, first by an envoy that came to the door from his office, a person unidentified, that he was not attending this morning, and there was a follow-up conversation by phone with his office by the committee clerk, and it was decided that he would not come today.

For the record, we can't have an approval of the agenda, I do believe, because we don't have enough members present to have a vote.

Dr. Taft: Why don't you have those who are present introduce themselves?

The Chair: I certainly would appreciate it if we could briefly go around the table and introduce ourselves, perhaps starting with you, Dr. Taft.

[The following members introduced themselves: Ms Blakeman and Dr. Taft]

[The following staff of the Auditor General's office introduced themselves: Mr. Dunn and Mr. Hug]

Mrs. Dacyshyn: Corinne Dacyshyn, committee clerk.

The Chair: I'm Hugh MacDonald, MLA, Edmonton-Gold Bar, and I am the chair of Public Accounts this morning.

Now, the committee clerk has also been informed, again, by the vice-chair of the committee, that there will be no government members in attendance. This is an unusual event. We've had the time set aside. Do the hon. members have any . . . Yes?

Ms Blakeman: I'm just wondering, Mr. Chairman, if we were given any advance notice of the government members not attending the meeting. Alternatively, did they give us any notice on the day, and did they give us any explanation as to why they're not here?

The Chair: I have not had any advance notice, certainly, on my cell phone or on my office phone on the second floor. Perhaps Corinne Dacyshyn can . . .

Mrs. Dacyshyn: No, I didn't have any notice. I understand that there's a voice message from the minister's office on my voice mail. I left my desk at quarter after 8 this morning, and there was no message then. But, no. I spoke with the vice-chair just now when I called his office.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you.

The Chair: That's all I know. This is an unusual event. Certainly we have had problems in the past trying to schedule various ministers to this committee. Some have been reluctant to appear, but I thought we had all this behind us, quite honestly. But today, you know, unless they have good reason for not attending . . .

Ms Blakeman: Well, I move to adjourn the meeting. We don't have quorum.

Mrs. Dacyshyn: We can't even have a motion on that.

The Chair: We cannot have a motion to adjourn, but the chair would like to have a look through *Beauchesne* for a second.

While I'm doing this, are there any issues that either of you have with the Auditor General, any questions in regard to this department that you would like to ask?

Dr. Taft: I don't have any at this point of the officials from the department present.

Ms Blakeman: Uh-huh.

The Chair: Okay. That's fair enough.

Well, the chair is going to source *Beauchesne* 821. If there are committee members who read *Hansard*, it's certainly not going to take them very long this morning. *Beauchesne* 821(1) states, "All rulings of the Chairman may be appealed to the committee." In this case the chair is going to unfortunately, with great disappointment, adjourn the meeting. We'll have to pursue this matter and ensure in the future that ministers and members are going to do due diligence and try to attend, and if they cannot attend, there has to be some form of advance notice. Certainly the Auditor General, Mr. Dunn, and Mr. Hug have other work to do, as do the members who are present here from the Official Opposition.

With that, I thank you for coming this morning. If you have any other questions with regard to this matter and you would like them on the record, please do so at this time.

Dr. Taft: No. The meeting is closed.

The Chair: Okay.

Ms Blakeman: The meeting is closed.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned by the chair in light of the circumstances. Thank you.

[The committee adjourned at 8:45 a.m.]

