

# Audit Committee

## Charter

### CONSTITUTION

The Board of Trustees (the “**Board**”) has by resolution set up an Audit Committee (the “**Committee**”) made up of four unrelated and independent trustees (as such term is defined in the Standards Applicable to Audit Committees) who are financially literate.

The Board appoints the members and designates the Committee Chair. The Committee may from time to time invite other persons it considers advisable to attend its meetings and participate in deliberations and discussions on the various matters transacted by the Committee. Any person invited to attend Committee meetings who is not a member of the Committee is not entitled to vote on decisions made thereat.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Committee is responsible for the following:

- (i) scheduling Committee meetings;
- (ii) in consultation with the Executive Vice-President and CFO and the Committee Secretary, preparing the agenda for Committee meetings and ensuring that relevant documentation is made available in a timely manner;
- (iii) chairing Committee meetings;
- (iv) ensuring that the Committee fulfils its responsibilities as per its Charter and complies with the terms thereof; and
- (v) reporting to the Board of Trustees on all matters transacted by the Committee.

### QUORUM

A majority of the Committee members constitutes the quorum. At a meeting, all questions are decided by a majority of the members. However, if one of the members is absent, all questions must be decided upon unanimously.

## **MEMBER TERMS**

Members appointed to the Committee hold office until the first meeting of the Board following the annual general meeting of Unitholders where they are elected members of the Board or until they resign or are removed. Any member who ceases to be a Trustee shall cease to be a member of the Committee and may also be removed from office at any time by the Board.

## **PROCEDURE**

The Committee follows the same procedure for calling and holding its meetings as the Board does with regard to such issues. The Board secretary also serves as secretary of the Committee.

## **MEETINGS**

The Committee meets as often as circumstances require but it must hold at least four regularly scheduled meetings per year. After each of these meetings, the members meet the external auditor and Management separately.

## **PRESENCE OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR**

The external auditor attends all Committee meetings. The Committee Chair shall call a meeting of the Committee when so required by the external auditor.

## **POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee exercises all powers and duties conferred upon it under the Contract of Trust governing the REIT and the laws and regulations governing the REIT.

In the exercise of its duties, the Committee or its representative is authorized to access the books, ledgers and accounts of the REIT and its subsidiaries, and to discuss any question concerning the financial situation and financial results of the REIT and its subsidiaries with the officers and the internal and external auditors of the REIT and its subsidiaries.

The Committee also has the authority to conduct investigations or have investigations conducted on any question falling within its authority. It is authorized to:

- use the services of external advisors, accountants or other experts to advise the Committee or to help it conduct any investigation. However, should the amounts incurred exceed \$100,000 during a given fiscal year, the Committee shall obtain approval from the Board of Trustees in the form of a resolution adopted to this effect;
- ask personnel for any information that it may need;
- meet, as often as circumstances require, the officers, the external and internal auditor or the external advisors.

## **PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to oversee the financial management of the REIT, the financial information presentation process, the internal control system, the internal and external auditing process, the identification and management of financial and operational risks and the procedures set up to ensure

compliance with the code of ethics and professional conduct and the laws and regulations governing the REIT. In performing its duties, the Committee shall promote good relations with the Board, Management and the external auditor, and the internal auditor, if any.

The REIT's Management is responsible for the preparation, presentation and integrity of financial statements, as well as for the efficient functioning of the system of internal controls respecting disclosure of financial information. Management and the internal audit department, if any, are responsible for implementing and applying appropriate accounting and financial principles and policies respecting the disclosure of financial information and internal controls and procedures in accordance with accounting standards and practices and in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations.

The external auditor is responsible for planning and conducting a review of the REIT's quarterly financial statements and an audit of the REIT's annual financial statements, in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, which are intended among other things to establish with reasonable assurance that the financial information set forth in the financial statements is free from material inaccuracies pursuant to generally accepted accounting principles. The external auditor must also inform the Committee of any deficiency that it may find during its annual audit regarding the system of internal controls and its functioning, including the disclosure of financial information.

Unless the situation is otherwise and the Committee members are aware of it, in which case they must promptly inform the Board, they are entitled to rely on the integrity of the persons or organizations that provide them with internal and external information, on the accuracy of the financial and other information that the Committee members receive from such persons or organizations and on statements made by Management and the external auditor regarding non-audit services provided by the external auditor.

#### **MANDATE**

1. Recommend to the Board the choice of external auditor and when appointed, remind the latter that it is not management but the unitholders who are its client.
2. Recommend to the Board the remuneration to be paid to the external auditor as well as the terms and conditions of the auditor's mandate.
3. Determine and confirm the independence of the external auditor.
4. Review with the external auditor the approach and scope of its mission plan, oversee the auditor's work and report to the Board on material qualifications that the Committee may have or that the external auditor may have formulated.
5. Give prior approval to all non-audit services desired to be referred to the external auditor to the extent the remuneration paid for these services does not exceed 5% of the total remuneration paid by the REIT and its subsidiaries to the external auditor during the fiscal year in which the services are rendered and provided that the Audit Committee is kept informed thereof at each meeting.

In addition, the Committee may, subject to certain conditions, adopt specific policies and procedures to delegate prior approval authority. It may also delegate this authority to one of its members provided said member informs the Committee at its next regular meeting following the approval.

6. Oversee performance of the work of the external auditor.
7. Review the quarterly unaudited financial statements and notes thereto, the management discussion and analysis, the external auditor's report, the press releases, the message to Unitholders and any other

written communications related to the Committee's mandate intended for the public, the regulatory authorities, etc. and recommend their approval to the Board.

8. Review the annual audited consolidated financial statements and recommend their approval to the Board, as well as all financial statements and reports that may require review by the Committee pursuant to applicable laws and regulations or in response to a request from the Board. The Committee is also responsible for reviewing all related financial information, including the financial information contained in the annual report, the management discussion and analysis, the annual information form and any prospectus, etc.

In performing this task, the Committee shall discuss with the external auditor such issues as the acceptability and quality of the accounting principles and practices applied, underlying assumptions and material judgments affecting the REIT's financial statements, while ensuring that there is no disagreement between the external auditor and Management concerning the financial statements. Should a disagreement arise, the Committee is responsible for resolving it.

9. Receive at each regular meeting a certificate signed by the President and Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer to the effect that the quarterly and annual consolidated financial statements and the related management discussion and analysis are free of false or misleading information and that they fairly reflect the REIT's financial situation, operating results and cash flow for the period in question.
10. Receive and examine the internal auditor's and, if any, the external auditor quarterly report as well as those that the latter may produce following its quarterly review and year-end audit or for any other purpose and the auditor's letter to Management together with Management's comments on each point raised
11. Following a review of the external auditor's comments and suggestions after its audit, report to the Board on the following matters:
  - the pertinence of accounting records and how they are kept;
  - the pertinence and efficiency of the accounting, internal control and information systems as well as the extent to which they are properly and uniformly applied; and
  - the competency and efficiency of the personnel assigned to accounting, financial and internal control tasks and if the number of people working in each of these areas is sufficient.
12. Assess the performance of the external auditor.
13. Following consultation with the external and internal auditors, if any, request that Management indicate to the Committee the major risks to which the REIT is exposed and the actions taken to minimize them, and report to the Committee thereon at each regular meeting, the latter, upon review and if required, shall make any modifications deemed necessary.
14. Following the periodic evaluation of the competency, performance and independence of the external auditor, recommend to the Board renewal or, if deemed appropriate, termination of the auditor's mandate either by recommending that the mandate not be renewed or by recommending that a meeting of the Unitholders be held to consider the auditor's removal.
15. Periodically assess the need to set up an internal audit program. Where such a function exists or is created:
  - determine how the work it includes will be carried out;
  - examine the approach and scope of the program, the mission plan and the budget;
  - review quarterly the reports issued together with comments from Management;

- keep informed of projects and activities related to this program;
  - assess its performance;
  - ensure that Management follows up on the recommendations it and the Committee have accepted; and
  - ensure the best possible match between the external auditor's and the internal auditor's mission plans.
16. Obtain at each quarterly meeting an officer certificate stating that the REIT complies with all applicable laws and regulations, and to rules of corporate governance, that there are no off-balance sheet activities and that the REIT is not in default under any of its loans or contracts and that it has complied with the policy, if any, regarding foreign currency hedging.
  17. Review the efficiency of the system implemented to ensure that the REIT complies with all applicable laws and regulations and review the results of any investigations that Management conducted and ensure that the Committee is informed of any fraudulent activity or accounting or financial irregularities.
  18. Review at each regular meeting, the report of pending and ongoing litigation or actions, indicating to the Committee if there is any case or major litigation that may have occurred since the reporting date.
  19. Review once a year the policies and procedures in place for approval of the expenses and bonuses of officers.
  20. Periodically address important accounting issues and review the manner in which the most recent reports and statements, both professional and regulatory, are presented.
  21. Ensure that the general insurance portfolio for the REIT and its subsidiaries is adequate and make appropriate recommendations to the Board while ensuring that the recovery plan in the event of disaster is appropriate.
  22. Review and report to the Board on contingent liabilities and commitments of the REIT and its subsidiaries, as well as off-balance sheet transactions.
  23. Resolve any disputes arising between Management and the external auditor regarding the disclosure of financial information, financial statements, internal controls or any question about accounting or finance.
  24. Ensure that adequate procedures were implemented to review procedures related to the disclosure of financial information and periodically assess if these procedures are adequate.
  25. Be informed of and discuss with Management any legal question and any regulatory or compliance with laws and regulations issue that could have a material effect on the REIT's financial situation or business.
  26. Review any pro forma publication of financial statements or financial information that is non-compliant with accounting principle and practices used by the REIT.
  27. Obtain and receive on a quarterly basis the certificate produced by management on the internal control, management information, internal audit, important information and documents, relevant facts, prosecution and risks.
  28. Ensure that the rotation of the external auditor's associates is done according to standards.
  29. Update and monitor the policy for the confidential or anonymous communication of complaints about accounting, financial and internal audit matters.

30. Review and update, when necessary, the REIT's hiring policies regarding partners, employees and former partners and employees of the present and former external auditor.
31. Establish the list of questions to be submitted in writing at the end of the year to the external auditor and Management and review the responses received when reviewing the audited consolidated financial statements for the fiscal year.
32. Ensure that the Committee's Charter is disclosed when required, including in the management proxy circular and in the annual information form.
33. Review the findings of any investigation conducted by any regulatory body.
34. Assess Management's performance of its responsibilities respecting the security of computer systems and applications, and its emergency plans for handling financial information in the event of a system breakdown.
35. Review and closely monitor proposals that are made or may be made by Canada's or Québec's Ministers of Finance pertaining to the taxation system applicable to trusts and partnerships and report thereon to the Board, from time to time.
36. Meet separately, after each meeting with the internal auditor, if any, the external auditor and Management, as well as any time that circumstances require so.
37. Review once a year and update the Committee's Charter and its work program, as required.
38. Assess the performance of the Committee and its members at least once a year and inform the Board thereof.
39. Confirm each year to the Board that the Committee has fulfilled its responsibilities as per its Charter.
40. Perform all other tasks related to the Charter as the Board may request.

#### **ANNUAL WORK PROGRAM**

The annual work program is appended hereto.

#### **MINUTES**

Minutes are prepared for each Committee meeting.

#### **REPORT TO BOARD**

The Committee must report on its proceedings at the following Board meeting.

#### **REMUNERATION**

The Committee members receive remuneration as fixed by the Board for their services.