



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 220

1st Session

33rd Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, May 28, 2015 — 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

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NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
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Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Tourism and Culture; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Minister responsible for Justice; Yukon Development Corporation/ Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Doug Graham	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Education
Hon. Scott Kent	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Highways and Public Works
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Community Services; Public Service Commission
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister responsible for Environment
Hon. Mike Nixon	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation

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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, May 28, 2015 — 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 at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Jean MacLean, Watson Lake Secondary School

Ms. McLeod: I rise to pay tribute to principal Jean MacLean, and the Watson Lake Secondary School. Jean was named one of Canada's outstanding principals of 2015 by the Learning Partnership. This award of excellence recognizes innovative leadership in education. Through this award, Jean also joins the ranks of the National Academy of Canada's Outstanding Principals, which provides ongoing mentoring and professional development for Canadian leaders in education.

Yukon's previous recipients of this award in recent years have included dedicated administrators of the Yukon, such as Marj Hlady, Maggie Mann, Dennis Darling — who was also in Watson Lake — Paul Bennett, Gloria Coxford, Ted Hupé and Penny Prysruk.

Jean leads a terrific staff team at the Watson Lake Secondary School and their contribution to the success of this initiative should also be recognized and celebrated. They have worked with consultants from the Department of Education to bring a blended, differentiated learning approach to the school. The teachers have reported improved engagement and participation in class since the introduction of blended learning. Students who were having difficulty attending school due to conflicting work or childcare commitments have been able to participate in school and continue to pursue their education due to the flexibility of blended learning. Students adjust the pace of their learning to ensure they are mastering each lesson in the subject area.

The preliminary results have been very promising, inspiring other Yukon schools to explore and implement their own blended learning models. Other Yukon schools have been inspired to explore and implement these models, and I am quite sure that Mrs. MacLean is quite proud of the work that she has initiated.

I would like to acknowledge and celebrate the entire project team for this remarkable initiative. They have brought true change to the learning environment at Watson Lake Secondary School. Their work with the students and the wider school community of Watson Lake is exemplary of how partnership in education supports success for each learner and builds strong schools and programs.

Congratulations to Jean and her team for their success so far and this well-deserved recognition of their efforts.

In recognition of tributes

Ms. White: We have nothing to lose if we have already lost our sense of humour, so today, with tongue in cheek, I offer up my humour as a parting gift for this 2015 spring legislative Sitting. Shakespeare said that brevity is the soul of wit, but I speak not of brevity, but verbosity in this tribute, as I rise on behalf of the tribute writers to pay tribute to the tribute.

Mr. Speaker, during this Sitting, members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly have risen to pay tribute on 75 separate occasions. I always look forward to the month of May, for with May comes the usual tributes to Digestive Motility Awareness Month and other curiosities. Sadly for us, May comes but once a year.

May 7 was a high-water mark for tributes. There were nine read into the record, filling six full pages of Hansard with tiny text and accounting for about 20 percent of the day's words in the Legislative Assembly. May 7 fell on an opposition Wednesday — always a great day for tribute lovers.

A very unscientific study of the 2013 Legislative Assembly Hansard found that on these opposition Wednesdays, which could really be called Tribute Wednesdays, the government would average 3.9 tributes on an NDP motion day, and 3.25 tributes on a motion day called by the Third Party, whereas on days when government had motion debate, sadly tribute lovers were only treated to an average of 1.3 tributes. On those days there mustn't have been any person, place, thing or happening worthy of tribute.

A very flimsy cost-benefit analysis of the tribute pegs the economic value of the tribute and its spinoffs in the thousands of dollars. Hansard staff, caucus and Cabinet employees count on the tribute to put food on their tables and iPads in their children's hands. Maybe we need a new strategy to increase and maximize the benefits of the tribute. Maybe we need to follow the recommendations of the Yukon tribute advisory board, or YTAB, which I'm told may or may not exist.

So Mr. Speaker, as we prepare to wrap up another legislative Sitting and tally the 20 minutes spent debating the Public Service Commission, let us pay our respects to the tribute. We wonder what bold tributes await us when we return to this Legislative Assembly in the fall. I hope that perhaps my dreams will come true and we will be back in time for International Talk Like a Pirate Day — Argh, that would be great.

Speaker: Well done; and that makes number 76.
 Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would just like to again welcome an individual who has come to the gallery in fact every sitting day of this Legislative Assembly. He has been a very persistent and loyal visitor to the gallery. I understand his travels will take him next to Inuvik. I would ask that all

members join me in again welcoming David Millar to the gallery.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly to welcome my mother — and in fact we didn't actually pay tribute to Mother's Day, so perhaps we'll tack that on to number 77 for next year.

I would just like to also mention for all members' information that my mother is celebrating her 50th year in the Yukon. When she first arrived here 50 years ago in May, she arrived in the Town of Watson Lake, fresh out of Edmonton, Alberta. She had joined Ms. Faye White, who was a long-time employee for many professions here throughout the Yukon and, most recently, in her term as the information desk personnel officer.

My mother celebrates her 50 years in the Yukon and she came up here looking for a job and worked for an individual named Tippy Mah, and kind of the rest is history. She met my father and had all of us. Thanks to Tippy Mah and Faye White, I am here, and so I thank her for that and I thank her for her being a trusted advisor, a pillar of strength and a great community individual here and for all of her contributions to the territory.

Applause

Ms. White: I thank everyone for that privilege to pay tribute to tributes.

I would like everyone to join me in welcoming Ms. Bonnie Dalziel. She's in the back row there and mortified that I've introduced her. This is a woman who, in 2011, allowed me into 600 College Drive and she was one of the two people who came to my introduction tea. Thank you so much for being here, Bonnie, and thank you for the guidance, the encouragement and the e-mails that I continue to receive.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Graham: I have for tabling the 2014 Department of Education annual report.

Mr. Silver: I have the 2015-16 opposition briefing from April 7, 2015, Highways and Public Works, with the estimated cost of the 300-bed facility.

Speaker: 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

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure former clients and all residents are kept informed of how the transition from the Yukon Council on DisABILITY to a new service provider is progressing.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: YESAA process

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, the federal Conservatives intend to move the time allocation on Bill S-6 to shut down debate and push it through Parliament. The bill will pass — that much we know.

Yukon First Nations have said that the legislation goes against their rights under the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. The Premier disagrees but, regardless of the Premier's views, Yukon First Nations have said that they will be forced to go to the courts to protect their rights. The Premier has chosen to ignore the potential consequences of litigation on Bill S-6.

The Premier says that he thinks that Bill S-6 is good for the Yukon, yet he knows when it passes, Yukon's entire assessment regime will be operating under the cloud of potential litigation. Presumably, he thinks that this too is good for the Yukon.

Why is the Premier supportive of legislation that will tie up the entirety of Yukon's environmental assessment regime in the courts?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Once again, I believe that the NDP leader is deliberately creating fear within the public. Again, I will remind the Leader of the Official Opposition that this is federal legislation. Through this process, they consulted with the Yukon government and we provided our comments and recommendations to the federal government. We also provided them to the First Nations as well. We believe that these amendments allow our environmental assessment process to be consistent with other jurisdictions. That allows us to continue to remain competitive and have a greater chance of seeing some of those investment dollars come to this territory. That is important to this government. Jobs, families and prosperity are important to this government.

Ms. Hanson: It is unfortunate the Premier keeps trotting out his tired speaking points. Yes, this is federal legislation, but that won't matter to Yukoners when development, and the jobs that come with it, takes a nosedive because of one more court battle. YESAA does not just apply to mining projects. Yukoners are aware of this and the implication is that it won't just be mining projects that will be at risk, but all types of projects. In fact, several mining companies have stated that if Bill S-6 does go ahead as is, without any changes, it will put at risk their plans for operating in the Yukon.

Is the Premier prepared to take responsibility for the negative repercussions that Bill S-6 will have on Yukon's resource extraction industry if Yukon's assessment regime is tied up in lawsuits?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In Section 4 of the *Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Act*, it clearly states — and I quote: “In the event of an inconsistency or conflict between a final agreement and this Act, the agreement prevails to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.” Again, we believe that these amendments are good for the territory. They are good to allow us to see further economic growth in our territory.

As I have stated, I have reached out to Yukon First Nation chiefs and said that this is not the first time that we have seen federal legislation that has affected this territory. In the past, we have seen the leadership of the Premier and of Yukon First Nation chiefs get together and figure out how to implement these amendments on the ground, here in the territory. That offer continues to be in place and I look forward to an opportunity to continue to work and see if we can, in fact these amendments pass, find a path forward that works for Yukon.

Ms. Hanson: You know, Mr. Speaker, the Premier clearly does not understand the implications of pushing First Nation governments into a corner and daring them to take legal action. He should, though. Whether it was his government’s decision to unilaterally change the final recommended Peel plan or he was avoiding his duty to consult the Ross River Dena Council regarding mineral staking in their traditional territory — on both occasions, his government lost the resulting legal battle. On both occasions, the entirety of those areas has been removed from staking and development for the foreseeable future. With a track record like that, Yukoners should be worried and when it comes to Bill S-6, it won’t be portions of the Yukon that will be tied up in legal battles — it will be the entire Yukon.

Why does the Premier continue to use divisive and strong arm tactics with First Nation governments rather than working with them in a respectful manner?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I want to acknowledge the work that occurs each and every day in every department in this government with First Nations. It goes on, on a daily basis and through that work we see increasing capacity for First Nations, we see support to allow their people to come and work with Yukon government employees to better understand their jobs to go back into the communities. We continue to work.

Recently, some of the things that we’ve done together are: the money for the Old Crow Community Centre, \$2.7 million; support for the Carcross Learning Centre; the recent — I talked about this just recently — money with the Carcross Tagish Development Corporation along with Kwanlin Dun First Nation to create an opportunity for skills development for a number of their youth to build tiny houses — tiny houses that are then going to Carcross commons. My understanding is that all of those tiny houses have already been leased out. It was a great opportunity for those youth to learn a skill and perhaps move that forward to a career.

There is the money that we’ve invested in geophysical data with Kluane First Nation recently; the money that we put into new classroom space with Kwanlin Dun; and the money

that was given recently to Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation for their six-unit affordable housing project. We continue to work with First Nations on a daily basis.

Question re: Economic outlook

Ms. Hanson: Whereas anything that Midas touched turned to gold, this Yukon Party government has a gaze like Medusa. Anything they look upon turns to stone.

For the past four years, this government has undermined Yukon’s wealth of land, people and resources. They have watched record federal transfers circle the drain without strategic reinvestments to diversify and strengthen Yukon’s local economy. We were once leaders in economic growth, but since this Premier came to power, year over year, GDP growth has fallen. Yukoners are now dealing with a Yukon Party made recession.

Provinces and territories around us big and small, including other resource-based economies, are growing while Yukon’s economy is the only one in Canada that has shrunk for two years in a row.

Does the Premier realize that his government is responsible for this poor economic performance?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We continue to invest in this territory, not only for today but for the future, such as our record capital budget that will pass today. Creating jobs for Yukoners, keeping Yukoners here in the territory today, but building infrastructure that we will use for many years to come — infrastructure that members opposite will again vote against, like expanding our hospital, like the new seniors home, like building the new Salvation Army’s emergency shelter or the new Sarah Steele for enhanced alcohol and drug services, like the investments in roads, and like the investments in bridges and aerodromes. We continue to make investments today to benefit the territory today, but get this territory ready for prosperity and success because of that vision that we see in the future.

Ms. Hanson: This government cannot run away from its track record. Yukon is the only jurisdiction with two consecutive years of negative GDP growth. We have been in this Spring Sitting for two months and the Premier has yet to make a coherent statement about the direction of Yukon’s economy.

Indeed, his government does spend millions after millions of federal transfers with no clear plan and without consulting Yukoners. The consequences are clear — cost overruns, delays and gross mismanagement — yet the Yukon Party government is so out of touch that, as recently as this past Monday, they said, with a straight face, that the F.H. Collins replacement is on time and on budget. Which time? Which budget? Yukoners deserve better.

When will the Premier admit his responsibility for taking Yukon into recession?

Hon. Mr. Kent: With respect to the F.H. Collins construction project — one of the many construction projects that this government is managing — I have mentioned in debate on a number of occasions that 75 percent of the employees — up until the middle of April — were local

employees. There are local benefits to subcontractors as well as vendors. One of the interesting things, though, when it comes to looking back in history — and I know there are a number of new Yukoners who have moved to the Yukon since 2003, when the Yukon Party first came to power. When the NDP first assumed office in 1997, there were just under 800 jobs in the mining industry here in the territory. When they left office, that number had shrunk down to about 25 percent of that — just over 200 jobs. When the Yukon Party took office in 2003, it was still at that 200-job level, and it peaked in 2011 to well over 1,200 jobs.

This is one of the industries that the Leader of the Official Opposition has demonstrated during this Sitting that she certainly does not understand. That has been affirmed by industry individuals in the community. As important as the mining industry is to the territory, just a little bit of a trip down memory lane will show how devastating the NDP government was to that industry during their years in power and how positive the Yukon Party influence has been for the mining industry.

Ms. Hanson: History will show that the Yukon NDP does know the value of having strong, community-based strategic plans to strengthen and diversify the economy. After all, it was the NDP that established the Yukon Mining Advisory Board and the small business investment tax credit. This Yukon Party government prefers to rely on ever-increasing federal transfer monies instead of taking leadership on their own. Though the Premier says that he will make Yukon a net contributor to Canada, his actions have led to the erosion of Yukon's economic independence. The percentage of own-source revenue has dropped significantly under this government. This government does not have regional economic development plans in place, and it does not work with all sectors of our economy.

The Premier may have put on boots at the beginning of this Sitting, but it is anyone's guess as to where he is headed. When will the Premier get serious about regional economic development and pull the territory out of the recession it is in?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: On the Leader of the NDP's assertions on own-source revenues, she is absolutely wrong. It appears that facts are irrelevant.

We continue to see the growth as a percentage of our budget of own-source revenues over the past 10 years, and that is because of the leadership of this Yukon Party. We continue to invest in schools. We continue to invest in new hospitals and upgrading hospitals — Canada's first MRI north of 60. We continue to have the vision to look at new generation hydro. We continue to build seniors residences, invest in home care and invest in fibre optics to expand our IT sectors. We are putting \$5.5 million back in the pockets of Yukon taxpayers. All Yukon taxpayers in 2015 will see a reduction in their taxes. We are investing in an increase in the Yukon child tax benefit.

While the NDP were busy making plans, they were overseeing the exodus of thousands of Yukoners during their last time in government — who had to leave this territory to

find a job somewhere else. We are focused on growing the private sector, creating prosperity for Yukon families.

Question re: Dome Road and Mary McLeod Road rerouting

Mr. Silver: The government is set to begin working on the realignment of the Dome Road in Dawson in order to allow a placer miner to access his claims. One of the outstanding questions from my constituents is what the top of the road will look like when the project is completed, particularly the intersection that occurs with Mary McLeod Road. While the government has stated that safety concerns will also be addressed by this road project, residents I have spoken with have a different point of view. They're not too happy with the proposed realignment of the intersection, and they want a different solution — in particular, one that was under consideration by this government but was scrapped. There was a public meeting, officials stuck around afterward and a solution was in the works — a solution that would have met neighbourhood values.

Will the government revisit this issue and address these residents' concerns?

Hon. Mr. Kent: The member opposite is correct. The Dome Road is being realigned. It was scheduled to be completed last year but, unfortunately, was not done at that time. I understand the contractor is going back in there.

As far as the issues the member has raised, I will follow up with department officials. I wasn't made aware of particular issues. The Minister of Economic Development, the Minister of Environment and I — when we attended the gold show on our way into Dawson City — went up and around that particular section of the road and turned on to the road. I believe the Member for Klondike's home is located on that road as well in Dawson City.

With respect to the specific concerns raised by his constituents, I will take those under advisement, follow up with officials and see if there's anything that can be done to address those concerns.

Mr. Silver: I can't believe the minister didn't come in for tea.

Another aspect of this project that has left residents scratching their heads is the government's decision not to repair the worst section of the Dome Road that is mere feet away from where the road construction starts. It is without a doubt the most unsafe piece of the entire road, and it only makes sense to fix it at the same time. However, this is not part of the government plans.

Both residents and contractors are baffled as to why this government is not including this in the overall project. This attention to detail will go a long way to show that this government is actually listening to citizens' concerns in my community and also to their own officials when they report on what they heard after a consultation.

Can the minister explain this decision? Will he look into fixing this lower section of the road at the same time?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As I think I've said on a number of occasions here in the House, this government is responsible

for thousands and thousands of kilometres of road, and much of that is spread across obviously a very vast area. We have a sparse population outside of the community of Whitehorse that relies on this type of activity. We've made significant investments in the member's community. In fact, in these 2015-16 mains, there are anticipated investments in the Klondike riding of \$16.428 million, which is a tremendous amount of investment — and we're making investments all over the Yukon when it comes to this budget.

Unfortunately, when we reach 5:00 p.m. today, I would anticipate that the member opposite would be voting against those types of investments that are being made in his community — investments to McDonald Lodge, investments in the Dawson aerodrome and a number of investments in land development and road repairs.

Again, I understand that this is an important issue to him and his community, but I think it is important as well for his community to recognize the significant amount of investment that we're making, not only in Dawson City and the member's riding but throughout the entire Yukon with this budget that we will be voting on later on today.

Mr. Silver: It really is too bad that we are getting partisan over this. This is a simple question and it is a simple fix. The gear is going to be there on a road that they are not responsible for, actually. It is a municipal road that they are putting \$1 million toward, so surely the minister can at least say he'll look into actually talking to the community about it as opposed to playing partisan politics here over this.

Another question is: There was an arrangement as well — we know that the price tag is \$1.3 million and we have been told as well by several residents that they are really concerned about what pocket this money has come from. They often answer their own question and hopefully their fears can be set at ease with the minister's comment today. They are wondering if the money for this road is coming out from a matched reduction for the maintenance budget from roads around Dawson.

Can the minister at least tell Yukoners if the budget for this project has changed since last year, what the total amount is and where the money is in fact coming from to pay for it?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I don't believe we were engaged in partisan political debate. I certainly just wanted to highlight many of the investments that we are making in the member's community of Dawson City.

This year will see the completion of the McDonald Lodge replacement, a \$7.858-million investment; there is a \$1.75-million investment being made in the Dawson City water system; and there is a \$775,000 investment being made in the Klondike paleo facility in the community of Dawson City. On top of that, there is \$3.6 million being invested into the Dempster Highway, which is an important highway obviously to members of the Klondike and indeed all Yukoners who enjoy travelling up to Inuvik or any of the marvellous spots along the way.

These represent almost \$20 million in investment in Dawson City and the Dempster Highway combined. It is something that is very important to us as a government. We

continue to make solid investments across the territory in each and every one of our communities. We take the concerns of the residents of these communities very seriously. Of course there is only a finite amount that we can invest, year over year. When I return to Dawson City — the two or three more times I am planning on doing that this summer, I will again speak to community leaders and others in that community about what is important to them.

Speaker: Order please.

Question re: Drinking and driving

Mr. Barr: There are four Canadians killed and 175 injured in impaired driving crashes every day. Rates of drinking and driving in the Yukon are four times higher than the national average. To eliminate drinking and driving, we need strong penalties, good education, and cultural change. We need our youth to fully believe that drinking and driving do not mix. There are serious penalties for impaired driving. One of the possible penalties for impaired driving — and this is taken from the driver's handbook — is having to take a remedial driving program and have an ignition interlock device installed.

How many convicted, impaired drivers have taken the remedial driving program and had ignition interlock devices installed in the past year?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I don't have that specific information in front of me that the member asked about — the statistics of the interlock program — but we can certainly look into that and undertake to provide that to the member at a later date.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister and look forward to getting those numbers.

There have been too many deaths and injuries and too many lives ruined by impaired driving. We need strong penalties and effective programs to reduce Yukon's staggeringly high drinking and driving rates.

Convicted impaired drivers shouldn't be easily allowed back on the road without taking an appropriate driving course and without having an ignition interlock, the device that requires the driver to provide a breath sample before attempting to drive. The sample must register alcohol-free breath or the vehicle will not start.

We have heard there have been problems with the remedial driving program and with ignition interlock device installation. Will the minister commit to reviewing these programs to see they are operating as intended and get back to this House with the results?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Those specific programs are not actually managed by the Department of Justice, but I can tell the member that along with other departments — including the Motor Vehicles branch staff, the Department of Justice, the RCMP, and the Driver Control Board, which is composed of Yukon citizens who serve on that body — all play an important role in managing the programs related to reintegrating people who have been convicted of an impaired driving offence back into being able to drive again through use of the interlock program.

As far as the very technical question that the member asked about — his understanding that there had been failures of interlock devices, I would appreciate it if the member could provide more detailed information and certainly I and my colleagues will be happy to look into that, but I don't have that specific information about technical equipment failures that the member is claiming occurred. It's the first that I've heard of it and I would appreciate if the member could provide more information so we can look into it and get back to him with a response.

Question re: Mobile home owners

Ms. White: This week, local mobile home owners were notified about another pad rent increase. This most recent increase has seen the rent go up by 10 percent since 2013. In the Yukon, mobile home owners have no recourse to protect themselves or their assets from unrestricted increases in the rent or the possibility of eviction.

Mobile home owners need more than and different protections from traditional renters because they aren't traditional renters. They own their homes but they don't own the land the home sits on. Despite their names, mobile homes aren't all that mobile, so when push comes to shove, they put their heads down and they pay the rent increases rather than risk the threat of eviction.

Does the minister agree that mobile home owners are a distinct class of tenants and the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* doesn't properly reflect that reality?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: As members know, the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* hasn't come into force yet but will hopefully later this year. That new act will govern tenancy agreements between mobile home owners and mobile home parks. It will provide additional protection and certainty for mobile home owners and it will also provide new tools and options for mobile home owners to avail themselves of, in the event that they need help or advice or have a dispute with their park owner.

In terms of protection and certainty, it will limit pad increases to no more than once a year. It will require mobile home park owners to provide at least three months' notice of an increase in pad rent and it will prohibit pad rent increases in the first year of tenancy.

Furthermore, if a tenancy is to be terminated, the RLTA provides more expanded time of notice for mobile home owners than for other types of tenants and prohibits a park owner from requiring a tenant to move a mobile home during the coldest months of the year.

We do recognize that there are some unique features to mobile home ownership and, as I have indicated before in Committee debate, if it becomes apparent as we move forward with the implementation of new regulations and legislation that there is a need for some additional measures relating to mobile homes, then I can commit to revisiting tenancy laws between mobile home owners and park owners at a future date.

Ms. White: I know that the minister has constituents in his riding who live in mobile homes and that he knows just

how precarious their situation is when it comes to pad rent increases and the fear of eviction.

The fact that hard-working Yukon home owners who live in mobile homes have next to no protections for pad rent increases or evictions is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, no one in the City of Whitehorse has their taxes go up by five percent a year. The new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* has protections for mobile home owners, but it does nothing to deal with the two major issues faced by mobile home owners — that of pad rental increases and the threat of eviction. The minister has just acknowledged that inequalities exist, and I thank him for that.

What options has the minister considered to protect mobile home owners from unfair increases in pad rent and the threat of eviction?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, members know very well that the new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* will provide some additional tools and certainty to mobile home owners. It will limit pad rent increases to no more than once per year. It will require mobile home park owners to provide at least three months' notice of an increase in pad rent. It will prohibit pad rent increases in the first year of tenancy. Furthermore, if tenancy is to be terminated, the RLTA provides expanded time of notice for mobile home owners and for other types of tenants and prohibits a park owner from requiring a tenant to move a mobile home during the coldest months of the year.

Additionally, mobile home owners will have access to the Residential Tenancies Office, which will be prepared to offer advice and assistance for mobile home owners on matters related to their tenancy, including tenancy agreements.

As well, the RTO, the Residential Tenancies Office, offers a new avenue for dispute resolution beyond what is currently available. That new avenue for dispute resolution was a key consideration in the passage of the legislation a few years ago and was a key feature of the select committee's advice on this matter a few years ago as well.

While there are new protections, new tools and new options for mobile home owners built into the RLTA, the act does not provide the type of rent control that is being sought by the opposition but, as I've noted, we can look at options going forward.

Question re: Social workers and health care in rural communities

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, this government's neglect of the health and social needs of rural Yukoners runs the gamut from shortages of ADS workers to shortages of mental health supports in the communities.

It wasn't always this way with all of Yukon services centralized in Whitehorse. At one time, almost every rural community had a social worker who lived in the community they worked in. Under this government, we have a community social worker living in Whitehorse who commutes — a social worker for Haines Junction who covers everything to Beaver Creek. Many of our communities do not even have a resident social worker, but must instead depend on a social worker

travelling to their community once a week. These hard-working social workers deliver a range of services, including child welfare, youth justice, social assistance and adult protection.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell this House how many Yukon communities are without a full-time social worker?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Certainly I will take this opportunity to thank the many social workers who are working throughout the territory. I have first-hand knowledge of the work that they do in all of the communities throughout the territory.

We see some jurisdictions in the territory requiring more supports with social workers and they're able to cover off areas that require less supports throughout the territory.

This government's priority is making those types of investments and providing that level of support to a variety of the communities. We see the role of the social worker as that of an important role in the communities and working with a number of different stakeholders and organizations. Again, I tip my hat to the work that they do in communities throughout the territory and for those who are in rural areas. It is certainly important work and necessary work.

Ms. Stick: There are a lot of communities that don't have the benefit of a social worker who lives in their community and works full-time. The minister responsible for Health and Social Services has demonstrated that he does not consider these rural Yukon communities a priority or they would have a social worker. Continuity and stability are critical needs of youth in care, and when Yukon youth do not have a family and are not placed in foster homes, the social workers are often their sole source of protection.

In 2014, the Auditor General revealed that several Yukon communities had been without permanent social workers for extended periods of time. I understand the challenges of staffing rural communities, but there is no excuse for social workers not being in a permanent place for 12 months, 14 months or even 22.

Can the minister tell rural Yukoners when they will have ongoing access to permanent social workers?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The government remains committed to provides social work services through qualified staff who reside in rural Yukon. There are a number of instances in communities where retaining and recruiting social workers remains a challenge for the department, and we continue to work with those communities and continue to look at innovative ways where we are able to recruit and keep people in those communities. This government is committed to continuing that work with retention and recruitment. We certainly believe that the role of a social worker is an important one, and we will continue to work with stakeholders like Yukon College, for example, on training opportunities for Yukoners to stay in Yukon communities.

Ms. Stick: It is not only social workers and family and children's services missing from the slate of Health and Social Services staff in our rural communities. As of last month, there were seven community nursing vacancies and four vacancies of float nurses who provide relief to our hard-working community nurses. Health professionals have

expressed concern about the shortage of LPNs in our community hospitals. There has been study after study showing that our health centres and community nurses are not getting the resources and supports that they need. These dedicated professionals provide primary and emergency care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This government has let down rural Yukoners and hard-working health professionals. It is time they put the Yukon community and our rural health professionals first.

Will the minister explain to Yukoners why he has not made support for rural health professionals a priority?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I am going to take this opportunity to tell Yukoners and the members opposite how proud I am that, during the budget speech of the vision that we articulated for education is focused on the needs of all students — students and youth being our biggest investment in this territory.

I am proud to again continue talking about our vision for the territory, and that is, in the long term, making this great territory a net financial contributor to this great country.

Other provinces talk about surpluses and deficits simply because of the massive debt that they have. They want to focus on that current year, whether they can get to balance or have a surplus or a deficit. That's because they have massive debt. This territory has money in the bank, which is indeed the envy of the country. We're continuing to invest in infrastructure and in training, and in our permitting and in our regulatory processes.

We have money in the bank, and that is a comfort to Yukoners in good times and in slower times. Yukoners trust the Yukon Party government to be financially responsible, to be focused on short- and long-term goals, to be focused on jobs and to be focused on Yukon families.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. Elias: 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): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All 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. 18: *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Department of Economic Development — continued

Hon. Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to rise again today to speak to the Economic Development budget. I would like to once again thank my deputy minister — no longer acting deputy minister — Terry Hayden, for being here with us today, as well as the acting deputy, Steve Rose.

Just to begin, there was one thing that came up last time we debated Economic Development, and one thing in particular that stuck with me for the weeks now that have gone by.

One thing in particular that stuck with me for the weeks that have gone by is when the Leader of the Official Opposition was talking about mines and what kind of benefits we see from working mines. If I can just read an excerpt from Hansard — I believe it was May 4, that we had that debate.

The Leader of the NDP at that time said: “We see local expeditors, helicopter and fixed-wing companies benefitting quite a lot because there's a lot of activity there, but, once a mine is actually up and operational, the perception — and I look to the minister to correct this or not. I've only seen the one example in action myself — at Minto — where once the mine is in operation — has been for some time — but the actual procurement of everything from, I would say, toilet paper to lettuce to whatever comes in on big trucks, on pallets, from Outside, and nothing is sourced locally.”

Madam Chair, it was somewhat disturbing to hear that statement and I would like to thank the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, who was able to get those numbers from Capstone Mining and showed that it was somewhere in the \$125-million range over two years — and that was excluding wages. That was just contracts and services and toilet paper and lettuce, I guess we could say.

On that note, I would like to just continue and take a few minutes to remind people what the branch of Economic Development does. Apparently the member opposite has some questions already, but if she would just bear with me for a minute. Our role at Economic Development is to foster responsible development opportunities that contribute to a sustainable and diversified economy. We are here to increase the benefits that Yukoners, businesses, First Nations, and communities receive from economic projects and activities. The department works with a wide range of partners from the

private sector, First Nation governments and development corporations, industry associations, non-governmental organizations and other Yukon government departments.

Yukon's Technology and Telecommunications Development Directorate led the Yukon government's work with the ICT sector and they were able to develop a strategic action plan to grow the industry's contribution to our GDP. I am proud to say that Economic Development supported three First Nation development corporations with Dempster Energy Services — and that was to develop a bankable feasibility study for an alternate fibre optic telecommunications link to the south.

This study formed the basis for the Yukon diverse fibre link project. We understand how important this link is to Yukoners and Yukon businesses. There are two options for this diverse fibre link here in the Yukon. One option is through Skagway and into Juneau and on to Seattle, whereas the other option is up the Dempster, and that would join us with the Mackenzie Valley fibre link that is currently underway. It's not an either/or option. We are certainly looking at both options and will do all of the hard work to determine which is the best way to go to move forward.

We have the research, innovation and commercialization sector. We're investing over \$1 million in this sector this year. It's to do such things as support the Cold Climate Innovation and Technology Innovation Centre at the Yukon Research Centre and support the Yukon Information Technology and Industry Society, or YITIS. We have \$577,000 for the Cold Climate Innovation and \$235,000 for Technology Innovation Centre.

In February, the enterprise development services unit moved to a storefront location, and that was done to better serve the needs of small- and medium-sized enterprises throughout the community. Clients will now be able to benefit from Business and Industry Development staff expertise and also learn more about the branch funding sources.

From April 1, 2014 to January 21 of this year, we provided \$223,575 to 56 projects from Yukon businesses to assist them to expand their export-related operations, and we have another \$360,000 for that this year.

The Film and Sound Commission — just as we reach out to mineral industry investors, we also reach out to film and sound industries to help create opportunities for Yukoners and to maximize the economic impact of media production here in the Yukon. The Film and Sound Commission this year will build on its recent activities and successes, providing Yukoners with employment and training opportunities and encouraging investment from outside interests.

From April 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015 the Commission approved 24 projects under the film programs for a total of \$1.31 million.

Madam Chair, as you can see, the Department of Economic Development is continuing to work hard to help diversify the economy here in the Yukon. We continue to look forward to new and great ideas coming forward. With that, I'll sit down and open the floor to questions. Thank you.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the Minister for his opening comments.

It's unfortunate and actually kind of disappointing that this minister, who started off quite well in his portfolio in defying the standard of behaviour of his colleagues chose —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of Order

Chair: Mr. Elias, on a point of order, please.

Mr. Elias: I wish the Leader of the NDP would carry some more rectitude in here because that was clearly against Standing Order 19(g): imputes false or unavowed motives to the Hon. Minister of Economic Development. I mean, seriously.

Chair: Ms. Stick, on the point of order.

Ms. Stick: In fact, I think I heard the leader, my colleague here, complimenting the minister in comparison and I would suggest that this is a dispute among members.

Chair's ruling

Chair: There is no point of order. This is a dispute among members.

Ms. Hanson: The point I was trying to make — or going to make — was that it was unfortunate that the minister chose to take out of context the comments I made on May 4. If he will recall — and I would just like to recap for him what I said to him in the questions that I was asking him.

What I was asking the Minister of Economic Development, as I have asked his predecessor and as I had asked the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, is a question with respect to the kind of tools that the Department of Economic Development has at its disposal, or has developed, to analyze the actual contribution of the mineral resource sector to Yukon's economy. I have raised this repeatedly because I think, as I said before in debate and in questions when I raised it before, it's absolutely imperative because this does, as we have said before — the mining sector has the potential to be a significant contributor to our economy. It is not currently. As I said, because of the fact that we're in a current downturn, this might be an opportunity. If he looks back to Hansard of May 4, that's what I said.

I asked him and I referenced again the data, as I have in previous years, that's provided by the comparable department in Alaska. I do know that the minister did say that we're not a state, we're not a province, we are a territory, but we have an Economic Development department, which I also said to him. We do expect them to have the ability and the capacity — because they are professionals and have economists on staff — to be able to develop some economic data and tools to do that analysis.

I was asking him and telling him in that brief example with respect to Alaska that the Government of Alaska's legislators can tell us — by mine — the number of jobs created, the amount of income tax generated and the amount of royalty generated, among other source data. I asked if we had any of that kind of data and are we developing any of that

kind of data? Do we have it for the various stages, I said, and do we have it for exploration? Do we know how much is being spent in Yukon? How much of it is being spent Outside in terms of supplies? Have we done a comparative analysis of the amount of money that is spent on exploration versus a developed mine in terms of actual local procurement?

As we have talked about many times in this House, there is a significant multiplier effect from local procurement. I was asking the minister that question. Then I went on to say — and we heard this repeated at the Yukon Chamber of Mines luncheon when Stewart Muir from Resource Works spoke to the Chamber of Mines luncheon. He said that there is a need for the government and the industry to paint a fuller picture of the economic impact of mining in this territory. It is not enough to have generalities.

When I went on to say, it is generally assumed — I was talking about the general public perception, and I asked the minister repeatedly to correct these perceptions or these assumptions. If he read the whole of the sentence that he just took out of context, I was asking him to clarify the perception that, once a mine goes into full production, there is less local procurement. It is unfortunate for this minister to have jumped on that bandwagon when in fact he was being asked to help clarify a perception and to help inform Yukon citizens. What he has simply done is work to do the contrary. It is really unfortunate.

On the issue of data, the Premier said in Question Period — maybe the minister would like to listen — and I quote: "As I have stated many times, the resource industry is the largest employer of First Nation people in this territory." That is an encouraging fact. As this is jobs data, could the minister share the source of this statement with the House?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: I just have to go back there one last time because it kind of gets my goat just a little bit that I read five or six lines out of an excerpt directly from Hansard, but, just the other day, I read a news release from the NDP and they had three quotes from me that were about three words apiece. It is interesting that the Leader of the NDP doesn't like that — she says that in five lines, I have taken things out of context when it might be a little bit of a case of those in glass houses shouldn't throw rocks. Let's carry on.

In terms of economic forecasting — because that is where this discussion evolved from in the first place — we do have detailed information about the work that our Business and Economic Research branch does. The Business and Economic Research branch provides research analysis and reports to support a broad understanding of Yukon economy and the assessment of its impacts on Yukon government's fiscal position, budgetary projections and financial decision-making. I would like to thank the team down at Economic Development, dedicated public servants, for the important analytical work they do.

I recognize that economics is a specialized area of statistical analysis, and I will do my best to inform the opposition and the public on how the economic information is gathered and presented.

The Department of Economic Development uses an industry-accepted approach to economic forecasting. It's essentially the same approach followed by all other provincial and territorial jurisdictions that undertake their own forecasting. Yukon uses an econometric model developed in 2010 by the Centre for Spatial Economics, a modelling firm based out of Ontario that provides modelling services for most of the provinces across Canada.

The model is essentially a fixed-price general equilibrium model, analyzing major project investments — such as mining development or government capital expenditures — and is key to producing the forecast, but is also the most difficult task, since investment can be unpredictable and volatile.

This is especially challenging in a small economy like the Yukon, where a large project or two can have a significant impact on economic forecasts. The Yukon model is designed specifically to incorporate information on major projects, including total investment expenditures and their allocation over time. To include the projects in the model, assumptions must be set for investment, capital, stock and employment.

Major projects in this model are assumed to be those related to export activity, as those projects that serve the local economy are assumed to be a reaction to increased demand generated by the new major export projects. For example, a new shopping centre being constructed is assumed because of increased wealth brought on by a major project or projects. There are several steps in undertaking a model run. The model is updated with the most recent data from Statistics Canada, including gross domestic product, employment, consumer prices and others. Consensus forecast for areas, such as commodity prices, inflation and exchange rates, are all entered into this model.

The department works with other departments and branches to identify potential major projects in the short, medium and long terms. The department gathers data on export-based projects and areas such as capital expenditures, output production, estimates and employment levels, as well as timelines.

The data used in the model is publicly available data and is provided by the companies themselves. Projects that have been identified as falling outside of the realm of export-based projects and appear outside of wealth-driven factors, such as large, one-time government capital investments, are taken, inventoried and used to adjust or tune the model results at the industry level.

An initial model run is then produced. The initial results are then reviewed by economists in the department to identify areas where the results appear to be outside of expectations.

The dialogue is then initiated with the Centre for Spatial Economics to find the root cause of the anomalies, whether they are a data entry error or a model anomaly, and then remedy the problem. This process is repeated until results are supportive of expectations based on inputs. Once the economists are confident in the results, the Yukon economic outlook document is drafted in conjunction with other departments and branches to add a narrative to the forecast results and provide a descriptive background to current

conditions. The complete document is reviewed at multi-levels and the final document is presented to the minister for approval to release. The outlook document is then posted on the department website and a news release or media advisory is sent out.

Currently, the forecast schedule for publishing of the outlook is twice annually, usually around January and June of each year. The key challenge for forecasting in Yukon relates to the size of the territorial economy, as I have mentioned. By way of comparison, the economies of British Columbia and Alberta are some 200 times larger than that of the Yukon. Because of its small size, forecasting for Yukon's economy is susceptible to volatility. The opening or closing of a mine or the construction of a large highway project can have an impact on the overall territorial economy. Incremental changes like this in southern jurisdictions would have very little impact on the GDP of that province. I hope that answers the question, Madam Chair.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for recapping the process for putting together the Yukon economic outlook, the economic forecasting document. We do look at that and study it. We think it is a useful tool. That is one of the kinds of tools that I was referring to when I asked the minister the question I was asking him with respect to — so there is a combination of forecast and then actual expenditures and then implications for the local economic multiplier effect of those actual expenditures was the other aspect that I asked.

I also asked the minister with reference to the comment made by the Premier — and I will quote it again: “As I have stated many times, the resource industry is the largest employer of First Nation people in this territory.” As I just said, that is an encouraging statistic. Because this is job data, I asked the minister to share the source of this statement with the House and if you could indicate — since, according to the Premier, it is the largest employer of First Nation people in the territory — how many First Nation people are employed in the mineral industry? Clearly the Premier says that he has this data, so I am presuming the minister does. How many First Nation people are employed in the government sector and other professions? That is economic data that was referenced in this Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: I believe that information was gathered when we moved forward with the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining. I obviously can't speak on behalf of the Premier so I'm not sure where he got that information. I'm assuming it was from there. We haven't actually looked at that number recently because it does fluctuate quite a bit, which, I think, would be fairly obvious to all members. I don't have an exact number for today but, like I say, I can't speak for the Premier. The member opposite would have to ask him that.

Ms. Hanson: As the Minister of Economic Development, can he undertake to provide the source data to this Legislative Assembly by return, by letter to the opposition that would provide substantiation for the Premier's comment in the Legislative Assembly?

I have one other question for the Minister of Economic Development. This Monday, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources in discussion on this, when he was talking about the select committee on the report on hydraulic fracturing, said — and I quote: “I have mentioned before that there are opportunities for Yukoners ... who are ... working in places like British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan to move home so they can take advantage of opportunities here. There are business and contracting opportunities, not only for businesses in the immediate vicinity of Watson Lake, but also businesses throughout the Yukon when it comes to a strong and robust oil and gas industry.”

I wasn't aware that this government kept data on the number of Yukon residents who are living and working outside of the Yukon because they can't find work in the Yukon in their desired field. Could the minister shed some light on this data source and share his numbers with this side of the House? We are interested in keeping track of this very important issue.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: In regard to the first question from the member opposite, I can commit to getting a letter to the opposition, both opposition parties, with that number.

In terms of the second part of her question, we certainly do not keep numbers on how many people are working in other parts of the country.

Chair: Does any other member wish to speak in general debate?

We're going to proceed then to line-by-line debate, starting with Corporate Services.

On Corporate Services

Ms. Hanson: Could the minister confirm for me the amount that was spent on the website development for Corporate Services?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: I guess I apologize; I thought we had provided that. Anyway, the total cost of the invest Yukon website since redesign in 2012 was \$38,408.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Deputy Minister's Office

Deputy Minister's Office in the amount of \$368,000 agreed to

On Corporate Administration

Corporate Administration in the amount of \$1,234,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,602,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Office Furniture and Equipment

Office Furniture and Equipment in the amount of \$90,000 agreed to

On Information Technology Equipment and Systems

Information Technology Equipment and Systems in the amount of \$9,000 agreed to

On Building Maintenance, Renovations and Space

Ms. Hanson: Could the minister clarify this? It has gone from zero to 100 to zero to 100. I thought Economic Development was moving into a new building, so why would they be doing renovations? I'm just curious.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: I understand it is because of the potential move coming up.

Ms. Hanson: When is that move scheduled?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: The move is expected to happen in the first quarter of the 2016 calendar year.

Ms. Hanson: Is that building that Economic Development will be moving into a government-owned building, or is this going to be a lease arrangement?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: It is a lease.

Building Maintenance, Renovations and Space in the amount of \$100,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$199,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,801,000 agreed to

On Corporate Planning and Economic Policy

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Directorate

Directorate in the amount of \$302,000 agreed to

On Communications

Communications in the amount of \$237,000 agreed to

On Policy and Planning

Ms. Hanson: Can the minister explain that \$100,000-plus increase?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: \$100,000 of that was for the relocation of the T2D2 — Technology and Telecommunications Development Directorate.

Policy and Planning in the amount of \$945,000 agreed to

On Business and Economic Research

Business and Economic Research in the amount of \$771,000 agreed to

Corporate Planning and Economic Policy Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$2,255,000 agreed to

Corporate Planning and Economic Policy Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,255,000 agreed to

On Business and Industry Development

Chair: Is there any general debate?

Mr. Barr: I realize that just recently there were a number of people who directed a letter to the Premier regarding having the Film and Sound Commission moved to its original subsidiary in Tourism and Culture. Could the minister please comment on that?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Yes — I mean, we have heard from the people who the member opposite is talking about but we have also heard from another complete sector in that organization or that group of people who don't want to go that way. I mean, we are here to listen.

We are open to anything and will listen to all sides of the story. It's not just a clear case of: “Oh, hey, Jimmy wants to go over to Tourism, so we are all going to Tourism.” We have to balance it out and look at all factors in the equation.

Mr. Barr: Would the minister be willing to provide that letter to see the various components that are advocating for that change? I haven't seen it. I had understood that there were people from different sectors who accessed those funds. I would seek clarity as to who is involved. I understood there

were people from film and sound and, in the film, to studio people and so on and so forth.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: That letter was sent to the Premier, so I don't think that I am in any position to forward a letter sent to the Premier on to anyone else. There certainly were people from various parts of the industry who sent this letter. Like I say, there are a lot of people from other parts of the industry who have stated the opposite.

Mr. Barr: What is the minister going to examine about film and sound operations to decide if there is a move and if it is a good idea or not?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: We continue to review programs, but we are not — if I led the member opposite to believe that we were considering moving them, I apologize, because that isn't what I was insinuating. While we do review things on an ongoing basis, there aren't necessarily plans for moving anything out of Economic Development to anywhere.

Mr. Barr: I understand that the Film Commissioner position is vacant. It has been vacant for some time. I believe it has been a year and a half. I know that is part of the concern of the people trying to work with the department — the lack of having that position means there is no one at the helm. What is the minister doing to rectify this?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: One thing that we have done is increase the number of full-time equivalent positions actively working on the development of this industry sector. Prior to November of 2013, Yukon Film and Sound Commission was staffed by three full-time positions, including the commissioner.

At this time, there are three full-time positions within the commission plus a senior business advisor assigned to the industry sector. The director of Business and Industry Development oversees the commission at an executive level. As well, two staff members are accredited by the Association of Film Commissioners International, as certified film commissioners.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Directorate

Directorate in the amount of \$548,000 agreed to

On Industry Development

Industry Development in the amount of \$3,585,000 agreed to

On Investment Attraction and Marketing

Investment Attraction and Marketing in the amount of \$715,000 agreed to

On Business Development

Business Development in the amount of \$1,291,000 agreed to

On Film and Sound Commission

Film and Sound Commission in the amount of \$1,426,000 agreed to

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$7,565,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Business Incentive Program

Ms. Hanson: Could the minister explain the doubling of this figure with the actuals? The only real actual we have is \$542,000. It is now \$1,055,000.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: We have to budget a large amount because we don't know how much it is actually going to be, as there are so many variables in it. The actual was only \$542,000, but we don't want to budget \$542,000 and then have to go asking for money because we didn't budget enough. Hopefully that answers the member's question.

Ms. Hanson: Maybe I am misunderstanding the minister, but this is a capital budget — Business Incentive — capital. I am just wondering how — what is covered in that? I would have expected the O&M, but what is covered under the capital aspect of that, as opposed to the O&M?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: The business incentive program is a program that provides rebates to contractors for purchasing local things for capital projects and hiring local people, so we never know how much is going to be applied back for, for capital projects until the year is over.

Business Incentive Program in the amount of \$1,055,000 agreed to

On Dana Naye Ventures Business Development Program

Dana Naye Ventures Business Development Program in the amount of \$19,000 agreed to

On Prior Years' Projects

Prior Years' Projects cleared

Business and Industry Development Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$1,074,000 agreed to

Business and Industry Development Total Expenditures in the amount of \$8,639,000 agreed to

On Regional Economic Development

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Directorate

Directorate in the amount of \$295,000 agreed to

On First Nations and Regional Economic Development

First Nations and Regional Economic Development in the amount of \$1,121,000 agreed to

On Community Development Fund

Community Development Fund in the amount of \$3,377,000 agreed to

Regional Economic Development Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$4,793,000 agreed to

Regional Economic Development Total Expenditures in the amount of \$4,793,000 agreed to

On Revenues

Revenues cleared

On Government Transfers

Government Transfers cleared

On Changes in Tangible Capital Assets and Amortization

Changes in Tangible Capital Assets and Amortization cleared

Department of Economic Development agreed to

Chair: We are going to move on to Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture.

We will be recessing for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order. We are going to be in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, general debate.

Department of Tourism and Culture — *continued*

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I'm pleased that we're able to continue on the debate on our Department of Tourism and Culture for this fiscal year. One thing I did want to mention — I know I have less than a handful of minutes before my time is up — but I did want to make mention that next week marks Tourism Week, from May 30 to June 7.

In fact this year's theme — we're participating through what we're calling "explore your Yukon" campaign and it will run between May 30 and June 7, and in order to provide a couple of full weekends for Yukoners to fully participate in this particular campaign, it's coordinated in partnership between our government and the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon.

I think we have up to about 30-plus businesses that have enrolled in the program and other stakeholders as well, but it's really an opportunity for Yukoners to be visitors in their own hometown in their own home territory. "Staycation" — I think it has been coined in other places, and I know that in my travels, whether it's in Watson Lake or Dawson City or Faro, there are a multitude of different various attractions and scenic points to be able to take in and to completely consume oneself with the festivals or cultural events that are so vibrant, particularly this time of the year.

It's really a plug to be able to encourage Yukoners to be tourists in their own homes, discover the many amazing businesses there are throughout the territory, historic sites, galleries, museums, cultural centres, events, and our warm hospitality throughout the territory.

I know there are a number of businesses and attractions that will be offering special offers for residents, and people can go on to the government website for Tourism and Culture and see the full list or they can actually go to one of our visitor information centres to obtain a full list of the participants in order to provide some great suggestions as to what you can see and do in your own backyard.

I know that there is also going to be a draw for a tourism prize pack that includes a digital camera — even more opportunity to take in all that there is and to share that with the rest of the world, with family and friends.

I see that my time is pretty much due. I look forward to carrying the debate with my opposition colleagues.

Mr. Barr: I would like to welcome the officials and thank them for their hard work in the department, which is very important, I believe, to the economy of the territory, and I would also like to congratulate the minister. This is the first time formally in the House that we've — I wasn't able to be here for the first part, but congratulations on this portfolio. I know it's one that brings a smile to your face so it's good to see you at the helm.

"Staycation" — that's very interesting. May 7 to June 4 — I think that my "staycation" will be to actually be at my own bed and breakfast where I haven't been able to lay my head down too much in the last few months, given that, being a rural MLA, you don't get to go home as often. I look forward to being in and around Carcross and seeing all the new things that are happening there. I know that people are excited in that area as one of the places to be visiting in the territory as far as a destination.

With that, though, I'll just move on with some questions. I would like to thank my colleague for Whitehorse Centre, who started off this debate, as I was away for personal reasons with my family. I had an uncle who passed. It was great to be there at that time and although I did miss the first part of the Tourism and Culture debate, I read through Hansard, so at least I know what was said and I had some conversations. But I would like to thank my colleague and our Leader of the Opposition for filling in for me while I wasn't here.

I would like to start off with — the City of Whitehorse has recently decided that museums within the city will no longer be exempt from paying property taxes. The MacBride Museum is one of the premier museums in the territory that has a wonderful collection that will also be impacted. It is the only museum currently that owns its land, while the rest are on Yukon government land.

MacBride expects to pay about \$5,000 in property taxes annually after three years of a phased-in approach. Museums are public educational institutions and tourist attractions and they have a large economic spinoff. The more attractions we have, the more tourists will come and stay longer. I do know that MacBride Museum is one where I'm walking down the street — even local people — when we talk about "staycations" — I have never been to the MacBride Museum. So it's always good when you let them know it's just over here, they say, "Oh really? I'll have to get over there" and sometimes you'll see them again shortly and they thank me or whoever directed them. I know it is a great place to have a look.

They're not, as we know, big money-makers — museums. There's going to be a hardship, I believe, to come up with an additional \$5,000. It may cause increases in admission prices and so on and so forth. There is minimal hall rental there. I was wondering if the government has considered covering the property tax expense for the MacBride Museum.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Madam Chair, I would like to thank the member opposite for his question because it gives me a great opportunity to articulate all of the many investments that the Yukon government has made over the past 12 or 13 years actually.

I'm very pleased of course with this year's budget in particular. I also want to acknowledge the hard work and the efforts of the previous Minister of Tourism and Culture for working with the museums community.

I do just want to go back a few years ago, having worked with Yukon museums and of course more recently with First Nation cultural centres, we have made great strides in terms of

really working with them to build capacity in terms of programming and exhibits and in terms of exemplifying and practising good standards when it comes to conservation. When it comes to working with the tourism industry, they are major attractions for local Yukoners, but also for our visitors. We are really proud of the museums community over the number of years. It is almost on a daily basis that I am in touch with many of our museum counterparts, constantly attending various events and learning about new exhibits.

This morning there was a representative on CBC Radio talking about the official launch, or the official opening of the Woodchuck and its wonderful new display on Yukon River history that will be showcased at MacBride Museum. It is just one of many different ways of engaging with the public, really taking great pride in being able to preserve, promote and protect Yukon's history in each of our museums.

Of course in the Yukon museum family, there are 19 today. Back in 2002, when I was first elected, we had approximately nine. We added a number of museums to our family at that time, inclusive of the Binet House in Mayo, to the Northern Lights Space and Science Centre in Watson Lake, to the Campbell Region Interpretive Centre in Faro and to the Copperbelt Railway and Mining Museum as well — the museum itself.

Since that time, there have been a number of other institutions that have come on-line. First Nation cultural centres — and in fact we had developed a few years ago a new program to recognize First Nation cultural centres and the distinct role that they play, and therein was born a specific program applicable to First Nation cultural centres.

Right now we have about 19 institutions under the umbrella of the Yukon museums assistance program. During that time period of 2002 to where it is today, the annual funding envelope has also increased from approximately \$500,000 to where it was back then to well over \$1.5 million in support of O&M and special project funding for each of those organizations. We recognize that, while the number of museums has increased in size, that level of funding for each of our organizations hadn't actually seen an increase since 2007. Of course, the case for making that enhanced funding available to enable institutions like MacBride Museum to sustain itself and to be able to maintain its programming and to continue to grow — it has been a point of discussion and it is one that I know that Yukon Historical and Museums Association took a leadership role in bringing it to the forefront, and for that I thank YHMA for the work and the individual institutions for bringing that to light and that of the museums round table in that regard as well.

Back in February, during the annual awards ceremony hosted by YHMA, I was really pleased to be able to announce additional dollars for each of our cultural centres and our Yukon museums. In fact, we were pleased to announce a 20-percent increase for each of the 11 museums and the seven First Nation cultural centres over the next two years. The budget that we are currently debating includes that 10-percent lift. With that increase, the overall budget supporting those museums and cultural centres over the next two years will

have grown more than 300 percent since 2002; specifically growing to the \$1.69 million in this fiscal year to the \$1.86 million in the next fiscal year that we committed to. For that, we are really pleased to allocate those additional dollars.

In addition to that, we have also been able to allocate that 20-percent lift — 10 percent this fiscal year and 10 percent next year — to the special projects capital assistance fund. In fact, yesterday I was really pleased to announce almost \$400,000 in funding for capital projects assistance for our museums. I know the MacBride Museum was a recipient of some of that funding as well. I know that, for example, they will receive an additional \$60,000 for their education program expansion. They do an amazing job on that front. I met with them on a couple of occasions when I was Minister of Education and the level of programming that they are really working on to build in and incorporate into our school curriculum and expand into our schools is exemplary. Also, there is a conservation implementation project — in the second year of their project they are receiving about \$20,000 for that — so between those two projects, it is about \$60,000. There are many other various projects that were approved.

Also, earlier this week, through the community development fund, MacBride Museum is also receiving an additional almost \$70,000 to interpret and exhibit Yukon's telecom pioneers in the telegraph office. It is a designated historic building in Whitehorse. We are really pleased to be able to partner with the MacBride Museum Society.

I should also mention that when it comes to the MacBride Museum — and the member opposite is very clear in that it is quite an iconic attraction. It has a lot of history and a lot of historic, intrinsic value along the Whitehorse waterfront. A number of years ago, we were really pleased to be able to expand with an expansion of their museum. I believe it was well over \$1.5 million — complete with the exhibit, it was probably closer to a \$2-million upgrade to the museum with a new facility on its property. It is part of one of many different improvements to the Whitehorse waterfront. Through Community Services and other departments, we have seen about \$35 million in increased investments along our Whitehorse waterfront — from the Roundhouse being relocated and refurbished, to the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre, and our great partnership between the library and the centre. Then there are the trail upgrades to the landscaping — and that doesn't even include investments in the Old Fire Hall.

The Old Fire Hall — we're talking to this budget as well — includes \$175,000. We just recently struck an agreement with the Yukon Arts Centre for a three-year agreement — \$175,000 — to be able to bring life to that cultural venue through various programming — different programs and events. I'm sure we've all been to many different events at the Old Fire Hall. Also, with the recent completion of the Whitehorse wharf on the waterfront, it enables them a specific dollar allotment of about \$25,000 per year over the next three years to be able to further animate with performers and events and various attractions to actually program that particular piece of infrastructure.

It builds on the number of investments that have been made, not just by the Yukon government, but the City of Whitehorse, the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and the business community in terms of revitalizing the downtown core, bringing life to Main Street, to the downtown core, and preserving that particular area as a cultural corridor, so to speak. It has worked very well.

We see increased use of different festivals taking part along the waterfront and the use of the various institutions and various venues along the waterfront.

With respect to our increase in funding to museums, we're very proud to be able to deliver that. I know that museums are very appreciative of the funding as well, and they do a fantastic job of being able to leverage that additional funding.

When it comes to MacBride Museum, we also recognize the specific challenges it faces as one of the few museums in the territory that is owned and operated by a non-profit society. We have been working to adjust the funding for that particular museum to reflect that specific circumstance. They are actually receiving additional dollars in recognition of that adjustment. In fact, I think their funding has gone up from about \$100,000 to \$154,000 this year alone. That's to really reflect their specific and unique circumstances, unlike other institutions in the territory that may be owned by a municipality, or may be owned by a First Nation government, or may be owned by the Yukon government. MacBride Museum is very much an anomaly among the family there.

We have been working with MacBride Museum for quite awhile and we have adjusted funding to acknowledge those specific circumstances. The Yukon government has done its part to support MacBride Museum. We will continue to support MacBride Museum and the remaining 18 museums and cultural centres as well. I just take the opportunity to encourage all Yukoners to really take time to visit all of these interesting institutions and the great work that is being done in collaboration with our own Museums unit. I just want to thank all of our officials in the Department of Tourism and Culture for their hands-on assistance.

I was just at the Copperbelt rail museum just last week and had an opportunity to get together with some of the board members and the executive director. The day before, a representative from the Museums unit was just there and was lending assistance — hands-on technical advice — in terms of upgrading exhibits, in terms of raising the standards, in terms of conservation and really promoting through signage and preservation concepts. There is a lot of work that is being done in behind the scenes as well, and we're really very pleased to see this sector, the heritage sector — and that doesn't even take into account all the various historic sites that we have throughout the territory.

I know that, in addition to our museums, we have about another half a million dollars that are invested on an annual basis in terms of investments, of upgrades and improvements and ongoing maintenance for sites such as Rampart House and Fort Selkirk. In fact, there was a great news item on CBC just recently — log building workshop in which museums, cultural

centres and First Nation staff were invited to come and take part in that as a means of applying those different techniques in terms of applying to standards of conservation when it comes to not just simple log building techniques but really in this specific circumstance of historic sites such as Fort Selkirk. There are many others. That doesn't even take into account that arm as well.

I am very proud of the work that is being done by MacBride Museum. I am looking forward to taking part in the official opening later on this evening. Every time that it seems that I go into a museum, their exhibits are changing up and there have been new investments being made, and it's in large part due to some of these funding mechanisms — special projects funding that we announced yesterday, about \$400,000. As I mentioned before, that 10-percent lift recognized in this year's budget applies to this fund as well, so that's great news. We were able to distribute even more dollars in support of museums this year and next year again as well.

It has been great in terms of being able to: facilitate equipment purchases; produce new collections; come up with plans in terms of management preparedness, recording different artifacts, being able to provide that curatorial component of permanent exhibitions development such as they're doing in Dawson City at the museum there; working on outdoor exhibitions, interpretation developments; and simple upgrades, such as back deck replacement at the Campbell Region Interpretive Centre in Faro.

Then, through YHMA, we're also pleased to be able to provide dollars in support of joint marketing initiatives through YHMA — that they're able to help promote all the good work at the museums and cultural centres as well. Like I said, that doesn't even touch on all of the in-kind assistance and the ongoing workshops that we provide as the Department of Tourism and Culture in support of our museums.

Madam Chair, I know that my time is just about due, but hopefully that answers the question.

Mr. Barr: I do thank the minister for her response.

Just for clarity — I understand that there are several new dollars for museums in the territory and I was aware of those. I was speaking specifically of MacBride Museum. I know the minister commented that there was funding that, in her mind possibly, would cover the \$5,000 taxes. Is that also what MacBride Museum thinks — that money is allocated specifically to deal with the \$5,000 taxes? I'm not sure, in her response, if the minister — I know she said that there's money there for education and there have been lots of upgrades, but being that it is a unique place — unique to the other museums. It's the only one.

Is she saying that these new funds to MacBride are acknowledged, on both parts, to assist in the \$5,000 tax situation? I'll move on to another question — if she could clarify that.

I was also wondering about the trails, because she did talk about signage as she responded. I had brought up previously the Silver Trail signage that is on the way from Dawson to Mayo from Stewart and approaching — that signage is in

quite disarray. Some parts have fallen down. I was hoping to hear that this had been addressed — seeing that we're right in the beginning of the throes of people travelling. Hopefully that has been taken care of for those travelling — that would increase the rubber-tire traffic on into Keno and Mayo and so on and so forth on the Silver Trail.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I just want to go back to MacBride Museum. To be very clear, I haven't discussed with MacBride Museum about any increases to taxation. That would be between MacBride Museum and the City of Whitehorse, and I respect that. However, what I am saying is that, over the past couple of years, the previous Minister of Tourism and Culture and I — and our department officials — have been working closely with MacBride Museum, as I mentioned, recognizing the unique circumstances the museum finds itself in because it's not owned by a municipality; it's not owned by a First Nation government; it's not owned by the Yukon government. It has specific challenges, because it's one of the few that's owned and operated by a non-profit society, so it is unique in that regard.

As a result, their funding has been adjusted. It used to receive \$100,000 on an annual basis through the Yukon museum assistance program funding for O&M. That funding is now increased to \$154,000 this year. Next year, there will be an additional 10-percent lift on that \$154,000. That is a significant funding increase, as you can appreciate. How MacBride Museum chooses to allocate those dollars, where it chooses to invest, is really up to MacBride Museum to do just that.

I did want to point out that, in addition to those ongoing funds, we're also making dollars available for not just MacBride Museum, but for all others through capital projects assistance in terms of ongoing programming or exhibits, capital upgrades and so forth. I just mentioned that, this week alone, we just announced well over \$120,000 in capital assistance for MacBride Museum alone — so significant dollars — but we very much appreciate all that MacBride does. To talk about the community support that MacBride has garnered is very significant indeed.

In terms of Silver Trail signage, I don't have too much information on that specific area, but what I can say is that, when I was in the department a number of years ago, we did actually come up with a new program and we were able to increase our dollars available to the interpretive signage. I think it was through the scenic drives program, at that time. We were able to bring up those dollars to about \$200,000 a year.

When you look at investments in signage, pullouts and interpretation education training, even to reflect the oncoming importance of multi-media projects through apps and video website projects, that total budget has actually increased even more to just shy of \$270,000 — so pretty significant.

In terms of specific areas, I do know that when I first came on board back in 2002, at the time there were a number of interpretive signage plans that had been prepared but, literally, there was not a lot of money that was allocated to those plans. I know that, through the department, we continue

to work on refreshing those various plans to be able to work with each of the communities in addressing some of those points that are in need in terms of improvements all the time.

I have some examples here: Taylor House panel, Arctic Circle panels, Yukon River panels and Top of the World Highway. When we look at the Top of the World Highway and at the Yukon River panels specifically, there are dollars allocated for repairs to the stairs and maintaining the trail, for which we partner with Department of Environment. Stewart River and the lookout on the north Klondike Highway — we are working to replace those outhouses. That is a significant investment unto itself with those newer, improved, concrete, accessible places. There are dollars allocated to the Arctic Circle kiosk on the Dempster Highway, the Hunker Creek road pullout, Champagne pullout and the Minto Bridge pullout. In terms of the Silver Trail rest stop, we have a maintenance contract with the Silver Trail association to do that. The Canol Road pullouts — there are landscaping dollars associated with that. Then it just goes on in terms of purchasing garbage cans, picnic tables and retrofitting those outhouses and basic rest-stop maintenance and so forth.

We also partner with a number of different institutions to be able to outreach in terms of Parks Day at Fort Selkirk. We have partnered with Yukon College and Selkirk First Nation on interpreter training, and the list goes on. As I said, we are also looking to launch a pretty exciting initiative on the app content management system as well. We are looking to launch some of the vignettes of our historic resources fund projects over the past 10 years. There is a lot going on in this particular shop.

With respect to Silver Trail signage, I will take that into consideration and pass that along. I know our officials have now heard that and we will very much appreciate all of the history on that particular area of the territory. There is a lot that we can do. I know that there is a very active Silver Trail Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Association as well. There are a lot of great partnerships being done. I know the member opposite raised, not long ago, the visitor kiosk at Stewart Crossing and how that is a fantastic improvement that has been made in collaboration with Victoria Gold and many other businesses and, like I said, the tourism and chambers of commerce in that area.

You know there is, quite clearly, an appetite for partnerships there and if we can work in collaboration and to be able to leverage those dollars — extend that marketing reach — we are all for that. Certainly we will take that to the department and get an update on the Silver Trail signage. I haven't received an update recently, but that is not to say that isn't top-of-mind for our officials as well.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for the response. I do know that when I was at the chamber meeting at Moose Creek just last month, it was something that they had requested the previous year — well, when you drive up there, you will see what it looks like — and they do need attention. They have been doing their part, as you say, so it is great that we can continue to do that. I do understand that we have signage

throughout the territory that needs constant repair and stuff. They have been waiting a couple of years.

As I am thinking about it, I do know also that, in my riding, the Tagish businesses that have been asking for the last couple of years to have the blue signs on the approach from the Alaska Highway from Teslin and Whitehorse way and in the Carcross area, those signs are also something that the local businesses have been waiting for. People stumble upon those businesses down there as I've heard. Just to know that there is a restaurant and marina and that kind of stuff if people turn left is only going to enhance the efforts of the local businesses, and people are certainly happy when they do stumble and they end up staying a couple of days. I know that is our goal — to have people stay a little longer in the Yukon on their way to Alaska or back through. I would just highlight that one area too that I am aware of and pass that along.

I will move on to repatriating Yukon heritage artifacts. As we know, Yukon has rich cultural resources. There have been reports in the media about Yukoners travelling south and finding valuable heritage and family artifacts. There was a story about a Yukon elder finding her mother's beautiful beaded purse at the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa. From the report, repatriation cases — Yukon and beyond — to consider with the digital launch of Searching for Our Heritage by Daich Heritage Consulting Services, I will say that Searching for Our Heritage is a long-standing project initiated and supported by Yukon government, Museums unit. There are further supports through repatriation goals of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* by identifying where artifacts of Yukon cultural patrimony are located. To date, the researchers have identified over 6,000 artifacts in 170 institutions worldwide. As the minister would appreciate, this is a very important project as part of our efforts to reconcile our colonial past, to repatriate Yukon heritage and to increase the collection of valuable artifacts for our museums.

Can the minister provide an update on the Searching for Our Heritage project? How much funding is committed to this project on an annual basis?

I do know in speaking with the elders in Carcross — and wherever I go in the territory, the elders bring this up on a regular basis — so many things went missing through residential schools and so on and so forth, and are hanging in churches and in museums. They would like to see these actual family heirlooms come home.

If the minister could give an update as to how the Searching for Our Heritage project is going and how much funding is committed on an annual basis.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for his question.

Searching for Our Heritage, as the member opposite would be familiar or may not be familiar — there has been a lot of work over probably the past 20 years-plus in terms of really working to expand that database. As our officials just reminded me, how we do that is we work almost on a daily basis with some 140-plus museums from around the world in terms of actively looking to see what potential artifacts there may be that could actually be from here and belong here.

There has been that long-standing relationship with those institutions and it has really worked to build that database over the years. I don't have the specific document — I did once upon a time — so I don't really want to speak out of turn in terms of how many artifacts are actually documented within that database.

Through the land claims implementation funding allocated, we have been able to permanently secure ongoing dollars for that particular project — Searching for Our Heritage project — it's \$60,000 to situate artifacts housed in institutions around the world that originated in the Yukon, as I mentioned.

In fact, I just have this information note and it states that we have over 6,000 artifacts and photographs in more than 80 institutions. They've been identified. They have also been shared with various First Nations around the territory. It continues to be updated, as you can appreciate, on an ongoing regular basis, enabling First Nations across the Yukon to share information, to better understand, to discover, to repatriate, and to locate those artifacts, just building upon that traditional information associated through that knowledgebase and the knowledge base of those other institutions.

It's a pretty important initiative, as the member opposite fully appreciates as well, and it makes it all the more important to be able to work with First Nation governments on developing their cultural centres. I recently had the opportunity to tour through Da Ku, Our House, through the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, with my colleague, the MLA for Kluane, in Haines Junction. We took a couple of hours to tour that facility at great length. It's about the only institution that I understand — outside of the Yukon Arts Centre — that has that ability, that certain category, to be able to house those artifacts in a controlled-climate condition. I'm not sure what it is — category A, so to speak. There certainly is potential there in capacity to be able to repatriate some of those artifacts back to those individual First Nations, as is deemed appropriate between the two institutions.

I know that, in addition to the \$60,000, that's just for, as I understand, the actual database itself, the project itself, but we also have our own cultural heritage training coordinator. That has been permanently allocated through land claims funding, so now it will be rolled over year after year. That specific position works with specific First Nation governments, organizations, cultural centres, museums and individuals to help facilitate and develop that overall framework for training and skill development in that heritage sector pertaining to Yukon First Nations.

We also have dollars allocated for ongoing management planning for Lansing Post and the Conrad historic sites, again to develop heritage management plans for both of those historic sites, including hiring of an historic sites planner. There's a lot going on in terms of being able to build capacity and expand that work being undertaken by Yukon First Nations and their heritage departments.

In addition to the human resources and the actual project itself, under the leadership of our officials, I know they have hosted a couple of recent workshops and have distributed

some contracts to the heritage community to be able to facilitate those workshops for cultural centres, for example, and have been hugely successful, I understand. I heard great feedback from the First Nation representatives, as well as from the department itself.

It's great to be able to take two or three days at a time to be able to go over best practices in terms of conservation and that curatorial assistance, and being able to build capacity on revenue generation and so forth. That all fits part and parcel in this particular realm — as what the member opposite has asked about. Hopefully that helps to address the member opposite's question.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her response. I do know that at other times when we brought up some of the First Nation concerns over the — I guess you would say the “wrongs”, whether it is intentional or unintentional, it has caused unrest and uneasiness — not a good feeling, especially when you listen to the elders who keep hoping and wishing that these things would get things get resolved. I know the minister is sympathetic to that. I have sat with her in this House when we have discussed other things, and I can only hope that we continue to put a concentrated effort in however we can expedite any of these kinds of things. It really is about reconciliation, healing the hurts of the past and being able to put some minds at rest, especially those who do not have much more time here. It is important that things come home to rest where they can be and where they should be with families, even if it is in a place where it can be looked at by members coming to see but, more importantly, that it is in the homeland territories — whether it is a purse or a beaded jacket or whatever. I know it is important.

When I go to Teslin or wherever I go and I see — as we call them, “artifacts” — it is somebody's personal stuff that would normally have been handed down in the family. It was taken — or however it was not here — it's just more comforting that it is back where it originated. I am happy that we are moving in that direction. I do know that we need a lot more work and effort.

The fact that we do have a category A in Haines Junction to house some of those things — I'm aware that there is a lot of palaeontology that is in drawers that really no one can see unless you are a minister or official. A number of those, by speaking with some of the elders, come from the Carcross area, for example. I know that is the dream with the learning centres to — in the first phase, to have second and third stages that will allow some of these things to actually be in place on the traditional territory and at home. We can just keep working in that direction.

One of the things that kind of goes hand in hand with repatriating is keeping what we do have intact. I would like to bring up the Yukon Archives vault at this time because it has been an ongoing effort.

At the time of the Yukon Archives' 40th anniversary in May, 2012, the minister announced funding for vault planning and design and a commitment of \$2.6 million for construction to begin in the 2013-14 fiscal year. I know the Yukon government did not meet those targets, whether they were

caused in part by confusion over the vision of the project, or which department had the mandate to plan it. Regardless of what had happened, I would like to know what stage we are at. Is there an architectural plan? I know we had some briefing in the Tourism briefing, but some of that information has escaped me and I want to confirm some of the stuff I have, just to be clear on where we are there.

How much has been spent on the Yukon Archives project to date? What's the total projected cost of the project? Will the plan reflect what the archivists have said is required to preserve our abundant collection? Is the Yukon Archives space full? I actually just remembered that it's not at full capacity, as I remember from the briefing, but it is of concern.

Do we have a pre-plan if we're not finished — where other heritage resources would be stored if we do come to full capacity?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: As I've referenced, the Yukon Archives facility is nearing capacity. That is true. It was built in 1990 so, as one can appreciate, there's a lot being stored in that particular area. It was designed with a certain growth horizon. I know that Yukon Archives has been carefully monitoring the situation, and they've been taking a lot of different steps in order to extend the life a number of years beyond what was originally planned.

I know that Yukon Archives is currently maintaining their available space through strategic processing of archival material and improving the organization of allocated space, but we also know that there's an ongoing collections mandate, as mandated under the act itself. We also know that there has and will be a continued demand for storage — that's inevitable. We know that right now.

We know that planning in the works, expansion of the facility — will include increased storage for those paper records. It needs to have a separate cold-storage environment for photographs and films, and a special area for digital records as well. Those we do know are necessary components to be able to sustain its legislated mandate.

We're very much committed to ensuring that Yukon Archives continues to do its job to preserve Yukon's rich documentary heritage. We recognize it's nearing capacity and we're currently working on a design for the expansion of the vault — again, that is both cost-effective, but meets the mandate of the *Archives Act*.

That work is currently underway, and within this budget that we are debating, we have allocated about \$629,000 in support of planning and design of the vault expansion. Ultimately we want to go out for tender on that for construction and to see that “up and at ‘er”.

Once we are able to finalize that final design, then we will be able to go out for tender at a later time. For now, I know that work is underway and we, of course, are working pretty closely with Highways and Public Works. They are the lead in helping with the design, the planning and the actual construction of that eventually. We know that we need to go to construction on that final design when it is finalized, and that will likely take place within the next 12 months. That work is currently underway, but I know it hasn't been

finalized at this particular time. It is underway and that is what that \$629,000 is in support of — the planning and the design of the actual construction of the facility.

Ms. White: In 2013, I was able to kind of learn quite a bit about archives and I just have some follow-up questions to what my colleague has just asked. In the 2012 press release, it said that the Yukon government has committed \$291,000 in the 2012-13 budget for planning and designing a vault expansion project, and that construction was expected to begin in 2013-14 at a cost of approximately \$2.6 million. In 2012, was the study complete and the plan complete, as to what that vault was going to look like? I am just trying to figure out — because this year we had \$629,000 budgeted and last year there was \$829,000 budgeted. So can the minister tell me what happened in 2012 to help me understand where we are at now, in 2015?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I don't have the specific details at my fingertips, and perhaps it would even be better to refer it to Highways and Public Works for more detail on that technical aspect of the project itself. I do know, as I was just reminded, that there has been a lot of due diligence done in terms of investigating various options for the vault. I know that at one time there was even consideration being lent to adding different components to that vault, in terms of looking to house heritage resources, to other different areas.

At the end of the day, the decision has been made. We need an expansion of the vault and so, basically through various technical aspects and looking at what is required to move this project forward, I think that we are getting closer to a schematic than ever before, obviously.

The \$629,000, as I seem to recall and as I understand is almost — well, it was part of the initial \$800,000-plus as the member opposite referenced last year, I believe it was. Obviously not all of that was spent so the \$629,000 is literally being revoted to incorporate that finalization of the planning and to actually go forward with the finalized design. Hopefully some of those dollars can also be used toward the construction of the facility as well. That would be fantastic as well. I do understand that we are pretty near to realizing a finalized schematic.

Ms. White: In the press release in 2012, it talked about an approximate cost of \$2.6 million. Knowing that we put that plan aside and that we've re-studied it now — I mean between last year's budget and the amount that was spent and then the budget amount this year to the tune of nearly another \$1 million, does the minister have an idea of what kind of financial ballpark that vault expansion will be? What is the Management Board expectation or hope for how much that will be? How much does the minister expect that this might cost?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I'm always hesitant to quote a dollar figure, especially when it hasn't gone to Management Board, in terms of the finalized schematic and the design itself. To put a dollar figure on what this is going to cost — the allocated budget — that hasn't been determined.

Obviously as we hone in on this specific project in terms of expanding the vault itself, and not looking to other

components, I think that we have a much better understanding and that is really part of the due diligence as of Highways and Public Works and Tourism and Culture over the past year and a half, as I understand it — a couple years in terms of what is required to move this project forward. So again, as we're able to finalize that design and bring that forward to Management Board for consideration, we'll be able to better allocate that budget and be able to reflect that in an upcoming budget.

Ms. White: In 2012, when that initial study and that initial plan were done — does the minister know what the cost of that original plan for the original vault replacement was going to be? Is that documented anywhere and would she be willing to share that number with us?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I don't have that information at my fingertips. As I understand it, they were estimates at that time so I don't. Perhaps Highways and Public Works has that.

Ms. White: Would the minister share those estimates with the opposition?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Again, Madam Chair, I'm kind of hesitant. I haven't actually seen those estimates myself, so I can take a look at that, but I try not to get into the habit of sharing estimates. We're really focused on trying to finalize the schematic design and being able to put the figure, in terms of where we're going from here, in terms of trying to allocate a reasonable amount of money that reflects the actual project and what is really required to move this project forward.

I know, as I mentioned, there has been a lot of work done in the past couple of years on this file, and there have been various variations. As I understand, this project was first anticipated, then it has added different elements and it has taken different elements away. Those are all various options that have been considered.

For all intents and purposes, the \$629,000 that is allocated in this year's budget is for the vault expansion itself. As to what that looks like, I don't have that, because that work hasn't been finalized, but we anticipate that work will be finalized this year, and then we'll have a better understanding of the dollars to be allocated to that.

I do know, though, that it will likely be more than what the member opposite had referenced, which I'm just trying to look up myself.

Ms. White: The number that I referenced in the press release was \$2.6 million. The reason why I was asking about the cost estimate is that, when the press release came out in May and the tone and the intent of the press release said that it was going to happen, I believe the archivists were pretty much under the impression they had been working for quite a while with the design team to make sure that the vault expansion was going to take into account the many avenues that Yukon Archives covers and protects.

If people haven't had a chance to go, Archives is a fascinating place to visit. They're happy to do tours and they can, with a little pre-emptive information, they can find you all sorts of really neat documents to look at. Yukon Archives is unreal because you essentially walk through paths of history. It's a super fascinating area.

The reason why I was asking about the cost estimates is because, in 2012, with the approximate cost of \$2.6 million, it talked about how it was going to be constructed. The reason I'm asking is, that was 2012, and I have questions — and I could go over it, if the minister wants to know more about the numbers of documents we were talking about in 2013 — but one of my concerns is that, in 2012, we were reaching capacity. The minister herself has just mentioned that we're getting closer and closer to that.

I can understand that the minister is not comfortable talking about hopeful costs or projected costs, and I understand and appreciate that. Does the minister have a hopeful timeline as to when we might expect the vault expansion to happen?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Again, I'm trying to convey an accurate projection but, as I mentioned, the dollars that are allocated in this year's budget are to be able to finalize the schematic design at that time. We anticipate that will happen this year in 2015, and then we'll be able to work in 2015, and then we will be able to work — again, Highways and Public Works is the lead on this project — to come up with tender-ready documents to be able to go out to construction.

I would anticipate that this would be going out to construction early next year so that you can take advantage of a whole construction year. Whether or not it would be complete next year, I haven't seen the final schematics so I don't know entirely what those timelines are, but the intent is to go to construction early next year.

Ms. White: One of my questions goes to the fact that, understanding that we are getting closer to capacity, understanding that — I think it's an approximate and that it would change every year — the approximate guess of the number of boxes transferred to Yukon Archives per year was 500 — so 1,500 in three years — we would have already hit that from 2012. We would be going into that 1,500 or so boxes right about now. What does the minister expect will happen to the existing paper records, the ones that we are receiving? At one point in time, the previous minister talked about how we would look for space in other offices. As the minister stated earlier, archives are really specific. It is about temperature and humidity control. What does the minister expect will happen with current and future paper documents? What does she expect will happen with current and future digital records as we wait for construction?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: As I understand it, when it comes to the digital collection itself, it's not an issue unto itself, but when it comes to the actual paper, that is the compelling argument. As I understand it, by next year — probably mid-year next year — we will probably be in need of that space. They will be housed at the records centre until that building is opened. There has been great work by the staff. They have been working very diligently in terms of moving this — in terms of accommodating and being able to facilitate all the growth in records over the years. Nothing is going to be placed in jeopardy, but obviously there is a timeline associated with getting that building up and going. That is what we are working on, anticipating that we will be going out to

construction early next year. As to whether or not that is going to be open next year, one can be hopeful, but I haven't actually seen the finalized design, so I don't want to speak out of turn.

Ms. White: I just have one follow-up question on that. In late 2012 and 2013, when I was learning about archives because I thought it was interesting and I wanted to, I learned more about the records centre, which I believe is actually under the auspices of Highways and Public Works. I know that there was concern at one point that the records centre was actually filling up quite quickly as well. We know that is where documents go, either before they are destroyed or they are transferred to Yukon Archives. Is there enough space up there currently to store all of these new records that are coming in, or old records as they wait to be transferred?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Yes is our understanding.

Mr. Barr: I am just going to veer off before I come back with some other questions.

It was going back to the TIAY gathering in Dawson City, where I had heard for the first time that, with Yukon Now funding, there had actually been billboards been put up in various cities — in Toronto and Calgary. I am not sure of the other ones, but — correct me if I am wrong — I had also understood that there wasn't one put in Ottawa. It had come to the attention — given that Air North has a direct flight, with one stop in Yellowknife now — that people were wondering if that had been just missed or, since then, has the Department of Tourism and Culture, given that we do have a flight from Ottawa, included some billboards and signage in Ottawa now to attract domestic tourism?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I want to thank the member opposite for raising Yukon Now investments. We are really excited about this new investment in tourism marketing over two years in partnership with the Government of Canada — \$1.8 million of CanNor funding over two years, matched by an equal \$1.8 million in funding through Yukon government, Tourism and Culture department. It is really focused on building awareness of Yukon as a travel destination in our markets, specifically Canada but also, to a degree, some select overseas markets as well. To be clear, about 80 percent is targeted at the Canadian market. We have seen tremendous growth in the Canadian market and we owe that in large part to increased air access that Yukon has been experiencing over the years.

Air access — of course, one only has to take a look at Air North, Yukon's airline and to be able to see the new markets — Ottawa and Yellowknife — to be sure. I can't say enough about all that Air North has done to be able to open up those couple of markets. In terms of sharing events and festivals — and we were just talking about even the linkages between Sourdough Rendezvous and the Snowking Winter Festival in Yellowknife and Winterlude in Ottawa, and how the three are very closely tied within a three-month window and how we can better forge alliances and work.

Recently we went to the Frozen Globe awards and celebrated. We had well over 50 representatives from different Yukon businesses that literally cleaned house at the Frozen

Globe awards. They did their part in terms of top marketing award, in terms of just doing their part in terms of showing innovation across the pan-north spectrum. It was amazing. We stopped into Yellowknife — it was a charter flight on Air North. We stopped in Yellowknife and picked up another 20-plus individuals. It was a great opportunity for us to be able to collaborate and be able to share and recognize some new opportunities, whether it was one of our First Nation development corporations that were represented on board the flight, inclusive of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation, for example, or whether it was an individual business or it was an actual attraction. There were tremendous opportunities.

Through Air North, we have been able to — I've met a few times with them over the past few months in my new role as Minister of Tourism and Culture. We're really trying to work even more cohesively to take advantage of the relatively low Canadian dollar, to be able to take advantage of the lower fuel prices as well, and the enhanced marketing that we're doing through Yukon Now, and to be able to leverage that reach.

So we are working on being more present in those markets, especially those gateway cities that Air North flies to, whether it be Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Yellowknife and, of course, Kelowna — tremendous opportunities, not just during the summer, but year-round.

I do know that Yukon Now — we just launched the first television commercial. It's the first of six to come out over the next year and some, based on summer and winter. Of course we're really focused on winter. We did our first winter commercial. The next one we'll be coming out with will be a winter commercial, to be launched next fall. We'll be shooting and we've been collaborating with organizations through, for example, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, SPYA Film Society and their works, Tourism Industry Association of Yukon and many others, and community visits as well, to obtain more feedback, in terms of how we can really accentuate those key pillars of First Nation history, heritage, wildlife and so forth.

That work is currently underway. There will be a tremendous amount of work to be done and we're really excited. The thing about this campaign is it is a very integrated campaign. It's not just television commercials but, as the member opposite alluded to, it's billboards as well. It's print media; it's digital advertising. The other two components of course — the digital storytelling component of Yukon Now where we had a number of successful webisodes produced by local producers — and they did a great job and we're looking to do more actually of that as we continue this campaign.

Likewise, the Yukon-generated content as well from Yukoners — we're seeing increased uptake from images and video taken by Yukoners as seen through Yukoners — why they've chosen Yukon as their home to raise a family, to invest and to be able to share all the fantastic attributes associated with Yukon and all that we have to offer as a travel destination. That is underway.

With regard to specifics as to where specific billboards are set in place, I do know that that feedback was taken back. I

do know that there were representatives of our agency of record. They were present — Outside the Cube. I do know that we'll continue to work in collaboration with Air North and the Tourism Industry Association to go over the results of that first commercial and the first round of investments that have been made recently, and we'll continue to tweak. Maybe we didn't get as much play on that specific network. We had over 24 networks, so just like the billboard, maybe we'll change up instead of Toronto.

I do know that Toronto was deemed as a very key target market for specific areas. Again, I'm not a marketing guru. I'm not an expert. That's why we have a Department of Tourism and Culture that has a marketing department who are currently actually at Rendez-vous Canada in Niagara Falls and couldn't actually be here with us today. But I do know that point was raised and it's being talked about because there will be more billboards and there will be new ideas and more ways.

At the end of the day, though, it is working and we're seeing an increase in traffic coming to the Yukon. I know that the statistics of visitors coming to the Yukon, year to date, from January I think to the end of April, were up about four percent. I think we had estimated about a two-percent growth over last year to this year, so we still have a long way to go, but we do know that the initial results of that campaign are really good.

I know that the commercial was played some 500 times in February on 24 channels and of course we'll continue to monitor that. But I do know that even the traffic to our website, travelyukon.com, more than doubled. In fact, just when one looks at the previous February to this February — so comparing apples to apples — the commercial was viewed on YouTube over 60,000 in the initial six weeks, so it is paying dividends. We also know that there has been uptake from some of our tourism operators as well based on increases in those winter bookings, with a lot of clients crediting that commercial for their decision to come see the Yukon for themselves as well.

So far, so good — but as you can appreciate, I pay a great credit to the team over at Tourism and Culture working with industry, working with our operators and working in collaboration with our agency of record to be creative, unique and strategic because we are not the only ones who are investing in tourism marketing. It is a very competitive environment and we need to continue to be very unique, and I think we are. We have a great product — winter, summer — all four seasons — and we are seeing that in terms of our visitation. Just the uptake in the winter visitation is very encouraging.

We are also looking to the Asian markets. I just saw a tweet from our Minister of Industry. He is in Niagara Falls with the rest of the tourism sector from Canada. He just tweeted — five years since the approved destination status for China, and how that has seen about a 30-percent increase in growth in the Chinese markets. Here, in the Yukon, we have seen just that. In fact, I think we have seen more growth than that in the Chinese market. I think from 2013 to 2014, the

number of Chinese travellers was relatively small, but it more than doubled in that one year alone. Some of the investments of Yukon Now — we were able to take that Tourism and Culture trade mission to Asia, including China and Japan, and there is significant potential and incredible opportunities overseas in terms of how we can grow that market. We know that the overseas markets are really key in terms of high-yield spending and revenue and being able to help drive the winter markets as well.

Just getting back to those investments, we are really quite relatively pleased with the outcomes so far, and we will continue. We need to work with our operators; we need to continue to work with all of the business sectors to take advantage and to ensure that we have the capacity on the ground to accommodate increased growth and demand for attractions as well as services and actual product on the ground. I am very proud of the work that has been done to date. We will continue to learn and continue to develop capacity in-house among all sectors in this regard.

It is an exciting time for Tourism and Culture. I know that industry feels the same way. I am just looking forward to the launch of the next commercial and looking forward to continuing our increased investments across the board. That doesn't even include all of the other investments being made with our two sister territories. That is also very key in terms of Air North.

I do know that we have been working on a new agreement through CanNor on the pan-north marketing front. The member opposite will recall that, back in 2007, we launched the Look Up North marketing campaign at that time. It was the first time we had been in television commercials on a pan-northern basis. It was very popular, and it carried on into 2010 and so forth.

We are continuing on with that relationship and looking to secure those dollars through the federal government for an additional couple of years to expand that campaign as well. The more we can put the north out there — I have always said that what's good for Northwest Territories and Nunavut is good for us too. At the end of the day we are all unique and very distinct jurisdictions. Canada's north comprises a lot to offer for any traveller.

Mr. Barr: I would like to thank the minister for her response. I do know that working with our partners in the north, whether it is N.W.T. or Nunavut or Alaska — they come through us to get there and they have to come back. I know that there is interest in our partners in the north, from the last TIAY conference — how can we better work with each other so that we can capitalize on the going back and forth from our sister territories or the State of Alaska.

It is good to hear that we are doing that. I think it is a great thing that the monies for Yukon Now did come to fruition. I am aware that there had been an ask of \$5 million and I would hope that, seeing the success that we are having with the \$3.6 million to invest in that, we would look to the future — not only increasing that with the understanding that capacity falls in line with that — and to work with our operators into developing the attractions necessary that will be

able to be filled, which we are seeing is possible with these added marketing dollars — that we increase that and that we look beyond these first couple of years to really put Tourism and Culture in the economic seat that it deserves and that we know it can fulfill as an economic thrust to the Yukon.

In thinking about that, also knowing that wildlife viewing — I had mentioned it and I know it was brought up previously — but the numbers alone that are possible, knowing that we would have to build that capacity, and that is why I have been asking for that study and strategy in moving in that direction. That would involve land use planning and so on and so forth. The numbers are kind of staggering, if available — keeping that in mind.

When I think about gateways to the north, as the minister alluded to — I come from a place that is called Gateway to the North — in North Bay. We had rock pillars and people actually had to drive through this — I forget what you call them. But it was part of the marketing strategy there and there was quite a tourism place just to get there and then move on from there.

It brings me to Watson Lake. It is ideally situated as the gateway to the Yukon on the Alaska Highway, coming on the Alaska Highway — not 37 — and knowing that, in 2011, the town commissioned a strategic plan for revitalization of the Watson Lake economy and identified a number of improvements that could help draw tourists. They were looking for a partner in the Yukon government for several years, and some of these endeavours included trail and park signage that could also direct tourists to other attractions such as the Sign Post Forest, Jayden's park, the Northern Lights Centre, Wye Lake and the golf course. I understand that this city is trying to seek funding. People love to golf and they want to see the golf course succeed. I know that's on the mind of the city. Also the historical lend-lease display at the airport — and the Watson Lake region has a unique centre in the Albert Creek bird-banding station.

When I think of wildlife viewing — and when I just say Albert Creek banding station, I know that we have these wonderful festivals here in the Yukon. The Minister of Environment spoke to them and the Minister of Tourism and Culture — Swan Haven, the cranes in Faro, grizzly bear on the various highways, such as in the Southern Lakes, and moose and caribou opportunities. There are people throughout the territory who don't tell you much, but they live in the bush and the moose come in winter in their yards for the winter. These are the kinds of things in wildlife viewing that could be harnessed and people are willing to look at and grow.

My point, before I continue on with the Watson Lake, is that part of that strategy went to marketing to birders, marketing to people who travel to do this throughout — when we're visiting China or one of those other markets that is very highly interested in wildlife viewing, to look into that and let them know that we do have an abundance of opportunity there.

Going back to Watson Lake, the Watson Lake region, as I was saying, it has a unique centre in the Albert Creek banding station. As I understand it, this could be far better utilized to

keep tourists in town another day. Improvements to the road, an RV turnaround, picnic tables and interpretative signs and materials would dramatically improve its ability to retain tourists in the area. This would also help the off-season hotel and restaurant business — the long-term need for a museum in Watson Lake, as it's one of the few communities in the Yukon without a museum.

Even Burwash and Keno have museums and they do attract people as we know. As we're looking forward with our museums' budgets, if there was anything possible — whether it was themes of historical, geology or natural history, the flora and fauna, First Nation culture — for example, the Kaska — these are all part and parcel of what could be things that would just have people delay a little bit longer and stay in the Yukon a little bit longer.

I would like to ask: Is there a tourism plan for Watson Lake? Does the Yukon government plan on investing in any of the areas I've identified, or in the people of Watson Lake, through their strategic plan? Is there any planning for a museum for Watson Lake on the horizon?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for his question. He has talked about Watson Lake and, in fact, Watson Lake has been coined as one of the gateways to the Yukon. Having been born and raised in the Town of Watson Lake, I'm pretty familiar with the area. Talk about "staycations" — with my 10-year-old son now spending a lot more time in Watson Lake due to family residing in Watson Lake and really reconnecting with that community through the eyes of my son. It is fantastic.

I am so appreciative of all there is available in Watson Lake. On my last trip to Watson Lake, I stopped in at Teslin, for example. Teslin Lake — Teslin, in its entirety, is a beautiful place with many great businesses and many great attractions, but the natural beauty of Teslin Lake is astounding. Again, being able to visit these communities and to be able to rediscover your home through the eyes of another individual is great. It just makes me, like I said, reconnect and be so much more appreciative of Yukon and how blessed we are with all the various assets we have built and the natural ones as well.

In Watson Lake, the member opposite referenced that there are a number of various attractions. The bird-banding station at Albert Creek is but one of them. I know the visitor information centre is a great advocate of that particular facility. The individuals who volunteer their time do a great job. Having been to McIntyre Creek a couple of times with my son, and being able to go on those walks and to be able to see those birds and to see them being banded, and then having the opportunity to have your son or your child release that bird before your eyes, after having documented and talked about it — it is an attraction unto itself. Nowhere else in the country can I think of being able to capitalize on those opportunities.

I do know that, through the Department of Environment, they work pretty closely with the Department of Tourism and Culture on building on the strategy that came into play back in 2007 for developing and promoting those viewing opportunities. In fact, I think in 2013 they came out with a

great document in terms of identifying the objectives and the strategic actions.

A lot of that is really engaging with our information centre staff and training on local wildlife viewing opportunities, taking coordinated approaches with the respective departments. There is a lot of work underway in that regard. Of course, bird banding stations are a very important component of all of that. When I think of the visitor information centre itself and that being an attraction unto itself in Watson Lake, the staff there are incredible in terms of having that longevity of expertise and their knowledge of the local community. The history and the heritage that go alongside that are invaluable. The interpretive centre that they have at the visitor information centre is based on the Alaska Highway. The construction of the highway was so instrumental in opening up that community for various reasons. The air access — that project in itself led to having a great presence of the U.S. Air Force and having a great presence of the Royal Canadian Armed Forces as well. All of the documented information — the history of that — we talked about the B.C./Watson Lake hangar and the tremendous asset that it is as well. In fact, last time I was back in Watson Lake, we took a trip out to the airport and took a great tour through the Watson Lake Airport. It is another attraction unto itself.

With all the photographs that have been documented and exhibited at the airport, it continues to be a very busy place in terms of attracting aviation enthusiasts to come to that area. I know that is a great merit to the Watson Lake Historical Society, which was just recently formed. I had the opportunity to meet with them back in January, about a week after having assumed that post of Minister of Tourism and Culture. With you, Madam Chair — we sat down Sunday morning. I think it was about 8:00 in the morning — a very enthusiastic bunch. We talked about their vision and talked about a number of various initiatives and items we would like to proceed with.

I'm really thankful, and I want to put a big plug out to the Watson Lake Historical Society, because they have done some great work. They actually secured a space in the Watson Lake Airport and now have dedicated office space that has been donated to them. I think that's fantastic, so thanks to the Watson Lake Airport for securing that space. Now they have a dedicated working area to be able to work outside of that.

In terms of being able to articulate their vision, we've talked about having a travelling exhibit. We've even had the suggestion of working with the Yukon Transportation Museum. I've had chats with them as well about collaborating and utilizing those resources in terms of interpreting some of the history just at the airport itself. It's very timely with the 75th anniversary of the Alaska Highway coming up in 2017.

That's a whole different topic of interest, but there is a society that has been formed and is working closely with our senator from Yukon and working closely with many of our departments throughout the Government of Yukon in terms of being able to designate that particular highway as a historic site. I shouldn't say just the highway, but the corridor itself and all that comprises. The Watson Lake Airport is one of

them. Watson Lake has tremendous attributes already at their fingertips. They are doing a great job in terms of promoting those opportunities and events. I know that, for example, the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce is going to be hosting their annual spring fling. It is a great event that continues to grow with more artists and more businesses coming to the table to showcase all that they have in terms of their products and being able to have an auction as well. It is another fundraiser for the Chamber of Commerce. They continue to reach out on many different levels, whether it is through the Chamber of Commerce or through the Watson Lake Historical Society, in terms of trail networks — and I can speak at great length in terms of when I look at Lucky Lake recreation area and Jayden's park. I have been on those trails many times. Little did I know until I was of a later age — but the amazing trail networks in terms of being available for cross-country skiing and running — it's quite a network of miles and miles and miles.

Having the Watson Lake downhill ski hill — another fantastic facility — and the chalet — I'm a little partial, because my father had built that chalet, but it is a stunning piece of infrastructure in that community, available for use year-round in terms of hosting summer events, weddings, different parties. It's great.

The golf course is another fantastic area that encourages visitors to stay longer and be able to say that they golfed north of 60 at midnight. It's part of a series of golf courses throughout the territory. The Northern Lights Centre is one of our family members of the museums family. The Northern Lights Centre is actually one of those four that we had brought on when we assumed office. They weren't part of the family of nine — I think it was at that time — so we added four, including the Northern Lights Centre.

They are now receiving — it's probably well over \$40,000 right now per year in funding from the Yukon government. The municipality owns that facility, so they're doing a part as well. They've hosted some great events over the years and they have been able to garner some national attraction through astronauts, through Marc Garneau and so forth.

I could talk at great length about all that there is available in Watson Lake. I would be very remiss if I didn't mention about the Sign Post Forest, of course. It's a key attraction and it was designated as one of our Yukon historic sites just recently, back in 2013. There was a huge, great designation celebration that was held last spring and it attracted a wide cross-section of the community — and again, great community pride. The Sign Post Forest has grown from a handful — I think there were less than 10,000 when I had grown up — to now I think it's probably pushing 100,000 signs. It is incredible and it just doesn't stop there. So a lot of stolen property — I shouldn't say it's stolen property. There is just a lot of property represented in the Sign Post Forest.

In terms of working with our communities, I look to a community like the Village of Haines Junction, for example. The village mayor and council have taken great pride in terms of being able to reach out to the Yukon government. I know

that there have been a couple workshops hosted by Tourism and Culture as well as Economic Development in recent years. In terms of working with us — and not just in Haines Junction, but all the stakeholders along the north Alaska Highway — to facilitate those discussions on ways to grow visitation to the area. That is something that we open up and make available to every single community as well.

I know that the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture and I will be looking forward to going into many of our communities this summer and into the year ahead, in terms of reiterating all of the expertise available and the willingness to work with those communities to come up with a tourism-related plan, or a broader economic plan, as Haines Junction has chosen, and to help facilitate those discussions in the community and to hear directly as to how far, how wide and where we can be a best fit in terms of assistance.

There are tremendous opportunities, obviously. I know that Haines Junction has really seen fit to put a concerted emphasis on the trail networks in the area. I've had follow-up discussions with the Mayor of Haines Junction on a couple of occasions. I have been out there a number of times — three or four times in the past couple of months — and continue to extend that offer.

We don't want to force that. We want the community to come up with that grassroots —

Chair: Order please.

Termination of Sitting as per Standing Order 76(1)

Chair: The time has reached 5:00 p.m. on this, the 31st sitting day of the 2015 Spring 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. 16 and Bill No. 18, the only government bills now before Committee of the Whole, should be called.

Mr. Elias: Madam Chair, the government directs that Bill No. 16 and Bill No. 18 be called at this time.

Bill No. 16: Third Appropriation Act, 2014-15 — continued

Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 16, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2014-15*. The Chair will now recognize Mr. Pasloski, as the sponsor of Bill No. 16, 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. 16, entitled *Third 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. 16, entitled *Third 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 \$9,125,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$42,683,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$33,558,000 agreed to

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to

Schedules A, B and C agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 16, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 16, entitled *Third 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

Bill No. 18: First Appropriation Act, 2015-16 — continued

Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*. The Chair will now recognize Mr. Pasloski as the sponsor of Bill No. 18 for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Madam Chair, I move that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, 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. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, 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 \$1,054,291,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$312,779,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,367,070,000 agreed to

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to

Schedules A, B and C agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, 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 Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 16, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, and directed me to report it without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, and directed me to report it without amendment.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Chair of 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. 16 and Bill No. 18, the only government bills now standing at third reading, should be called.

Mr. Elias: Mr. Speaker, the government directs that Bill No. 16 and Bill No. 18 be called for third reading at this time.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 16: *Third Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 16, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 16, entitled *Third 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. 16, entitled *Third 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.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: 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 yea, 7 nay.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 16 agreed to

Speaker: I declare the motion carried and that Bill No. 16 has passed this House.

Bill No. 18: *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 18, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 18, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, 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.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: 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 yea, 7 nay.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to

Speaker: I declare the motion carried and that Bill No. 18 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 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: *Third Appropriation Act, 2014-15; First Appropriation Act, 2015-16.*

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

Before I leave the House today, I have a couple of things I would like to say. First of all, I want to ask all of you here in the House to join with me in thanking Captain Carol Winter. Captain Carol Winter is with me today, my aide-de-camp. She has been with us since 2012. Carol has been posted to Comox and will be leaving the Yukon possibly this summer. She did

receive the Commissioner's Commendation at the Levee this year, and I want to thank Carol who, no matter when we call, comes on a volunteer basis and serves the Office of the Commissioner of the Yukon.

Carol, on behalf of me and all Yukoners, thank you so much for your service to our office.

Applause

Commissioner: Now I get to do my advertising. Actually, June 13 is the Yukon's birthday — the 117th birthday of the Yukon Territory — and the Commissioner's Ball again this year is in Dawson City. If you can make the Commissioner's Ball, that would be wonderful. Most of the tickets are sold, I'm happy to say, but it's going to be a great evening with the regular festivities of the tea in the afternoon and the ball in the evening, with Hank Carr and the Canucks providing the music. It's going to be a great evening of entertainment. I look forward hopefully to seeing some of you there.

The next event is a fairly significant event for the Commissioner's Office, and that is opening our new office in the historic Taylor House. That will take place on July 6 at 2:00 p.m. in the afternoon. His Excellency David Johnston has agreed to open the Taylor House at 2:00, so the Governor General will be there to open the house with the Premier and me. I am looking forward to the opening. We are going to have an open house there for a couple of hours so people can actually walk through the office at the house and have a look at it. All of the MLAs will be receiving a personal invitation for that event, and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

This is going to be the first time, I think, since Dawson City that the Office of the Commissioner has had a permanent home. I think it is a significant event in the territory and hopefully it will be the permanent home of the Commissioner from here on in. I look forward to seeing many of you there. Thank you very much.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I now will call the House to order.

I would like to thank, on behalf of all the members of the House, the staff of Hansard, our pages, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the staff of all the caucuses and the Legislature staff for their great work in helping to make this a great success. It is not their fault; I think we are to blame. To all of you, my colleagues and friends: a safe and enjoyable summer.

As the House has reached the maximum number of days permitted for the 2015 Spring Sitting, as established pursuant to Standing Order 75, and 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 5:17 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled May 28, 2015:

33-1-169

Yukon Education Annual Report — 2014 (Graham)