Daily Media Note September 7, 2017 5:00 P.M.

Good afternoon Premier,

Here is what people are talking about at Queen’s Park today:

- Public Accounts

Public Accounts

Ministers Charles Sousa and Liz Sandals made the announcement today that the 2016 deficit was $991 million, beating the target by $3.3 billion as they released the province's 2016-2017 public accounts.

The Canadian Press moved a story on their wire reporting the government attributes the results to billions in increased revenue, a cut in program spending, and smaller interest costs to service the province's debt.

Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk issued a qualified statement on the government’s financial statements, noting that the deficit is understated by $1.444 billion for 2016/17 ($1.831 billion in 2015/16) and the net debt is understated by $12.429 billion for 2016/17 ($10.985 billion in 2015/16) because of the province's decision to include a pair of public pensions as assets.

But the Canadian Press reported that the government maintains it is following established accounting practices by doing so.

The CP story was picked up by the Financial Post, CTVNews.ca, and a few other online sources.

FYI – Toronto Star’s Kristin Rushowy filed a story on how the province will compel school boards to collect race-based data on everything from hiring staff to student suspensions, and Education Minister Mitzie Hunter is also looking at ending the streaming of Grade 9 students into applied and academic courses as part of her three-year equity plan. The Canadian Press also moved a story on their wire.

FYI - Toronto Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong apologized today for saying city planner 'should stick to the knitting' after backlash from critics who called his words sexist. Jennifer Keesmaat fired back on CBC's Metro Morning today, saying she found the comment deeply offensive.

FYI - Amazon has announced plans to open a second headquarters somewhere in North America and Mayor John Tory says he “firmly believes” that Toronto should be a “prime candidate” for the facility.The online retailing giant said on Thursday that it will invest $5 billion in constructing and developing a second headquarters that will be a “full equal” to its campus in Seattle.

As always, let us know if you have any questions.

Ronan