



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 239

1st Session

33rd Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, November 26, 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

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME CONSTITUENCY PORTFOLIO

Hon. Darrell Pasloski	Mountainview	Premier Minister responsible for Finance; Executive Council Office
Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for 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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Party

Darius Elias	Government House Leader Vuntut Gwitchin
Hon. David Laxton	Porter Creek Centre
Patti McLeod	Watson Lake

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

New Democratic Party

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

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
---------------------	---------------------------------------

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Floyd McCormick
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Rudy Couture
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Doris McLean
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, November 26, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: Before we start, the Chair wishes to inform the House of a change which has been made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 1088, notice of which was given yesterday by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, was not placed on today's Order Paper as the action requested in the motion has been taken.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today on behalf of all members to speak to Lung Cancer Awareness Month, which is aimed at raising awareness for those affected by lung cancer.

Lung cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada, excluding non-melanoma skin cancers. It is the leading cause of death from cancer for both men and women in Canada. The Canadian Cancer Society estimates that there will be over 26,600 new cases of lung cancer in 2015 and over 20,900 deaths. On average, 73 Canadians will be diagnosed with lung cancer every day. On average, 57 Canadians will die from lung cancer every day.

Based on 2010 estimates, about one in 12 Canadian men are expected to develop lung cancer during his lifetime and one in 13 will die from it. About one in 15 Canadian women is expected to develop lung cancer during her lifetime and one in 17 will die from it. The most significant risk factors for lung cancer are exposure to smoking, smoking tobacco, radon, asbestos, and air pollution. The risk of developing lung cancer increases with age. When lung cancer is detected and treated early, the chances of successful treatment are much better. Recognizing symptoms and getting regular check-ups are the best ways to detect lung cancer early.

Signs and symptoms of lung cancer include: a cough that worsens or doesn't go away; chest pain that is constant and made worse by deep breathing or coughing; blood-stained mucous coughed up from the lungs; shortness of breath; wheezing; frequent chest infections; fatigue; hoarseness; loss of appetite — among many others. For a complete list of signs and symptoms of lung cancer and other information, please visit www.cancer.ca. Lung cancer remains one of the deadliest yet most preventable forms of cancer. Let's all do whatever we can to ensure we keep our lungs healthy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the work you and our former Commissioner, Geraldine Van Bibber, do — working with many others — to help raise funds and awareness for the Yukoners cancer care fund to help those diagnosed with cancer. On behalf of the Yukon Party government caucus, I would like to thank you; I would like to thank Geraldine and others who work so hard to raise funds and awareness in Yukon.

Thank you.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.
Are there any returns or documents for tabling?
Are there any reports of committees?
Are there any petitions to be presented?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Ms. McLeod: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with JDS Energy and Mining Inc. in the development of its high-grade silver/lead/zinc Silvertip property in order to maximize economic benefits and employment opportunities to Yukoners.

Mr. Elias: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with a panel consisting of representatives from the local business community and experts on procurement from other jurisdictions to discuss the unique challenges and concerns of the local business community and Yukon contractors, and present a report outlining key findings and recommended actions to improve the current Yukon procurement model.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to improve opportunities for camping for persons with disabilities by:

(1) ensuring accessibility in the design and development of future Yukon campgrounds, campground facilities and campsites; and

(2) building new accessible campsites, outhouses and trails during upgrades and repairs to existing Yukon campgrounds and campground facilities, including the work proposed at the Conrad, Marsh Lake, Wolf Creek and Twin Lakes campgrounds.

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give notice of the following motion:

That this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure new restrictions on hunting in the Whitehorse area do not unfairly single out only resident hunters.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to call the Department of Environment for debate before party leaders attend the COP21 climate change conference.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: First Nations/government relations

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, the Premier came out of Monday's First Ministers' meeting with the Prime Minister, praising him for re-engaging with the provinces and territories for the first time in seven years. Former Prime Minister Harper was notorious for avoiding meeting with provincial and territorial leaders.

The Yukon Forum, established in 2005, has been similarly avoided by this Premier. The Yukon Forum was supposed to meet four times a year. Since taking office, the Premier has participated in only one Yukon Forum.

Now that the Premier has acknowledged the value of re-engagement with other orders of government, when will he actively pursue the convening of a Yukon Forum with Yukon First Nation government leaders?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government — the ministers and I — discuss and meet with chiefs of First Nations on a regular basis and we continue to do so on a bilateral government-to-government basis. We also get together informally as well and in fact when it comes to meetings, I was at the leadership table this very morning, talking to a leadership of Yukon First Nations.

Ms. Hanson: The fact of the matter is, by legislation, this government was part of creating the Yukon Forum. Since he took office, the Premier has overseen some of the worst examples of intergovernmental relations in Yukon's history — the Peel court case; the Ross River Dena Council court case; the Bill S-6 court case; and legislation that has had to be put on hold — all because this government thinks that they are above meaningful engagement with Yukon First Nation governments as equals.

The purpose of the forum is to identify opportunities for cooperative action — actions that benefit all Yukoners, First Nation and non-First Nation citizens alike. It is a sad irony that the Premier does not get that his embrace of the Prime Minister's meaningful engagement is in stark contrast to his divide-and-conquer approach to Yukon First Nation governments.

Why does the Premier think that the Prime Minister has a duty to meet with premiers but that he does not have a similar duty to engage Yukon First Nation governments in a meaningful way at the Yukon —

Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, divide-and-conquer is exactly the tack that we're hearing from the NDP.

As I said, I met with leadership this morning. In fact we have another meeting next Thursday. We continue to work with First Nations on a day-to-day basis — not just me, but

everybody on this side of the government. We continue to do good work with First Nations and we will continue to do so.

Ms. Hanson: Just like the former Prime Minister, the Premier's decision to avoid the Yukon Forum for all these years is no doubt motivated by fear of being accountable to other levels of government, but his refusal to meet with Yukon First Nation leaders as leaders in a forum has a more tangible impact on Yukon than just the animosity among the governments it helps to foster.

The uncertainty created by the Premier's unwillingness to work with First Nation government leaders has had a negative impact on Yukon's economy. Mining executives have highlighted uncertainty as one of the biggest barriers to capital investment in the Yukon.

Why is the Premier afraid to commit to working with Yukon First Nation leaders as equals and to set a date for a Yukon Forum?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, you know it wasn't very long after the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission came forward — the calls to action — that we did indeed call to action this government, to have the deputy ministers go through and review the report, review the calls to action, put forward a list of the work that has been ongoing and that we have already done toward meeting the calls to action — but also providing recommendations of how we move forward, Mr. Speaker.

I have reached out to First Nation chiefs to see how together we can address the calls to action and move forward as a region, Mr. Speaker, as Yukoners and as leaders in this territory. That's exactly what we're doing. We continue to work. Just recently — the announcement on affordable housing with Ta'an Kwäch'än First Nation and the partnership with Kluane First Nation on renewable wind power, Mr. Speaker. We met with First Nation leaders today and I'm meeting with them next Thursday as well, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to work with First Nations, much to the chagrin of the NDP and the Liberals.

Question re: Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport maintenance

Ms. Moorcroft: Mr. Speaker, in today's modern world, we Yukoners increasingly take our travel to the skies, and while we appreciate a wild Yukon adventure, we want the maintenance of our airfields to be predictably on time and on budget. In 2013, the Canadian and Yukon governments allocated millions to rehabilitate the runway apron panels at the Erik Nielsen airport in Whitehorse, and support the seamless operation of the airfield.

Since the 2014 contract work was done, 13 panels have already been replaced. Can the minister confirm that one-quarter of the new airport runway concrete apron panels already had to be replaced and that further work is needed, and will he tell the House what the total cost will be for correcting deficiencies?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite is correct. There was work done to improve the apron panels at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse

International Airport. There were over 200 large, concrete apron panels that were replaced in 2014 under a joint federal and YG airport safety project. There were some deficiencies, as the member noted. The company that installed them will be responsible for replacing those. We're in negotiations with them right now. I don't have any firm numbers that the member opposite is looking for at this point, but, again, officials within Highways and Public Works are working with the contractor to address the situation and find a remedy to fix the deficiencies that are associated with the work that was undertaken.

Ms. Moorcroft: The Yukon government is unquestionably responsible for the quality of airfield upgrades, maintenance and repairs at Yukon airports. In the 2013 announcement of the concrete airport panel repairs, it was made clear that over \$1 million of Yukon's public money was going to be invested in the project, but here we are — money in the budget for next year but not the work done and completed.

This same Yukon Party story has been repeated so many times that it is becoming the stuff of legend. Inadequate contract management leads to repeated delays and do-overs. The minister has acknowledged concrete deficiencies for the Whitehorse airport runway apron panels.

Can the minister tell the House what the latest Transport Canada report says about the recent work at the Erik Nielsen airport?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Again, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, there were some deficiencies that the Transportation Engineering branch detected with the work that the contractor has undertaken. We're working with the contractor right now to come up with a solution to replace those. Obviously we feel that the contractor is responsible for those deficiencies, but work continues with them to develop a workplan and get the necessary repairs done to the apron panels. I don't have any additional information to share with the House at this time but, as information becomes more available, I'll certainly be in a better position to talk about the specifics.

Again, there's discussion back and forth with the contractor at this point, and we'll look forward to a resolution and the repair of those apron panels.

Ms. Moorcroft: When the rehabilitation plan for the concrete airport apron was announced in 2013, the former minister said his government was — and I quote: "... committed to enabling an efficient and well-functioning airport ..." Surely he doesn't consider efficiency to mean doing the same work twice over, time and again.

Another concern is that monitoring wells drilled into the ground underneath the airport, which are used to check for and help to mitigate any potential underground hydrocarbon pollution in the airfield, were accidentally paved over during the apron repairs. New wells had to be drilled.

Again, will the minister table the Transport Canada reports on this airports capital assistance program's assisted project at the Whitehorse airport?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, this was an opportunity for us as a government to work

with a local contractor to perform a project. The project value was in the range of \$3 million to \$4 million initially — again, a partnership between the Yukon government and the federal government.

As I mentioned, we're working with the contractor and the bonding company for the contractor to find a solution that is mutually acceptable to address this problem. Obviously sometimes there are deficiencies when contracts are undertaken.

The Transportation Engineering branch does a good job of inspecting these projects and ensuring that we get value for our dollar and that the projects are delivered in a manner that is acceptable and safe. We are working with the contractor and the bonding company to come up with a solution that is acceptable for the repair work that is required for the apron panels at the Whitehorse International Airport.

Question re: School curriculum

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The final section of the budget speech in the spring outlined yet another attempt by this government to redesign our education system. Big, block letters proclaimed, "A New Vision: A Made-in-Yukon K to 12 Education Curriculum". This is the third or fourth try over the last 13 years that this government has been in office to redesign, makeover or lead the Department of Education. It follows the New Horizons project that was just implemented in 2010, and before that we had the *Education Act* review followed by the education reform project. To say that the results have been mixed is an understatement. I have spoken with many people in the education field since the government's announcement in the spring. Not one of them has identified creating an entirely new curriculum as a top priority.

Where did this idea to develop a new curriculum come from, which seems to have caught many people off guard?

Hon. Mr. Graham: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The new vision for education is an attempt — we trust will be successful. But it is an attempt to ensure that some of the things that have occurred in the past don't occur in the future. That's why we are involving all of our partners in education, from parents, students, First Nations, school councils and educators themselves. They are all involved in this process to ensure that the students who are in our system at the present time and in the future will have a reasonably good chance of graduating or pursuing a career of their choice — pursuing the further education of their choice — without the barriers under the current system.

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure that Yukoners will follow with great interest and plenty of scepticism over the following year this new plan from Education. It's my view that Education doesn't need another examination or a master plan for education reform. It needs to implement and assess the work that has already been done. The ink on the budget was barely dry before the government started to back away from this commitment anyway.

The budget said a new curriculum for K to 12. Earlier in the spring, the minister said K to 7 was a priority, and in the

minister's new mandate letter in August, the minister was told to begin the development of the Yukon curriculum — without any mention of specific grades. However, now the new vision education website makes no mention of a total revamping of curriculum. Which is it? Is it K to 12? Is it K to 7 — or another navel-gazing exercise that doesn't improve outcomes for our students?

Hon. Mr. Graham: Mr. Speaker, this is one of the reasons that the member is sitting opposite and we're sitting over here. We have that vision that is necessary to ensure that education is revamped in such a way that there is no disruption to current students. We are not going to rush out tomorrow and redevelop curriculum for kindergarten to grade 12, as the member opposite seems to believe. This is going to be a well-thought-out process. This is going to be a process that's very inclusive and that is tailored to the students' needs. I had the opportunity to speak with two groups of high-school students — one in Dawson City, representing rural students from around the territory, and again in Whitehorse. They were very clear about what they wanted to see in education.

They were also pleased to see some of the changes we were suggesting that should be taking place because, Mr. Speaker, whatever way we go with the new vision of education, the thing that we have to keep in the back of our minds at all times is that it's about the children; it's about the students in the classes — and that's the part that the member opposite seems to forget.

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, whichever way we go — pick one. This new vision has not even got off the ground yet and they're in the last year of the mandate. Mr. Speaker, in the Budget Address in the spring, the government had all the answers — a new curriculum was needed top to bottom. Never mind that it was never mentioned before, the government decided in the spring and therefore it was an appropriate thing for them to talk about in their budget speech.

Now six months later, the focus has shifted from curriculum changes to another visioning exercise. The Yukon Party has had several of these over the last 13 years and they've had marginal impacts for the students — marginal impacts for the students, Mr. Speaker.

The website states — and I quote: "The goal of this process is not to create another report or document..." However, given the record of this Yukon Party government over the last 13 years, people are skeptical, students are skeptical, parents are skeptical and so are teachers.

Mr. Speaker, why does the minister — what does the minister hope to accomplish before the next election on this —

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

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we have heard certainly has been excitement about a vision, Mr. Speaker — creating a vision to ensure that our focus in education is on successful student outcomes, Mr. Speaker. That's how we want to see this move forward, and that is by creating different pathways.

Mr. Speaker, the BC curriculum allows for one pathway to success and we believe that different students need different approaches and that's why part of our Yukon curriculum would be creating different pathways to success, Mr. Speaker — something that we've heard very loud from students and teachers, educators and parents that they are very excited about.

We also recognize that schools and teachers have to deal with some non-academic issues as well and we're there to listen and look for ways to support those teachers as well. I will acknowledge that the Leader of the Liberal Party says that this government has lots of visions and we absolutely do, Mr. Speaker. We have a vision for education, we have a vision for new hydro and we have a vision to ensure that this territory becomes a net contributor. What we see from the other side of the House is no vision, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Solid-waste management

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After legislative changes, the government announced in March that it would amend recycling regulations to increase recycling deposits on refundable containers and electronics. Nine months ago, the Yukon Party government pledged that it hopes to bring forward amendments later this year. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, hope alone doesn't cover the true costs of recycling.

Mr. Speaker, is the government going to complete the important amendments to Yukon's recycling regulations before the end of this calendar year required to help offset the true costs of recycling?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise and speak in response to this question because I'm very proud of the record this government has with regard to recycling and with regard to solid waste across the board.

We support recycling in a number of ways. First of all, we provide of course the processing and handling fees to both processors and handlers throughout the territory. We also provide diversion credits to processors here in Whitehorse to subsidize the cost of getting those recyclable materials out of our waste stream and see those products head south to be recycled.

Mr. Speaker, we also of course make investments of infrastructure throughout the territory at our solid waste transfer stations, whether they be owned by the Yukon government or whether they be owned by municipalities.

We have made dramatic upgrades to some of our sites throughout the Whitehorse periphery, but I note that municipalities, with the assistance of Yukon government, have also made improvements to their facilities around the territory as well.

Recycling is getting easier for Yukoners and it is getting more prevalent. We're seeing the results of that through the increased tonnage being recycled. We've been successful in increasing recycling in the territory and I look forward to continuing down that path through our *Solid Waste Action Plan*.

Ms. White: So can we understand that to be a “no” — the amendments won’t be in place by the end of this calendar year?

The government has a stained track record when it comes to waste diversion. The Yukon Party government failed to meet their campaign promise of diverting half of Yukon’s waste from the landfill by the end of 2014. Raven Recycling had to resort to temporarily closing its public non-refundable drop-off because the government could not understand the true cost of recycling and was will unwilling — until forced — to plan for the future of recycling in the territory.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Yukon Party government get it right when it comes to Yukon’s recycling services?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that we do have it right when it comes to recycling. We have a *Solid Waste Action Plan* that is very progressive and considers the needs of all Yukoners, whether they are here in Whitehorse or whether they are in communities.

It’s important to note that the NDP continue to criticize government on various aspects of our program and our plan, but I should note that not once have they ever considered putting forward their vision or an alternative. Mr. Speaker, we hear empty criticisms from the NDP consistently and we never hear anything new in terms of alternatives.

We have proposed changes to the beverage container regulations and the designated material regulations. Those will be coming in due course. They should be in place in a matter of months. We anticipate those to include the addition of tires to the designated material regulations schedule as well as e-waste, so we’ll see a new program in place for all tires in the territory. We’ll see a program in place for e-waste, which is some of the most dangerous and expensive waste to deal with in the waste stream. We’re improving our practices; we’re improving regulations; we’re making investments throughout the territory; and we’re doing a great job at improving recycling opportunities for Yukoners.

Question re: Rural recreational infrastructure

Mr. Barr: With another winter setting in, the Village of Carmacks faces another year without repairs to its outdoor arena. We now know, with the report in hand, that the government has spent tens of millions of dollars to support the Wolverine mine with no business case and no cost-benefit analysis. Imagine what that kind of money could have done to community infrastructure across Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, will the government revisit its community funding priorities and invest in recreation infrastructure for the Village of Carmacks?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: An odd angle on a fairly simple question with regard to how we’ll work with the Village of Carmacks on its recreation priorities; I’m not sure why investments in road infrastructure somehow preclude us from doing so, but I’ll let the member explain that perhaps in his first supplementary question.

As I noted in Committee of the Whole debate with the member just a few weeks ago, we remain very closely linked with the Village of Carmacks as we consider options for going

forward with their recreational infrastructure in that community. As I’ve noted, we have worked very closely with the village administration to provide options to the Village of Carmacks, so that they can consider what they want to do going forward. It’s a decision, ultimately, that the Village of Carmacks and its residents will have to make about what they think an appropriate level of recreational infrastructure is in that community. My understanding is that they have three options before them. They either have conducted, or will be very soon conducting, a public meeting for the residents of that community to discuss the options that are before them.

There is a new council in place with the mayor there, and I look forward to meeting with them very soon to talk about these issues, but whatever decision the Village of Carmacks makes, the Yukon government looks forward to working with them and to exploring options to find the adequate funding or the necessary funding to see that vision come to fruition. Obviously whatever we build needs to be something that’s affordable for the residents there, affordable for the taxpayers of Carmacks and affordable for the municipality.

Mr. Barr: Mr. Speaker, they’re still not skating this winter.

Yukon’s communities are tired of this government’s Whitehorse-focused approach to recreation funding, and next year they’ll have the chance to replace this government with one with the right priorities.

While the Yukon Party government threw money, without a plan, at road upgrades to a doomed mine, important community infrastructure projects like a long-standing request for road improvements from Faro to Ross River were neglected. That’s no way to support our communities.

Will the government table a plan with timelines for completing upgrades to our territory’s community recreation infrastructure?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: If the member opposite is concerned with our priorities with regard to building roads, I’m sure he would agree that the brand new asphalt right through the Village of Carmacks was a bad idea then. That is, of course, not the vision of the Yukon government. We see investments throughout the territory having a positive effect on all communities.

With regard to the Carmacks recreational facility, I have explained the process, I’ve explained where it’s at, and all we hear from the NDP is bravado and gusto that really have no purpose.

The Leader of the Official Opposition likes to shout off-mic, but, when faced with the sad reality that she has no plan, she has no vision and neither does her party, she often has to resort to these off-mic comments.

We have a plan for recreational infrastructure in the territory. We’re working with municipalities. We’ve increased the CRAG funding for unincorporated communities to fairly significant levels. Just about every community in this territory has seen the benefit of that. We’ve worked with municipalities to develop infrastructure in all communities in the territory, and we’ll continue to do so, much to the chagrin of the NDP, who would like to see their empty vision for the Yukon

fulfilled with bizarre accusations and bizarre claims made in the House here today.

Mr. Barr: Mr. Speaker — and they're still not skating. The Yukon Party can say all they want.

With another winter setting in, this party sees that the communities are being left out. Hopefully — well, actually they can't see that the communities are being left out — and next year they'll have the chance once more.

Pools are aging. The Carcross community club has been asked for — the Dawson City community centre has been asked for. When will this government take care of long-standing issues that rural communities in the Yukon have been asking for, for years?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It was difficult to hear a clear question in that particular instance, but what I would say is that, in the community of Carmacks, it is my understanding that the village is moving the boards, they are working with the First Nation there and there will hopefully be ice there this winter so the kids will be able to skate — much to the opposition of the NDP.

In Dawson, we have a clear plan with the City of Dawson for the repairs to their community centre — their recreation centre. In Carcross, we are happy to work with the unincorporated community there to see improvements made to their pool.

If the member wants to see a list of these things, we can go over it in Committee of the Whole. But let me say, Mr. Speaker, that we have made considerable investments in recreation throughout the territory. We've made investments in programming and services for Yukon children, Yukon adults and Yukon seniors. We've made investments in infrastructure. We've seen dramatic increases to the community recreation grants throughout the communities in the Yukon, and we'll continue to do so, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know what the member opposite is looking for with regard to some sort of infrastructure pool fund. I'll have to get some explanation on that, Mr. Speaker, but we've done a great job investing in recreation in the territory and I look forward to continuing to do so.

Question re: Greenhouse gas emissions-reduction targets

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past week, the Premier went to a First Ministers' meeting, armed with inaccurate data and with no concrete emission reduction targets. For years it has been apparent to Yukoners that the Premier and his Yukon Party government don't take climate change seriously.

But last week, the Premier took advantage of his trip to show all of Canada's First Ministers and the Canadian public his complete lack of understanding and concern when it comes to climate change. In the face of bold action on climate change from jurisdictions like Alberta and Quebec, the Premier's commitments on climate change fall short.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier recognize that Yukon is being left behind when it comes to establishing meaningful emission reduction targets?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Yukon has a role to play in responding to climate change, just as the rest of the world does, Mr. Speaker. We're not a large contributor to climate change, but we're one of those most affected, and we're one of the most sought-after jurisdictions for our work on climate change, Mr. Speaker.

Our plan has guided our approach. We're proud of our made-in-Yukon plan and, in Paris, we'll be able to share our achievements and learn more from other jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker.

I want to talk a little bit about our climate change action plan, Mr. Speaker. During the development, we consulted with many stakeholders to get updates on actions included in the previous action plan and progress report, Mr. Speaker. The progress report on our action plan will be ready for distribution in time, with all kinds of data and numbers in there, Mr. Speaker, for our COP21 trip, and I'm looking forward to having the world see what the Yukon is doing for climate change.

Ms. White: Man — it will be quite the view for the world to see what we're doing.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier talked about the global perception of Canada as a climate change contributor, but he fails to look into the mirror at his own government's inaction. Yukon does not have an up-to-date annual report on greenhouse gas emissions, we do not accurately measure emissions, and we don't even have a plan in place with concrete targets to tackle Yukon's own greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier have plans to introduce emissions reduction targets for the Yukon, or will he continue to coast on the hard work of the rest of Canada?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to the effort of developing our climate change progress report, Mr. Speaker, we also held a series of targeted stakeholder workshops, looking at the work the Climate Change Secretariat has done, and they do a wonderful job. It was created back in 2009, and I'm very proud of what the department does there. In general, that also will provide information that will help develop the progress reports.

Those workshops involved more than 40 participants from a variety of government departments and Outside agencies, including some of NGOs, industry and youth, and CYFN. Mr. Speaker, we're sending a youth delegate over to the climate change — we're sending the leaders of the two parties and the Premier. CYFN is going over.

Mr. Speaker, to tell Yukon's story, I'm looking forward to everybody getting together, going over there and telling the great work that we do on climate change, but also telling the Yukon story on the effects that we see from climate change worldwide.

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps when the Premier talks about being a net contributor to Canada, he's really talking about our greenhouse gas emissions. While every other jurisdiction in Canada is taking meaningful action on climate change, our Premier and his government are refusing to listen to Yukoners and take action of our own.

Alberta and Manitoba have both made strong commitments to combatting climate change. They have both indicated that they are willing to work with the Prime Minister after COP21 to establish clear jurisdiction-wide emissions targets.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier follow the Alberta and Manitoba's leadership and commit to working with the federal government to set emissions reduction targets for the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to emissions, Alberta will be looking to Yukon as a leader, Mr. Speaker. Alberta — Alberta's goal is to reach 30 percent of their energy to be renewables. Yukon Territory has 95 percent of its electricity from renewables. That is a success story, Mr. Speaker.

We are very loud and proud of the work that we're doing. We're working with — or reducing consumption. We're supporting Yukoners in their individual efforts, for example, by helping them reinsulate their homes and their windows so that they use less energy and produce less greenhouse gas emissions. We continue to focus on innovation and technology through the Yukon Research Centre. We continue to work on understanding the broad knowledge that is required. We also continue to focus on adaptation, Mr. Speaker.

Canada contributes two percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions; Yukon contributes less than one percent of Canada's emissions, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to work very diligently, but we also are not prepared in the north to have people pay more money to live here. Our largest greenhouse gas emission sector is the transportation sector, Mr. Speaker. All of those goods that come up this highway are in fact paying a carbon tax right now in British Columbia.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 91: *Act to Amend the Elections Act and the Electoral District Boundaries Act* — Second Reading — adjourned debate

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 91, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Cathers; adjourned debate, the Hon. Mr. Dixon.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, when we left off, I was just giving some concluding remarks at second reading to this bill. I just wanted to circle back and repeat one of the key components of what I said last time with regard to this bill, and that is that oftentimes what occurs when elections acts are changed, Mr. Speaker, is that we see a lot of divisiveness and a lot of partisanship, and that's not the case here in Yukon when we did that and undertook this exercise.

When I left off last time, Mr. Speaker, I was commending all three parties, especially those members of the Members' Services Board who came together to address the

recommendations put forward by the Chief Electoral Officer and I wanted to thank them again for that work. Mr. Speaker, as we have them before us, the amendments to the *Elections Act* will do a great job in making our system much stronger, making our democracy better and, for all the reasons I explained last week, will improve our system dramatically for Yukon voters.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and commend this bill to the House and thank all those who were involved in bringing it here today. Thank you.

Ms. Moorcroft: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of Bill No. 91, an *Act to Amend the Elections Act and the Electoral District Boundaries Act*. The Official Opposition is pleased to see this bill before the House. It makes a number of improvements to the *Elections Act* and brings modern communications technology into the administration of Yukon elections. There are provisions in the bill to establish a permanent electronic voters list while continuing to ensure that the security of voters lists and the privacy of voters' personal information is respected.

I would like to begin by thanking the Chief Electoral Officer for the enormous amount of work put into the Elections Yukon report of December 2014. *Recommendations for Amendments to the Elections Act* is a clear and thorough report documenting the need for the amendments to the *Elections Act* that are now before us. I also acknowledge the work of the former Chief Electoral Officer who prepared a report on the 2011 election before her retirement.

These amendments were designed to: provide for a more accessible and more flexible voter registration and voting opportunities for electors served by advance polls or institutional polls; a uniform, simplified approach to absentee voting while protecting their independence and the secrecy of their votes; modernization of election practices and increased opportunities for innovations; and enhanced clarity and equity within the framework of election finance reporting and disclosure.

The Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations are based on a number of principles that are supported by all political parties represented in this Legislature as we have heard in debate so far, but these are important principles to note.

Firstly, democracies are strengthened by a high level of voter participation. The process of voting, from the initial step of voter registration to the announcement of official results must be easily understood and effectively implemented to avoid disenfranchising electors. Effective means of voter registration and convenient voting options must be clearly communicated to everyone. We all have a vested interest in the effective administration of elections. Electors and prospective electors, political parties, candidates and members of the Legislative Assembly, their staff members and volunteers, election officers with responsibilities under the *Elections Act*, the media and others all play an important role in elections.

The second principle is that democracies are strengthened when voters trust the integrity of the electoral system.

Electors' rights and responsibilities must be communicated clearly to give electors confidence that election law is being implemented correctly. Appropriate checks and balances must be put in place to ensure that everyone complies with the law and to identify and address any irregularities that may occur.

The next principle is that elections are honour-based. Based on available research, there is no evidence of systemic voter fraud in Canada. To a great extent, participation is based on an elector's declaration of eligibility. Electors are not required to produce evidence of citizenship, length of residency or age in order to vote. Imposing stringent requirements for proof of eligibility could create an administrative barrier, resulting in the disenfranchisement of certain groups of eligible electors. While the system is honour-based, it is also self-policing.

Electors vote at polling stations that are staffed by their neighbours and overseen by local campaign teams. Election officers and candidates' agents may, in good faith, challenge an elector who is believed to be ineligible. Should irregularities be alleged, Elections Yukon has broad powers to investigate. We need to be cautious that governments do not legislate obstacles to voting.

Electors are entitled to vote independently and to maintain the secrecy of their vote. The polling day process is designed to protect the entitlement to vote independently and to maintain the secrecy of their vote. The *Elections Act* contains specific prohibitions against influencing an elector's vote and offenses are subject to prosecution. All electors should have access to effective voting options that allow them to maintain the independence and secrecy of their vote.

Electors are entitled to voter registration and voting opportunities that accommodate the diverse needs of a mobile society. Appropriate services are needed to meet the needs of electors who may work, travel or study outside of Yukon for extended periods; those with variable and often unpredictable schedules; those with mobility issues; and those who live in isolated communities.

We live in an electronic age much different from the time the *Elections Act* was originally framed. Today, people do their shopping, banking and communication online. Voters expect to receive public services in the same manner. Adding online services to the traditional means of service delivery will facilitate participation by electors and political entities, allowing access around the clock from any location with Internet connectivity.

The importance of accurate lists of electors cannot be overstated. At the last election, concerns were expressed with respect to errors and omissions on the list of electors, the inability to identify a specific individual when electors appeared on the list with the same initials and surnames and the limited utility of the handwritten lists that were provided to political parties and candidates for use during the last election. Some of the challenges associated with enumeration are: door-to-door enumerations are labour intensive and costly; it is difficult to find voters at home during the day, which is best suited to the enumerators' work; weather; road hazards; potential injuries by dogs; uneven sidewalks and

other obstacles; managing security concerns of both residents and enumerators during door-to-door visits; ensuring accuracy and legibility in conditions that are less than ideal and subject to human error; and managing data collection, storage and delivery in a secure manner.

So we're moving toward a permanent voters list. Evidence has shown that maintenance of a permanent list: improves the accuracy of voters' lists; ensures election and by-election readiness at all times; allows for the timely provision of updated lists of electors to political stakeholders following a prescribed schedule; achieves long-term savings; and facilitates the redistribution of electors resulting from changes to electoral district boundaries. We welcome the initiative of preparing and maintaining a permanent voters list.

The Chief Electoral Officer plans to conduct a full door-to-door enumeration next spring to create a permanent voters list for Yukon before the next election. A permanent voters list is well-suited to an electorate that is more mobile than in the past. A permanent voters list makes it easier to simply change the riding that a voter lives in if they move from one neighbourhood to another.

Many levels of government have already moved to a permanent voters list. Under these amendments, the Chief Electoral Officer may enter into agreements with other electoral authorities to create a permanent voters list. The Chief Electoral Officer has had encouraging preliminary discussions with municipal and federal election administrators about partnerships with those public agencies and the possible need for reciprocal legislation.

It is important to note that voters may consent to allowing the Chief Electoral Officer to acquire information from a public body or a municipal electoral authority to use the National Register of Electors and that there are protections for the privacy of their personal information.

The creation of a permanent voters list maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer is significant, and the ability to distribute it to political parties, to candidates after they have been nominated, and to MLAs and the public will improve the electoral process for everyone.

A voter must be 18 years of age. Amendments in this bill provide for the enumeration of 16- and 17-year-olds at their high schools so that, when they turn 18, their names will appear on the voters list. The amendment also allows 16- and 17-year-olds to work at polling stations. These amendments are welcomed, as they encourage youth to participate in the electoral process.

There are a number of other measures that will make the electoral process easier to administer and ensure that eligible voters are able to vote.

I would like to speak to the requirement for identification when voting. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the right to vote. The need to avoid disenfranchising electors is paramount, and this is a principle that has been supported in judicial decisions over the years.

I repeat a principle that I spoke to earlier: elections are honour based. There is no evidence of systemic voter fraud in Canada. In fact, most jurisdictions in Canada do not require

voters to present identification at the polls. The honour system works.

Throughout Canada, every effort is made to promote participation in the voting process by making it simpler and more accessible. Election administrators and political actors focus time and resources on encouraging voters' participation in the democratic process. As the Chief Electoral Officer said in her report, we must weigh the requirement for mandatory identification against the potential for disenfranchisement that additional administrative requirements may cause.

These amendments do require voters to present identification; however, the Chief Electoral Officer will prepare a list of approved identification that electors can use to register to vote, and the amendments will allow any election officer at the electors polling place to serve as a vouching elector. Generally, these amendments allow electors who are not on the voters list to register more easily in advance of election day or at the polls.

The current *Elections Act* provides three voting options: at an advanced poll, at a regular poll on election day, and by one of several absentee voting methods — proxy voting, special ballots and mail-in ballots.

Bill No. 91 amends the *Elections Act* to provide for a simplified special ballot process that allows —

Due to a power outage, the Speaker recessed the House until power could be restored

Speaker: Thank you for your indulgence.

The Member for Copperbelt South, please continue.

Ms. Moorcroft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before the power interruption, I was speaking about the new special ballot provisions in Bill No. 91, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act and the Electoral District Boundaries Act*. Bill No. 91 amends the *Elections Act* to provide for a simplified special ballot process that allows absentee electors, isolated electors and others with special needs an extended opportunity to vote. It extends special ballot voting to a larger group of electors.

Special ballots will be available for people in hospitals, correctional centres and remote locations. Special ballots will all be counted as a separate poll. This amendment ensures the secrecy of the vote by not reporting polls such as a hospital or care facility, where there may be only two or three votes cast, as a separate report. They will be put in with other special ballots.

The use of proxy votes will be phased out after the next election. This is a good change, as proxy votes have been criticized for the potential of misuse.

There are changes to liquor sales. Another change that modernizes our *Elections Act* is the removal of the prohibition of liquor sales on polling day. This practice was criticized as being unfair to business. Bars, restaurants and hotels will now be able to sell alcoholic beverages on election day.

It remains an offence in the *Elections Act* to influence an elector's vote. It is illegal to offer or promise money or any

other consideration — which would cover alcohol — to directly or indirectly attempt to influence how a person votes or to encourage a person to refrain from voting. This offence is subject to prosecution, which mitigates the potential for coercion and vote-buying activities. The system must have integrity in order to ensure public confidence in the legitimacy of the outcome of an election.

Election financing is also addressed. Amendments to the election financing sections of the act bring in consistent provisions for the disclosure of all contributions to political parties and candidates. In their official revenue returns, candidates and parties must record and issue receipts for in-kind as well as monetary contributions.

Another change is that all candidates will have their \$200 nomination deposits refunded after the election, even if they do not receive at least 25 percent of the number of votes received by the candidate who wins the election, which is the requirement in the current act.

There are also amendments to the *Electoral District Boundaries Act*. The amendments to the *Electoral District Boundaries Act* are simply corrections to the geographical descriptions of three electoral districts: Copperbelt North, Mountainview and Whitehorse West.

Most of the provisions of Bill No. 91 will come into force on the day of assent. Part 2 of the act contains the deferred amendments, which relate to ending the use of proxy voting. As I noted earlier, the elimination of proxy voting will only come into effect after the 2016 election.

I look forward to debate in Committee of the Whole and to the passage of this bill during the Fall Sitting of this Legislature.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I will not speak at great length since I already addressed this in my introductory remarks at second reading. I would again like to thank the Chief Electoral Officer, Lori McKee, for her work on this and acknowledge the work of the past Chief Electoral Officer, Jo-Ann Waugh, for her prior report, which formed part of this work. I would like to thank Lawrence Purdy as the drafter from Justice for his hours of work on this project, and I would like to acknowledge the work and participation of the Members' Services Board for contributing to the content of this as well as those representing political parties for their contributions, which led up to identifying changes that could be made to modernize our system and improve Yukon's *Elections Act* structure — to modernize it to move to an electronic list system, to enable a permanent voters list to allow for more flexible opportunities to vote remotely, and to address some of the other issues that had been identified.

I would also like to make two minor corrections to something that I said in my introductory remarks. The ability for voters to vote by Skype — I believe I inadvertently said that it was through a returning officer when in fact it is through the office of the Chief Electoral Officer only in this

bill. As well, I should note that the provisions related to identification requirements provide for consultation with and a report by the Chief Electoral Officer six months after every election, but there's also provision for the Chief Electoral Officer to consult and then come back to the all-party Members' Services Board six months after the coming into force of this section of the act.

I hope that clarifies that and, with that clarification, I will commend this bill to the House.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

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: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for second reading of Bill No. 91 agreed to

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): Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office, in Bill No. 20, entitled *Second 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: Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 20: *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office, in Bill No. 20, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Executive Council Office

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: It is my pleasure to provide some very brief comments that will detail the requests in the first supplementary funds for the Executive Council Office. I am honoured to be joined by Pamela Muir, assistant deputy minister of Executive Council Office.

Madam Chair, this supplementary budget reflects a net increase of \$7,000 in operation and maintenance funding and an increase of \$900,000 in capital funding. On the O&M side, at the end of 2014-15, there were outstanding transfer payments to various youth-serving organizations. A revote of \$61,000 is requested for the Youth Directorate in order to make final payment to youth organizations that have reporting requirements that fall after the end of our fiscal year.

There are also O&M requests for the Aboriginal Relations division; \$165,000 is requested to cover a transfer payment agreement with Ross River Dena Council to meet our consultation obligations arising from the RRDC versus Yukon case. An additional \$20,000 is for discussions relating to developing a reconciliation agreement with the Kaska in southeast Yukon.

We're also requesting a total reduction in the O&M budget of \$239,000 for boards and councils established pursuant to the final agreements. Each year, we estimate the budget for boards and councils. Once the numbers are confirmed by the Government of Canada and a transfer agreement is signed, the numbers are adjusted in the supplementary budget.

For this year, the adjustment has resulted in a reduction of \$19,000 to our O&M budget. We're also requesting a reduction of \$220,000 to funding that was allocated to the Dawson Regional Planning Commission, as the work for the commission is on hold. The decision to pause the planning process was made jointly by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Vuntut Gwitchin government and the Yukon government.

Madam Chair, lastly the capital vote increase of \$900,000 is for the second installment of the transfer payment agreement with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for the community centre in Old Crow. The remaining balance of \$900,000 on this agreement is expected to be paid over the next two years.

These are the highlights of the significant changes in the supplementary budget. I would like to thank all of our officials in the Executive Council Office for their commitment to Yukon citizens, for their good work and for their support.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister opposite for his comments. I acknowledge that the net amount for the supplementary increase for the Executive Council Office is on the operation and maintenance side — minor at \$7,000 — and not quite so insignificant with respect to the capital side of the \$900,000 for the Old Crow community centre.

I will have some detailed questions for the minister by means of updating on initiatives, given the important role that the Executive Council Office does provide to essentially the whole of government in hopefully providing the whole government's point of view on some very important governance issues and its key role, as stated in the planning documents and the main estimates, of promoting effective and timely communication of information to the public.

I'll be following up with the minister on just those matters. I will be asking the minister for a bit more detail with respect to the decision process for a capital infrastructure project in Old Crow and how that relates to decisions not taken in other ridings in the territory, but we'll come to that as we go through the details.

Chair: Does any other member wish to speak in general debate? If not, we will move to line-by-line debate.

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures
On Aboriginal Relations***

Ms. Hanson: As I had said, my interest is in getting an update. I understood the explanation given by the minister, but I also want to reflect the releases that were made and the important aspect of the work of the Executive Council Office.

I mentioned earlier this afternoon when the minister and the Premier referenced the work of the deputy ministers under his direction that was given in June of this year to review the Truth and Reconciliation report.

At that time he had indicated that after there had been the opportunity to engage with First Nation — “partners” is the language that was used in the June 8, 2015 release. The government's press release said that the government also intends to “engage with First Nation partners and Yukon communities in determining next steps”.

Can the minister outline for us what process and which calls to action the Premier and his Cabinet will be focusing on with respect to engagement?

The prioritized list that he has discussed with First Nation partners — or I would suggest First Nation leaders, and governments, in this case — as well as reflecting on call to action 43 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which calls upon federal, provincial, territorial, municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation — if the minister could explain what public engagement process he intends to lay before the Yukon public to, first of all, share with Yukoners just exactly what the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is, what the implications of adopting it are

— because it is, as the minister will no doubt acknowledge in his comments, far-reaching and certainly provides, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission said in that section of its report, the fundamentals of the challenge of reconciliation.

I would be interested to hear the extent to which he has already reached out or intends to reach out to those other orders of government as well as the various faith communities in the territory that have taken leadership roles already over the course of the Truth and Reconciliation process and the process leading up to the TRC. In some cases, like many civil society groups, they are sometimes ahead of government in starting that dialogue. What role does the Premier see — the minister see — so first of all, with the other levels of government, First Nation governments, and then as the territorial leaders with the municipal governments. I use the example of faith communities, but there may be other civil society groups that he's intending to focus on over the course of the next while.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will begin my comments by saying that it was indeed very shortly after the release of the calls to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that I did instruct all of the deputies of the Yukon government to begin a process of evaluating the calls to action, identifying the work that has already been done by the government and some recommendations going forward on how we can continue to work toward reconciliation.

That work — that report — is now complete but, because this is about being respectful to First Nations and everything that has gone into this work, certainly we need to recognize all of those people across the country — but, here in the Yukon certainly, those Yukoners who came forward and shared their stories, which I know was very difficult for many people to do.

What I have stated is that the first step of this process will be to share this with First Nation chiefs, and that will begin the dialogue. We want to allow them to digest the work that has been done by the deputy ministers as a starting point for dialogue to move forward and to identify how we continue down the path to reconciliation as a public government and as First Nation governments. I absolutely agree that there is a role for all of us in this process — as individual Yukoners, as religious groups, as municipalities. In fact, we did also receive a letter from AYC indicating their willingness as well.

There certainly will be engagement going forward, but the first step will be to begin that work with Yukon First Nations and we look forward to that work. I mentioned earlier today in the House in Question Period that I met with the chiefs — with leadership — today and we'll be meeting with them again very shortly, and we'll continue down the path toward identifying and listening to the First Nations and what their responses to the TRC recommendations or calls to action are.

When it comes to the United Nations declaration, this House has unanimously supported a motion that was debated earlier in this session of the Legislative Assembly — in the 33rd session of the Legislative Assembly — supporting Canada's statement on the United Nations declaration. But to

be honest, Madam Chair, we are focused on the final agreements, because I believe that it is through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the calls to action and through the final agreements that we have the path to long-term success, and we will continue to work toward implementation and working together to the benefit of all Yukoners, because certainly, within the context of this country, we are leading and these agreements are also looked upon from other jurisdictions across the world as well.

We're very proud of the work and the leadership that started over 40 years ago with Elijah Smith and other leaders, and I will perhaps use this minute to wish a happy birthday to Judy Gingell — because Judy has also played an instrumental role in the process and I know it's her birthday today, so I will, for the sake of Hansard, recognize her and wish her a happy birthday today.

Ms. Hanson: I do acknowledge that many, many of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission do focus on the process that we together need to do to reconcile and to address some of the very serious challenges and damage that was done as the result of the residential school system. But Madam Chair, the issue that I'm raising with the Premier is a fundamental issue that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission also raised, and it goes to the core of how such a heinous system could have been put in place in the first place.

It challenges — and that's why I have been pointing out to the members here the challenge of reconciliation, that significant section of the Truth and Reconciliation report. What I am asking the Premier is — it is one thing to say that we agree, and I acknowledge that the new government in Ottawa, along with the New Democratic Party — both the Liberal and the NDP parties — moved beyond the Conservative Party's notion that the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was aspirational. There are fundamental legal underpinnings to the UNDRIP, and that is why I am asking the Premier what work he envisions doing as the territorial Premier. Does he agree, and how will he give effect to one of the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* — the very core concept of free, prior and informed consent? Can the Premier explain to this House how that will be given effect in this territory?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again, I will say that I believe that the path forward to address these issues is through the final agreements that we have signed. It is through the final agreements. It is through reconciliation. It's through implementation of those final agreements. That is the path forward for this territory. We are in a very enviable position. We have almost half of all the self-governing agreements in the entire country residing right here in this territory. This work will begin — I suspect it will be engaging. As I have said many times, there is a responsibility of all citizens, all communities — religious communities, municipalities, local advisory councils, groups and individuals of all kinds in the territory — to pause and reflect and to review the recommendations that have come forward — the calls the

action. There is a role to play for everybody on a go-forward basis. I believe that this begins with direct discussions and planning with the First Nations. That is what I had stated right from the beginning in June, and that will be our path forward. We will share the documents with the First Nations and from there we will chart a path forward.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for his comments, and I fully appreciate the absolute imperative of not only respecting the fact that we have negotiated and entered into agreements with First Nation governments and we have an obligation, a responsibility, to ensure that we live up to the obligations that we sign and that represent all Yukoners now. I guess the challenge that the minister did not address in my question is in terms of what he believes the language of free, prior and informed consent means. Perhaps to get a focus on that, I could just read a paragraph from “The challenge of reconciliation” on page 244 of the Truth and Reconciliation executive summary report, because it does dramatically and directly relate to those First Nations in the Yukon that have not settled First Nation final and self-government agreements.

It's one thing for us to have a framework — which I share in terms of the understanding that the final agreements that have been negotiated with First Nations are an important and hugely valuable tool for reconciliation if they're given life and if we actually live up to the terms of what we've entered into.

To quote, “In 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Tsilhqot'in peoples have Aboriginal title to their lands in northern British Columbia, and ‘ownership rights similar to those associated with fee simple, including: the right to decide how the land will be used; the right of enjoyment and occupancy of the land; the right to possess the land; the right to the economic benefits of the land; and the right to proactively use and manage the land.’”

The court said — I quote again: “Governments and individuals proposing to use or exploit land, whether before or after a declaration of Aboriginal title, can avoid a charge of infringement or failure to adequately consult by obtaining the consent of the interested Aboriginal group.”

Madam Chair, that is rooted in the concept that is contained in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* so it's not enough to simply say, “Well, we support the federal government's endorsement under it”. What does it mean? This is why the TRC said it was going to be a challenge for us. It was going to be a challenge for us to give life to the calls to actions and they said in that recommendation that I read to the House just now — we call upon the Government of Canada and we call upon the governments of the provinces and territories to not just say that you accept UNDRIP, but say how you are going to implement that.

We know that First Nation groups across the country, the most recent one on behalf of British Columbia First Nations — the Union of British Columbian Indian Chiefs — just sent a very detailed letter to the Prime Minister. I would expect that we will see something similar coming from Yukon First Nations — settled and non-settled First Nations — and I'm asking the Premier, on behalf of Yukoners, what thought has

he given to how this will be communicated and what will we do concretely together as Yukon citizens to not just to say we respect the words of the United Nations declaration — but does he envision and has he consulted with the Department of Justice? Has he consulted with other provinces and territories about the implications at a national and sub-national level of moving beyond aspirational language — aspirational acceptance of the UNDRIP but actually the practical implementation of it?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will begin my comments by directing the Leader of the Official Opposition to refer back to the statement that the NDP government in Alberta made shortly after winning the election earlier this year in terms of quantifying their support around the UN declaration.

Again, I will stress that when it comes to Yukon, our focus is the final agreements. It is through the final agreements that we have a process and a path forward, whether its control with settlement land or whether its rights that are there on Crown land and obligations around consultation.

This is all described in the final agreements and that's why, when it comes to those First Nations without modern-day treaties, we are approaching this from the aspect of reconciliation. It is through these two processes — through reconciliation with those First Nations without a modern-day treaty and through the implementation of the final agreements — that there is a path forward for this territory — a path that is, in fact, well beyond the curve of practically everybody else in this country. We are very proud of that and will continue to work down that path; a path that has been charted out many years ago with some very visionary leaders at the time who brought us to be able to have these documents, and we will focus on those documents.

Ms. Hanson: I'm glad to hear the minister articulating that he recognizes that the final agreements and self-government agreements actually do have merit. Sometimes that's difficult to see — giving life to the challenge.

What I'm asking the minister to focus on are those First Nations who do not have final agreements. I asked him — and I quoted the Supreme Court of Canada — what is the basis for the reconciliation discussion with those First Nations which do not have final agreements with Canada and with Yukon? Is the basis now reflected in what the Tsilhqot'in Supreme Court decision says? Does the minister recognize the rights of those First Nations in those territories with respect to their right to free, prior and informed consent before he or anybody else takes action in their traditional territory?

If not, then what aspects of UNDRIP does he believe apply to those unsettled territories in Yukon? I mean it's important to have this conversation because we don't have — I asked the Premier at the outset what he was doing to have the public engagement process. I asked if he was going to engage with faith communities or other levels of government to have this important conversation — a call to action from the TRC — and he has focused only on one aspect. The challenge is larger and it's one we should be embracing. I'm

asking him to explain on this one element of it. What is the position of this minister?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I have stated already, when it comes to those First Nations that do not have final and self-government agreements, we are in fact pursuing reconciliation agreements with them. I will not dictate as to what that looks like, because it is a negotiation. The First Nations will bring their concerns to the table and the public government will sit down with them. Through that process of negotiation, we will establish a reconciliation agreement. In fact, what I hear is the NDP leader being a little paternalistic in her approach to dictating what this agreement should look like.

I think the First Nations have the support and the capacity and the wisdom from all that has occurred to in fact articulate what is important to them within a reconciliation agreement, and that will be the approach.

I know that the Leader of the NDP thinks that she is most knowledgeable in all of these areas; however, I think we'll listen to the concerns that the First Nations have and, from that, we'll build a reconciliation agreement.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's unfortunate that the member opposite is kind of gender-blind, but that's fine. I haven't been called "paternalistic" before, but that's fine.

The issue at play is not what kind of frame the minister would like to put on it. All I asked the minister was what the Government of Yukon's position is as articulated by this government — by this Premier, by this minister — with respect to free, prior and informed consent. I asked if that would be the basis upon which he would be willing to enter into the discussions of reconciliation, because unless he is, then I would suggest that they will be very short conversations.

Perhaps another way to go about this would be to ask the Premier, the minister responsible, if he supports call to action 47. This is articulated in the chapter challenge of the reconciliation. So I'm asking the Premier a direct question. The call to action says — and I'll just read it: "We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts".

Will the Premier stand here today and confirm for Yukoners that the territorial government repudiates the concepts used to justify European sovereignty over indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*, and that it will reform those laws, government policies and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts?

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: What I will say, Madam Chair, is that we will share the work that was done — the report that was done — by the deputy ministers. We will share that with the First Nations. That is what our plan is and then we will work together to chart a path forward for this territory. That's

exactly what we're going to do. We will articulate the work that has been accomplished. We'll put forward some recommendations on how we move forward with reconciliation. We will sit down and listen to the concerns and suggestions of the First Nations, and that's what we'll do, Madam Chair. That's precisely how the original agreements also came to fruition — it was by having a negotiation and working together to come to those agreements, and that's what we're going to do.

Ms. Hanson: That's interesting — a reframing of history, Madam Chair. For the record, the territorial Premier is not prepared to repudiate the concepts used to justify European sovereignty over indigenous people and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and he's not prepared to reform the laws, the policies and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts. The Premier is then reaffirming that the litigation strategy that he has taken so far — to basically challenge every aspect of those final agreements that he has said he respects. He is going to continue that strategy, because it is rooted in all of those aspects that the TRC has asked him to repudiate. That's unfortunate.

Madam Chair, I'll move on to the last part with respect to the minister's press release of June 8, 2015. He said in that press release that, in addition to engaging the language — actually, I'll just quote it, in case he has forgotten: "The government also intends to engage with First Nation partners and Yukon communities in determining next steps" — with respect to reconciliation. I have asked this several times: When and what aspects of the Yukon communities, in addition to First Nation leaders and First Nation communities — apart and aside from First Nation programming, which he's quite happy to list for hours at a time and which is quite insulting and patronizing — and that is gender appropriate — what and when will he commit to engaging with the other governments and community groups, civil society and faith communities that are such important partners and have played a lead role in pushing and prodding governments to support the work of the TRC?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: For the record, I will address the opening statements and the last question. The NDP leader is simply wrong. Her assertions are wrong and they are incorrect, but that's what we expect from the NDP. We will continue to work with First Nations. We will share our document with them first, because that is respectful. That's what I said we would do. I met with the chiefs today; we're meeting again shortly.

That work will begin with the First Nations and, at that point, once we get to a point in that process, we will then, with First Nations, chart out how we will do further engagement with everybody. As I have said many times, the responsibilities for reconciliation exist with all of us — as individuals, as groups, as service clubs, as religious organizations — with everybody.

I know that it was upsetting for the Liberals and the NDP to listen to me list just some of the areas where the government works every day with First Nations. I know it was

upsetting. It was only two hours of listing some of the accomplishments — some of the things where we work on a day-to-day basis with First Nations. Of course they don't want to listen to that, because they are looking for antagonism and looking for one or two things that they can find to try to throw in the air, but I believe that, in the end, Yukoners are smarter than that and they will have to decide whether the strategy of fear, the strategy of maybe not telling the truth, maybe not being accurate.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think we could probably look through the record. There aren't very many days in this House that we don't have to talk about the Leader of the NDP talking off-mic.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Premier has just accused me of lying, of uttering a deliberate falsehood. If he wants to say that, then he can say it, but he is not allowed to do that in this Legislative Assembly.

Chair: Mr. Elias, on the point of order.

Mr. Elias: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was listening to the debate very keenly, actually, and the Premier did not identify any individual. He identified the party, and this is not personalizing the debate at all, and it's his opinion. I consider it a dispute among members.

Chair's ruling

Chair: This isn't as clear-cut as some of our conversations. I would ask members to refrain from using language around untruthfulness.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I believe that the opposition's assertions are wrong and not factually correct. We hear that on a day-to-day basis. Of course they are upset when we talk about the accomplishments we've done. Of course they are upset when they see the efforts that are being exhibited by First Nations and Yukon government to work together right across our governments, whether it's from health care to justice to tourism to infrastructure — right across the board.

I did just provide only a couple of hours' worth of examples to remind our listeners out there in Yukon, and to perhaps enlighten the opposition on some of the tremendous work that is done, not just by the elected officials in the government, but the genuine efforts and commitment made by officials in the departments every day to move forward to ensure that we are working to do the best that we can and make Yukon truly the best place to live, work, play and raise a family. I know that doesn't ring well for the opposition.

Ms. Hanson: I think that it's unfortunate, and I would really recommend to the Premier to actually read the Truth and Reconciliation's executive summary. He will be aware that, in the middle of December, the full five volumes will be coming out.

One of the things that — I think perhaps many who commented to me, after that infamous afternoon — was a real sense of insult and a sense that, despite years and years of working hard to recognize that the pre-colonial relationship that has existed and has so badly tainted the relationship between non-aboriginal and aboriginal people in this country, it is still there — the notion that public monies that represent the public good of all Yukoners — First Nation and non-First Nation — should be listed as somehow the largesse of government giving to the First Nations. Madam Chair, it rang so much like the language that we heard about from Duncan Campbell Scott and others.

It's time for us to move on from that history. I will restate that, for the record, this Premier has been unwilling to declare how he will give effect to several key calls to action — most notably the call to action 47 and the ones with respect to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* — and how he, as the Premier responsible for the public government of this territory setting the public government policies with respect to how we will reassess our approach to litigation, our approach to the underpinnings of the laws and the legal system — that it is a choice that he is making to reject those.

It's great to see the work done and I really applaud First Nation leadership having the patience and the perseverance to work with this government, to focus on those aspects of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report that do speak to the importance of governments — First Nation governments and non-First Nation governments — working together to find common ground, to deliver on the commitments and the responsibilities that we have for all of our citizens. But, until and unless public governments deal with these serious challenges with respect to how we have carried forward the baggage of history, with how we view the law as our weapon — as it has been demonstrated by this government — then we will be in a really unrelenting challenge with respect to giving effect, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission said, to the challenge of reconciliation.

Madam Chair, the minister did make comments about some changes. If he could just elaborate the two figures that he quoted with respect to the Ross River Dena consultation and the “reconciliation agreement” — in quotes, because that was all it was referred to, as a “reconciliation agreement” with the Kaska — and if he could provide an update to this House on those consultations and that agreement.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again, I will state for the record that it is about respect. The report that I asked deputies to create, immediately following the calls to action by the technical review committee — we will share them first with Yukon First Nation chiefs. That was the plan and I will not deviate from that plan.

Madam Chair, as to the question on the agreements — I will not negotiate on the floor of this Assembly. We have provided funding for the First Nations. We continue to work with Ross River Dena Council, with Liard First Nation and the Kaska Dena Council on their transboundary, and also with

White River First Nation. Those negotiations are ongoing. We continue to meet and have dialogue.

As I mentioned earlier, this is how we come to agreements — allowing everybody to put their concerns on the table and their aspirations and priorities. From that, we have a negotiation. I appreciate the willingness and realization of the importance of this on everybody's behalf, on behalf of the chiefs and councils, and also acknowledge the work of those negotiators who are doing the due diligence in working toward the creation of these reconciliation agreements.

Ms. Hanson: Could the minister tell this House whether or not the discussions are at a framework stage of negotiations? Have they sketched out the broad parameters? I absolutely understand and respect the integrity of the subject matters for negotiation, but the process — it's helpful for citizens, both First Nation and non-First Nation citizens, to understand. I raise this question, Madam Chair, because I hear the question being raised not just within this legislative Chamber.

Are we at a framework or is there an agreement in principle? Is there an end point for the negotiations? It is a reasonable and standard procedure in negotiations to go through phases, to have the broad parameters laid out in the framework agreement for negotiations, to move toward an agreement in principle. What stage are we at?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I can report that, with White River First Nation, we are at more substantial negotiations at this point. We are still in a lesser state with the Kaska First Nation — Liard and Ross River. They are still a little bit more on the preliminary side.

Having said that, there has been regular engagement, consistent engagement, and we will continue to meet with the negotiators — officials representing the First Nations — and continue to meet with the elected officials as well. We had a meeting with the chiefs of the Kaska not very long ago — I don't know exactly, but probably two or three weeks ago — so there is communication that exists at the elected officials level, and also between negotiators representing all parties.

Mr. Silver: Thank you to the official from the department for her time today as well. I have just a couple of questions — back to the reconciliation talks, specifically with the White River First Nation, Liard First Nation and Ross River Dena Council.

We've already seen that we don't have a willingness to talk about what necessarily Cabinet has set for a mandate for these reconciliation talks specifically. However, can the minister responsible for ECO give us an update on how many negotiations sessions have actually happened, or a timeline for completion?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I don't have the exact number of meetings that have been held, and I don't have an end date for those negotiations. They are being done in a manner that is respectful of all parties, and we will work together to move forward on an agreement that all sides believe is important. The negotiators are doing their due diligence, sometimes with direction from chiefs and council as well. I again want to acknowledge the work that is being done. It is ongoing. It has

been regular, and when we have information to share publicly, we will certainly be excited to do that.

Mr. Silver: We are not getting many answers here today. Maybe the minister responsible for ECO can confirm how many meetings he has been to. How many negotiation sessions has he personally been to? Surely he could remember that.

I would also like to move on to the Ross River staking ban. In 2013, as you know, Madam Chair — the result of another legal battle — the Yukon government was under a court order to find a way to work with the Ross River Dena Council on what land will be available for staking in their traditional territory. Can the Premier confirm that this ban remains in place? If he could give us any new statements on the status of these negotiations, I think the people of Yukon are very interested in seeing where we are with this — or maybe even what outstanding items remain unsolved in order to lift the ban. We know that we are not going to negotiate in the Legislative Assembly, but I believe it's time for a report for the general public.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I can report that I have been to none of the actual negotiating meetings because I am not a negotiator. We have people who work on behalf of the government to fill that role, as do the First Nations, so I have gone to none of them.

I won't answer the question or talk about details of negotiations on the floor of this Assembly. They are ongoing discussions and, as I have mentioned, when there is something that is ready to be announced on behalf of the First Nation and Yukon government, we certainly will announce those announcements in due course as they appear to be ready to be announced.

Mr. Silver: There was one other unanswered question there as to whether or not the Premier can confirm that this ban on staking still remains in place on the traditional territory.

I will move on to resource royalty agreements. On October 29, 2012, the Premier announced the terms of a new resource royalty agreement with 11 self-governing Yukon First Nations that was agreed to. Since then, the question is: How many First Nations have actually signed the agreement? Is the new deal in force? When will the actual terms of the agreement be made public?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The staking ban that has been publicly announced multiple times is in place until early 2017. The work will continue and if there is an opportunity to change that date, then it will be announced at that time. We won't be negotiating here, but I can say that work is continuing as we go forward.

When it comes to the resource royalty sharing agreement, 10 First Nations of the 11 self-governing First Nations have signed the agreement. As a reminder, with the signing of an enhanced resource royalty sharing agreement with the federal government, I approached the First Nations with a proposal to provide them an opportunity to share in the additional royalties potential that would exist over and above the obligations that were agreed to in chapter 23 of the *Umbrella*

Final Agreement, which clearly lays out a formula for sharing of resource royalties. That was the premise on which we went forward. That work has been done, and 10 of the 11 First Nations chiefs have signed on to that document. Until we decide to trigger the second part of that royalty agreement, there is no essential change right now. What we did see was sort of an amalgamation where we had royalty sharing on oil and gas separate from mining and other resources. They are now all together so the Government of Yukon doesn't have to share in the first \$6 million of resource royalties and, until that time that we trigger the second part of the agreement, that will stay status quo.

Mr. Silver: There has been a lot of debate today alone, if not over the last couple of years, about the Yukon Forum. There were some comments today by the Premier about some meetings that are being had currently. I guess the question is: Is there a date set for the next Yukon Forum?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Here we go again, listening to the opposition speak out of both sides of their mouth. When there will be a Yukon Forum announced it will be announced jointly —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Order, please. Mr. Silver, on a point of order.

Mr. Silver: There is obviously inferring of false reference. We're asking a simple question here. When is the Yukon Forum? We're not mincing words. We're not speaking out of two sides of our mouths. We're asking a simple question.

Chair's ruling

Chair: I would ask that members — all members — refrain from using that term.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair's statement

Chair: Order, please. The Chair has made a ruling. Mr. Silver, can I have your attention please?

The Chair has made a ruling. That's the end of the discussion. Thank you.

Mr. Pasloski, please continue.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Chair. Of course, if I was to stand here and announce the date of a Yukon Forum, the accusation would then be that here goes that government again not working — telling First Nations how it's going to be.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Silver, on a point of order.

Mr. Silver: Again, the minister is referencing false motive here. He's putting words in my mouth as to what I would be doing in the future if he actually answered a question. Again, this is not going back to the other issue; this

is a new point of order about the same point of order, Madam Chair.

Chair: Thank you. Mr. Elias, on the point of order.

Mr. Elias: Madam Chair, this is, to me, simply a dispute among members. When you ask a hypothetical question on the floor of the Assembly, and the Hon. Premier is trying to answer the question, I mean, he has to simply speak with his other leaders.

Chair: Thank you.

Chair's ruling

Chair: This is a dispute among members. Mr. Pasloski, please continue.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Madam Chair, it's exactly what the case would be. If I announced a date for a Yukon Forum, the accusation would again be there about how that was handled. I told this House today on a couple of occasions that in fact I met with leadership today. I will be meeting with leadership again very shortly and when there is a Yukon Forum to be announced, it will be announced jointly with Yukon First Nations and that is how that process works.

That doesn't mean that there aren't ongoing discussions and ongoing communication at the leadership level, at the bilateral level and at the department level every day, Madam Chair. He is just sadly trying to find something I guess. We will continue to work with First Nations. We will respect their governance and we will, when there is a time and the place to agree upon a Yukon Forum — at that time we will announce it jointly.

Mr. Silver: So the answer to a very simple question as to has there been a date yet — the answer is no. A date has not been set and I thank the minister for his answer that a date has not been set.

I will continue another question on that. Will the minister confirm or will he make a commitment today to allow for equal representation from the territorial government and the First Nation governments for the agenda of the Yukon Forum? From what we hear, one of the reasons why we're not having a yearly Yukon Forum — which is legislated as you know, Madam Chair — is because of the agenda items. We see First Nations that would rather have a joint approach to the items on the agenda and that's not happening, and we haven't had a forum since 2012.

So will the minister make a commitment to share the responsibility of presenting an agenda for the forum when it does eventually happen?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I agree that when there is an agenda that is agreed upon by First Nations and Yukon government, that agenda can be publicly shared with everybody. Certainly my expectation is that when we move forward with the next Yukon Forum, there will be an agenda that is agreed upon by all parties.

Aboriginal Relations underexpenditure in the amount of \$54,000 agreed to

On Corporate Programs and Intergovernmental Relations

Mr. Silver: I have a couple of specific questions here. In July, the Executive Council Office issued a sole-source contract for \$50,000 to a company called Temple Scott. They specialize in crisis planning and management and lobbying, according to their website. The contract registry says that they are working on — and I quote: “government monitoring and advisory services.”

What is the company doing for the government and what is the purpose of this contract?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I believe the Leader of the Third Party articulated from their website what roles and functions and services they provide. I don't have anything to add to that.

Mr. Silver: We're looking for what services they are providing specific to this government, only because the project manager for this contract, according to the government registry, is the Premier's chief of staff. The contract was issued in July 2015.

Why is a contract issued by a public service being managed by the Premier's chief of staff?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This is not an anomaly, in terms of Intergovernmental Relations, to have such a contract signed by a member or the chief of staff of the Cabinet and caucus offices. To perform duties that report back that are important not just to the Cabinet and caucus offices, but indeed to IGR as well — and to intergovernmental relations that this government has with the past federal government and with the new and current federal government.

Mr. Silver: I find it interesting that the Premier doesn't think it is odd that a contract issued by the public service is being managed by a political appointment. That is very odd I think, Madam Chair.

Will the Premier table any product received by this government as a result of this work to justify that this is actually public work, as opposed to some kind of political appointment or contract? He doesn't want to talk about the details or the purpose of this contract, so again, it begs more questions.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The one thing that is not odd is that the Leader of the Third Party finds everything odd. I guess that's certainly one consistency that we do have from the Third Party. I think that ensuring strong relationships between the territorial government and federal government — in fact, I'm sure all Yukoners would believe — is in the best interests of Yukoners.

We will continue to work with our partners in the federal government.

Of course, we are aware that I just had the pleasure of attending the first First Ministers' meeting in almost seven years. In fact, I had the opportunity and the leadership to be able to respond on behalf of all premiers at the press conference following the meeting with the Prime Minister, using that opportunity as well to add to the telephone meetings that have occurred to actually have some face-to-face meetings with ministers as well. Continuing to work in a spirit of collaboration is a priority for this government and is a priority for the new government as well.

We will continue to build relationships with the new government. We will continue to ensure that the new federal government understands the priorities of this territory. Certainly, there is some great alignment between the priorities of the federal government and the territorial government. Certainly, greater investments in health funding are a priority for this government. Enhanced funding in infrastructure is important to this government and is also a priority to the new federal government. We'll continue to work together with the government and with our Member of Parliament to ensure that we can maximize those relationships to the benefit of all Yukoners.

Mr. Silver: I think what's odd is the Premier doesn't comprehend the job of the opposition. We are asking questions because we have a contract here that has been sole-sourced — \$50,000. This company specializes in crisis planning. The Premier refuses to answer any questions as to why the government needs this. Yet, the name that is on the contract here — the project manager — is a political appointment. Many questions are begged here — and for the record, the Premier does not want to answer any of them. He wants to talk about an open and accountable government and open relationships he has with the federal government, but yet on the floor of this House, when the opposition asks questions, he will not answer what the point is of having his chief of staff being the project manager for a contract — a public service contract. He also will not produce any of the documents or any of the results of this work.

I guess we will just leave it at that and I'll move on to one more question I have here under Corporate Programs. There is a contract in the contract registry for Eyford Macaulay Shaw for \$40,000 for — and I quote: “negotiator representing the Yukon government”. What is that contract for? Specifically, why are we contracting out negotiations, I guess is the main question for that; is this not something that can be done in-house?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Back to the comments at the beginning prior to the question. I think I was quite clear in answering the question. Unfortunately, he didn't want to hear what the answer was. I think as he described the Temple Scott company — they provided many different services other than the one that he quoted at the beginning of his last question. As for the contract for the negotiator, I'm not familiar with that and we'll have to get back to the member with the details on that contract.

Ms. White: I have a couple of questions about the Youth Directorate, if I may.

The Youth Directorate supports youth leadership and encourages youth engagement in social, economic and cultural activities aiming to improve the overall services to young people; increase youth awareness of initiatives throughout Yukon; increase youth involvement programs for youth; develop youth leadership skills so that youth can contribute to their communities in a positive way; and improve the health of Yukon youth.

The directorate supplies core funding to four youth organizations: the Boys and Girls Club, the Youth of Today

Society, Bringing Youth Towards Equality and most recently, the Heart of Riverdale. Each of these organizations do their best to support different aspects of the youth community and their programming, and target audiences are very different and unique to each of the organizations. I think it's important to note and to acknowledge that the work that these groups do is preventive. The time and effort that they put in pays off in the long run, with healthier, more engaged and informed youth. It's harm reduction, for sure.

In the 2009-10 funding for the original three organizations, the funding was increased to its current standing of \$220,000 per year. In this year's budget, an additional \$140,000 went to the Heart of Riverdale. To be clear, this is money that's very well spent.

Has the department investigated as to whether this level of funding is able to sustain the work provided by these organizations? Are they able to accomplish the work that they have done in the past and continue to do with that core funding?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: For the record, there are 19 territory-wide youth serving groups that are included in this revote request. They are: the Beaver Creek Community Club, Boys and Girls Club, Bringing Youth Towards Equality, Carcross Recreational Board, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, the City of Dawson, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Kluane First Nation, Association franco-yukonnaise, Mount Lorne Community Association, Marsh Lake Community Society, Selkirk First Nation, Tagish Community Association, the Town of Faro, the Town of Watson Lake, Ross River, the Village of Carmacks, the Village of Mayo and the Village of Teslin.

I would have to say that I'm in agreement with the member opposite about the good work that these organizations all do. I'm not sure if she used the word “preventive”, but in one of my recent community conversations, I certainly had some people from the social economy, who, to me, continue — well, I'm not surprised and it's not just in this conversation, but in all of them — at the level of commitment that people have to ensure that we live in the best communities and the best territory that there is. Their commitment — their giving to help others — is certainly tremendous and I applaud each of those organizations — the Heart of Riverdale, Boys and Girls Club, Youth of Today and the BYTE empowering youth society for the good work that they do; the commitment they have to creating that positive outlook; empowering youth; and providing leadership roles for youth. I believe that is very important and we're very proud — not only of supporting this — but also enhancing the funding not very long ago to these organizations.

We had a very good conversation about many things, including the funding and how the funding works and some of the challenges that exist with reporting of the money spent and some of the opportunities that can exist around one of my interests, and that's really about how we look at successes. When we make an investment, whether it's in the Youth Directorate or whether it's wherever we are in the government, how do we ensure that we're getting the best

value for our dollars that we invest on behalf of Yukoners because it's Yukoners' money?

I very much enjoyed the conversation that I had and appreciate the passion and am grateful and thankful that we have such wonderful people who are out there, dedicated and committed to working with today's youth. We will continue to work with them. It's a government that is comprised of a public service that is professional, engaging and trying to make this a better place, and we will continue to work with those organizations, work with officials to chart our plan forward.

Ms. White: Is the recent funding enhancement that the Premier is referring to — is that the change that was made in the 2009-10 budget year?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I don't have the year in front of me. I know it wasn't long ago that we, I believe, doubled the amount of money that went to those organizations. I think it's also very important to note that currently the Youth Directorate provides annual contributions of over \$1.2 million to youth-serving organizations.

We're very proud of the investments that we are making on behalf of youth in this territory.

Ms. White: Just to let the Premier know, those changes happened in the 2009-10 — where the funding was increased.

My original question was: Has the department looked into whether or not this level of funding is able to sustain the work provided by these organizations?

Often we have non-government organizations that take the place of government programs. They are the social safety net. The work that the Boys and Girls Club does, the Youth of Today Society, Bringing Youth Towards Equality, and most recently the Heart of Riverdale — has the government investigated whether or not they are able to sustain the work that they do with the funding that they have been given by government?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly this government looks at all of the requests and all of the opportunities that we have, and certainly there is always room to do more, but I have to say unequivocally that we live in a tremendous jurisdiction where there is tremendous support by public government in many, many areas.

When it comes to budgeting, this is a government that views its responsibilities to deliver programs and services very seriously. We have — as we always do — looked at all aspects of government. I know that the NDP think there is a money tree and there is not really any sense of fiscal responsibility to manage Yukoners' money, but I believe that Yukoners want their government to manage their money and are very comfortable with knowing that, in good times and in times that are not quite as good, this government will continue to focus on ensuring that we can deliver programs and services, and that we can continue to invest in capital projects that create jobs and training opportunities for youth today, while building infrastructure that we'll use for many years to come.

As it is in every budget, it is a balance of how much money we have for health care, how much money we have for

building roads, how much money we have for tourism marketing, how much money we have for wildlife monitoring. All of it collectively is important. We continue to work to ensure — and acknowledge the work of all the ministers in their due diligence to ensure — that we continue to deliver on all those areas.

We're very thankful for the great work that this public government in this territory delivers on behalf of Yukoners every day.

Ms. White: An interesting point to put out to the universe right now is that our wages, on a yearly basis, are increased along with inflation. As the cost of living increases, so do our wages go along with that. We're lucky that we're not in a union-negotiating position and have to wait a long number of years for that to happen. It's automatic.

My question is: Has the level of funding increased with the rate of inflation since 2009 for youth organizations?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think the member opposite can answer that question. All she simply has to do is go back and look at the records from previous years to answer that question herself, in terms of what the funding has been. Again I will reiterate that, in the current fiscal year, \$1.2 million was invested by this government in youth-related activities. We'll stand up loud and proud to that every day.

Ms. White: I'm not quite sure what to do with that last answer. I can't answer the question, because I have gone over the budgets. Unlike the minister, who was unable to tell me when those changes were made — and they happened in the 2009-10 budget year — there actually has been no increase for that core funding. There hasn't. It has been the same, which is really hard to work with, within the NGO community. Unfortunately, things don't stay static; things increase. That's why there's inflation.

Has the department spoken to those organizations about the level of funding? Is the minister aware that, last year, the Boys and Girls Club had to crowdsource to make sure that their after-school program could continue? Does the Youth Directorate ask youth organizations as to whether or not they're adequately funded for the programs that they run — the preventive programs that they run, I might add — to ensure that they can continue offering those services to youth?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again, I will reiterate the appreciation and acknowledgement of the great work that's done by all these organizations that provide services to Yukon's youth. I applaud their ingenuity as well because, unlike the opposition, which just thinks there's a money tree and the government can just continue to pour the money into all, I want to applaud the Boys and Girls Club for their ingenuity in creating their own revenue source to be able to supplement.

I sadly have to again publicly acknowledge the off-mic remarks of the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Madam Chair, the Boys and Girls Club has actually created a revenue-generator through daycare. I applaud them for looking outside the box and finding ways to enhance the money they have to deliver the good programs and services that they have, and the opportunity to continue to expand

those services by looking for ways to enhance their revenue stream through the social economy.

I am familiar with the work they have done, and it's disappointing that the NDP finds it disturbing or that they would oppose an NGO going forward in actually being creative in finding ways to generate more income. This government will applaud that.

Ms. White: I'm not sure if I mentioned yet that I'm surprised by the level of contention around the Youth Directorate and the questions I'm asking. It's interesting that the minister — I'm not sure that he understands how much time an executive director spends trying to fundraise to make sure that all the ends meet, so that, instead of having to cut the after-school program, or instead of having to close the centre when youth need it the most, they can be open.

The minister said that they take seriously — and they look at all requests. Is the minister aware of a funding request, an increase for core funding, from BYTE in 2014?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: All of these groups that provide services to our youth in this community and in communities across this territory play an integral role in developing leadership opportunities and having a secure place for kids to feel welcome. It is certainly very important work that is done by these organizations — and not only organizations. We also acknowledge the work of the many volunteers who are engaged and are committed. A lot of times it's because their kids were involved, but their kids grow up and they continue to volunteer because they know how important it is. I think there are many of us on both sides of the House who do that sort of work on a regular basis.

We'll continue to work with those organizations — again, \$1.2 million in the current fiscal year that this government has committed. We'll continue to work with those groups, continue to look at ways that we can ensure that we can get the best value for every dollar that we have. Maybe there are some of those opportunities that exist out there as well.

That is our commitment as it is across the entire government — to continue to work with organizations that provide good work on behalf of the government or, quite honestly, do work that the government really doesn't have the expertise or capability to provide. It's a very integral part of our economy that we have here and we will continue to work with them. We will continue to listen to their concerns, and we'll do the best to manage all of those priorities, because there is no money tree. We will continue to ensure that we can continue to spend money responsibly and ensure that we don't start borrowing money today to pay for services today and mortgage that against our kids' future and provide them with the burden of having to pay for services that were provided in the past.

Ms. White: I think that the things that you can find through ATIPP are super fascinating — like this report.

In 2014, the Youth Directorate received requests for an increase in core funding. You might be surprised to know that this isn't just like a one-pager in saying that we need more money — without explanation. It's an in-depth report and it highlights a lot of things.

When I ask if the Youth Directorate and the minister — because he's in charge of the Executive Council Office — are aware if groups can operate within the funding that they receive — was the minister aware of the fact that, since 2009, the rent for that youth organization has doubled? It has gone up to twice as much as it was in 2009. Is the minister aware of issues like that in this request for an increase in core funding?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I use the example of the Boys and Girls Club, which has thought outside the box and created a revenue stream for them that's outside of the core funding that they receive from the government. I certainly applaud that, but I also remind the member opposite — and I know that certainly most of these organizations are very well aware of it — that sometimes there are opportunities to find sources of money outside of the Youth Directorate, to find funding from different departments based on the programs that they want to run because, of course, we offer and provide a myriad of support vehicles — whether it's through Justice or whether it's through Health and Social Services or Economic Development.

There are many opportunities for organizations to look for other revenue streams, other sources of income — not only through partnerships and creating some revenue through the private sector, but also perhaps by looking at other departments to see whether some of their goals, aspirations, projects or programs that they want to deliver fit the criteria of some of the funding that is available through another department.

Chair: 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. We are resuming line-by-line debate of Executive Council Office, Corporate Programs and Intergovernmental Relations.

Ms. White: Just before the break, the Premier mentioned that there were other pools of money that could be accessed through different departments. Is the Premier aware of restrictions that are sometimes tied to that money? Is he aware of restrictions that might be tied to that money?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I guess the answer to that would be yes. I have talked to a number of those people. It's not just within the Youth Directorate, but it's in different programs. There are some frustrations when there are programs that have money for a program for that year.

It's not core funding or long-term funding. There are challenges that exist in how you re-frame your application for subsequent years, so I think there are opportunities to continue to work — between officials and organizations — to see how we can be most effective at providing the funding for programs, but also looking at the programs and ensuring that we're getting great value for them and that if there's a program that isn't as successful, there's an opportunity to re-

deploy that money for another program that may provide more benefit to students.

On that as well, I also have to reiterate that, when it comes to those organizations — such as BYTE — empowering youth — they have core funding. Within that core funding — because it is core funding — they make the decisions on how to spend that money as well. I think that is the other part of the opportunity — for organizations such as those to be able to look at how exactly they utilize that money.

While I'm up, Madam Chair, I wanted to clarify with regard to a question earlier from the Leader of the Third Party, who asked about a consulting contract for \$40,000, I believe it was. I think he listed a firm and the spelling I wasn't familiar with, but it was actually for a negotiator. His name is Doug Eyford, who is a well-respected negotiator and has a very good relationship with the Kaska, and we did supply a contract to employ Mr. Eyford in some of our Kaska negotiations. He also did some significant work for the federal government not very long ago, in terms of providing recommendations on a path forward to see that there was a relationship — better acceptance for some of the large-scale projects that were being debated or are currently still being debated. That contract was for Mr. Eyford to provide those services in part of our negotiations with the Kaska.

Ms. White: Is the minister aware that no Yukon government funding provides administration funding on top of projects — that all of the money that is sourced for project funding is reported down to the dollar and it can't get redistributed to cover things like wages or the costs of keeping the door open?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again I would say that I appreciate the work of not only these organizations with youth, but all those many organizations that work and support various aspects of Yukon life. Again I will say that, in the current fiscal year, this government is committing \$1.2 million to youth-related activities.

Ms. White: Is the minister aware that all project funding that is applied for is only able to be used for those projects, that it can't be relied on to pay things like staff wages, it can't be used for rent, it can't be used for utilities and it is solely for the project — and that the groups that are looking Outside and trying to raise funds in different ways are definitely tied to how that funding is dispensed?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think the essence of project funding is that: it's to fund projects. We do provide money for wages and administrative costs through core funding but, when it comes to projects, that money is designated for the actual project. Again, this government has committed \$1.2 million this year for youth-related activities.

Ms. White: So understanding that project funding is only for projects, and that the core funding is supposed to cover the day-to-day costs and keeping the door open, what suggestions does the minister have for youth organizations that are applying for funding for projects to make sure that they can get out into the communities? How would the minister suggest they cut down their day-to-day expenses?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again, I guess it speaks to the lack of respect by the other party — in terms of how they would manage such things. I'm not going to tell these organizations that work hard what they should spend their money on; what decisions they will make. We'll leave that to them to make those decisions.

I will say though that we continue to invest significant money into youth funding — \$1.2 million in this current year.

Ms. White: In other documents I received through access to information — is the Premier aware that, within his department, the suggestion has been made that staff be cut in order to extend the budget?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I again will say that I will not dictate to organizations how they should spend the money that they have. I applaud the Boys and Girls Club for thinking outside the box and creating a revenue stream outside of the core funding they receive to help them be able to provide more and more services to the people they provide services to and support.

I continue to applaud that good work. I encourage the organizations to continue to work with officials in seeing how we can all do a better job of ensuring that we get the most value for every dollar that we spend. I enjoyed some of the conversations where we've had discussions of these things.

Again I will say that this government is spending \$1.2 million on youth-directed services in this current fiscal year.

Ms. White: I'll just remind the minister that, although he says that he won't personally tell people how to spend the money, it has been suggested by people within his department that one way to be able to afford to keep the door open is by cutting staff. I would like to point out the obvious, which is that staff is there to run programs and, with fewer staff, they have fewer programs.

In the report that was submitted to ask for the wage increase, there was a comparison done between non-profit organizations in Yukon and Outside non-profit organizations, as far as the income earned. Is the minister aware of those differences?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I again will say that I will not tell these organizations how to spend the money that they have. I will applaud those organizations that look for ingenious ways to be able to generate more revenue to provide those services that they have or to provide comments in how we can work together in a more efficient manner to ensure that dollars are maximized and put to the best use in providing that programming for youth.

I think that in a jurisdiction as small as this one; that this government has committed \$1.2 million to youth programs — well, it should be and I know is applauded.

Ms. White: So in answer to the question I asked the minister — and he didn't respond — the difference is about \$10,000 per local NGO to Outside NGO as far as yearly wages. The really interesting point is the difference between that and government of similar — so we're talking about people working with these organizations, who have university degrees because they specialize in youth and there are a lot of different kinds of challenges that go along with that. There is a

difference of \$30,000 on average between what a person working with an NGO receives and what someone in a similar position in government receives.

Does the minister think that kind of discrepancy in work — I would say that equal work is equal pay, but it's not the case. Does the minister have any thoughts on that?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again, I'm always moved by the passion that the people exhibit in the support of their community, ensuring that it's the best place to live, working in any area. Whether it's with youth or working with people with disabilities or just volunteering and helping at the cross-country ski club or wherever they are, they help ensure that youth have great opportunities and that we live in truly the best place in this country. I'm always moved by the passion of all of these people and I'm very proud of the money that we are committing in this territory for Yukon's youth. Through these great organizations and the support — I listed earlier a number of organizations in communities that are benefiting as a result of this supplementary budget as well — \$1.2 million this year. I think we should all be loud and proud and appreciative of that. Certainly in a jurisdiction of this size, that is a significant amount of money in investment.

Of course that is not the only revenue stream that there is. There are many other youth programs that are funded or projects that are funded through Justice, through Health, through Economic Development — any of these departments. We will continue to do that good work.

Ms. White: Is the minister willing to direct the Youth Directorate to have conversations with these organizations to see if the funding is adequate; if there is a way to look at other ways of project funding and helping with administrative costs? Is the minister willing to investigate as to whether or not our youth organizations are funded enough to be able to continue offering the programs that they offer currently?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Project funding will continue to be driven for projects. Core funding will continue to be flexible enough for the organization to decide how to spend that money.

Ms. White: Again, is the Premier willing to direct the Youth Directorate to have conversations with those youth organizations to find out if they have adequate core funding to do what they are doing? To be perfectly honest, Madam Chair, no one is living lavishly in the youth world. There are no fancy offices with the best equipment. We are talking about people who use tape to make things stick together so they can continue offering the programs and the help that they do for the youth organizations. Is the minister willing to investigate as to whether or not they are adequately funded to offer the programs that they currently do?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think that for the member opposite to imply that they need permission to talk to these organizations is insulting, quite honestly. They talk to these organizations on a daily basis. They work with these organizations. They support these organizations, and I applaud the work of the people who run the Youth Directorate and the great job that they do. They will continue to have discussions and look at opportunities to do things better. Quite honestly,

as I said, for her to imply that the people within the Youth Directorate aren't talking to these organizations is insulting to those people who work in there.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Ms. White: That's not what I implied. I asked the minister to direct his department to find out if there was adequate funding.

Chair's ruling

Chair: I would say there is no point of order. This is a dispute among members.

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Chair. I actually take a certain amount of offence to the Premier's allegations that I am accusing the Youth Directorate of not doing good work. I think they do incredibly good work. The interesting part is that the directorate itself isn't the one who says that this is how much money we have to work with this year. That's set by the government caucus. They decide around the Cabinet table where the funding is going to go. My question is whether or not that is adequate funding and whether or not it is fully doing what the hope is of the Youth Directorate. The list of what the Youth Directorate tries to do is pretty impressive. The organizations that are receiving that core funding are part of making sure that it is received.

My question again is: Will the minister undertake a review of the core funding to those four organizations to make sure that it is adequate for them to continue offering the programs that they offer?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We will continue to look at all the funding that this government provides across the entire organization, across all departments, as we do on an annual basis. We will focus our money strategically across all departments, whether it's the French Language Services Directorate, the Women's Directorate, Education, Highways and Public Works, Energy, Mines and Resources, Health and Social Services, Justice, Economic Development, Yukon Housing, Environment or Community Services — all of the departments. We will continue to work to ensure that we're accountable to the Yukon public and that we are spending Yukoners' money wisely. I am proud to say that this government has shown by their record that we continue to be good managers of Yukon's finances in good times and times that are not so good. We have a vision for this territory to move forward for the long-term success and prosperity of this territory, or whether it is through our vision for a new hydroelectric facility, whether it's establishing the priority of seeing our long-term vision of becoming a net contributor, or whether it's changing our education to ensure that our students are at the centre of focus of all the work and that student outcomes are the priority, and creating multiple pathways to success.

We have a tremendous amount of work, whether we're working with First Nations and building capacity, or

partnering with them on areas of joint priority, whether we're signing intergovernmental accords. We continue to invest in all of these areas and we continue to do it in a responsible manner, because that's what Yukoners expect. We're very proud to continue to provide funding to all these areas.

I will say that I am very proud to say that our annual contribution to youth-serving organizations is in excess of \$1.2 million this year.

Ms. White: Is the minister suggesting that, if the budget of the Youth Directorate were to be increased to help these organizations cover their core operating needs, the money wouldn't be used in a responsible manner?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will not accept words being put into my mouth, Madam Chair. I did not say that, and of course that is a hypothetical question and elicits no further response.

Ms. White: The minister was just talking about how they responsibly manage money and how they choose where it goes — the Yukon Housing Corporation, Department of Environment, energy projects and all those things — so my question is: Is increasing the Youth Directorate budget to help assist with the core funding for these organizations not a responsible use of government money?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As a responsible government, we will continue to manage Yukon's finances to ensure that we can provide the goods and services that Yukoners have come to expect in all areas, whether it's the Youth Directorate, whether it's the roads or bridges that we're fixing or repairing or building, or whether it's services for victims in Justice or whether it's through health care, or whether it's investments to try to grow our private sector economy, whether it's supporting our municipalities and their infrastructure or ensuring that we protect our wildlife and our environment. We have many responsibilities; we have many commitments. We'll meet all of those priorities in a responsible manner financially.

Ms. White: The Premier — maybe two or three previous statements ago — talked about strategically focusing the money. We both agree that money that goes toward the youth organizations, through the Youth Directorate, is preventive. It's preventive in Justice costs; it's preventive in health costs, when we look toward alcohol and drug treatment.

My question is: Does it not make sense to strategically focus more money into the Youth Directorate to make sure that our youth organizations are fully funded?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Madam Chair, I think it's very important that we strategically focus all of the money that we invest across the territory.

Ms. White: Does the minister think that .9 of one percent of the overall budget is adequate to put toward the Youth Directorate?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This government is providing over \$1.2 million to youth-serving organizations. We'll be interested to hear what percentage of the budget an NDP government would put toward youth and where they would take the money from. Sorry, I forgot — they didn't have a plan.

Ms. White: Speaking about not having a plan, can the minister tell me what happened to the bullying behaviours committee?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The responsibility for bullying within the government has been the responsibility under the Department of Education and I'm sure that the minister would gladly like to speak to the member at some opportune time on that subject.

Ms. White: Was that committee set up on the request of the minister?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Again, I will defer to my last answer and say that questions with regard to bullying is through the Department of Education and the minister will be glad to answer those questions.

Ms. White: Has the minister, in his role as the head of the Executive Council Office and then, in turn, of the Youth Directorate — has he personally met with youth organizations to discuss some of their concerns or the challenges that they face?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: If the member opposite was actually listening to the responses to the questions, she would have heard that in one of my community conversations I had, where the focus was on the social economy, we had a member from one of those funding organizations there and they were a very active part of the conversation and certainly it was — as I mentioned — I acknowledge the passion in all of these meetings and the people who are continuing to work hard to make this territory the best place for all of us. I applaud that work. I appreciate the opportunity to meet in such an environment to have open and frank discussions, and look forward to continuing those discussions.

Ms. White: Would the minister be willing to invite the representatives of the different youth organizations who run services the government doesn't run to a joint conversation with him to discuss the challenges that they face in running the programs and trying to make sure that they're there as the social safety net for youth?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As we have explained, we have hired someone to coordinate and facilitate these meetings. It has been the responsibility of that individual to speak to organizations and to come up with a list of people who really cross all political boundaries and points of view, again to be able to gather in an informal setting to have an open and frank discussion. Not all people want to go to a public meeting. Not all people want to write a letter to the editor. Some people would appreciate the opportunity to meet in such a setting. I have to say that it has exceeded my expectations and I have certainly enjoyed all of these conversations and will continue to do so.

Ms. White: It's unfortunate that the minister didn't listen to my question because my question wasn't about a public meeting. My question was about a meeting with the representatives of the youth organizations — so not a public forum, not letters to the editor, not in a public place — but a meeting with maybe him and his representatives to discuss the challenges that youth organizations in the territory face.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The mandate of the Youth Directorate is precisely that — to liaise with these organizations, to provide the support and to help them. That's exactly what they're doing. Again, I will applaud the work of the people within the Youth Directorate and it's disappointing that the member opposite feels that they are not capable of doing their job.

Ms. White: It's not that I have concerns about the work done by the Youth Directorate. I have concerns about the ministerial direction and the responsibility that the minister has as the figurehead of this. I thought that he would possibly jump at the chance to meet with youth organizations to understand what the reality is like on the ground and that maybe the minister would want to hear from them about the challenges and how they try to creatively raise money to fill the gaps in their core funding, and that maybe that conversation could help him decide as to whether or not he thought that those groups could get an increase in core funding. I have no criticisms for the staff of the Youth Directorate. I know that they do great community outreach. I know that they help the communities with the applications for funding. I know that.

My question was about the minister and the role that he could play in that. So if he would like to respond, I would like to hear it.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Members on this side of the House meet with individuals and groups on a daily basis, both formally and informally, because we're all very active in the community as well. I know that we will soon have the festival of trees this weekend. I know that a number of people on this side of the House will be at the Festival of Trees who pay for that ticket to support the Yukon Hospital Foundation and the good work that they do — like we do every year, Madam Chair.

We will continue to meet and discuss with individuals and with organizations, both on a formal process and also informally as well. As I mentioned, I certainly have enjoyed the feedback, the information, the ideas, the suggestions and the passion that I have heard from people through my community conversations. I believe that I have had — I'm not sure — probably 11 or 12 of them already and I look forward to more of those meetings in the near future.

Corporate Programs and Intergovernmental Relations in the amount of \$61,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Operation and Maintenance

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

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

On Capital Expenditures

On Strategic Corporate Services

On Old Crow Community Centre

Ms. Hanson: I appreciated the minister's explanation at the outset that this amount of \$900,000 capital contribution was a second installment of three that are being made toward an Old Crow community centre. In fact, I was at the Gwitchin gathering the summer before last when this announcement

was made and I know the community was very pleased to see this, and I share the pleasure that the Government of Yukon made.

The question I have is really about the sourcing of this funding. I would ask the minister to confirm for the record how the determination was made to contribute \$2.7 million to an Old Crow community centre, and how and why the appropriation for the centre comes from the Strategic Corporate Services budget of the Executive Council Office.

I ask this for several reasons, Madam Chair. One is that it will hopefully alleviate the perception that this government tends to support the development of community recreational infrastructure in rural ridings only in those ridings that the Yukon Party holds, leaving such ridings as Mayo-Tatchun — which we have many times in this Legislative Assembly talked about the dire condition of the hockey rink there — and Klondike — which was again another photo op by a previous Yukon Party government — and so we know the long history of the Klondike and Dawson City's community recreation centre and their attempts to get assistance for renovations — and as well the riding of Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, where the community of Carcross has — and we've heard many times from the MLA from there. All those MLAs, unfortunately, are not members of the Yukon Party so it's hard for them to be able to explain, despite the fact that they make repeated entreaties on behalf of their citizens — all of whom are taxpayers of the territory — that this government has turned a deaf ear toward them.

I'm hoping the minister can provide an assurance that the same source of funding is available to all communities to replace, renovate or rebuild much-needed community recreational facilities, given that we've known the recreational facilities I've identified in these other ridings have been documented and made known to the government for many years.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The community of Old Crow has been working on a plan with the goal of creating a new community centre for many, many years. They created a non-profit. They have put in hundreds of thousands of their own money. I'm going to stop for a moment and recognize the hard work of the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin to support — long before the announcement of this money, he has been working on helping to deliver this community centre for his community, among other priorities that he has in that community, so I applaud the work that the MLA has done. I applaud the patience and the commitment of the community. They are investing their money into this facility as well.

I'm also going to applaud the work of the Department of Community Services and the work that they're doing on the ground every day in all the communities. We have some incredible people who liaison with these communities, whether they're municipalities or whether they're local advisory councils, to get an understanding of the challenges, priorities and opportunities that exist, and then we work forward with them through a planning process to be able to meet some of those needs. We heard the Minister of Community Services talking about that earlier today.

Certainly we're excited with some of those other investments, such as a fire hall in Beaver Creek and now the construction of a new RCMP facility in Faro. Of course the Leader of the NDP didn't mention the commitment to the community of Carcross — \$2.7 million for them in support of the construction of their learning centre and the money as well for the new fire hall in that community. Unfortunately it's sad — and to remind the people listening as well — that the MLA for Carcross voted against those projects.

Ms. Hanson: I think the minister may have missed my question. I was asking the minister for assurance that those communities, which I named, in the ridings, which I named, where those community members have worked for many years — and I applaud the diligence of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin. The difference is — and this is why I was seeking the assurance — because there is a perception — and I want the minister to help alleviate the perception — that those rural ridings that are not held by Yukon Party incumbents have equal access to the source of funds. We fully understand that the normal course of proceedings is that these facilities would be funded through the Community Services department, but the government chose to make available funds from the Executive Council Office through the Strategic Corporate Services budget. I would simply ask the minister: Is it now the norm — or will it be possible for these same communities that have been waiting, planning and going without these needed services to also access funding from the Executive Council Office? It's a simple yes or no. We are absolutely clear about the mandate of Strategic Corporate Services. We are just pleased to see that it appears that the Premier has opened up a new avenue of funding. If so, I would like him to confirm that.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I want to thank all of those volunteers in all of these communities. As we go to these communities and meet with the individuals, sometimes you don't get a lot of people who turn out, but who you get to turn out are those people who are there for everything. They are there coaching the kids. They are there organizing. They are making sure that all of these events that make small communities work are successful. In fact, I'll applaud the work that you do as a supporter and a doer in the community of Watson Lake, Madam Chair, and I appreciate that.

The approach that was taken with Old Crow and the community centre is the same approach that we took with the learning centre in Carcross. Those commitments were made as a result of intergovernmental accords that were signed — government-to-government accords. As such, the decision was made to finance that money through the Executive Council Office simply because that is where the Aboriginal Relations branch sits — in the Executive Council Office. As this funding was a result of an intergovernmental accord, we thought it was prudent to capture the money and flow it through the Executive Council Office. Her assertions that government doesn't invest money in some ridings is absolutely unfounded and untrue. The record will show that — all the investments that we do throughout all the communities. I pointed out for the record two investments in Carcross with the learning centre — \$2.7 million — and the

millions of dollars that we are investing in a newer fire hall that, unfortunately, the member representing that community, a member of the NDP, has voted against those funds.

Ms. Hanson: Perhaps the minister opposite has just opened up an avenue then. I'm looking for positives here. The minister said that — I was asking questions about community recreational facilities. He has diverted it to learning centres, which are laudable and important as well, but he did open an opportunity here.

Can the minister confirm the ability to access funding through Strategic Corporate Services, where we see great partnerships already in these rural communities? So perhaps if the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Dawson City wanted to work together, would that be a mechanism, through an accord, that they would be able to — on behalf of those joint communities — see a recreational facility because, as we know, people work together in communities, they play together and they raise families together?

We're looking for ways and mechanisms, Madam Chair, to respect those relationships and to find ways to get around the seemingly impossible hurdles that these communities have faced so far in accessing money through Community Services to address much-promised — and, in some cases, many years of outstanding promises — by this Yukon Party government.

If the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the LAC in Carcross entered into an agreement — and, on behalf of that joint agreement, part of the accord with the First Nation — would that be an access point for the government — and similarly, the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation and the Village of Carmacks?

I asked the minister to outline the basis of the determination and to provide assurance that there wasn't any intention to exclude non-Yukon Party ridings, because we know that this was how it was done in the past. Anybody who knows the old ways of doing old patronage politics — we know that this government doesn't want to go there and doesn't want to be accused of that. I'm looking for opportunities to allow the government to provide opportunities for everybody in the community so that they can, as he says — how frustrating to be a volunteer in Carmacks last winter, wanting to work with the kids to play hockey and knowing you couldn't do it because it was unsafe, in case that bloody beam fell on your head at the rink.

Madam Chair, my question was pretty straightforward. I asked the minister to provide an assurance that the other communities that I have outlined would be able to — and perhaps this is the way of doing it — access funds through Strategic Corporate Services, Capital, Vote 2. It's simple — it's "yes" or "no" — and then we can move on.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We continue to work with all the communities. Prior to the Building Canada 1 infrastructure money that was a result of the massive economic downturn that occurred globally, the Government of Canada came forward with significant funding for infrastructure. Dollars were matched 75 percent to 25 percent — 75 percent for the federal government and 25 percent for the territorial government.

As a result of that investment over the past few years, we've seen a total investment in Yukon of a quarter of a billion dollars, including roads and bridges, providing clean drinking water for residents, providing waste-water treatment, solid waste — in many areas have we provided significant investments.

We are very proud of those investments. We only have to scan the news on some nights to look at areas in other parts of the country that certainly have not been as fortunate. Those decisions were made prudently. They were made responsibly. They were made in a manner to ensure that there was a maximum benefit to Yukoners, Yukon businesses and opportunities for training.

As we now roll out and we know there's a commitment from the federal government for enhanced infrastructure and a willingness to find a process to expedite those dollars, we will work with the federal government. In fact, one of the meetings I held in Ottawa was with the new minister responsible for infrastructure. We talked about those projects and those priorities and the fact that we have projects that are ready to go.

We'll continue to work with the federal government. We'll continue to work with those communities because that's how those projects were identified. It was through conversations, through the Department of Community Services and through the leadership of the minister that we were able to organize and hear from the communities what their priorities were. We'll continue to invest, along with Canada, through an infrastructure program, to ensure that those investments are made throughout the territory.

We're very proud of those investments. We're very proud of the fact that we can make those massive infrastructure investments without creating an economic downturn in terms of fiscal management for the territory. We'll continue to work and listen to communities to hear what their priorities are. Then we'll work with our partners, such as the federal government, to see that we can make those investments. There are investments that are needed across every community in this territory. We will work with the communities to determine what their top priorities are, and then try as best we can to expedite those processes to have that money flowing as quickly as possible so we can see shovels in the ground and people working and developing some of the infrastructure, whether it's recreational infrastructure or whether it's perhaps more enhanced potable water or waste-water treatment, as required. This is mandated by enhanced requirements by the federal government.

Madam Chair, as you know, we have consecutive record capital budget investments in this territory. We have some tremendous projects moving forward and we continue to partner with First Nations in their communities to build infrastructure that will benefit everybody. We're very proud of that work and will continue to do that work.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Mr. Elias: In listening to the debate today, just to be honest, I didn't really understand what patronage politics meant, so I looked it up. I am going to reference 19(g), imputing a false and unavowed motive to the Hon. Premier.

To me, suggesting that the Hon. Premier is somehow politically using public funds to politically reward another member of this Assembly is a deliberate and calculated attack on the reputation and the integrity of the Hon. Premier and it is obvious —

Chair: Order. Order, please.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair: Order, please.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair: Order, please.

Chair's ruling

Chair: Order, please. Points of order ought to be brought up at the earliest opportunity when a statement is made and in this case perhaps this was your earliest opportunity. At this time, I would say that this is a dispute among members. I will have a discussion with the Speaker about this.

I will review the Blues. Should another ruling be necessary tomorrow, then it will come tomorrow.

Thank you.

Chair: Is there any further discussion regarding \$900,000 for the Old Crow community centre?

Old Crow Community Centre in the amount of \$900,000 agreed to

On Total of Other Capital

Total of Other Capital in the amount of nil cleared

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$900,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$907,000 agreed to Executive Council Office agreed to

Chair: We are finished now with the Executive Council Office and are going to move on to the Department of Economic Development, Vote 7.

Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 20, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16*.

Department of Economic Development

Hon. Mr. Hassard: I'm pleased to rise today to introduce the 2015-16 supplementary budget estimates for the Department of Economic Development. This budget focuses on completing projects already committed to and to funding additional projects that will contribute to economic activity in the territory and to increasing the quality of life for Yukoners.

This budget will further our economic development goals and is directly linked to our vision of building a sustainable and diversified economy focusing on prosperity for all Yukoners.

This summer, Premier Pasloski directed all government departments to focus on growing the economy and supporting the infrastructure by: making strategic investments in Yukon's infrastructure; improving Yukon's regulatory regime; making Yukon the best place to live, work, play and raise a family; and building First Nation partnerships.

In this regard, the department is remaining focused on its goals of attracting investment, growing Yukon's economy, building Yukon's competitive advantage, and providing quality public service.

Madam Chair, we remain committed to working with our partners in the private sector, First Nation governments, industry associations, non-governmental organizations, other Yukon government departments and other levels of government to create and foster development opportunities.

To accomplish this, the department offers broad support to all sectors of Yukon's economy. To continue the progress we have made in this regard, the supplementary budget seeks approval for operation and maintenance expenditures in the approximate amount of \$2,159,000. This funding will enable the department to continue its work toward a prosperous economy on behalf of Yukoners whose employment, businesses and livelihoods depend upon it.

Under operation and maintenance, this will include \$750,000 for funding toward revotes and approvals for the following Business and Industry Development branch-related projects not completed by the 2014-15 fiscal year-end. This includes \$19,000 toward enterprise trade fund projects; \$394,000 requested for strategic industries development fund projects; \$294,000 for film and sound incentive projects; \$53,000 for additional funding toward small business development; \$30,000 toward investment attraction initiatives; and \$110,000 toward technology and telecommunications projects.

The supplementary budget also includes a decrease of \$150,000 to the Business and Industry Development branch budget, which reflects the request for an internal transfer to the Regional Economic Development branch.

As well, in this budget we're asking for revote funding for \$19,000 for business marketing and related initiatives through the enterprise trade fund, such as \$13,349 to Kluane Drilling Ltd. for attendance at marketing conferences, development of collateral materials and business website; \$1,839.80 to GroundTruth Exploration Incorporated, which were the winners of this year's Frozen Globe Award for the most innovative business, and that was to attend marketing events. As well, there is \$2,500 to Fawn Fritzen, winner of the 2014 Julian Award of Excellence for Emerging Jazz Talent — that was for redevelopment of her music business website.

The enterprise trade fund is available for business development and market expansion activities in a range of economic sectors. Projects supported by the enterprise trade fund have provided Yukoners with employment and training opportunities, promoted Yukon musicians nationally and

abroad, and provided the support needed to create demo and full-length albums. As of August 14 of this year, 59 projects have been approved for the enterprise trade fund in the fiscal year, totalling \$155,124.

It's also interesting to note, Madam Chair, that since 2004-05, the department has supported 885 projects undertaken by Yukon businesses for developing export markets, attracting investment, capital and business planning, marketing and business skills training, and providing \$4.4 million invested in Yukon businesses and growing our economy. This fund can be accessed by a wide variety of businesses, including those in the manufacturing, service, culture and mining industries.

Some examples of projects that we're asking to be funded through revotes for the strategic industries development fund include \$75,000 to support the Chamber of Mines to develop its marketing capabilities — that's with the goal of reaching new and larger markets.

Other examples of funding are \$110,000 to support a business to undertake a study of the feasibility — or sorry, Madam Chair, a study of the possibility of establishing an industry-related business in the Eagle Plains area and \$75,000 to support an industry organization to educate and build knowledge within the business community and reaching outside markets. The strategic industry development fund supports the Government of Yukon's commitment to foster the development of industries that have the potential to create jobs, generate wealth and increase Yukon's economic output.

This budget will support several businesses to develop marketing skills and to reach new and larger markets through the use of this fund.

In the film and sound incentive projects, we're requesting \$294,000 for related projects. The department has been working with five Yukon owned and produced television productions through an agreement with Northwestel community cable. This agreement has been renewed with the expectation of more productions to be started throughout the year. A portion of this requested funding will provide support to Yukon musicians to tour and showcase in Japan, Sweden, the US and also across Canada. It will also include the Panimania event in Toronto during the Parapan Am Games. This budget will continue to provide support to film and sound professionals working to develop professional products and viable businesses, which in turn contribute to the diversification of Yukon's economy.

Yukon is becoming widely known as an ideal filming location. The film and sound incentive programs are being utilized to support a variety of projects and the film and sound sector is evolving and thriving in the Yukon.

Seeing the time, Madam Chair, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Hassard that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Mr. Elias: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Elias that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

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. 20, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, and directed me to report progress.

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.

Mr. Elias: I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Monday.

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.