



Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Thursday, December 18, 2014 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable David Laxton

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER — Hon. David Laxton, MLA, Porter Creek Centre

DEPUTY SPEAKER — Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME CONSTITUENCY PORTFOLIO

Hon. Darrell Pasloski	Mountainview	Premier Minister responsible for Finance; Executive Council Office
Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Education; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Minister responsible for Community Services; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation; Yukon Lottery Commission Government House Leader
Hon. Doug Graham	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Scott Kent	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Yukon Energy Corporation; Yukon Development Corporation
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Environment; Public Service Commission
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister responsible for Highways and Public Works
Hon. Mike Nixon	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Justice; Tourism and Culture

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Party

Darius Elias	Vuntut Gwitchin
Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin
Hon. David Laxton	Porter Creek Centre
Patti McLeod	Watson Lake

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

New Democratic Party

Elizabeth Hanson	Leader of the Official Opposition Whitehorse Centre
Jan Stick	Official Opposition House Leader Riverdale South
Kevin Barr	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes
Lois Moorcroft	Copperbelt South
Jim Tredger	Mayo-Tatchun
Kate White	Takhini-Kopper King

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, December 18, 2014 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of the Child Development Centre

Hon. Mr. Graham: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the final day of this legislative sitting to ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Child Development Centre for two very significant events. The first is the celebration of the centre's 35th anniversary earlier this year.

For three and a half decades, the centre has been supporting families and young children with disabilities in a safe, therapeutic and healthy environment. The staff is highly qualified and caring. The board members are there for all the right reasons — to make our community a better place for children with disabilities.

The Child Development Centre not only makes minor miracles happen for the children it serves, but it also offers parents strong support, providing them with a safe place, for their children and for themselves. In Whitehorse, the Child Development Centre has created a place where children are valued for who they are, and their abilities are celebrated. Another benefit is the mentorship of these children who are not special needs, who work and play together with their peers in the classroom. This part of the CDC is not often recognized but goes so far in creating more accepting and understanding children and adults.

I was just there yesterday, at the — I can't call it playschool, because my grandson refers to it as "school". I was there at the school Christmas concert and watched the interaction between special-needs children and technically normal children, and it was wonderful. I think this will only prove to benefit the Yukon in the future.

I know I'm speaking to the converted, Mr. Speaker, as you are a former chair of the CDC, and I know you appreciate its values.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the Child Development Centre staff travel to rural Yukon communities on a regular basis to ensure the children who need their services receive them. We are indeed fortunate to have the Child Development Centre here to support Yukon families and their children, and we wish them well for another 35 years.

The Child Development Centre itself only had a very small celebration earlier this year because staff were focused on their very first accreditation process. I want to recognize them here today for obtaining their three-year accreditation

from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities International.

In awarding this three-year accreditation, the commission — or CARF — report speaks to the strengths of the Child Development Centre and all of the positive things that anyone who has any interaction with the organization has to say, from ourselves as the funder, to parents, First Nations and other organizations who work with the centre. There were 1,500 standards, Mr. Speaker, against which the Child Development Centre was measured and the commission only had recommendations on how this could be improved, changed or modified in 10 areas. I had the opportunity to go through the complete commission report and I was absolutely astounded at the number of items that were simply titled "No recommendations in this area."

It is a testament to the organization that accreditation was awarded so quickly. This accreditation will only further benefit the services and supports provided for children with disabilities and their families and we commend the Child Development Centre for its continuing dedication and hard work on behalf of all Yukoners.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In recognition of holiday season workers and volunteers

Ms. Stick: On this last day of the sitting before Christmas, I rise on behalf of all members of this Legislature to pay tribute to the many workers and volunteers across the Yukon who will be giving of their time over the holidays to keep Yukoners safe and warm.

These individuals often are required to spend time away from their families and their friends to do their jobs. These workers and volunteers do their jobs year-round, but I feel it is important to remember them over the next two weeks. There are so many to thank and there are many obvious ones: the police, the firefighters, the nurses, the doctors, medevac crews and road crews — highway crews. There are the volunteers trying to ensure everyone has a safe and warm shelter and good food. There are volunteers working hard to ensure there are gifts under the tree and food in the cupboards for every family. I would be remiss not to mention our private sector workers who are there at our hotels cleaning the rooms, welcoming people at the front desk, the gas station operators along the highway and the check-in people at the airports as we all try to get home for the holidays.

We often get caught up in the rush and the bustle of the holiday season, decorating, cooking and shopping and we sometimes forget to thank them, to lend a hand and to be sure no one is left out at this time of the year.

I have not named all of the workers and volunteers in our communities who deserve our thanks, but I do want to thank them anyway for being there for all of us. I would encourage everyone to take a moment and thank someone for the work they are doing over these holidays.

In recognition of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Mr. Elias: It is my pleasure to rise and pay tribute to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's birthday this month of December. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is an irreplaceable, unspoiled wilderness and home to millions of birds, bears, fish, muskoxen and many other species of wildlife.

The refuge is made up of soaring mountains, verdant valleys, lush wetlands and majestic rivers and lakes. It is an unspoiled wilderness. The coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the birthing and nursing grounds of the 197,000-strong Porcupine caribou herd, the herd that the Gwich'in Nation depends on for food and which is the foundation of our cultural traditions and is central to the social, economic and spiritual fabric of our being. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is sacred, not only to the Gwich'in but to millions of North Americans who have, time and time again, voiced their steadfast support of permanent protection of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The Arctic refuge was established in 1960, but it didn't happen easily. Throughout the 1950s, powerful interests opposed the conservation area, while many others worked in support of its creation. Eventually, widespread public support persuaded the Eisenhower administration to establish the nine-million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northeast Alaska. This 1960 protection of the land and its wildlife in Alaska was a momentous achievement, but there was another purpose in the minds of those who worked to create the refuge in the Arctic, and it had to do with the second value — the value of wilderness.

I take this time to thank those many thousands of Yukoners and our First Nation governments, our Yukon government and the Canadian government for their support of the Gwich'in efforts to protect the Arctic National Wildlife coastal plain and the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd in Alaska from industrial intrusion.

Mahsi' cho, shijyaa for the hundreds of times the people of Old Crow have travelled to Washington D.C. to help protect the Porcupine caribou herd's calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain.

It is the holiday season and we have much to be grateful for and much to celebrate this year. This December, we also celebrate the 55th birthday of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and what it means to our Yukon citizens. It was on this month in 1960 that President Eisenhower established the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to preserve its unique wilderness, wildlife and recreational values. In 1980, the United States Congress expanded the refuge to encompass more winter habitat of the Porcupine caribou herd, and the refuge's purpose to provide continued sustenance and subsistence uses was very specifically mentioned at that time. Each spring, between 40,000 and 50,000 caribou calves are born there. It is because of the vadzaih — the caribou — that we as Gwitchin people have been able to maintain and thrive in our way of life. For thousands of years we depended on this herd for our sustenance, for our clothing, for our shelter, for tools, medicine and even games.

In 1988, in Arctic Village, Alaska, with an increased threat of oil and gas development in the birthplace and nursery grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd, the Gwich'in nation came together and agreed unanimously to speak with one voice in opposition to oil and gas development on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge — a very specific mandate, Mr. Speaker. I was there in 1988 as a teenager and to this day, it was the most powerful and life-changing political event I have ever attended. I will always remember the oldest Gwich'in elder spoke to the Gwich'in nation and he said, "When you speak around the world to protect our caribou, you do it in a good way and you don't harm anyone."

To accomplish this task, the community has established the Gwich'in Steering Committee. Today I recognize the Gwich'in Steering Committee's tireless efforts to protect the arctic refuge and our Gwich'in way of life.

My journey with the refuge began in my mother's womb, and it continues today with so many thousands of international Arctic residents. I will tell a quick story, Mr. Speaker.

I was once camped right beside the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in my former job as a senior park warden for Vuntut National Park. One morning, I was walking toward the refuge in a mountain pass, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky and I heard a rumbling, so I stopped and I saw a cow caribou and a calf come over the pass and, in just minutes, I was surrounded by about 20,000 caribou and a sight, experience and a power that I will never forget.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service received close to one million comments in support of wilderness declaration for the Arctic refuge, and we remain steadfast on this side in our country.

If I had an audience with the President of the United States, Barak Obama, my one and only ask would be for him to designate the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska as wilderness and protect it for all time before he leaves office.

This month is the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge birthday, and we, as Yukoners, celebrate all that it supports and protects for our citizens as well. It is the sacred place where life begins, and I say to my fellow Yukoners today: Long live the Porcupine caribou herd.

Applause

In recognition of Legislative staff, Clerks, Sergeants-at-Arms, Hansard staff and pages

Speaker: I would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of all the members here, to thank our pages — not just the two that are here presently — but all eight of our pages. They have done a wonderful job in assisting us. Also the staff of Hansard behind the microphones and doors who keep our words correct on our behalf when we misspeak; the Legislative staff who always guide us to make sure we don't trip over ourselves; and the Clerks at the table who help us go through the protocols and the procedures and make sure we get it right; both of our Sergeants-at-Arms for their ceremonial duty and their patience and time with us, and looking after the

Mace. On behalf of all members, thank you to all of you who help make this Legislature work.

Applause

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I have the unique pleasure of introducing and welcoming to the gallery, the perhaps three most important women in my life — my mom Linda Dixon, my fiancée Brittany McNeil, and our daughter London.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I have for tabling the Yukon Liberal Party press release, March 12, 2013 and also another Yukon Liberal Party press release, February 28, 2013.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to expand program offerings and work with communities in support of the Healthy Families Yukon and Learning Together programs.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with Government of Canada and industry stakeholders to create the employer-sponsored training stream of the Canada job grant in support of Yukon's labour market.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work in cooperation with Air North, industry partners and cultural sector representatives in support of the Yukon government's commitment to promote the Yukon as an attractive year-round destination during Winterlude in Ottawa.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House recognize the contribution Yukon artists make to the territory and commend Yukon government's partnership with the Friends of the Yukon Permanent Art Collection for wise stewardship of the Yukon permanent art collection and the focus on fine craft in 2015 in honour of Craft Year 2015 and to help promote craft as a key component of culture.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to work in cooperation with the Government of Canada and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to advance to construction of a new detachment in Faro, in keeping with the public safety needs in the community.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House acknowledge the importance of Yukon's network of community-based museums in preserving, sharing and celebrating the territory's rich heritage now and into the future.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urge the Government of Yukon to continue to provide services to child and youth victims and witnesses of crime by coordinating multi-disciplinary and inter-agency partners who provide services and programs by applying national best practices for child advocacy centres to Yukon's northern context, by providing a child advocacy centre where a collaborative team of professionals work in a child-friendly setting to help child or youth victim or witness navigate the criminal justice system and by partnering with law enforcement, child protection, prosecutors, medical professionals, victim services and counselling services to provide an integrated support system for young victims and witnesses of crime and their families.

Ms. McLeod: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government and the Town of Watson Lake to work together by reaching an agreement similar to the one which was signed by the Minister of Community Services and the Mayor of Dawson City for the purpose of seeing the Watson Lake solid-waste facility become a regional solid-waste facility.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Department of Community Services and the Town of Watson Lake to work together to upgrade Watson Lake's drinking water system using the \$5 million that has been allocated for this project by the Yukon government.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to develop and implement protocols that outline how the Yukon government will work cooperatively with rural Yukon municipalities in identifying and providing available land for potential territorial, municipal and private sector developments within their boundaries.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to implement the Yukon water strategy by spending an additional \$2.7 million over three years to:

- (1) hire a hydrogeologist to formalize and enhance the existing groundwater program;
- (2) further establish the community-based monitoring program;
- (3) install and upgrade hydrometric stations throughout the Yukon;
- (4) seek to add new wells to the groundwater network;
- (5) plan a water forum for water managers across the territory;
- (6) develop a system to track water allocation for licences; and
- (7) conduct a research study on the Dempster Highway that will help to better understand and adapt to climate change on Yukon's hydrological regime.

Mr. Elias: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to support the Climate Change Youth Ambassador program and ensure that that youth ambassador is included in the delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties 21 in Paris in 2015.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I rise to give notice of the following:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government and the board and staff of Yukon Housing Corporation to carefully consider all input from the Community Advisory Committee for the housing action plan, the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, the Anti-Poverty Coalition, the Yukon Residential Landlords Association, the Yukon Real Estate Association and the Association of Yukon Communities regarding options for use of the remaining northern housing trust funds and the new investment in affordable housing funding at the meeting jointly hosted by the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation, the chair of the board of Yukon Housing Corporation and the president of Yukon Housing Corporation on October 27, 2014, as well as written input received from stakeholders after that meeting expressing their views regarding options for use of these funds.

Ms. Moorcroft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Merry Christmas. I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urge the Government of Yukon to live up to the terms of its contracts and monitor information supplied by contractors at the F.H. Collins replacement school to ensure that all subcontractors and workers are being treated fairly.

Mr. Barr: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to report on the implementation of the recommendations of the 2010 Beaton and Allen report "Task Force on Acutely Intoxicated Persons at Risk" by the first day of the 2015 Spring Sitting of the Legislature.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Economic outlook

Ms. Hanson: The fact is that the annual economic growth has decreased year over year since this Premier took office. In response to Yukon's stagnating economy, the worst in Canada in 2013, the Premier is resorting to desperate measures by gutting environmental legislation.

It appears he does not understand certain basic economic principles. The fact is, when government policy creates economic uncertainty, businesses are reluctant to hire and to invest. Economists of all stripes agree that policy-driven uncertainty, like the ongoing uncertainty generated from this Premier's position on YESAA and the Peel, hurt the economy. This concern about economic uncertainty has been echoed by our local chambers of commerce, as well as mining companies.

Given the Yukon economy's poor performance since this Premier took office, why is the Premier still ignoring calls for a new positive economic direction?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This government certainly is proud that, in nine of the last 10 years, it has had positive economic growth. I can look back to 2009, when the whole world's economy contracted and what we saw was a growth of almost eight percent.

Yes, we knew that there was going to be a downturn in 2013. What I can say is that, through a record capital budget this year, we're seeing growth in the construction industry and positive indicators that our economy is again tracking in a positive manner. In the last decade, we have seen a record amount of population growth in this territory — over 20 percent growth — primarily because of the policies of this government.

We know the NDP and the Liberals would again like to throw a big fence around this territory, with a sign that says, "No jobs; closed for business." This government is focused on creating opportunities for Yukoners, wealth for Yukoners, so we can have jobs for people today and for our children tomorrow.

Ms. Hanson: The Premier seems to be selective. He seems to think that he can take credit for 10 years. He has only been Premier since 2011. The Premier seems to believe that trampling Yukon First Nations' constitutionally protected rights will create certainty and jump-start the economy. This is in sharp contrast to the view taken by the Yukon's public sector and Yukon mining industry.

The Department of Economic Development's 2013 mining sector report states — and I quote: "The advent of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act (YESAA) in 2005 has brought in broader regulatory requirements but most companies know that simply following the legal minimums will not win them the 'social license to operate' without which they will not have a successful project."

When the government interferes with the certainty afforded by our Yukon land claims, it costs all Yukoners. Will the Premier respect the advice of the Yukon public service and admit that his attempts to undermine aboriginal rights and gut YESAA threatens Yukon economic certainty, investment and growth?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again we hear from the Leader of the NDP a misunderstanding of the legislation that is before the federal government. I will have to remind her again that this is federal legislation tabled by the federal government, going through the federal process. Yukon government was asked for comments and we provided them. First Nations were asked for comments and they provided them as well. Did we get everything that we wanted in Bill S-6? No, we did not, but we feel that we were adequately consulted and that they considered our recommendations prior to tabling the amendments that they have provided in Bill S-6.

We are proud of the investments that we have made to continue to ensure that we are on the right track through investments in tourism, investments in infrastructure, investments in skills training and the creation of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining.

The Liberals and the NDP, again, would do everything to oppose and obstruct any growth in this economy. This government disagrees with that. We will continue to focus on jobs and opportunities for Yukoners.

Ms. Hanson: The truth is that YESAA is federal legislation. The truth is that the regressive amendments were proposed by this Premier, and this Premier keeps telling Yukoners that YESAA and the Peel final recommended plan generate uncertainty for mining companies and constrain economic growth.

Again, the Premier should read his own government's research reports. The mining sector report states that our largely stable regulatory regime that is well-established and well-understood is an opportunity for mining. Listed among the risks are the Premier's legal battle over free-entry staking and the protracted public conflict over the Peel land use plan. His own public service — the attractive investment climate is achieved through predictable environmental regulations and engaged First Nation partners.

Will the Premier stop obstructing the economy and ignoring his public service, and pull his support for Bill S-6 and commit to not appealing the Peel court decision?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This government will continue to look at all avenues to create a strong private sector economy that drives the ability for this government to provide programs and services for all Yukoners to, in fact, be able to provide pensions for those people who work for this government now — and enjoy a quality of life unseen anywhere else in this territory. This government will ensure that not only do the people of today have an opportunity for prosperity, but those young people of tomorrow can also have that opportunity for prosperity.

We continue to work with First Nations. Today we announced with White River First Nation our agreement to work toward a reconciliation agreement. We continue to work

on a day-to-day basis, both at the officials level and at the elected officials level. All governments in this territory have economic development as one of their priorities. It's too bad that the Liberals and the NDP oppose that.

Question re: Mountain View Golf Course leased land buyback

Mr. Tredger: Over the course of the last month, this Yukon Party government has not been transparent or accountable with Yukoners about their backroom golf club deal. The Premier has refused to speak to the issue and the Ministers of Community Services' and Energy, Mines and Resources' constant refrain of, "I wasn't there so I'm not responsible" is quite selective, given what we've heard and the government's most recent attempt at pointing to an NDP government of two decades ago shows how desperate they are.

This government has refused to disclose even the most rudimentary details of this backroom deal. The price of lots sold in Whistle Bend included development costs for trails and storm drains.

So Mr. Speaker, were the costs of this government's backroom deal passed on to unsuspecting homebuyers in the Whistle Bend subdivision? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Obviously, this topic has been brought up on a number of occasions in this current sitting of the Legislature. The Minister of Community Services and I, while noting that neither of us were in government at the time — this was done by a previous minister — it did, of course, accomplish a couple of things. It saved an incredibly important piece of recreational infrastructure from having to perhaps consider closing.

I've been approached by a number of members of that golf club who reside in this community and I have been actually thanked for standing up for that golf course, unlike members opposite who choose to berate and belittle the efforts of the volunteers who have made that golf course such an important feature of our community for the past 30 years.

Again, we hear the heckling from across the way. The other aspect of this deal was that it allowed for the purchase of land that provided for complementary infrastructure for the development of Whistle Bend. At that time, there was a housing crunch in this territory. Now we have lots available for sale over the counter in a number of communities, including Whitehorse. Again, we have a functioning golf course that has and continues to raise money for important things like the Hospital Foundation as well as literacy.

Mr. Tredger: This is not about the value of our NGOs or of the golf club; this is about a Yukon Party backroom deal. It's a shame that no one from the government is willing to be forthcoming with Yukoners about why the government secretly spent three-quarters of a million dollars to bail out a golf club.

Worse than that, the minister keeps telling Yukoners that this backroom deal is business as usual when it comes to his government's approach to funding NGOs; however, Yukoners have a right to know how their money has been spent.

Because this government has refused to be accountable to the Yukon public and answer simple questions, it appears we need some outside help.

Will this government support a call to have the Office of the Auditor General of Canada look into this transaction so Yukoners can finally know the truth about this backroom deal?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, it's again unfortunate — the way the members choose to characterize this. As both my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources have reminded the member that we were not in government at the time the decision was made. We have looked into the matter. We have determined that the minister of the day clearly made a decision to help Mountain View Golf Course. We have said that had we been in that position and made that same decision, we would have put out a press release to announce it.

Not only has the conflicts commissioner provided his advice on this, indicating that, despite the member's assertions and attacks, the Premier was not in a real or perceived conflict of interest — the members are engaging in muckraking that affects the reputations of every member of that board of directors from February 2011, when the agreement was concluded and when the money was paid to Mountain View Golf Club.

So the members owe several private citizens an apology for their accusations and their characterizations. While we do not see it necessary for the Auditor General to look into it, we also have absolutely no objection to the Auditor General looking into that. If the Auditor General deems that it's appropriate to review, government will happily provide the Auditor General with all information and assistance, just as we do on each and every matter the Auditor General chooses to look into.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order please. I remind the gallery that you are here to watch and listen and not participate in any fashion. That includes applauding or jeering. Please keep that in mind. I don't want to have to ask you to leave.

Final supplementary, please.

Mr. Tredger: Sometimes we're responsible; sometimes we're not. This is about accountability to Yukoners.

Can the minister answer at least one of the following questions? Why was this land purchased for residential and retail development for the City of Whitehorse when the city told the government that they had no interest in the land? Why did this government buy out the remainder of the lease for more than the appraised value of the raw land itself? Which line item was this money appropriated from? Finally, was the \$750,000 recovered from the pockets of unsuspecting homebuyers purchasing lots in the Whitehorse subdivision?

Hon. Mr. Kent: To answer some of the member opposite's questions with respect to this deal, the way that the lease was structured by the NDP government in 1997 — we've talked about that — an initial 30-year period with a 30-

year renewal, a 60-year lease. It was set up at that time so that there were a couple of aspects to respond to the member opposite.

The property would have to be purchased back at an appraised value. The appraisal was done in 2010-11, when this transaction took place, and there were no requirements in the lease signed by the former NDP government for the property to have any development, should that occur.

When it comes to this particular transaction, I've been informed by the Minister of Health and Social Services, who was a city councillor at the time, that the city did know about this. Of course, we've heard in the paper and read in the paper that many, if not all, of the golf club members themselves were apprised of the situation and informed of the situation by the volunteer board of directors at that time.

Again though, I think the most important thing is that this is an important NGO — it provides an important service, runs a very important asset for this community, and raises funds for the Hospital Corporation, for the maternity ward at the hospital — those were two projects I was involved in — as well as literacy here in the territory.

Question re: Affordable housing

Mr. Silver: I began this sitting with a call for the resignation of the minister responsible for the Housing Corporation over the mishandling of \$17 million of affordable housing money. That was echoed, of course, only a few days later by the City of Whitehorse.

Again this week, there has been renewed criticism from the Chamber of Commerce and housing advocates over this government's mismanagement plan to spend some of the money on energy-efficiency rebates.

When the minister went back to the drawing board this spring, after cancelling plans for affordable housing units, he said, "Stay tuned." Yukoners are still waiting. I'll give the minister an opportunity to explain the motion that he tabled here today. Does the government actually plan to spend any of the remaining funding on affordable housing?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: We see the mischaracterizations and entirely political attacks coming from the Leader of the Liberal Party. I would remind the member that, again on this area, in fact, as identified in the motion I tabled, I hosted a consultation jointly with the chair and president of Yukon Housing Corporation to share with the community advisory committee of the housing action plan and several stakeholder organizations — including representatives of the Association of Yukon Communities, including representatives of the two chambers of commerce, the residential landlord association, the Yukon realtors association, and the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition — where we identified options to them of the areas we were considering using additional northern housing trust money for — as well as consulting with them on the new investment in affordable housing agreement that I signed with Minister Bergen this summer.

We provided them with options, which we sought their feedback on. We received feedback at that meeting and received some additional feedback afterwards, and that

feedback is being given careful consideration by Yukon Housing Corporation board and staff, as well as by the Government of Yukon. We have already acted in one of those areas that was recommended to us by several stakeholders, including the chambers of commerce, which was the initiative announced by my colleague, the Minister for Energy, Mines and Resources. That is one of the things that we heard from stakeholders and we acted in that area.

Mr. Silver: What we do know is that the government has been spending this money on anything but affordable housing.

We know, for example, it recently spent \$850,000 to purchase land downtown for a new Salvation Army on Alexander Street. Again, all these projects are great, but it's not affordable housing. The criteria for what this money can be spent on seem to be changing every day.

Here is another idea that I would like to throw into the mix, Mr. Speaker. The Dawson daycare has completed a feasibility study for a new building. It would include affordable housing units for staff who are not highly paid. The plan would — as they say — kill two birds with one stone. It would provide much-needed affordable housing and provide daycare with a much-needed building to operate in.

It's the 35th anniversary of the Dawson Daycare Society. Will the government consider spending some of the remaining money on this project?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Investments in daycares would not meet the criteria of the program, but again I would note that we sought feedback from stakeholders, including the Chamber of Commerce. From the letter that the chamber sent us, they specifically said, "We also support option four and believe that programs that encourage improved energy efficiency in homes will lead to more affordable housing rates over the long term."

They were one of the stakeholders that supported programs, like my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, announced this week, and they supported it being used out of the northern housing trust, because that was one of the options we were consulting on. Again, we have acted in a number of areas. Contrary to the member's assertion, this funding was not specifically required for affordable housing and that is why we have used it for areas including: investment in the Salvation Army; investment in Betty's Haven second-stage housing project; \$300,000 as well to support Habitat for Humanity; investments in housing in Carcross and Carmacks; and, most recently, the energy-efficiency program.

The total amounts remaining in this fund, contrary to the member's attempts to paint it as a massive fund — most of the money was initially given — more than initially given. It was given and kept with First Nations for their housing priorities. \$32.5 million was used for that purpose. We have used the remaining amount for purposes, including social housing and the recent announcement this week.

Mr. Silver: Let me get this straight, Mr. Speaker. New windows for anybody fit the criteria but affordable housing for Dawson daycare workers doesn't.

I'm trying to do a favour for the minister here. This money has been burning a hole in his pocket for several years and he can't seem to spend it. I'm also trying to help out a daycare in my community. We know the government has thrown the doors wide open on what it wants to spend affordable housing dollars on. This proposal that I'm asking for today actually would see the money go toward affordable housing.

It's the 35th anniversary of the daycare. Its current building has a leaky roof with water literally coming in through the lighting fixtures. The floor needs replacing; they have had no renovations done in the last decade. When staff from this government visited the facility, they had to keep their coats on. This is a need. They need a new building and that new building could have affordable housing units in it for their staff and for anybody else who needs it in the community.

Give us a Christmas present here, minister. Will the government please consider this proposal?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I would point out that that is not one of the things we've heard from the municipality of Dawson City. That is not something we've heard from stakeholder organizations.

In answer to the member's off-mic heckling, I in fact have not only talked to the Mayor of Dawson about affordable housing, we have talked on a number of occasions about it — and the perspectives of both Dawson City and other communities. In fact, we look forward to additional work with those communities in addressing options.

In responding specifically to the needs and requests of Dawson City, one of the things we did at the request of Mayor Potoroka and his council was that Yukon Housing Corporation released lots that were held by Yukon Housing Corporation for sale, which was a specific request we had received from the City of Dawson. Again in this area, we will continue to make investments. In social housing, we will continue to listen to the input from stakeholders. While there is a diversity of opinion between those stakeholders, we will work with the board and staff of Yukon Housing Corporation to come up with additional solid investments — all of which I'm sure the member will vote against, as he has voted against every dollar that has been invested in Dawson City.

Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member that we have made unprecedented investments in housing — over \$100 million in investments, in social and seniors housing, since 2008 and that includes \$53 million directly from Canada's economic action plan —

Speaker: Order please. The member's time has elapsed.

Question re: Climate change action plan

Ms. White: Last week was the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Lima, where diplomats, scientists, economists, public servants and concerned citizens came together to tackle the most pressing issue facing the world. The global environmental movement has long since

acknowledged that climate change is a real threat. The purpose of the Lima conference was addressing that threat.

We thought that we had made a breakthrough with the Yukon Party when they admitted that climate change was real. But unfortunately, beyond some token measure, this government has not followed up that acknowledgement with any significant action.

Mr. Speaker, when will this government make a serious commitment to reducing the Yukon's fossil fuel dependency and address our contributions to global climate change?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with the member's characterization of the government's approach to climate change. I think the Yukon government has demonstrated that Yukon can be a leader when it comes to climate change, not only in Canada but around the world. Some of the work that we have done through the Climate Change Secretariat demonstrates that.

At the COP 20 conference in Lima, the Yukon delegation had the opportunity to highlight the leadership role that they took in the Arctic adaptation portal that was spearheaded by the Yukon government through the Climate Change Secretariat. That is a project that is of international significance to all Arctic regions in the world, and it is a project that was led by the folks right here in Yukon.

We are taking leadership on this issue. We are making investments and we are taking action to ensure that Yukon responds adequately to the needs of our citizens and the needs of our territory with regard to climate change. We will continue to make those investments both through the Yukon Research Centre and the Climate Change Secretariat, and we will continue to take action to reduce our greenhouse gases here in the territory and provided input into scientific processes around adaptation that affect not only Yukon, but the entire Canadian north.

Ms. White: This government has talked a lot about increased energy sources, but they rarely make mention of ways that we can reduce our dependence on energy and better manage our existing power supply. A smart grid is a system that allows for the redistribution of power throughout the grid. The idea is that power needs ebb and flow throughout the day. It allows us to take power from areas of low demand and redistribute it to areas of high demand. This management of power would allow us to shave the peaks in demand when the backup fossil fuel generators kick in. This would increase the ability of our existing renewable energy sources to meet our demands. The problem is that to implement this kind of system, the political will and direction needs to be there.

Does this government have the will necessary to take us into energy management of the future, establish a smart grid and begin meaningfully addressing Yukon's contributions to global climate change?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I am pleased to talk about the Yukon's electricity grid. In fact, we have one of the greenest — if not the greenest — electricity grids in the country, indeed, possibly even the world. As we heard from the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation earlier this month, close to 100 percent of our energy comes

from hydro power which is, of course, a clean, carbon-free source of power. Obviously we do have fossil fuel backups, but with the change that we have recently made from diesel backups to LNG, that carbon footprint is decreasing. We continue to make investments in renewable energy through the Yukon Energy Corporation and through some of the steps taken by Department of Energy, Mines and Resources through policies like the microgeneration policy, which allows individual homeowners to access renewable energy systems for their own houses. With the change and the announcement made earlier this week, there is a new incentive program for homeowners to access those renewable energy systems for their own houses.

Through a number of initiatives and a number of programs, we are providing opportunities for Yukoners to access renewable energy. On the grander scale, we are increasing the Yukon's green energy by expanding our hydro sources through the development of a new hydro project, which of course will be a legacy project for many years to come.

Question re: Alcohol consumption statistics

Mr. Barr: Yukon consistently has the highest per-capita consumption of alcohol in Canada. Liquor sales are among the top sources of self-generated revenue for this government. While the government is eager to track the revenue benefits it gains from liquor sales, it has been very reluctant to track the social costs attached to these sales. In B.C., the provincial health officer's report, entitled *Public Health Approach to Alcohol Policy*, concludes that alcohol-related health and enforcement costs far exceed government liquor revenue. This is a conclusion also reached in the government's overlooked 2010 Beaton and Allen report on acutely intoxicated persons at risk. It is time this government began to use evidence rather than tired rhetoric to support its position on the liquor file.

When will this government commit to analyzing the real cost of alcohol misuse in Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'm not sure what rock the member has been under, but this government has done more in the area of FASD action than any previous government. We have taken a leadership role, which we have been recognized for at a national level. We have taken a number of actions through multiple departments, including the good work done by the Department of Health and Social Services and by the Department of Justice. In the area of Yukon Liquor Corporation, there are efforts made to promote social responsibility and encourage people to take personal responsibility, as well as to intervene if a friend is about to drink and drive.

Government can only do so much. We will do that, but responsibility also rests with each and every one of us to ensure that we, as individuals — and in seeing our family and friends — take action if someone is in trouble and encourage them to seek assistance in counselling, because an addictions problem is something that can be assisted with, but requires someone himself or herself to take steps to address it.

Again, I would encourage the member to make himself aware of the facts and to realize how much is done and to also do his part in this situation.

Mr. Barr: Mr. Speaker, this government is not doing enough. The minister is fond of reciting his support of MADD and Yukon RCMP. The dedication of these organizations is not in question.

It is too bad that the minister doesn't walk the talk and keeps ignoring MADD's recommendations. ER visits by highly intoxicated persons remain very high. The Yukon Medical Association attributes this persistent trend to a lack of housing. Many others cite a lack of supportive housing. The Beaton and Allen report recommended a shelter for at-risk, acutely intoxicated people to be co-located with, or very close to, a sobering centre or detox facility in downtown Whitehorse. When will this government begin working with their partners in the Yukon Liquor Corporation, Justice, Health and Social Services and NGOs to take its social responsibility mandate seriously?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The member's script writers didn't expect me to answer the first question, because the member said I said something that I have not in fact made reference to. My colleague, the Minister of Justice, has talked about some of the work he referenced.

I would remind the member of this government's FASD action plan, of an area where we took action and the NDP opposed providing those interventions when they were in government. We have supported, through NGOs including Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, the Child Development Centre and their diagnostic team — we have implemented our five-step FASD action plan. We have taken a leadership role on the national stage, including chairing the Canadian Northwest Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Partnership ministers meeting — which I did when I was Minister of Health and Social Services — and we are continuing to work with all of our jurisdictional partners on determining best practices in the areas of research, intervention and support. But, ultimately, the member needs to understand that there is only so much that any government can do and that each and every one of us also has a personal responsibility — if we see a friend about to drink and drive, or know a friend or family member who is consuming alcohol too much — to step in and encourage them to seek the assistance that they need to address that problem.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing line-by-line consideration of Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 15: Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing line-by-line consideration of Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

Department of Community Services — continued

On Public Libraries — Beaver Creek Library — continued

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would just like to take up where we left off the other day in talking about the Beaver Creek Library. This line item of \$358,000 is related to a transfer of funds from the Department of Education to allow Community Services to explore options for a new library location. The original plan was to house the library in the school basement, but renovation costs proved higher than had been originally estimated, so we had to explore alternative options.

I would just like to explain to members why this project is proceeding, and that is due to the fact that the existing library building is an older building and is not in the greatest of shape.

It is also connected to the fire hall that was being replaced. One of the considerations had been whether it should be part of the new fire hall building because of concerns about potentially conflicting uses and whether a new fire hall was really the best location for a library, because the users of the two facilities can be quite different. Lots of people can be coming in throughout the day to a library, or there may be many issues around people parking and trying to use the facility, which serves not only as access for borrowing books, but also, particularly in the case of Beaver Creek, the library space is an area that is used for community purposes as well.

When the MLA for Kluane, who represents the area, along with the Premier and I, were recently in the community of Beaver Creek — I believe that was the beginning of November that we were there on a Friday during a session —

we held a community meeting as well as a meeting with the White River First Nation. One of the things that we heard from people who use the library — particularly from mothers and fathers of children — was that the current facility is used as a gathering place for people to talk and to read and, for mothers in particular, along with children, to get together. So they are using it for social purposes and not just for the use of books.

Having heard that and having heard their suggestions about possible other options, one of the things that we heard from the citizens in Beaver Creek was their feeling that the existing community centre could perhaps be used for a library, and they felt that would be a complementary use. From their perspective, there is an interest in seeing a replacement to that community recreational centre at some point in time.

What I took from that meeting with the citizens of Beaver Creek is that people in Beaver Creek seemed to see it as a higher priority to, at some point, replace that recreational centre, rather than spending a lot of money on renovating other existing facilities to accommodate the library or putting in a trailer, which was considered as another option for use as a location for the library.

I believe that currently the option for potentially using the community centre on an interim basis for library facilities is being explored, as was suggested by the Member for Kluane's constituents in Beaver Creek at that meeting, which I referred to. So again, we are in this area attempting to be both fiscally responsible, but respond to the feedback that we heard from Yukoners living in the community of Beaver Creek. We feel that, in this case, it looks at this point like we should be able to meet both of those objectives through using the existing community centre space for a library on a temporary basis.

I should also note that the community centre is one of the community recreation facilities that is seeing a significant increase to their annual funding under the community recreation assistance grants, which the government announced, and that we're almost doubling the amount of money that goes to unincorporated communities, including Beaver Creek, which will help the organization that operates the community centre to pay the bills, to pay its costs and as well, because the library is now going to be going in there on a temporary basis, it will assist with the operation of the library in that community centre.

I hope I've adequately explained this to members. I should also note that although it's not included in the fire hall because of the issue that I mentioned about the possibility of conflicting uses, the fire hall itself is a pretty impressive facility built for a cost of roughly \$3.6 million. It is being completed ahead of schedule. It is a three-bay fire hall with room to house local Yukon Emergency Medical Services — medical responders who are the volunteer ambulance crew in the community. The fire pumper that is in this facility is owned by the Fire Marshal's Office and is in good condition.

We have that new facility, which I look forward to elaborating on more later at a different line item, and is a great investment in the community of Beaver Creek, despite the fact that it was not able to accommodate new space for the library.

We're very excited about this great investment in the Member for Kluane's riding that responds directly to the needs of the community of Beaver Creek and will help support both the volunteer fire department and Emergency Medical Services — EMS volunteers who provide that coverage within the community of Beaver Creek.

Public Libraries — Beaver Creek Library in the amount of \$358,000 agreed to

On Community Operations — Water Delivery Truck

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is a deferral. This is deferring the purchase of a water delivery truck to a future year, so this amount may surface in a future budget.

Community Operations — Water Delivery Truck underexpenditure in the amount of \$250,000 cleared

On Community Operations — Remote Monitoring — SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition)

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Madam Chair, this supervisory control and data acquisition is related to installing monitoring systems for our water facilities, so this enables remote monitoring, which of course provides great operational savings in terms of staff time plus provides more immediate information to tell staff if there is a problem at one of these facilities.

We are proceeding with remote monitoring systems and installing them at our drinking water facilities, but not all remote monitoring systems that had been budgeted for installation this year are going to be installed this year, and the intention that is because those projects could not be completed in the current fiscal year, the remainder are scheduled for future years. So this reduction of \$120,000 is something that the members can expect to see in a future budget of the Department of Community Services.

Community Operations — Remote Monitoring — SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) underexpenditure in the amount of \$120,000 cleared

On Community Operations — Rural Municipalities/Unincorporated Community Infrastructure Projects

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This \$197,000 is a project in the Town of Watson Lake and another in a long series of significant investments that the Yukon Government has made in the Town of Watson Lake and in partnership with the Town of Watson Lake.

This is a revote of \$197,000 so that a project under Building Canada and a project gas tax can be amalgamated under the same project and contractor.

I should note that one of the reasons that the Yukon government does provide significant capital funding to municipalities is because we have greater financial resources, although I should note that we have increased the financial resources for all municipalities through the increased comprehensive municipal grant. That includes the grant amounts for the community of Watson Lake for 2014-15, which is \$1,987,598. This specific investment is one in a long series of investments that have been made in the community of Watson Lake. It also links to other projects — investments in water and sewer — that have been completed under

Building Canada funding in previous years. That includes the water and sewer upgrade phase 1 in Watson Lake, which was a \$1.5 million investment in Watson Lake sewer upgrades. That achieved various upgrades to the water and waste-water infrastructure in Watson Lake.

The second phase of that project, water and sewer upgrades phase 2, was another project funded under Building Canada fund, which provided \$2 million of investment into upgrading the infrastructure in the Town of Watson Lake.

The third phase of the project in Watson Lake water and sewer upgrades under Building Canada was \$4 million for a project that started in 2012, with completion in the fall of 2014.

Other investments in Watson Lake in sewer have included the Lakeview Avenue water and sewer project, which was funded in part by — sorry, Madam Chair. There's a typo on my page, which is why I was confused. It was funded by MRIF, which was the municipal rural infrastructure program. There is a missing "M" on my page, which is what confused me — a minor typo. An MRIF, Yukon government and Town of Watson Lake funded investment in the water and sewer of \$966,000 — and the Lakeview project was completed in 2013.

Again, this specific line item is part of a long series of continued investments in the Town of Watson Lake. I should also recognize the work of the Member for Watson Lake and her predecessor in getting the needs of the Town of Watson Lake brought to the attention of the Yukon government. I would like to also thank staff of Community Services, including our staff in the Infrastructure Development branch and our community advisors, for their excellent work in this area.

As you'll recall from previous discussions, in addition to this, we're also making investments in water infrastructure in Watson Lake, on top of the ones announced here, with a \$5-million investment into new drinking water infrastructure.

Community Operations — Rural Municipalities/Unincorporated Community Infrastructure Projects in the amount of \$197,000 agreed to

On Community Operations — Gas Tax Funded Projects

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is a deferral of gas tax-funded projects to a future year, primarily the Ross River waste-water disposal facility. Engineering services were tendered later than had been originally anticipated, and a contract is just being awarded — also for the Burwash sewage lagoon. On the Burwash sewage lagoon — further to a question that was asked previously by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, I believe it was, the other day. The member asked me a question about the Burwash sewage lagoon, and I can provide the member with an update on that. As I noted, the original problem had been caused by a valve issue at the Burwash sewage lagoon, and that valve has been replaced. The update I've received from Community Services staff — and I thank them for their quick turnaround on that — is that they finished refilling the sewage lagoon at Burwash yesterday, and it is now fully operational. They have also been able to advise me that — and this, again, is in answer to a specific question

received from the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes — there was no environmental damage, as only relatively clean water from the final stage of the lagoon was released due to that faulty valve problem and the issue that had to be addressed.

I hope that provides the member some comfort. I had committed earlier to getting back to the member by way of letter with more information about that. I hope and trust that my response now will suffice for the member. If he does have any additional questions regarding the Burwash lagoon, I would ask him to stand up after I sit down to let me know that he would like more information.

The other item under this line item is related to the Ross River waste-water disposal facility. As I believe, I may have mentioned to the member previously in debate, the meeting was hosted by staff of Community Services on Monday of this week in Ross River to talk to them about things including the Ross River waste-water disposal facility and the plan for it and to provide an opportunity for the Ross River Dena Council, as well as citizens of the community of Ross River, to be made aware of what government was planning and to provide any input and ask any questions that they might have at this point in time. There will be further discussions scheduled over the course of the next several weeks and months with the community of Ross River to get their input on this.

I should also note for members, just to recap, that the gas tax is an agreement with the federal government. It is an agreement that has now been indexed to provide for adjustments to the cost of that agreement. The Yukon government administers and has a role in reviewing projects under this fund and deciding whether to issue approvals for them. The majority of the money under gas tax is transferred to municipalities and to First Nations. The Yukon government retains seven percent of it for use in unincorporated communities. That doesn't include the ones that already receive money if they have a First Nation in an unincorporated community. First Nations receive 25 percent of gas tax funding allocated to First Nation communities, and the remaining portion of that, 68 percent of gas tax, is set aside for Yukon municipalities. It has been an important source of funding for infrastructure projects since its inception.

We do appreciate the fact that the federal government has extended the gas tax agreement and has provided us certainty with regard to the life of the agreement and has given all three — Yukon, Yukon municipalities and Yukon First Nations — greater certainty with regard to this infrastructure funding.

I would also like to specifically acknowledge Elaine Wyatt, who, as members know, was a long-time Mayor of Carmacks and recently passed away.

I would like to acknowledge her work on this project on this project on behalf of Association of Yukon Communities and as a member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. One of the things that she fought hard for was northern-specific changes in the gas tax agreement and recognition of some of the unique challenges. She was an important part of pushing for there to be an escalator clause in

the agreement that acknowledged the need for the total amounts to grow in future years. So I would like to thank Elaine on behalf of Yukon municipalities and Yukon government for her work in this area, and this is part of the legacy that she leaves — through the improvements we were able to get through collaborative work by the Yukon government and Yukon municipalities, including that her participation in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities successfully did gain us a better gas tax agreement than we previously had.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for his answer and wish him a very Merry Christmas.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'll thank the member for wishing me a Merry Christmas and wish him one as well.

Community Operations — Gas Tax Funded Projects underexpenditure in the amount of \$802,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Infrastructure Major Repairs and Improvements — Mayo Contaminated Soil Relocation

Community Infrastructure — Infrastructure Major Repairs and Improvements — Mayo Contaminated Soil Relocation in the amount \$64,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Water and Sewer Mains — Kwanlin Dun First Nation Water and Sewer Installation

Hon. Mr. Cathers: What this relates to is that the Kwanlin Dun First Nation — this is a project of theirs. It is one where payment will not be required until Kwanlin Dun First Nation begins their Range Road project, which was not completed this past summer. This reduction of \$650,000 is a deferral to a future year, and members can expect to see funding for this Kwanlin Dun First Nation Range Road project in a future year.

Community Infrastructure — Water and Sewer Mains — Kwanlin Dun First Nation Water and Sewer Installation underexpenditure in the amount of \$650,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Flood/Erosion Control

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This \$575,000 increase for flood and erosion control is for several things. It includes an amount of \$500,000 for increased funding for monitoring of conditions at Mayo and completion of Mayo dike work. It includes investment in the Liard River stabilization project. It includes a \$12,000 increase for funding for stabilization on the Liard River and for monitoring. There is also an increase in the amount of \$8,000 for stabilization of the Porcupine River in the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin's riding at Old Crow, increased funding for stabilization, Porcupine River monitoring — \$8,000. We have, also, under this line item \$55,000 of increased funding for anticipated fall and spring monitoring, as well as an allocation for potential diversion activity at Zircon, and all of that is part of \$55,000 in this total line item of \$575,000. If members have any questions about any of those areas, I would be happy to answer.

Community Infrastructure — Flood/Erosion Control in the amount of \$575,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Roads, Bridges and Streets Upgrade — Ross River Suspension Bridge

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an increase to address the costs of work completed in spring 2014 that evaluated the stabilization or demolition of the bridge. As you know, both options were considered. At the request of the community and hearing their very passionate interest in seeing this bridge stabilized because of its importance to them, both from a community and cultural perspective, a heritage perspective and for access to the other side — sorry, that was more than two — for all of those reasons.

The community had an interest in it. The government then responded by adjusting the plans for the area and doing a reassessment through joint work of Highways and Public Works and Community Services staff, as well as advice from contractors and consultants. A path forward to stabilize the bridge was determined. There is work being done to complete that project — as I mentioned earlier to the member, I believe, in response to his question — or it may have been a question from someone else. Some of the work has been completed on that project. Some other work on the project is waiting, pending the freezing of the Pelly River at Ross River to a sufficient thickness to be used for an ice bridge. I haven't been keeping track on a daily basis of the temperatures in Ross River but, as members know, we've had, unfortunately, quite a mild winter and that has resulted in some of the lakes and rivers that would normally be frozen by this time still being open, so that's something we need to look at carefully. I would also, as a side note, just encourage all Yukoners to be careful and not make assumptions about ice because making assumptions without actually checking, especially in a warm winter, can lead to the most serious of consequences if people go out on the ice.

Madam Chair, if the member has any additional questions regarding the Ross River suspension bridge and if he would like to ask them now, I would be happy to answer them.

Mr. Barr: No, I feel that the member has answered them from a previous debate.

Community Infrastructure — Roads, Bridges and Streets Upgrade — Ross River Suspension Bridge in the amount of \$250,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Burwash — Grave and Sedata Roads Improvements

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is increased funding for BST work. I believe it's bituminous surface treatment, which is sometimes known — although Highways will probably tell us it's known incorrectly — as chipseal, but I believe they would say from a technical perspective that that's not the right terminology.

The increased funding is for BST work completed in Burwash this summer on the roads and the project progressed more quickly than expected, which is why we see the additional request for \$1.3 million contained in this fall supplementary estimate.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Burwash — Grave and Sedata Roads Improvements in the amount of \$1,300,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Carcross — Water Treatment System Upgrade

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This \$10,000 is to complete minor deficiencies on the Carcross water treatment system upgrade project, which, as the member for the area will know, is a significant investment that the Yukon government made in partnership with the Government of Canada into the community of Carcross.

As I've mentioned before, this is one of a series of investments across the territory in drinking water infrastructure. As I've mentioned before, I don't have that exact number at my fingertips, but a very substantial portion of Building Canada 1 funding was used for investments in water treatment infrastructure, largely due to the change in Canadian standards for drinking water, particularly with regard to things like arsenic but, in the case of Carcross, it's also because the water is coming out of ground surface water, so we needed to put in place better infrastructure to filter out any potential contaminants, because surface water, of course, is at most risk of causing a problem with people if there is not extensive treatment to it. Again, this investment is a correction to a minor deficiency on that project.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Carcross — Water Treatment System Upgrade in the amount of \$10,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Carmacks — Road Upgrades/Resurfacing

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an increase to wrap up final work on a road upgrade and resurfacing project in Carmacks. This is done under Building Canada funding and it's in the amount of \$31,000.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Carmacks — Road Upgrades/Resurfacing in the amount of \$31,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Faro — Pumphouse

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This investment in the Town of Faro is part of the Faro pumphouse project. It's an increase to complete both phases of the project in the current year and, again, is part of that long series of investment in municipal water infrastructure and rural infrastructure.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Faro — Pumphouse in the amount of \$874,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Haines Junction — Water Reservoir and Pump System

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This adjustment is due to the fact that more work was completed in the prior fiscal year than had been expected, which is resulting in a lapse this fiscal year. The project is expected to be completed in 2014-15 fiscal year, and the overall project is a multimillion-dollar project in the Haines Junction water reservoir and pump system. If the members have ever had the chance to go into the facility, it's quite an amazing array of equipment that requires someone with a lot more technical knowledge to explain to you what it does. It felt a bit like walking into the bowels of an ocean liner or walking into some sort of — I can't think of another analogy for it. It was quite the facility there — again, a significant investment in the Town of Haines Junction and has

upgraded their water treatment system to ensure that their drinking water continues to be at the highest quality standard.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Haines Junction — Water Reservoir and Pump System underexpenditure in the amount of \$275,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Mayo — New Community Well and Treatment

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is another Building Canada fund project — Mayo, new community well and treatment. This increase of just over half a million dollars is due to the project progressing more quickly than expected. This project is combined with Mayo water upgrades.

Mr. Barr: I would be remiss if I didn't thank the department for being here today and for the thorough line-by-line discussions in the briefing. I appreciate even the asking for extra questions that weren't familiarized in the briefing and wish all of you and the staff in the department a very Merry Christmas.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On behalf of department staff, I would like to thank the member for his appreciation. Also, Madam Chair, with your indulgence, I would just like to correct something that I said earlier that was an error on my part. That was that I mentioned a project in Watson Lake as being MRIF. In fact, it was a RIF project, which was a short-lived Yukon government program. I thank the member for allowing me to correct the record on that. My apologies for my error; the program was so short-lived, I wasn't familiar with the acronym.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Mayo — New Community Well and Treatment in the amount of \$573,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Mayo — Water Upgrades

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Some of the work on phase 2 of this water upgrade project has been deferred to the 2015-16 fiscal year. That is why there is a reduction of \$779,000.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Mayo — Water Upgrades underexpenditure in the amount of \$779,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Pelly Crossing — Road Upgrades

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Pelly Crossing — Road Upgrades in the amount of \$38,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Ross River — Suspension Bridge

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would just like to provide an explanation to members as we just discussed a line item called Ross River Suspension Bridge. This Building Canada fund Ross River suspension bridge project being a different line item — to clarify for the members, the reason that you see two line items related to this bridge is that the first one was ineligible under Building Canada. That is why there was a specific line item for it. The remainder of \$1.5 million is an increase for stabilization and repair of the Ross River suspension bridge, so together on this page it is an investment in capital you see, totalling \$1.75 million — but the reason for

splitting it into two line items, as I mentioned, is that this \$1.5 million in the current line item was eligible for Building Canada, and the other did not meet the criteria of the program.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Ross River — Suspension Bridge in the amount of \$1,500,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Tagish — Taku Subdivision Fill Point

Hon. Mr. Kent: This particular line item is of interest to me. There are a number of residents in my riding, including my wife and I, actually, who have property out at Tagish. I'm just wondering if the minister would be able to provide an update on this project and the line item referenced here.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: In answer to the member's question, this project was putting in a new fill point in Tagish to ensure that we had a modern drinking water treatment facility in Tagish. The increase of \$93,000 — I don't have a lot of information about that here, other than that the project is proceeding more quickly than expected. I would be happy to endeavour to get back to the member with a status update on the project by way of letter, if that would be acceptable. I'll happily provide him with that so he can share it with his constituents and any others he knows out there from having a cabin in the vicinity.

Mr. Barr: I would also like to comment on that. I'm very happy that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources asked that, and probably one of my potential constituents who I look forward to his vote in the next election, when he moves out there. I know that, in this Christmas season, he's really moving.

I would like to thank the minister that the fill site there is ahead of schedule. The people out there are very happy that the work is being done. There had been lots of work and lots of people concerned about the good water in Tagish and they're looking forward to the completion of this. Although it's attention that has taken awhile to get there, the government is working on it. Thank you very much.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I thank the member for his comments and, while I won't presume to speak to my colleague, the MLA for Riverdale North, with the member's expressed hope that he'll have the MLA for Riverdale North's vote in the next election, I do have to note that it's the Christmas season, not the Twilight Zone, so I doubt that's going to happen.

Mr. Barr: I would just ask of the minister opposite, if he's sharing a letter with his colleague, that I would very much like to receive the same letter and provide it to the Leader of the Third Party — that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'll happily provide a letter to the MLA for Riverdale North, as he has requested, so he can share it with his constituents.

I'll happily provide it to the MLA for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, but I haven't actually received a request or any gestures even from the Leader of the Liberal Party, so at this point, I'll save a tree rather than sending another letter about this to him, but I will of course send a letter to the MLA

for the area and the MLA for Riverdale North who asked the question.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Tagish — Taku Subdivision Fill Point in the amount of \$93,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Road and Drainage Upgrades

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is additional work on the Teslin roads that was provided through the Building Canada fund and this was an addition to a previous project that came at the request of the town of Teslin through the work and support of the MLA for Pelly-Nisutlin. This additional work on the Teslin roads is identified through the Building Canada fund. Initial stages of additional work will be carried out in the current fiscal year. Final work on the project is scheduled to be completed in the 2015-16 fiscal year.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Road and Drainage Upgrades in the amount of \$1,823,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Arsenic Treatment

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This increase is to complete the final stages of the Teslin drinking water treatment project, which of course, as you can see from the line item title, was to deal with — respond to the changes of the Canadian drinking water standards that lowered the amount of arsenic that's considered to be acceptable in Canadian drinking water to a level lower than it had previously been, based on new health information. As a result, as you may have heard me mention before, we've had many of these water investments pose a significant cost for Yukon municipalities, but were required because of this new data that came forward in the new Canadian drinking water standards. This \$47,000 adjustment is an increase to complete the final stages of that project.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Arsenic Treatment in the amount of \$47,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Wastewater System Upgrades

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is a deferral to the 2015-16 fiscal year because, unlike a number of the other projects where I mentioned that they were proceeding more quickly than expected, in this case this project progressed more slowly than had been anticipated. That was partly because of additional discussion that was required with the Village of Teslin due to concerns and suggestions that they had that we undertook to look into, which resulted in a delay of the project.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Wastewater System Upgrades underexpenditure in the amount of \$750,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Tlingit Council Road Upgrades

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an underexpenditure due to less funding being required this year to complete the project in Teslin than had been originally anticipated.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Teslin — Tlingit Council Road Upgrades underexpenditure in the amount of \$141,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Watson Lake — Water and Sewer Pipe Replacement and Wet Well

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Since the Member for Watson Lake is not currently seated in a seat, allowing her to ask questions about this, I will happily provide her with information for her constituents in answer to the project. This investment in Watson Lake complements the investments we have made in water and sewer throughout the community. I listed some of those multi-million-dollar projects that had been completed. This one is a deferral of funding from the 2014-15 fiscal year to fiscal year 2015-16, due to issues around seasonal work, i.e. the ability to complete work within the summer, as well as delays in both the regulatory approval process and some unanticipated delays in procurement as well.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Watson Lake — Water and Sewer Pipe Replacement and Wet Well underexpenditure in the amount of \$898,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Deep Creek Water Treatment Plant

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would just like to explain this to constituents of mine. The Deep Creek water treatment plant is a project that was committed to in 2010, I believe. It has progressed after consideration of whether Deep Creek or the new Grizzly Valley subdivision would be better suited for the well. Test wells were drilled in both locations. The water recovery rate was substantially better at Deep Creek. The initial well that was drilled at Deep Creek had a recovery rate of 27 gallons compared to a 7-gallon recovery rate at Grizzly Valley.

Also, the water quality at Deep Creek was better than at the test site in the new Grizzly Valley lots — although I should note that for anyone in the new Grizzly Valley lots thinking about putting in a well that the well from the tests done there is treatable, and the costs of treating it would not be as substantial for a home water system as they would be for a public drinking water system, because the standards around public drinking water facilities and trucked water are higher than for the standards of treatment and testing that are required for personal use. The reason for that should be fairly obvious, but because of the possibility that the municipal and trucked water systems, as well as central well points, serve an increased number of people and, should there be any issues or problems with that, there is more potential for an increased number of people to become ill as a result of testing not being as frequent as it is required under the regulations that are in place.

I should note that this project is progressing. Work is underway at the site right now. The building is partly constructed, but this underexpenditure in the current fiscal year is a deferral to 2015-16 due to unexpected conditions encountered at the site, which required a new well site. The unexpected condition was an assessment by a consultant that,

due to the proximity of the old Deep Creek landfill, there was some risk that, within future years, there could be a problem related to leachate from that facility, if any occurred. There is a monitoring well at the landfill, which has not yet encountered any problems but, based on the advice of the consultant, government then went to a new site, which is on the other side of the creek, and it was determined by the consultant to be safe from any potential future risk of that type.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Deep Creek Water Treatment Plant underexpenditure in the amount of \$462,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Ibex Water Upgrades

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an investment that is responding to a request from the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council, as well as the local volunteer fire department. It is adding storage tanks on to the existing Ibex fire hall. That is because of their request for increased water capacity for the purpose of fire trucks filling up and fire tankers filling up. This project was made possible through the good work of the Fire Marshal's Office and Infrastructure Development branch, and I would like to thank staff for their good work in coming up with a solution to move this project forward, to positively respond to the request we received from the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council and local firefighters, and improve our water storage capacity in that area.

This is part of the many investments we've made across the territory in fire infrastructure as well, including four new fire trucks that were purchased this year, which are currently serving the communities of Tagish, Golden Horn, Ibex Valley and West Dawson. Those trucks include specifically a new pumper for Ibex. It and the pumper tanker that they have at that facility will be able to utilize the increased water storage capacity referred to in this line item. Tagish also received a pumper tanker, Golden Horn received a pumper, and a specially designed truck that is lighter and more able to cross the ice bridge at Dawson to West Dawson was provided for earlier in that area.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Ibex Water Upgrades in the amount of \$220,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Marwell Water and Sewer Upgrades

Hon. Mr. Cathers: More work was completed on this project last year than anticipated, therefore less funding is required for the current fiscal year for completion of this project in Whitehorse.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Marwell Water and Sewer Upgrades underexpenditure in the amount of \$229,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Mendenhall Community Water Supply

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is a deferral to 2015-16 future year. It is an investment that I'm sure the Member for Klwane's constituents will be happy to see and that will occur in a future fiscal year. There were delays in the project that prevented the construction from being completed before winter.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Mendenhall Community Water Supply underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,400,000 cleared
On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — On Whitehorse (and area) — Hospital Road/Lewes Boulevard Upgrade

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an increase funding for final stages of the project, which was completed this fiscal year.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Hospital Road/Lewes Boulevard Upgrade in the amount of \$15,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Robert Campbell Bridge Widening

Ms. White: We see the \$207,000 toward the Robert Campbell bridge widening. I have a question as to whether or not the Takhini River bridge will be widened any time in the near future for safety of cyclists and motorists alike?

Chair: I would remind the member that this is a discussion on the Robert Campbell bridge widening.

Ms. White: Absolutely. I am trying to figure out a way to phrase it so that I can ask a question that ties to it.

In this \$207,000, is there a plan to spend similar money on the Takhini River bridge widening?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I wish the answer was yes, but, as the member should be aware, I have been working in my capacity as an MLA with the Minister of Highways and Public Works and have asked the department on a number of occasions to take a look at options for improving the Takhini River bridge. I am hopeful that that may include a pedestrian bridge being added to that. That is a question I will need to ask the minister at a different time since we are on this line item in Community Services related to a different bridge, that being the Robert Campbell bridge.

Also, I should note that, in referring to the member's specific question, one of the things that I have done previously as MLA for Lake Laberge is to ask them to look at options for widening the bridge, but the response received from Highways and Public Works is that the costs of widening that specific bridge, because of its structure, would be about the same as building a new bridge. They don't believe that widening it is a feasible or appropriate option, but I understand that they are looking at the possibility of adding a pedestrian and cyclist bridge.

In the area of the Robert Campbell bridge widening and the \$207,000 referenced under this line item here, this is an increase to fund final stages of the project completed this fiscal year. This is a project that was a priority for the City of Whitehorse, and this is part of the Yukon government working with Yukon municipalities and providing funding for projects. I believe that project also — just a moment, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, I think there also may have been gas tax funding used by the City of Whitehorse on that project, but I'm not certain of that. I will have to check into it before I state that with certainty.

The widening of the Robert Campbell bridge was a priority for the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon government has supported them in this regard. Of course, as members know, that's one of the highest traffic bridges in the territory with substantial pedestrian and cyclist traffic.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Whitehorse (and area) — Robert Campbell Bridge Widening in the amount of \$207,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Territory-Wide — Materials Recycling/Sorting Facility

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would like to elaborate on this one because certain members of the NDP had misunderstood this and publicly mischaracterized this outside the House due to that misunderstanding.

This is not a reduction in funding for recycling. It's a deferral in capital funds to the 2015-16 fiscal year of money that's identified under Building Canada funding, and Building Canada can only be used for capital. It can't be used for operation and maintenance, so this money has not been lost or cut. It is deferred to a future fiscal year. It remains allocated for investment in recycling capital infrastructure that has been earmarked for this — but specifically, what it will be used for is in part dependent on discussions with the City of Whitehorse and other municipalities in determination of what additional steps need to be taken in developing a long-term solution to ensure that Yukoners have access to adequate recycling processing capacity and appropriately accessible options for disposing of the various streams of recycling. Again, this \$841,000 remains earmarked for recycling capital infrastructure, and we look forward to spending it in the future fiscal year pending the completion of the work and discussions that I referenced.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for his explanation. I'm wondering, for all of the infrastructure — I would like to ask the cost of a round trip with the compactors in the rural landfills. What is the cost of that? Then, if there is this much money — and I have raised it in the House before — why wouldn't we invest in a switch-out bin rather than drive out to Tagish, drive back to Whitehorse, empty the bin and drive back with the empty bin? It kind of makes sense.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: For starters, in answer to the member's question — when we're talking about capital money — Building Canada money can't be used for trucks or other mobile infrastructure. So what is being suggested by the member doesn't appear to me, or to officials with me, to be eligible for Building Canada.

That being said, those types of options are not out of the question. Staff are working on determining what the most appropriate options are. We're in discussion with the City of Whitehorse. We have also been in discussion with the two recycling processors, including as recently as this week. Discussions have been held with them about both their view on long-term options and the potential of interim options

while the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon government work together on coming up with a long-term solution to ensure adequate recycling processing capacity within the territory.

That may take a bit of time so, as I mentioned in response to a question from the member earlier, one of the things that we are considering and have discussed as recently as this week with Raven Recycling and the other recycling processor is the possibility of doing a time-limited increase to the diversion credits. But, as I believe I may have mentioned in Question Period, what we've asked them for is clarification of their actual costs for transport of each stream, clarification around the processing cost for each of the various major streams of the non-refundable recyclables, and asked them for clarification on what they get paid for those types of materials — whether it be cardboard, the types of plastics that don't have a recycling refund associated with them, or whether it be for any of those various streams. I don't have the complete list in front of me right now but, again, we are looking at the possibility of an interim solution for that, which would potentially provide increases to the diversion credits and, rather than a flat rate for all costs or for all areas, would give recognition to the fact that there are different costs for shipping of those various streams of recyclable materials and there's a different amount paid for them. They have different values on the marketplace.

Consideration is being given to that. One thing that we have said to the City of Whitehorse, in particular — as the largest of the other players in terms of waste management and recycling — is that we are prepared to do more in this area, but we also expect the city to come to the table. The city has a larger area of responsibility than the Yukon government does, because most of the solid waste and recycling that is done is within the City of Whitehorse. In fact, a lot of our volume of waste that is shipped into Whitehorse and disposed of at their landfill is waste that has come from Whitehorse citizens trying to avoid tipping fees and increasing the volumes in the Whitehorse periphery. We know there was a significant spike in the tonnage of how much waste was being received at those facilities after Whitehorse had provided increased tipping fees.

We also understand why they have chosen that model, so I'm not saying that to criticize them or blame for it, but simply to state the fact that it does have a consequence. That consequence is that some citizens and businesses who think they can get away with it have chosen to use the facilities in the periphery, which then results in us shipping the waste back into Whitehorse and paying tipping fees to the City of Whitehorse for disposing of that material, which was taken out of town and is then being shipped back into town.

Again, those are some of the areas that we need to work on and find better solutions to. As I have mentioned earlier in Question Period to the member — as has my colleague, the Minister of Environment — the changes to the designated material regulation and the beverage container regulations, which we proposed and have been taken out to consultation, led by the Department of Environment this fall — if those proposals are approved, pending the review of what we heard in stakeholder public input from that consultation and, of

course, their presentation by the department to Cabinet with recommendations on how to proceed. If those are approved in the form they went out for consultation or something similar, they will result in a significant increase in the funding that goes into the recycling fund and can be used to pay for things including diversion credits. We envision that it will result in likely doubling the amount that the two recycling processors receive for the refundable recyclable materials, like the beverage containers that are recycled right now. But again, whether it is double or something different is one of the things that is out for consultation, so that is an expectation — not the final outcome. We do need to have the review completed of what was heard from stakeholders and the public.

I hope that answers the member's question. Again, this funding can and must be used for capital, and that doesn't include trucks or mobile equipment. I am sure that the options being considered by staff will include areas to improve efficiencies in recycling, but I should also note that, with some of the things to which the member refers, some of those services — most of those services, in fact — are not run by staff of the Yukon government. They are operated under contract.

Raven Recycling is one of the entities with contracts for shipping and recycling from Yukon communities. In case I didn't mention it to the member earlier, Raven Recycling has also confirmed, in response to my question to them about it, that they would continue to honour all their contracts that include shipping of recyclables from rural municipalities.

I should also note, just as an update for the members, that is part of the discussions between the processors and department staff — that we have received more information from Raven Recycling this week regarding the costs of processing those various recycling streams and shipping them out. We are working on consideration of options for interim rates that could be an interim solution in the current model while the city is working on their changes to their recycling system.

Again, I am not in a position to make the commitment that there will be increases to diversion credits until after Cabinet has had an opportunity to review and consider recommendations, once the department has completed that work and completed the recommendations and analysis.

I was advised that the discussions this week went well, and that we have more clarity on what the actual costs are and are looking at options for diversion credits being increased for certain streams. Those options will be considered by Yukon government and the city will also see the recommendations because, as I have noted before, we will continue to do more in this area. Much of this is actually a municipal responsibility and under the public *Health Act*, municipalities are required to maintain solid-waste facilities — facilities for garbage disposal. So recycling is actually arguably more of a municipal responsibility than the territorial government's, but we are shouldering more than our share of the responsibility financially and will continue to do our part and will, in fact, do more in this area because we believe that Yukon government also has a role in providing leadership at a

government level in helping to evolve and change the system, including increasing recycling territory-wide. We will work with partners, but we also expect those partners to step up and do like we are doing and put their money where their mouth is as well.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Territory-Wide — Materials Recycling/Sorting Facility underexpenditure in the amount of \$841,000 cleared

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Territory-Wide — Transfer Stations, Recycle Depots, Composting/Chipping Equipment

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an investment by the Yukon government using Building Canada funding to support increased composting opportunities and investment in equipment at the Whitehorse landfill. This \$896,000, it should be noted, is another area where the Yukon government actually doesn't have an obligation to make this type of investment. We recognize the importance of them and we are continuing to step up and to partner with municipalities and invest Building Canada funding in projects that are important to them and, in this case, are an important part of increasing diversion of waste materials and increasing composting and chipping within the Whitehorse landfill facility. This investment of almost \$900,000 under Building Canada is yet another one of the tangible steps that the Yukon government is taking to invest in our recycling and diversion joint efforts across the territory.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Territory-Wide — Transfer Stations, Recycle Depots, Composting/Chipping Equipment in the amount of \$896,000 agreed to

On Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Territory-Wide — Solid Waste Management System

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is another area that I should note to members. This is a deferral, not a reduction of funding — just so members don't get confused in the same way they did previously. This is not a cut to the money allocated for this solid-waste management system equipment; it's simply a deferral of Building Canada dollars, which reduce capital until a future year because we didn't have the projects to spend the money on this year, but have continued to keep the money earmarked for this purpose.

Mr. Barr: Perhaps I could seek clarity if the minister means equipment — that part of the question from previous, which wasn't answered, was: Would he get back to me with the cost of these round trips with the compacting bins, and if there could have been a bin purchased so that we would see savings, rather than running out with an empty truck and coming back with an empty bin?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The reason I didn't give the member a specific answer is twofold: one, I didn't have the information at my fingertips, and the other is that the costs will vary, depending on the routes and depending on the volume. In fact, some of these things have been because a lot of this volume came as a result of changes to the solid-waste management model, beginning with the ending of burning of landfill facilities as a management tool which, for decades,

had been what was used in the territory. Moving away from that antiquated process that resulted in known carcinogens being released in the smoke in Yukon communities, the Yukon government ended that practice a couple of years ago.

Now that led to — because we're only a couple of years since that completely ended, there have been some changes in the volume, and two years of information does make it difficult to make firm decisions and analyses on the basis of adjustments in the models and consequential adjustments in the contracts, because even if the staff analyze how large a load is, how many times a truck has to go, and so on and so forth, it doesn't allow for immediate adjustment, because existing contracts, in some cases, require changing at the end of those contracts to adjust those delivery models. The staff is doing an excellent job of working on this area.

I would also note that the total cost of this, while it has grown significantly — and we are concerned about that and taking steps to manage those costs — the total amount that is spent by Community Services on managing 18 dumps and providing all the contracts that we administer out of our operations budget is actually less than the cost of running Raven Recycling — less than their expenditures and less than their revenues for the last fiscal year.

Just by way of comparison, the Yukon government staff in this area are dealing with a challenging environment and a very limited number of years of experience with the territory managing the solid-waste system in this exact model and they're doing a great job to look at it. In answer to the member's specific question about costs of the contracts, that information is all available on-line. On the contract registry, it will show the member the costs for each contract and what that includes, but I can also tell the member that this is an area where there will be evolution and there will be change as we gain more experience with what represents annual typical volumes and what represents a blip or an adjustment — due to things like, for example, home renovations, construction and demolition or purchasing patterns or disposal patterns or who lives in an area — can cause some volume adjustment on a yearly basis, and so using one year or using two years of experience operating in the exact model can be challenging in certain areas, but we will continue to make additional improvements in this area. Staff will continue to work on finding efficiencies in their delivery models and in the contractor models.

Community Infrastructure — Building Canada Fund — Territory-Wide — Solid Waste Management System underexpenditure in the amount of \$864,000 cleared

On Land Development — Residential — Whitehorse

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is related to lot contribution to Habitat for Humanity in the amount of \$147,000 and part of a series of investments, including lots and the recent financial contribution from the northern housing trust that government has provided to Habitat for Humanity.

Land Development — Residential — Whitehorse in the amount of \$147,000 agreed to

On Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs

On Property Assessment and Taxation — Rural Electrification and Telephone Program

Property Assessment and Taxation — Rural Electrification and Telephone Program underexpenditure in the amount of \$100,000 cleared

On Property Assessment and Taxation — Domestic Well Program

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This is an increase to the domestic water well program due to more projects — higher demand than anticipated in the fiscal year. I would note that — I mentioned before as of the end of the last fiscal year, over 240 projects have been completed, which means over 240 families across the territory have received assistance of loans under the domestic water well program and that has been a direct expenditure in excess of \$5 million by the Yukon government in this area. Of course, that amount, as you may know, is going to be added to, as the result of the passage this fall of Bill No. 80 which allows for the creation of the municipal water well program. It allows us to extend the programming to municipalities as long as that municipality agrees to participate, so we look forward to further investments in this area.

I will again encourage all Yukon municipalities to sign on. It's a great deal for municipalities where citizens get the opportunity to access these low-interest loans over a 15-year period.

Through the structure of the new program, we have basically covered almost all of the costs of the program, including loaning all the money, paying for the upfront cost of loaning the money to Yukoners, and providing an administration fee that will go to municipalities.

In our view, we've reduced the cost to very negligible for municipalities and ones that could probably be more than addressed within their existing resources and the additional \$500 per project that we have proposed to give them under the municipal well program.

Property Assessment and Taxation — Domestic Well Program in the amount of \$100,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Capital

Total of Other Capital in the amount of nil cleared

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$703,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,441,000 agreed to

Department of Community Services agreed to

Some Hon. Member: (inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Ms. White, on a point of order.

Ms. White: I realize that, on a government business day, we follow section 12(2), which is that government business has precedence and they may call whatever departments they like. On the last day of the sitting and because of the season, I request that we move to Yukon Housing Corporation next.

Chair: I have on my agenda that we are moving to Department of Education, Vote 3. I suggest that Committee of the Whole recess for 15 minutes and we'll look at that when we come back.

Unanimous consent re proceeding to Yukon Housing Corporation budget debate

Ms. White: If there was a possibility for the Chair to ask the Government House Leader now, as 15 minutes will give time for officials to make their way to the Legislative Assembly if it's agreed upon.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: If I may, I should note that government does identify the order of business and, in this case, the officials who are lined up for Education are here and are waiting and ready. Officials for the department that the member is asking for have been told to expect that we might get into debate later in the day, so government will not be agreeing to the member's request. We will proceed, as identified at the House Leaders' meeting this morning, to the Department of Education.

Chair: Ms. White has requested unanimous consent to proceed to the Yukon Housing Corporation in budget debate of Bill No. 15. Do we have unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: Disagreed.

Chair: We do not have —

Some Hon. Member: (inaudible)

Chair: Order please. We do not have unanimous consent. We will be proceeding to the Department of Education, Vote 3.

Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Department of Education — *continued*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 3, Department of Education.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I want to thank our officials for joining us here again today for continued debate on the Department of Education.

I believe that, when we left off, we were talking again about a number of programs in support of Yukon's labour market. We actually tabled a motion earlier today that spoke to Yukon government working with the Government of Canada and working with all of our industry stakeholders in terms of implementing the Canada job fund, specifically as it relates to the employer-sponsored training initiative. That work is underway and we will continue to engage with our stakeholders in coming up with more broader-reaching goals in determining specific initiatives to meet some of the challenges in Yukon's labour market.

As I mentioned, the labour market has really grown in leaps and bounds over the last number of years. Of course, it was created back in 2009. It really comprises many different

stakeholders representing many different organizations. In fact, I know that we have a number of various working groups associated with every pillar of the labour group.

We have representatives from First Nation governments, organizations, business and industry, and, of course, Government of Canada, and all of our relevant government departments are engaged in ongoing discussion when it comes to meeting some of these challenges.

We were talking about immigration being one of the pillars when it comes to our framework. That really is in addition to other pillars.

I don't want to go over what I have already covered in previous debate, but this is just to say that this is an important area within Education — and that is referring to Advanced Education. There are a lot of various initiatives underway, particularly as we have ongoing discussions with the Government of Canada as they pertain to supports for employers and supports for employees under our employment support services. We have a number of various agreements with a number of stakeholders from Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon to Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, as they provide outreach and home tutoring programs, a wide gamut of programs — also other organizations, Challenge being one of them.

I know that has been a topic of great fanfare over the past number of years — and the good work that that organization has done in support of individuals here in the Yukon who are perhaps underrepresented in our population.

In addition to that, we have a number of other targeted initiatives. The targeted initiative for older workers — we were just able to renegotiate a new agreement with the Government of Canada to be able to build on the five-year agreement that we've had in place. It just came to an end and, again, that has been another area that we want to tap into, in terms of reaching out to those persons who may be underrepresented in our population, in our workforce — whether that be youth or persons with disabilities, older workers, First Nation citizens — particularly in rural Yukon.

There's more work, and that's where working seamlessly with many of these organizations and levels and orders of government is so important, to be able to deliver. Likewise we're continuing to work with all of our stakeholders on a new literacy strategy. The one that we've had in place is over 10 years of age, and we have been working steadily with all of our stakeholders for the past year in updating and reorienting the direction of where we go with literacy.

It builds on the really good work that's being undertaken by individuals and organizations like Yukon Learn Society and the Yukon Literacy Coalition. We were really thrilled to be able to work with the Government of Canada on a renewed funding for the Yukon Literacy Coalition and, in fact, the coalitions right across the north. That has been something in the works for the past year and a half, and we were able to help facilitate those ongoing discussions with the federal minister and the Government of Canada to ensure that funding was renewed. We're pleased to report that, as of the middle of

this month, funding has been approved for an additional number of years, going ahead.

It's the Northern Alliance for Literacy Essentials and Skills, I believe. It is an organization that really came together in the last couple of years to be able to respond to some of the northern challenges that we have, when it comes to literacy rates in the territory.

We are very pleased, and, of course, we provide funding in support of the Family Literacy Centre over at the Canada Games Centre in support of their ongoing programs. In fact, this year alone, we are providing them with about \$280,000 in support of the Family Literacy Centre. Yukon Learn Society also receives a very comparable amount as well — at \$275,000 — in support of literacy initiatives. That doesn't even include all of the tutorial support — in particular after-school programs — as I mentioned, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre. Kwanlin Dun also has a very unique and a very progressive program that they have also supported. All of this is to say is that, when you combine all of these initiatives — whether it's targeting underrepresented groups, whether it's targeting literacy rates, whether it's looking at advancing our skills trades through the Centre for Northern Innovation and Mining, adding more value-added to the professional development training that we have through the Northern Institute for Social Justice — and through the Yukon Research Centre of Excellence, capitalizing on our cold climate technologies and being better able to advance those technologies in support of what we do here in the north and right across the circumpolar north.

Of course, that doesn't even include all of the other initiatives underway through the renewal of the labour market agreements, which is now known as the Canada job fund, and the ongoing negotiations with Canada as we go to renew a new labour market development agreement. All of these, of course, are to work toward enhancing the labour market participation of all individuals, by assisting them to prepare for entry and return to employment, to obtain or keep employment and maintain skills for employment.

Madam Chair, I know my time is pretty much up. I look forward to receiving any further questions from members opposite and thank again my Department of Education for their continue work in support of learners of all ages at every level.

Chair: Does any other member wish to speak in general debate? We are prepared then to go line by line.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I would thank the officials for coming.

Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of the Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 3, Department of Education, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 3, Department of Education, cleared or carried

Chair: Mr. Tredger has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the

Whole to deem all lines in Vote 3, Department of Education, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: Disagreed.

Chair: We do not have unanimous consent. We will continue then to line-by-line debate.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Public Schools

Public Schools in the amount of \$293,000 agreed to

On Advanced Education

Advanced Education in the amount of \$129,000 agreed

to

On Yukon College

Yukon College in the amount of \$907,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Operation and Maintenance

Total of Other Operation and Maintenance in the amount of nil cleared

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,329,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Public Schools

On Facility Construction and Maintenance — Johnson Elementary School — Old Wing Demolition

Facility Construction and Maintenance — Johnson Elementary School — Old Wing Demolition underexpenditure in the amount of \$450,000 cleared

On Facility Construction and Maintenance — Beaver Creek Library Replacement

Facility Construction and Maintenance — Beaver Creek Library Replacement underexpenditure in the amount of \$350,000 cleared

On Facility Construction and Maintenance — Site Improvement and Recreation Development

Facility Construction and Maintenance — Site Improvement and Recreation Development in the amount of \$60,000 agreed to

On Facility Construction and Maintenance — School Initiated Renovations

Facility Construction and Maintenance — School Initiated Renovations in the amount of \$132,000 agreed to

On Facility Construction and Maintenance — Capital Maintenance Repairs

Facility Construction and Maintenance — Capital Maintenance Repairs in the amount of \$309,000 agreed to

On Instructional Programs — School-Based Equipment Purchase

Instructional Programs — School-Based Equipment Purchase in the amount of \$255,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Capital

Total of Other Capital in the amount of nil cleared

Total Capital underexpenditure in the amount of \$44,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,285,000 agreed to

Department of Education agreed to

Chair: We are now going to turn to Energy, Mines and Resources, Vote 53. We will recess to change officials. How much time do you need?

Some Hon. Member: (inaudible)

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for five minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I understand I have about 18 minutes or so left. I won't take that long, but there are a few things that I would like to bring an update on with respect to Energy, Mines and Resources arising from recent announcements as well as some questions that were asked by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun in Question Period since the last time Energy, Mines and Resources was up.

I welcome Shirley Abercrombie back to the Legislature to provide support to me today. I would just like to quickly take the opportunity as well to extend season's greetings to all Yukoners and, especially, those who I represent in this Legislature, the constituents of Riverdale North, for a very safe and happy holiday season and a prosperous 2015.

The first thing I wanted to update members on was with respect to the Yukon oil and gas regulatory regime. Some questions arose during Question Period, I believe, from the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and perhaps even during debate. They were fairly technical in nature.

The one that was asked on December 16 by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun was with respect to regulation of oil and gas activities. I think it was specific to activities taking place in the Kotaneelee fields by EFLO — not activities that are taking place yet, but activities that are proposed to take place through their application under YESAA.

The treatment that the member referenced was with respect to the use of acid. It's my understanding from responses provided by the technical staff at the oil and gas branches that oil and gas operators have used acid treatment, or acidizing, to improve well productivity for almost 120 years. Acidizing predates all other well stimulation techniques. Today this technique is one of the most widely used and effective means available to oil and gas operators for improving productivity of wells.

EFLO, the operator at Kotaneelee, has stated that they will be matrix-acidizing during their proposed well workovers. This is one of three types of acidizing used in the industry. The oil and gas industry is regulated by various pieces of legislation. The key pieces are the *Lands Act*, the *Environment Act*, the *Waters Act* and the *Oil and Gas Act*.

Robust legislation and regulations exist to responsibly regulate all activities from acquisition of rights through to abandonment of facilities.

I thank the officials for bringing that matter to my attention and hopefully that provides an answer to the member opposite with respect to that specific technique that they're planning to do down in the Kotaneelee field.

In addition to the *Oil and Gas Act*, there are six sets of regulations specific to the oil and gas industry, including: disposition regulation on acquiring oil and gas rights in the Yukon; the royalty regulations on royalties paid; licence administration regulation, which is on general licensing provisions for all oil and gas activities; geoscience and exploration regulations on activities such as seismic and aeromagnetic surveys; drilling and production regulations, which cover off exploration and production drilling activity; and gas processing plant regulation on gas processing plants and liquefied natural gas, or LNG, facilities.

This covers the licensing, construction, operation, reporting and decommissioning of processing plants in the territory, as well as penalties the Yukon government may impose for non-compliance. A review of these regulations is underway, along with the development of new pipeline regulations, as part of the department's ongoing efforts to achieve clarity, certainty and transparency within its regulations.

The *Oil and Gas Act* and the regulations were built in concert with Yukon First Nations in an effort to have a common regulatory regime on Yukon and First Nation lands.

With respect to waste disposal and environmental protection, drilling waste storage and disposal falls under the drilling and production regulations, as well as other Yukon legislation. Yukon government conducts regular monitoring and inspection of all activity related to oil and gas development. With respect to security and liability, Yukon government obtains well deposits and financial assurance for liabilities prior to licensing any oil and gas activity. The licensee must have well deposits to secure appropriate abandonment in place prior to project authorization. The well deposits are reviewed approximately every five years and adjusted accordingly. As per the *Oil and Gas Act*, the Yukon government may also require an applicant to provide proof of financial assurance for any actual damages arising from licensed oil and gas activity.

Madam Chair, I hope that covers off some of the questions the Member for Mayo-Tatchun asked in prior debate, as well as in Question Period. I know there might be one outstanding question with respect to the activities that are proposed at Northern Cross and permafrost. I don't have that response here, but I can perhaps provide that to him via letter between the sittings or at the Spring Sitting of the Legislative Assembly. I'm happy to do that, or if he wants to write a letter to me with outstanding technical questions that he would like addressed, I'm happy to provide that as well.

I want to touch quickly on the enhanced good energy residential incentive program that was announced earlier this week by the Government of Yukon. I'm certainly not going to

get into some of the debate around where the funding comes from. I think there is certainly a difference of opinion with respect to that in the House, but I think it's important for me to let Yukoners know and let members of the House know what is eligible underneath this new incentives program. I should thank Ms. Abercrombie and Shane Andre and the team at Energy Solutions Centre for bringing forward this package.

I think it's a comprehensive package that — in a moment I'll be able to explain some of the payback periods and the calculations with respect to it. I think it's going to, again, enhance what we're trying to do on the climate change front and bringing down those monthly utility payments that many Yukon families are finding difficult.

Obviously there are some capital costs associated with this, but the payback period is quite remarkable. I'll get to that in a second, but I'll just quickly run through the eligible products. Again, this will come into effect on January 1, 2015. Forms will be available on-line at the Energy Solutions Centre website on January 5. The one product is a heat recovery ventilator, or HRV. The criteria for that — the installation of an HRV with a sensible recovery efficiency of 64 percent or more at an outside winter design temperature of minus 25 degrees Celsius. These HRVs must be balanced by a qualified technician. The incentive offer for that is \$500 and a very straightforward application process.

Windows and doors — of course, that's a very easy one for Yukoners to access. There's a \$50 rebate per unit up to \$1,000 for a total of 20 windows and/or doors per home. These must be Energy Star units qualified for climate zone C, and all that is required is to submit the completed form and copies of receipts.

This is a very exciting one, because it follows on the heels last year of us introducing the microgeneration program. So this is with respect to the installation of a renewable energy system for microgen — be it solar, wind, hydro or microhydro, biomass or geothermal. The system must generate under 50 kilowatts and electricity must be generated from a renewable energy source. Again, referring individuals to the microgeneration program, you can click on the link on the website to get there. It must be inspected and approved by a territorial or city electrical inspector and by the appropriate electrical utility.

The value is 20 percent of pre-tax material costs up to \$5,000. The maximum is one microgeneration installation per residence. Again, what has to be done here is submit the completed form, copies of receipts and copies of both the electrical inspection and the utility inspections reports.

Moving on to the other aspect of this program is something that is quite exciting and compares and very favourably to what is offered in other jurisdictions. This is with respect to improving thermal enclosures. For new homes, the EnerGuide rating for new homes of 85-plus — this is the eligibility criteria. An NRCan-certified energy advisory will model new building plans and inform and/or advise the client on how to meet these standards. Once the building is complete, the NRCan-certified energy advisor will visit the new home to perform a blower door test and confirm that the

home is built to this standard. The incentive offer for this is \$10,000.

The application process is that the client contacts the Energy Solutions Centre that will arrange a visit from an NRCan-certified energy advisor. This advisor will submit the completed form, copy of building receipts and copy of the house report. It is obviously something that is very exciting and should be very helpful to people who are building new homes and looking for some sort of an incentive to ensure that they are as energy efficient as possible.

With respect to existing home air sealing, this rebate is based on the difference between the pre- and post-upgrade blower door test performed by a CEA — certified energy advisor. Again, a NRCan-certified energy advisor will perform this test. The incentive is up to \$1,000. It is a very similar process to what is done with new homes having an energy advisor and report and applicable receipts and forms filled out, but certainly worth it for the amount of money that is available.

Finally, the existing home insulation — the upgrading insulation levels of a home's main walls, basement or crawlspace, slab or floor and/or ceiling by a minimum of 20 percent. This is done with the assistance of an NRCan-certified energy advisor. They will perform an energy assessment to determine the current heat lost by house components — the ones that I just mentioned — and will advise the homeowner as to what amount of insulation is required to qualify for this rebate. The client will proceed with the renovation and once the insulation has been installed and renovation completed, the NRCan-certified advisor will return to inspect and confirm that the required amount of insulation was installed through visual inspection and by reviewing renovation receipts. The value of this is 20 percent of the pre-tax costs of insulating materials up to a maximum of \$10,000.

These are tremendous new products and incentives that are offered through this program, building on what the good energy rebate program that has been in existence since 2007 already does. This popular program has successfully delivered over 10,000 rebates to Yukon residents, displacing 29,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, saving 17 million kilowatt hours of energy and resulting in a cost-savings of \$15.3 million.

When it comes to the payback calculations for the new incentives, just to quickly run through those — the new home incentive, estimated simple payback to building a home to EnerGuide 85+, which is the super-green standard, is approximately 17 years. With the new incentive program, this payback improves to approximately five years. With the retrofit incentive, the estimated simple payback period for this type of retrofit to an older Yukon home is approximately 12 years; with the new incentive program, it is improved to seven years. Estimated total cost to make a major energy-efficiency retrofit in an older Yukon home is approximately \$45,000, with a savings of approximately \$4,000 per year.

With respect to the renewable energy, or what is part of the microgen program, the estimated simple payback to install

a solar electric or PV system at current prices is approximately 25 years, and this reduces that payback period to 20 years.

Again, this program — I believe — is obviously good for the environment. It is good for homeowners in reducing their monthly costs, and it is good for the economy, because many strong- to medium-size contractors will be engaged in installing these units, as well as the retail sector, which will benefit the local window and door manufacturer — Northern Windows and Doors. That is but one of the Yukon-based businesses and retailers that will benefit from this program. It is something we are very excited to introduce and we think it is going to pay huge dividends going forward.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and I look forward to potential questions from the members opposite or getting into line-by-line.

Chair: Does any person wish to speak in general debate?

We are going to carry on then to line-by-line debate starting on page 6-4.

Mr. Tredger: I thank the officials for coming on this last day of the Legislature.

Madam Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, cleared or carried

Chair: Mr. Tredger has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: Disagreed.

Chair: There is not unanimous consent.

We are going to carry on to line-by-line debate.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Sustainable Resources

Sustainable Resources in the amount of \$253,000 agreed to

On Energy, Corporate Policy and Communications

Energy, Corporate Policy and Communications in the amount of \$392,000 agreed to

On Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources

Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources in the amount of \$11,748,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Operation and Maintenance

Total of Other Operation and Maintenance in the amount of nil cleared

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$12,393,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Corporate Services

On Information Technology Equipment and Systems

Information Technology Equipment and Systems in the amount of \$19,000 agreed to

On Dome Road Realignment

Dome Road Realignment in the amount of \$1,260,000 agreed to

On Sustainable Resources

On Land Management — Industrial

Land Management — Industrial underexpenditure in the amount of \$200,000 cleared

On Land Management — Residential

Land Management — Residential underexpenditure in the amount of \$2,985,000 cleared

On Agriculture — Agricultural Land Development

Agriculture — Agricultural Land Development in the amount of \$50,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Capital

Total of Other Capital in the amount of nil cleared

Total Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,856,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$10,537,000 agreed to

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources agreed to

Chair: Committee of the Whole will be continuing on to Vote 18, Yukon Housing Corporation. We will be starting on page 16-3. We will need 10 minutes for officials and paperwork.

Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 18, Yukon Housing Corporation.

Yukon Housing Corporation

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, in rising in debate on Yukon Housing Corporation, I would like to begin by thanking the Board of Directors of Yukon Housing Corporation for the excellent work that they do. I would like to particularly thank the chair, Janet Moodie, for her continued service to the Yukon public, post-retirement, as deputy minister. She has taken on the role of chair, and I appreciate the work that she does and her dedication and interest in serving the Yukon public.

I would also like to thank the vice-chair, Joanne Fairlie, for her service as well, post-retirement as the assistant deputy minister for Health Services in the Department of Health and Social Services. Joanne, much like Janet, after serving a long career in government as a senior public servant, has also continued to contribute her time and effort.

I very much appreciate their service, their advice and their expertise and their experience in this area and their work — along with that of every member of the board — that they do together in governing Yukon Housing Corporation and working together with government on major initiatives,

including capital investments and the review of the loan programs that the board has initiated and is currently in the process of doing. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the past chair, Claire Derome, for her work and contributions as a chair of the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors.

I would also like to note — the Member for Takhini-Kopper King just sent me over some information regarding Closeleigh Manor and the concerns that she raised earlier. I will pass those on to officials. What I would ask the member is if she could — either in debate or by way of e-mail — give an indication of when that information was from and how recent it is. It wasn't clear on the information that she presented, but certainly I appreciate the information she provided and the photos and understand why that would be of concern to her and her — pardon me, not her constituents; constituents of another MLA — but I understand why in her role as critic for Yukon Housing Corporation that would cause concern.

We will look into it and endeavour to get back to the member with the update that I previously committed to regarding the status of the repair and upgrades to Closeleigh Manor that one-quarter of a million dollars has been budgeted for, and the status of that.

If the member will permit me, I will just provide some additional information regarding that. The information I have, as of about 10 seconds ago from the Housing Corporation, is that Yukon Housing Corporation has heard concerns about air quality at Closeleigh Manor. As a result, a Yukon Housing contracted a professional mechanical engineering consultant to investigate and complete a thorough assessment of the mechanical ventilation system. The consultant completed the report in March. Since then, Yukon Housing has initiated staff repair work and multiple contractor repair work to meet the recommendations listed in the consultant's report.

Based on the recommendations from mechanical engineering professionals, Yukon Housing Corporation contracted a certified mechanical contractor to undertake the work, which includes, among other things, relocating air supply, evaluating chimney height to ensure optimal heating system performance and minimizing the possibility of cross-contamination. The system is already better, with improved filtration, mortar improvements and clean ductwork, and it will be further improved with the new location of the air intake.

The ventilation system requires balancing, and this work will require vents to be unblocked so air can be mechanically exchanged. Ducting will be tied into the mechanical system once the work is completed. I will look into if there is additional information I can provide to the member about timelines, et cetera, but that is some information regarding the status of that work.

Moving on to my more formal remarks, now that I've answered — hopefully, or partially answered — questions that I've received from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King previously, in rising to present the 2014-15 supplementary budget for Yukon Housing Corporation, I would like to

recognize the officials who are here and thank Pamela Hine, president of Yukon Housing Corporation, and Mark Davey, director of Finance, Systems and Administration, for being here this afternoon to assist me in the Assembly and for already assisting me with the information that I just shared with the member.

Some of the highlights of Yukon Housing Corporation's 2014-15 supplementary budget include, in the area of operation and maintenance, an increase of \$72,000, which includes revotes of \$10,000 for electricity monitoring equipment repairs, \$12,000 for a transfer payment agreement with the Anti-Poverty Coalition, \$50,000 to acquire a report rating module for the software currently used for loan programs — and that is modernizing equipment. As I mentioned to the member I believe in my introductory remarks, it should be noted as well that the board and staff have been in the process of doing a complete review of the loans programs and looking at areas that they think can be adjusted to better suit the needs of Yukoners, and that does include looking at things like the cap on the one specific program that the member mentioned earlier. Again, without committing that it will change, I can confidently tell the member that those are exactly the types of issues that are being looked at.

In the area of capital, home repair loans, this budget contains a revote in the amount of \$602,000 for approved commitments in place for 45 approved loan applications.

That amount is 95-percent recoverable from loan applicants. It also includes funding for home repair enhancement loans. This is a revote of \$5,000 for an approved commitment that is in place for one approved loan application. This amount is 100-percent recoverable from the loan applicant.

Moving on to the area of flood relief — in this case, the 2002 flood relief initiative — we have a revote of \$11,000 for an approved commitment that is in place for one grant application.

In the area of mortgage financing loans, we have a revote in the amount of \$847,000 in this supplementary estimate that will address approved commitments that are in place for eight active or pre-approved loan applicants. This amount is 100-percent recoverable from the loan applicants.

In the area of home completion loans, the revote of \$50,000 is being requested to address an approved commitment that is in place for one approved loan applicant. That amount is also 100-percent recoverable from the loan applicant.

Another matter that members will see, in the budget in front of them is the owner-build loan area, a revote of \$369,000 to address approved commitments that are in place for six approved loan applicants. These owner-build loan amounts are also 100-percent recoverable from loan applicants through the life of that loan agreement.

In the area of rental rehabilitation, which is another program area within Yukon Housing Corporation, this budget contains a revote of \$16,000 for funding approved commitments through applications from two clients, and one

conditionally approved loan applicant. The rental rehabilitation money is also 100-percent recoverable from loan applicants.

In the area of rental suite loans, there is a revote of \$30,000 to provide for funding of approved commitments that are currently in place for three approved loan applicants. Those amounts are also 100-percent recoverable.

In the area of social housing, the funding for the renovation and rehabilitation of existing stock — an increase of \$113,000 — includes revotes for the following projects: \$2,000 for the Closeleigh Manor ventilation system assessment; \$92,000 for construction at 60 Selkirk Street of three storage lockers; and \$19,000 for Watson Lake furnace replacement. In Whitehorse, we have Whitehorse seniors 207 Alexander Street project, which, as members know, I'm sure, was recently completed and officially opened.

That project was done underbudget. This budget contains a revote of \$3.499 million for that project. This represents 100 percent of the approved budget remaining at the time the revotes were prepared. It has subsequently been determined — and that would be after the development of this budget — that the revote will not be required, so we will be lapsing in a future budget process and that would be due to the costs coming in significantly under the budget estimates.

Thank you to the officials with me for confirming that amount is due to the fact that the project came in significantly underbudget.

For 207 Alexander Street, there is \$473,000 recoverable from the third party and \$339,000 that is recoverable from Canada through the affordable housing investment agreement. The Mayo seniors housing project is also underway and this budget contains a revote of \$348,000. I would like to also thank Mayor Scott Bolton of Mayo and the entire council of the Village of Mayo for their partnership and work together with us on this project. We have appreciated that partnership and cooperation and have also, in some cases with the project, taken specific suggestions that have been made to us by the Village of Mayo. Thank you to them again for this. This budget contains a revote of \$348,000 for it — \$308,000 of that will be used to continue the remediation assessment and design work; \$179,000 of that is recoverable from Canada through the affordable housing investment agreement; and \$40,000 is an increase as an adjustment to the total project estimate.

In the area of staff housing as well, there is a revote of \$628,000 for tank and furnace replacements at various locations, as well as additional renovations of the Faro seniors housing project.

Before I conclude my opening remarks, I would like to again thank the board of Yukon Housing, as well as the staff, Pam Hine, for her work as president and Mark Davey as well, in his position in finance in Yukon Housing, as well as all of the other staff that support them — and also give specific recognition to Doug Caldwell in communications in Yukon Housing for the excellent work and support that he provides to my office.

Madam Chair, once again, thank you to the Yukon Housing Corporation board for all that they do.

Termination of sitting as per Standing Order 76(1)

Chair: The time has reached 5:00 p.m. on this, the 30th sitting day of the 2014 Fall Sitting.

Standing Order 76(1) states: “On the sitting day that the Assembly has reached the maximum number of sitting days allocated for that Sitting pursuant to Standing Order 75, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, if the Assembly is in Committee of the Whole at the time, shall interrupt proceedings at 5:00 p.m. and, with respect to each Government Bill before Committee, that the Government House Leader directs to be called, shall:

“(a) put the question on any amendment then before the Committee;

“(b) put the question, without debate or amendment, on a motion moved by a Minister that the bill, including all clauses, schedules, title and preamble, be deemed to be read and carried;

“(c) put the question on a motion moved by a Minister that the bill be reported to the Assembly; and

“(d) when all bills have been dealt with, recall the Speaker to the Chair to report on the proceedings of the Committee.”

It is the duty of the Chair to now conduct the business of Committee of the Whole in the manner directed by Standing Order 76(1). The Chair would now ask the Government House Leader to indicate whether Bill No. 15, the only government bill now before Committee of the Whole, should be called.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Madam Chair, the government directs that Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be called at this time.

Bill No. 15: *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — continued

Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*. The Chair will now recognize Mr. Pasloski, as the sponsor of Bill No. 15, for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be deemed to be read and carried.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be deemed to be read and carried. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$27,560,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$6,118,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$21,442,000 agreed to

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to

Schedules A and B agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that you report Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be reported without amendment. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

Chair: As all government bills identified by the Government House Leader have now been decided upon, it is my duty to rise and report to the House.

Speaker resumes the Chair

Termination of sitting as per Standing Order 76(2)

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of the Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Chair of the Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Standing Order 76(2)(d) states, “On the sitting day that the Assembly has reached the maximum number of sitting days allocated for that Sitting pursuant to Standing Order 75, the Speaker of the Assembly, when recalled to the Chair after the House has been in Committee of the Whole, shall:

“(d) with respect to each Government Bill standing on the Order Paper for Third Reading and designated to be called by the Government House Leader,

“(i) receive a motion for Third Reading and passage of the bill; and

“(ii) put the question, without debate or amendment, on that motion.”

I shall, therefore, ask the Government House Leader to indicate whether Bill No. 15 and Bill No. 83, the only government bills now standing at third reading, should be called.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, the government directs that Bill No. 15 and Bill No. 83 be called for third reading at this time.

GOVERNMENT BILLS**Bill No. 15: *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — Third Reading**

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 15, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now read a third time and do pass. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. Stick: Disagree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Mr. Tredger: Disagree.

Mr. Barr: Disagree.

Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 11 yeas, seven nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 15 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 15 has passed this House.

Bill No. 83: *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 83, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly*

Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007, be now read a third time and do pass. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 83 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 83 has passed this House.

We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, in his capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to grant assent to bills that have passed this House.

Commissioner Phillips enters the Chamber, announced by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

Speaker: Mr. Commissioner, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain bills to which, in the name and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

Clerk: *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15; Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007.*

Commissioner: I hereby assent to the bills as enumerated by the Clerk.

Before we leave the House today, I want to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas, a happy holiday and safe holiday season, and a very prosperous and healthy new year. Thank you.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. Please be seated.

Just before I close, I would like to thank all the members for their attendance, their passion and their commitment to our democratic process. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas. I believe it's a job well done by all and all the best for the new year.

As the House has reached the maximum number of days permitted for this Fall Sitting and the House has completed consideration of the designated legislation, it is the duty of the Chair to declare that this House now stands adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:11 p.m.