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HANSARD

Monday, April 29, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Spring Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

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Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Deputy Premier Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Economic Development; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Justice
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Pauline Frost	Vuntut Gwitchin	Minister of Health and Social Services; Environment; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Highways and Public Works; the Public Service Commission
Hon. Jeanie Dendys	Mountainview	Minister of Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Women's Directorate

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Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Liz Hanson	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
Kate White	Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King

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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, April 29, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I would ask my colleagues to help me in welcoming the following guests to the Legislative Assembly, who are dedicated to workplace safety in Yukon: Kurt Dieckmann, president and CEO of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Mark Pike, chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Justin Lemphers, past president of Yukon Federation of Labour; Paul Johnston, vice-president of Yukon Employees' Union; Peter Turner, president of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce; Sheila Sergy, executive director of the Northern Safety Network Yukon; Catherine Jones, director of legislative development for the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; and Azeez Ola-Ojetola who is the safety management consultant for the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. Thank you so much for coming and thank you for your dedication to safety.

Applause

Mr. Adel: I would like my colleagues to welcome some guests in the House today for the tribute to Ride for Dad. We have Mike and Julie Thorpe. We have John Gullison, Mark Beese, Blair Corley — and I know I have forgotten one. I apologize; I will correct that later. Thank you very much.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just get one person's name: It's Mr. Blair Corley. Blair is not only here for Ride for Dad, but he also happens to be on the volunteer fire department in Marsh Lake. He also happens to have volunteered for many years with the community society and, just lately, he has become a local advisory council councillor. I would just like to acknowledge his work in the community of Marsh Lake. Thank you.

Applause

Speaker: I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Yukon's Chief Electoral Officer, Max Harvey, who is here for the tabling of two reports today. Welcome to the Assembly.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Day of Mourning

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to the Day of Mourning. The ceremony took place yesterday, April 28, at the workers memorial in Shipyards Park. It was a very moving ceremony and very well-attended, and I thank everyone for attending and participating in such a special event.

We all know the sign in front of the blue and yellow building on 4th Avenue. As the year progresses, the number rises. At the end of 2018, that sign reported over 1,700 workplace injuries in Yukon. That means, on average, every day, more than four people are reporting injuries. These are not just statistics. We live in a territory blessed with intimacy of community, but that means that everyone is close to us. These are our neighbours, our coworkers, our friends, and our family. These are people who we love.

Some Yukoners aren't just getting hurt. Some are going to work and never coming home. Last year, four workers died as a result of their job. Three died while at work; one died as a result of conditions in their workplace years ago. I don't need to explain how a death shatters the lives of so many and how a person ripped from us too soon is mourned across our community.

At the epicentre, for the people closest to the tragedy, lies an unspeakable grief — a life cut too short — the loss of a neighbour, a co-worker, a friend or a family member. Zero is our goal — zero worker injuries or fatalities; zero broken bodies, minds, homes and communities.

On this annual Day of Mourning, we made a pact with one another: We will do better. We will aim for zero. This isn't some lofty, unachievable goal. This is up to you and me. We are all accountable for keeping ourselves and each other safe. We all have the power and ability to make it a reality. It doesn't matter if we work at a shop with two employees or for an employer of thousands. Each of us plays a role. It is about continuing to change workplace culture to ensure that safety comes first.

Do you know what the most encouraging thing about zero is? Most workplaces do it every year. Most workplaces are injury-free. They successfully arrive at zero. That shouldn't surprise us. We are, after all, hardwired for self-preservation. It is instinct. We all have the spirit of safety within us, and we have the wisdom and experience to empower the next generation of workers to continue fostering that culture of safety. Inspired by our influence, they will continue to pursue zero.

Though we mourn our losses today, I can imagine a future when we will celebrate the accomplishments of that generation — when we look up at the number on the sign outside of the blue and yellow building on 4th Avenue, and it will read "zero".

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize April 28 as the National Day of Mourning. I was honoured to join community members gathered at Shipyards Park yesterday afternoon to remember and honour those who lost their lives or were injured on the job.

We have a problem that is not often spoken about. We drive by the numeric counter each and every day and see the numbers that indicate workplace deaths and injuries, but we do not always think about what those numbers mean. Each number represents a life that has been changed or lost as a result of a workplace accident. What it doesn't reflect is the sheer number of people who are affected by each one of those deaths or injuries. Each number represented is someone's child, parent, sibling, friend or co-worker. The pain resulting from each death or injury is felt across the community.

Each year, we gather not only to remember but to pledge our commitment to ending accidents in the workplace. We pay our respects to individuals and their families and also raise awareness that these accidents are preventable, and it is within our reach to ensure that every person makes it home from work. Our goal as a community should be to one day see zero injuries and deaths as a result of accidents on the job. As employees, we must not only look to our own safety but to the safety of co-workers and those around us. As employers, we must safeguard the lives of our employees to the best of our abilities.

We have made many gains in the quest for workplace safety over the years. Health and safety regulations are in place, and it is everyone's duty to ensure that they are followed. We have the training and we have the tools. It's a shared responsibility to ensure that they are put to use.

Be safe, and watch actively for hazards on the job. Every worker has the right to go to work and make it home safely and without incident, and we each have a responsibility to ensure that this happens.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I rise on behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party to commemorate Canada's National Day of Mourning. This is a day of remembrance. It is a day of mourning for workers who have been killed or injured or who have suffered illness due to workplace-related hazards and incidents, and it is a day of recognition that, for each worker killed on the job or who dies from a work-related illness, there are family and friends left to mourn.

Yesterday, April 28, the Canadian flag on Parliament Hill flew at half-mast. Here at Shipyards Park, we gathered as workers; family and employers lit candles, made solemn pledges, and observed a moment of silence. As much as April 28 is a day to honour the dead, it is also a day that reminds us of the need to protect the living.

As we mourn the four workers killed on the job in 2018, we realize that the challenges to make workplace safety a reality are far from over. After yesterday's ceremony, I joined a group of friends to enjoy a cup of coffee. Sitting at a picnic

table in the warm sun outside the Midnight Sun, we were all shocked and then angered as we looked across the street to see a worker on the fourth floor of a construction site. He was busy working with power tools at the edge of the building. He had no hardhat on nor any obvious sign of protective gear.

It is 2019. Why is there even one work site in Yukon — in Whitehorse — today where workers are working without hardhats in areas that are clearly designated as requiring PPE, with signs reading, "No admission without hard hats", et cetera, and without harnesses when hanging over multi-storey frames? What my friends witnessed yesterday was not a one-off. It has been going on since construction began last summer. Polite and not-so-polite attempts to draw attention to a clear lack of a culture of workplace safety have gone unheeded.

Mr. Speaker, we will, as a territory, be reviewing the workers' compensation and occupational health and safety legislation in the upcoming months.

After the 1992 Westray mine disaster — where 26 miners were killed in underground explosions — the commissioner for the Westray public inquiry stated — and I quote: "The fundamental and basic responsibility for the safe operation of an... undertaking rests clearly with management... management failed in this primary responsibility, and the significance of that failure cannot be mitigated or diluted simply because others were derelict in their responsibility."

The Westray disaster led 12 years later to unanimous support in the House of Commons and the Senate to amendments to the *Criminal Code* designed to ensure that corporate directors and directors are held properly accountable for workplace safety. It is all too easy to blame the workers, Mr. Speaker. The question is: Who sets the ground rules for workplace safety?

It is vitally important that any new workers' compensation and occupational health and safety legislation carried clear requirements for greater clarity for employer responsibility to set and enforce safety as the key *modus operandi*. Increased oversight in terms of unannounced visits to work sites by safety officers armed with the ability to immediately sanction unsafe work practices may be necessary to get the message across that injury and death on the work site is a shared responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, while I pray that we have no situations in Yukon where a lack of worker safety leads to criminal charges being laid, I am mindful that as I drive down 4th Avenue and glance at the injury tally where there is a daily increase in the numbers and when I look at the statistics on the Workers' Compensation website regarding workplace safety violations in Yukon — many of them serious and potentially life-threatening — I am reminded that workplace safety is all too often taken for granted. There is no room for complacency.

During the Day of Mourning ceremony yesterday, participants were asked to place a flower on the memorial — white carnations signifying remembrance and a red rose for someone who had been injured or killed on the job. I placed a red rose. I know what it is like to hear on the radio about an accident — one that changes the trajectory of a family forever.

I know, from my own family's experience, that a worker's death has impacts that last long beyond the headlines. That rose was for my father. As we pledge to fight for the living, in the hearts of those left behind, the mourning never ceases.

Applause

In recognition of Ride for Dad

Mr. Adel: I am honoured to rise today to pay public tribute to Ride for Dad.

Ride for Dad's mission is to raise funds to save men's lives by supported prostate cancer research and raising public awareness. I ride for my father — a prostate cancer survivor. I ride for my sons, to educate them. 2019 marks the 10th ride in the Yukon. To celebrate this milestone, Mr. Speaker, Ride for Dad will be travelling to Dawson City for the first time.

This year, the ride will start on Saturday, June 8, which kicks off with a breakfast. Riders will depart from Shipyards Park, with the option to either travel to Carmacks or on to Dawson City.

A significant amount of money has been raised in the past 10 years by this organization, and that is a credit that is owed to the hard of participants in the ride who collect pledges each year. The top three overall pledge earners over the past 10 years are David Hett, Pierre Allard, and John Gullison, who have raised a combined total of over \$55,000 in the last decade. Congratulations to their good work.

Credit is also owed to their board of directors, which is comprised of Mike Thorpe, Sean Secord, John Gullison, Mark Beese, Julie Thorpe, Kat Secord, Gil Bradet, and Tanya Boone. Thank you to all the board members and the volunteers who make this event possible year after year.

As well, there are over 30 local businesses that are supporting this year's ride, which is wonderful to see.

It is not too late for anybody to get involved, and I would encourage anyone here today to see how they can play a part in making this a successful event. There are many ways to participate. You can register as a rider — as I have — a passenger, a fundraiser or a volunteer. Proceeds support Prostate Cancer Fight Foundation.

This is such a worthy cause, Mr. Speaker, and I am really looking forward to doing my part to support this cause by participating in the Ride for Dad on June 8.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I am also pleased to rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Third Party to recognize and pay tribute to Ride for Dad Yukon as they gear up for their early journey to raise awareness for prostate cancer and raise funds for research.

In Canada, prostate cancer is the most common cancer found in men, especially those in the older demographic. In fact, many men have it, and they don't even know it. So it is important to recognize the importance of early detection. Visit your doctor for a PSA test. The earlier prostate cancer is detected, the more treatment options are available.

Across the country, Telus Ride for Dad raises funds and awareness through one-day motorcycle, snowmobile,

watercraft, and ATV ride events. Here in the Yukon, of course, we are very proud supporters of the Yukon motorcycle Ride for Dad, which is scheduled to take place June 8 from Shipyards Park. This is a celebratory year for the Ride for Dad. As the member opposite said, this is their 10th ride in the territory. Participants this year can choose to take part in the base ride to Carmacks or to continue on that extra segment to Dawson City. Both options are accompanied by local entertainment and meals, and we want to thank all those who put that together and organized it. From what I hear, participants are more than excited to get on the road.

This year, participants have the chance to win a VIP concert experience with Jason McCoy, the original "road hammer". Top fundraisers among participants this year are heading toward the \$1,000 mark, and we aren't even through April. We look forward to seeing the excitement build as we get closer to the ride date, and we would like to thank organizers and volunteers for the roles that they play in making sure this ride happens each year. I would also like to give special thanks to Yukon Ride for Dad Captain's Club, who are deserving of special recognitions for going above and beyond raising funds this year.

Thank you to the participants and best of luck in your fundraising. For those who are listening and those in here: We travel our highways every day — it's motorcycle season, so let's have a lookout for them. Have a wonderful ride.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under tabling returns and documents, the Chair has for tabling a document entitled *Working hard for Yukoners*. This document includes the 2018 annual reports of the Ombudsman, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner. These annual reports are tabled pursuant to section 31 of the *Ombudsman Act*, section 47 of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and section 43 of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*.

The Chair also has for tabling two reports from the Chief Electoral Officer. The first is entitled *Annual Contributions to Political Parties in the 2017 Calendar Year*. This report was made public last year. The second report is entitled *2018 Annual Report on Political Party Revenues*. These reports are submitted in accordance with section 398 of the *Elections Act*.

Finally, the Chair for has tabling the *Report on Subsistence, Travel and Accommodations of Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly 2018-19*, dated April 2019. This report is compiled pursuant to an order of the Members' Services Board.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have for tabling the *Department of Education Annual Report 2018*, which is tabled pursuant to section 5(h) of the *Education Act*.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have a legislative return in response to a motion for the production of papers from the Member for Lake Laberge regarding cannabis sales.

I also have for tabling a legislative return based on questions from the Member for Whitehorse Centre regarding pharmacy and pharmacist regulations timing.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling two legislative returns. One is in response to questions asked by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King on March 21 regarding land development within Whitehorse. The second is in response to discussion related to general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 210.

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

Are there any reports of committees?
Petitions.

PETITIONS

Petition No. 11 — received

Clerk: Mr. Speaker and honourable members of the Assembly: I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 11 of the Second Session of the 34th Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Member for Lake Laberge on April 25, 2019.

The petition presented by the Member for Lake Laberge meets the requirements as to form of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare Petition No. 11 is deemed to be read and received. Pursuant to Standing Order 67, the Executive Council shall provide a response to a petition which has been read and received within eight sitting days of its presentation.

Therefore, the Executive Council response to Petition No. 11 shall be provided on or before the fifth sitting day of the 2019 Fall Sitting of this Legislative Assembly.

Are there any petitions to be presented?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Mr. Istchenko: I rise in the House today to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to recognize the economic benefits of supporting the growth of the Yukon's aviation sector by working with aviation stakeholders and the City of Whitehorse to develop new parking areas and float plane dock lease sites on Schwatka Lake during the 2019 construction season.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to use its 2019-20 budget to improve highway safety at the intersection of the Mayo Road and the Alaska Highway by moving

forward with the project that was supposed to begin construction in the 2018 construction season, including lengthening the turning lane and adding a slip lane.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide the members of this Legislature with a report detailing the steps that have been taken to address:

- (1) the Costanzo report recommendations;
- (2) the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner's recommendations in *Allegations of Wrongdoing in the Delivery of Group Home Care* report; and
- (3) the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate's recommendations in *Empty Spaces Caring Connections — The Experience of Children and Youth in Yukon Group Care* report; and further

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to table this report in this House no later than the first week of the 2019 Fall Sitting.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Children in care

Ms. McLeod: Last week, the Child and Youth Advocate released her report on government group homes. I would first like to thank her for her report, and I hope that all MLAs in this Legislature can work together to improve the system to better support these youth who are in need.

On Friday, we were briefed by the advocate, and I do have a number of questions for the minister about issues that were identified during the investigation and the follow-up.

As part of this review, the advocate invited input from staff and contractors who have worked or are currently working in group care, child welfare case management, and youth justice. An anonymous survey was sent out to approximately 200 employees; however, some group care facilities' staff were initially given the direction: "Do not fill out the group home survey at this time".

That direction was later reversed, but as a result, the Child and Youth Advocate received only 55 responses.

Can the minister tell us where this direction originated from?

Hon. Ms. Frost: The department received the Child and Youth Advocate report which was a report that really clearly intended to look at the obligations as defined under section 12(1). I have had a conversation with the Child and Youth Advocate. We identified some key points that she was intending to look at. That was clearly outlined — in terms of the transparency and the independence of her work — to allow us to provide her the information that she needed and the ability to access the data that she required.

With respect to the events — and the member opposite raises some questions with respect to who was interviewed —

my understanding is that there were a number of individuals interviewed — youth and staff. I am pleased about the results of the report given that, as we have gone through the process over the course of the last 18 months, we have identified numerous challenges, and the objective was always to try to provide transparency by working with the Child and Youth Advocate, working with our independent auditor from Vancouver, and working with the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner as well.

There is transparency everywhere and we will do the best we can to ensure all youth are protected.

Ms. McLeod: Transparency — and yet no answer.

After initially denying media reports about specific incidents that took place in group homes under her watch, the minister finally bowed to pressure and launched an independent investigation led by a lawyer from BC, Pam Costanzo.

That investigation looked at six specific allegations that took place between late 2016 and early 2018. These allegations related to youth being denied placement in a home, evicted on short notice or locked out. So far, the government has only shared a high-level summary of this report. What is most concerning is that the minister refused to provide the full Costanzo report to the Child and Youth Advocate for her investigation.

So with the government initially telling group home staff not to respond to requests for information, along with the government refusing to provide the advocate with the full independent Costanzo investigation, why did the Liberal government refuse to give the Costanzo report to the Child and Youth Advocate?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to acknowledge that the Costanzo report and the findings were released publicly, as was the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate PIDWA report. With respect to the confidentiality of clients who were interviewed and issues that defined the protection of privacy — those are things that certainly we will not breach. We will ensure that we provide as much as the rules apply — the report, as it has been laid out — we have done that respectfully and we will continue to look at the issues that have come to our attention from 2015 to 2018, Mr. Speaker, which is significant.

Now, the report tabled from the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate was one that — as I indicated, I requested that the Child and Youth Advocate begin this investigation under section 12(1) of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* following concerns brought to me by youth with experience in group care. That is an indication that we are working with our partners in good faith. The report clearly outlines a number of concerns, perspectives and suggested improvements, and those are things that we will respond to in good time.

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that these investigations were prompted by specific allegations that occurred under her watch.

In the Child and Youth Advocate's report, there are 31 recommendations. The minister has until July 31 to provide a written response. She is then supposed to provide progress

reports twice per year thereafter. In the interest of accountability and openness, will the government commit to releasing her written response and the progress reports publicly as soon as they are sent to the advocate?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I acknowledge that I will not shy away from the responsibilities that I have been entrusted with — and that is to ensure that every child within our care is given the support that they require. As of February, we have 19 children in group homes. Where are the rest of the children? Where are the 289, someone might ask? Well, they are back in their communities where they rightfully belong, with cultural supports and supports from their families, with the resources they need — be it through a counsellor or through the mental wellness supports or through their respective community support systems.

That is what we did; we ensured that we provided as much support as we can in the communities to reduce the numbers from when we came into office when we had in excess of 90 children in care in group homes. We now have 19.

I am very proud of the great work that the department has done with our partners. We will continue to do that work in good faith, but we will also ensure that we are as transparent as we possibly can be.

I have met with the children. I have met with the communities. I have met with the organizations. I have met with Annette King. I have met with our partners in our communities. I will ensure that we provide the supports that are needed.

Question re: Politicizing the public service

Mr. Hassard: Last week, it was revealed that someone instructed the Department of Economic Development to monitor the political opponents of this Liberal government. The document was called “YP meetings.docx”. It was created during the time of this Liberal government and documented 21 meetings taken by the Yukon Party, several of which were while we were in opposition. Thanks to an unredacted version of the document, we see that it was researched specifically for the minister. We also see that the public servant who was forced to do this work for the minister was uncomfortable doing so, as they wrote that they didn't want to be — quote: “... alerting people that this kind of activity is being undertaken...” This is because the public service is not meant to do partisan research for the government.

So can the minister tell us: Who instructed the department to conduct this partisan research?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, this has been a great focus of the opposition. We are now into week 2 of this particular topic, so I am going to just take an opportunity to read out the meetings. So you would think that, if there was information provided of what Minister of Economic Development meetings that they would undertake — I think that is more than appropriate. If there was something around the Yukon Party partisan piece, that would be something different.

So this is the list of information: February 27, Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, minister attended; January 2017, Mineral Exploration Roundup; 2016, Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining; June 2016, Canadian Council of Forest Ministers; 2016, Mark Eyking, federal MP, infrastructure; May 2016, the minister went to the Procurement Advisory Panel; May 2016, gold show; May 2016, Yukon Wood Products Association AGM; October 2015, energy innovation tour in Calgary; 2015, Canadian Council of Forestry Ministers; July 2015, Canadian Energy and Mines Ministers' Conference — by the way, these are all standard events that people attend — July 2015, Yukon mineral exploration site tour; July 2015, pan-Canadian task force — I will go on in questions 2 and 3 — but you can see how sinister this list is, Mr. Speaker. Thank you; let's carry on.

Mr. Hassard: The question is about getting public servants to do non-partisan work for this government.

These documents show that someone instructed the Department of Economic Development to inappropriately monitor a political opponent, but the question is: Who?

According to the documents, it was research for the minister. In fact, it specifically states that it was research for the minister. There were also a number of redactions to the ATIPP on this document that specifically state that this information pertains to — quote: "... advice, proposals, recommendations, analyses... developed by or for... a Minister". But the minister denies that any of this information was advice for him. In order for that to be true, we would have to believe two things: first, the department incorrectly labelled this file as research for the minister; and second, the department incorrectly redacted the documents.

Does the minister believe that his department incorrectly redacted these documents?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: July 2015, pan-Canadian task force on the reduction of usage of diesel for electricity in remote communities; June 2015, Northern Development Ministers Forum; June 2015, City of Whitehorse francophone school location; May 2015, Yukon Agricultural Association AGM; May 2015, gold show; March 2015, committee re: risks and benefits of fracking; March 2015, INAC re: Bill S-6; February 2015, Toronto meeting with economists and business leaders on Yukon opportunities; and October 2014, Opportunities North announced the launch of the next generation hydro.

Mr. Hassard: It certainly is unfortunate that the minister does not appear to be interested in answering the question at all. These documents show someone directed the department to monitor the Yukon Party. The document is called "YP meetings.docx". This is in a file called "research for the minister". The document was created under this government and even the details — several meetings taken by the Yukon Party while in opposition, as we know.

The Liberal office has been caught inappropriately involving themselves in the ATIPP process before, and the Premier has accidentally admitted on several occasions that the Liberals know who is submitting ATIPP requests.

Last week, the minister stated in this House that the Official Opposition submitted this particular ATIPP request. He even knew the wording of the request — but if you go back and look through Hansard, we never said anything about the request we submitted. Further, the wording to the request isn't public, so how does the minister know who submitted this request, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: My understanding is that monitoring would be something we would do if there is an active situation occurring and you were watching what was happening. That would be "monitoring". So in March 2017, if somebody put a list together of meetings — which most of which are probably public — I don't think that is monitoring. I think that is identifying ministerial meetings that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Minister Economic Development attended.

Once again, we understand the division between the political and the public service. Once again, I at no time directed — there have been a lot of accusations made. It is sad that, here we are on the second-last day of our Sitting, and once again, this is question 11 or 12. I have answered the member opposite's questions. Very simply — I did not direct anyone. It is very simple. You can see that it is getting under their skin a little bit, but once again, I am glad that the public now knows about the fracking meetings and the Bill S-6 meetings. We have got it all out there, and I am glad that whoever has put the ATIPP in had the good mind to make sure that this was in the public sphere.

Question re: Electoral reform

Ms. Hanson: When the Yukon government released its draft terms of reference for the establishment of an electoral reform commission, they invited the opposition parties to provide comments. Over a week ago, the Yukon NDP provided comments on the draft terms of reference. To date, there has been no response from government. Our comments were clear and intended to ensure the success of the commission's work.

We suggested that the scope of work for the commission focus on electoral reform and that the remuneration of commission members be increased, and we asked for a commitment that the commission members be selected through an all-party process.

The deadline for applications for the commission is now four days away. When will the government respond to the Yukon NDP's comments on the electoral reform commission, and when will the final terms of reference be released?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Our Liberal government is proud to be delivering on our commitment to strike a non-partisan, independent commission to engage Yukoners on possible options for territorial electoral reform and to make recommendations to government. We committed to working in cooperation with all political parties in the Legislative Assembly to strike a non-partisan commission and we continue to honour that commitment. The Premier met with leaders of both opposition parties to discuss the scope of the commission's work before the draft terms of reference were

released. The draft terms of reference for the independent commission have been released to the public.

Mr. Speaker, I will follow up on the request from the Leader of the Third Party concerning the communication that was sent and I will get back to the Leader of the Third Party — if not during Question Period, I will take it upon myself to reach out to her by phone or meet her in her caucus office to let her know when we will be returning the information she has requested.

Ms. Hanson: I raise these questions because I was assured that I would have that information by the end of last week. “Having input” does not meet the higher standard of cooperation committed to by this government over a year ago. When this House debated a motion on appointing a commission on electoral reform, the government said that they would cooperate with all Members of the Legislative Assembly when appointing that commission.

A key concern for the Yukon NDP relates to the selection process. As it stands, the Yukon government will be solely responsible for shortlisting candidates and then selecting the commission. We believe that the governing party exerting total control over the selection process has the potential to cast a cloud over the commission’s work. For that reason, we requested that the selection process be done on a consensus basis involving the three party leaders. This would ensure that no political party can call into question the makeup of the commission.

Will the government commit to selecting the electoral reform commission members on a consensus basis to ensure that the commission is perceived to be — and is — non-partisan?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I do want to thank the Leader of the Third Party for her comments on this topic. Once again, as I committed, I will ensure that we get back to the Leader of the Third Party concerning questions. As stated by the Premier — and as we on this side of the floor are all aware — the selections that will be made to this committee, our government will be judged on. We will stick to that process.

Ms. Hanson: You know, Mr. Speaker, the reason the principle of cooperation is essential is not because the opposition parties want to get their way; it is because, when all the parties are at the table making decisions together — doesn’t this sound like the government talking? — really, it ultimately lends credibility and legitimacy to the findings of the commission. I would think the governing party would get this.

Time is running out and the government has not yet met their commitment to cross-party cooperation on the electoral reform process. Given the delay by government in acting on electoral reform, the NDP has urged the government to focus the work of the commission on options for electoral reform, not a raft of other issues.

Will this government commit to meeting with opposition party leaders before the commission is formed to clarify that the terms of reference for the electoral reform commission is focused on electoral reform?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I think it’s important — first of all, without having the political parties get together to define the focus — it’s so important to go back to the draft that was provided to the community and to the citizens of Yukon — having and reviewing the output or the input that has been provided as Yukoners are having the opportunity to define this pathway.

I will take it upon myself to meet with the leaders of the opposition if they would like that.

Once again, we look forward to getting this commitment underway. We know that, in the past, there has been a report written — I think a number of years back — and essentially the previous government dismissed it. We are looking forward to having Yukoners get their opportunity to speak to this. Many people are passionate about it — they have done a lot of research on it — and it’s a very important topic to Yukoners.

Question re: Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services compliance with the Societies Act

Ms. White: Many Rivers society has a newly elected board of directors that is committed to do the work that will see the society back in compliance with the societies registrar.

They are prepared to do the work necessary to ensuring that the doors of Many Rivers are open and a society and staff are back to providing this professional counselling and mental health services that Yukoners have relied on for the last 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Minister of Community Services be meeting with the new board of Many Rivers to discuss funding and steps necessary to reopening their doors?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will start off the responses, and I’m sure the Minister of Health and Social Services will get up as well.

I think the minister might have even met with some folks from Many Rivers this morning — but I look forward to hearing back.

I knew that Many Rivers had an AGM this past Friday. I understand that there is a newly elected board. I look forward to them making their submissions to the societies registrar. When I checked this morning, it hadn’t yet happened, but I’m looking forward to it.

What I understand will happen is that they will file their outstanding annual report and financial statements with the registrar, and then we will work to help to get them back into compliance. The registrar had informed them that was what they needed to do to get back into compliance.

We’re looking forward to that happening. I don’t know that my role will be much more than that. I think it will turn now to the Minister of Health and Social Services. But I will say: Throughout all of this, my door has been open to talking with Many Rivers and other groups who are interested in getting their societies functioning so that they can provide these types of critical services for Yukoners.

Ms. White: This new board is prepared to do the hard work of hiring or rehiring counsellors, management, and

support staff and ensuring that all community offices have the staff and resources needed to reopen.

The new board wants to move forward, but questions remain over what transpired the last number of years that resulted in the society no longer being in compliance with the *Societies Act*.

We're aware that an independent financial audit of the society's finances is being undertaken. Mr. Speaker, when will this audit be complete and what assurances can the ministers provide to this new board going forward that they will not be held accountable for the previous transgressions and that they will be able to receive the support and funding to provide services that Yukoners want?

Hon. Ms. Frost: This government is committed to creating healthy, happier lives for Yukoners. We strongly support mental health services in Yukon.

The situation at Many Rivers has had a direct impact across the Yukon. My department continues to work to ensure that the needs of Yukoners are met by increasing mental health support resources. We have added services and funded alternate organizations to ensure Yukoners have access to mental health services. My priority is to ensure that Yukoners have access to mental health support services.

We are aware that Many Rivers — as my colleague had noted — is continuing to work to return to compliance and has elected a new board. However, as of today, they are still not in compliance. There is additional work to be done to meet the requirements that the registrar outlined for the organization.

We have met with Many Rivers. We have met with Friends of Many Rivers. We will continue to work with our funding partners to ensure that we have services so that Yukoners have direct access to services that they need, in a timely fashion. We have done that to expand the scope of care and the scope of practice to bring the services into Yukon communities.

Ms. White: The new Many Rivers board has a lot of work to do over the next weeks to reopen their doors — not just in Whitehorse, but Watson Lake, Dawson City and Haines Junction. Yukoners want this service restored and for individuals to be able to receive the supports that have been absent — like counselling for individuals or groups, including children, youth, adults and families. For many, these services have been sorely missed. Not everyone has the financial means or the benefit of coverage for counselling support through their employment. Being able to access this service free of charge is critical.

Given the wait times for mental health and counselling services that currently exist, what resources and assistance will Community Services and Health and Social Services provide to the new Many Rivers board in order for them to have their doors reopen as soon as possible?

Hon. Ms. Frost: As I indicated in my previous comments, Many Rivers is still not in compliance with the *Societies Act*. We have worked with Many Rivers. We have requested additional information with regard to the funding contribution agreement. There is still work to be done in order

to meet the requirements of their contribution agreement as well as the *Societies Act*.

The department has contracted an external firm to conduct a financial audit on Many Rivers as a result of considerable financial information that the society has been unable to provide. That was brought to our attention by Many Rivers themselves. We are working with them as they have advised. They are committed to ensuring that we get them into compliance with the joint work that is happening right now.

We will continue to see the results of the audit. We will continue the work and wait for the results of the audit before considering providing further government funding to the organization.

It is important to note that we are aware that there are other organizations that are interested in providing counselling supports and services in the territory. We are looking at options and ensuring that we provide those services into the coming days and weeks. Meanwhile, the department provides the support.

Question re: Seniors housing

Ms. Van Bibber: The waitlist for social and senior housing has skyrocketed under this Liberal government. It was 105 in 2016, under the previous government. Under the Liberals, that number has risen to 270. The Vimy Heritage Housing Society has been seeking support to build independent supportive housing for seniors. Earlier this session, the Premier said that the government had made land available in Whistle Bend for the project. He also mentioned that Economic Development provided funding to Vimy to support a comparative site analysis and for the development of a business plan.

Can the minister tell us: How much money has been given to Vimy so far? What is the value of the land that has been identified for Vimy?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I will have to endeavour to get the exact value of the land that has been put aside in the Whistle Bend area. I believe — and I will state that I look to be corrected — it was a very significant piece of land on a large corner lot after we supported Vimy to go through a site selection from a number of different locations within the city. I believe it is within a seven-figure range. I apologize that I don't have the exact number. After their analysis and working with their team, that seemed to be the location that they felt was best. They had of course an engineering firm that worked with them through that process. I can get back with a legislative return on the exact value of that particular lot.

They continue to fine tune their plan and we continue to be supportive in that process.

Ms. Van Bibber: Earlier this session, we asked the Housing minister if she would be providing any funding to further support the Vimy Heritage Housing Society's project. In response, she said, "A \$25.6-million initiative is not something that we can fund at this moment."

Can the minister confirm if the government will be giving any further money to support the Vimy project?

Hon. Ms. Frost: We are working with the Vimy Heritage Housing Society to explore resources of funding that support a financially viable project, including access to the federal co-investment fund. We have met with them and we will continue to meet with them. We will continue to support the project. As the Minister of Economic Development just noted, we have provided the Vimy society with land, and we will continue to ensure that we support them as much as we possibly can and ensure significant investment to support our partners in the development of this new housing initiative project for Yukon — accessing all of the resources that are readily available, whether through the municipal matching grant or through the housing initiative fund.

We have reviewed the proposal and we are continuing to work with the Vimy society.

Ms. Van Bibber: As we have mentioned, the Vimy Heritage Housing Society has been seeking support to build independent supportive housing for seniors. As we have just discussed, the price would be worth north of \$25 million.

My final question is: Is there any money earmarked for this project in this year's budget and, if so, how much?

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to funding allocated to this specific project, we do not have money set aside for this specific project, but we are working with the Vimy Heritage Housing Society to access resources that are available.

We have, however, provided funding for many, many projects that have been submitted and are shovel-ready to address some of the housing pressures in Yukon — in particular, seniors are our priority. Supports to aging in place must be a part of our collaborative Yukon-wide effort, and we are endeavouring to do that with our partners. We will continue to have dialogue with the Vimy society to ensure that they have the supports that they need to be successful — much like we did with Normandy Place and other project proposals that we have received through the Housing Corporation. So I am very pleased about that.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of the House to stipulate that divisions taken today at third reading shall be taken after a maximum of three minutes for the following bills: Bill No. 30, *Act to Amend the Education Labour Relations Act*; Bill No. 31, *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*; Bill No. 32, *Act to Amend the Securities Act*; and Bill No. 29, *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2019*.

Unanimous consent re time limit on division

Speaker: The Government House Leader has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of the House to stipulate that the divisions taken today at third reading shall be taken after a maximum of three minutes for

the following bills: Bill No. 30, *Act to Amend the Education Labour Relations Act*; Bill No. 31, *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*; Bill No. 32, *Act to Amend the Securities Act*; and Bill No. 29, *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2019*.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Unanimous consent has been granted.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 30: *Act to Amend the Education Labour Relations Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 30, standing in the name of the Honourable Ms. McPhee.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 30, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Labour Relations Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 30, entitled *Act to Amend the Education Labour Relations Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I sincerely appreciate the comments and the contributions from all members and all parties in this House to support this act.

The amendments to the *Education Labour Relations Act* will address the provisions that the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Teachers' Association agreed upon during recently concluded bargaining for a new collective agreement. We were happy to be able to settle a number of long-standing issues with the YTA — the Yukon Teachers' Association — during that process. These changes will provide greater clarity regarding the human resource practices for recruitment and retention of teachers here in the territory.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank all members, and I am pleased to hear any further debate if there would be such questions.

Mr. Kent: Being very brief in my remarks here at third reading, the Yukon Party Official Opposition will be supporting this legislation at third reading, as we did at second reading and through Committee. We congratulate the Yukon Teachers' Association and the Department of Education for successful negotiations through their collective bargaining agreement that led to the inclusion of substitute teachers in the bargaining unit going forward. We wish all parties well going forward with these particular changes.

Ms. White: The Yukon NDP of course supports Bill No. 30, *Act to Amend the Education Labour Relations Act*. I attended the YTA meeting on the weekend. It was most unfortunate that we didn't get to third reading and assent of this bill prior to that, because it would have been the very first Yukon Teachers' Association annual general meeting that auxiliary teachers on call could have participated in. That is my only regret today. We look forward to passing this legislation and moving forward.

Speaker: Is there further debate on third reading of Bill No. 30?

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. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yeas, nil nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 30 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 30 has passed this House.

Bill No. 31: Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 31, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 31, entitled *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 31, entitled *Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Bill No. 31 makes changes to leave allowances for Yukon's private sector employees that align with Canada's employment insurance programs. This alignment enables Yukoners to access various benefits when necessary and without risk of losing their jobs. This bill supports this government's commitment to supporting Yukoners to lead healthy, happy, and productive lives. These lead benefits uphold the importance of family and recognize the needs that Yukoners have when welcoming new family

members, caring for family or supporting a loved one toward the end of their life.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members of this Legislature for their debate on this bill and for their questions. I look forward to hearing them again and look forward to the vote.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Van Bibber: I too would like to thank the minister and thank all those who were involved with work on this bill.

I don't think it was an easy feat combing through this legislation word for word and identifying the sections that needed updating. I know that it takes a lot of time and dedication to do this job. I certainly recognize the staff for their work.

Aside from the many changes to grammar, usage and punctuation, there were a number of changes made to clarify leave entitlements as well as adding a new type of leave. These are welcome changes and additions, and we are in support of these changes in this bill.

Ms. White: In speaking in support of Bill No. 31, I just want to highlight again our gratitude for the new definition of "family" — not being what you are born to, but what you choose — and how important it is to know that we can take care of those who we love in their times of need. We look forward to passing this and the public sector having the same access to leave or unpaid leave as others.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 31?

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. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 31 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 31 has passed this House.

Bill No. 32: Act to Amend the Securities Act — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 32, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that Bill No. 32, entitled *Act to Amend the Securities Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 32, entitled *Act to Amend the Securities Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would just like to begin by thanking the members opposite who spoke to Bill No. 32. I would also like to acknowledge the drafters on this act. It is a complicated act and challenging, and I think we were lucky to have the folks we did.

The purpose of this bill is to make changes that will strengthen protection for all Yukon security industry stakeholders, including investors, and help to ensure that Yukon securities legislation is harmonized with legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions. All jurisdictions have made, or are in the process of making, these changes to their securities legislation. In doing so, we take five specific actions that will strengthen protections for Yukon investors, including: confirm that an order in one jurisdiction terminating the status of a reporting issuer applies in the Yukon; strengthen reciprocity of enforcement orders; introduce a new disclosure regime for exchange-traded funds; standardize and clarify limitation periods regarding securities and civil liability; and standardize financial benchmarks.

I would like to thank the members opposite for contributing to a better understanding of how this bill will impact Yukoners and securities stakeholders here in the Yukon and benefit them.

With that, I look forward to a final debate on the bill and the vote.

Mr. Cathers: We have already addressed this at both second reading and in Committee of the Whole, and the Official Opposition has no further comments to add.

Ms. Hanson: The Yukon New Democratic Party has already spoken to Bill No. 32. We just want to confirm that we understand that the changes are primarily technical in nature, and their main function is — as we have debated in the Legislature — to protect investors. We also understand that Yukon, as a government, has an obligation to make these changes along with other provinces and territories so that we can avoid having loopholes in our regulatory system. We will be supporting this bill.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 32?

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. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 32 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 32 has passed this House.

Bill No. 29: Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2019 — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 29, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. McPhee.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 29, entitled *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2019*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 29, entitled *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2019*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: As I have noted previously, ensuring that our legislation is accurate and without mistakes makes up part of the mandate for the Minister of Justice. From time to time, as minister, I undertake to bring miscellaneous statute law amendment acts to this Chamber to correct minor errors.

This version, Bill No. 29, is just that kind of legislation — it amends 37 other pieces of legislation in total. I have heard from members that they support this kind of bill being brought before the House from time to time. I will assure the

House that the government will certainly look to bring more of these types of bills if they are required.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of the government departments for working together to identify items for this bill and thank the staff of the Department of Justice for supporting this work in all its minute detail. I thank all members of this House for their support of this bill, and I am pleased to hear if there is any further debate before this matter is concluded.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 29?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 29 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 29 has passed this House.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, I move 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 (Mr. Hutton): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 210, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a 10-minute recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

Chair: I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill No. 210: *First Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 210, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Department of Economic Development — *continued*

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I thank the officials for coming back today: Mr. Justin Ferby, Deputy Minister of Economic Development, and Catherine Marangu, Director of Finance.

I am just going to turn it over to the Third Party to continue on.

Ms. Hanson: I would just like to go back to a couple of areas in Economic Development — the minister's comments on April 10, when he was giving an overview of the department. He was speaking about both the nominee program and what I would call the business investment program. I would just like to clarify so that we get the distinctions between the two programs. We have people who come to the Yukon because they are experienced business people wanting to start a business and become permanent residents of Yukon. There is distinct criteria for that, as opposed to those people who come here as nominees, working for Yukon businesses — people who are part of the — and I want the minister to confirm this for me — the nominee programs — because his overview was a bit confusing.

What I would like the minister to be able to do is tell this House — as opposed to since 2007 — but over the past two years, how many experienced business people have come to the Yukon as part of the business investment program and then distinctly, the number of people who have come to the Yukon as part of the Yukon nominee program in 2016-17 and 2017-18? How many are forecast for this year in each of those two categories?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I will apologize to the Leader of the Third Party if I wasn't clear in my previous response.

I am just going to identify — the first question was about the Yukon business nominee program, and I think it was characterized very accurately by the Leader of the Third Party — talking about the opportunity for seasoned entrepreneurs to come to the Yukon and invest.

Since 2004, 24 businesses have been established in the program. The question is — just the last 24 months for the Yukon? I will get the forecast for this year. I don't have the last two years broken out.

Then I believe there was a question about the nominee program. The Yukon nominee program has assisted 385 employers and addressed labour shortages with over 1,250 nominees. From April 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019, the Yukon nominee program issued permits for 161 nominees — 120 were critical impact workers, 20 were skilled workers, and 21 were express entry.

Express entry is a program that was put in place by the federal government. In January 2015, the express entry program was introduced by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada as a new program to manage the entry of skilled workers into Canada. The express entry program is intended to meet labour demand through a fast and flexible economic immigration system. In March 2015, the Government of Yukon launched a new stream within its nominee program called “Yukon express entry”, which mirrors the federal program. It is highly technical and used across the country, primarily in innovation or for very specific skilled workers.

I don't have a projection for the rest of the year. I believe that we have about 260 nominee positions that can be filled in the next fiscal period. I can get back with a legislative return to identify — there are a couple of pieces. For 2019 — just so I am clear — it is 267. The Yukon nominee program for 2019 is 267 persons. I don't have projected numbers. I think a lot of people are going through the process, but I can get back with numbers for the nominee program. I think the question was about the last two years of the Yukon business nominee program and what our projected number is. I would have to go back and find out what applications are in and how those applications are proceeding.

Ms. Hanson: To confirm, what I was asking was — because his comments on April 10 spoke about statistics going back — since 2007, the nominee program has assisted these 385 employers. My question is: How many employers over the last two years — since he has been minister?

I believe he has addressed the question that I asked about the number of nominees.

I had asked during the briefing — and I have a note to myself that I was told that they would get back to us — with respect to the country of origin of the business investors. Again, this is from the budget document on page 7-8. It talks about supporting experienced business people wanting to start businesses and become permanent residents of Yukon. I asked for the country of origin, and I was told I would get that.

We were also told that the Department of Economic Development did not use all of the government's allocation last year for the business nominee program. I guess the question I have is: Why? How does that change our approach to the program if that's the case?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Just for clarity, Mr. Chair. I know that I identified the fact that we had not used all of the allocations for our nominee program, but I believe, just for clarity, that the member opposite had said that we had not used all of our allocations for the Yukon business program. I just want to clarify.

Ms. Hanson: The note that I have — and perhaps this is incorrect because when you're in these briefings, we have a very brief time for a briefing — and the note I have was “business nominee — did not use all of our allocation for last year”. If that's not correct, then perhaps I would appreciate the clarification.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Officials have just provided me with a bit of information. I will make sure that this information is passed on to the Leader of the Third Party.

For the last two years — I am just going to go back — the Yukon business nominee program — in 2017, there were 13 applications. Out of the countries of origin — seven of the individuals came from China, two from India, two from Germany, one from Ireland, and one from Switzerland.

Approved to proceed to implementation phase: 10 of those were discontinued applications and three were approved to proceed to implementation phase — two for 2018 and one for 2019. The industries they were investing in were tourism and the agriculture and energy sector. All the locations were in Yukon communities outside of Whitehorse.

In 2018, there were 19 applications — there were 15 from China, one from India, one from Luxembourg, one from Pakistan, and one from the United States. Seven were discontinued in the process and 12 are in the application phase. But I do not have the communities that they are associated with — but I absolutely can get that.

As for the other part of the question — I think it does give us food for thought around how to best look at a program such as this and to leverage that opportunity. I know that my initial thoughts in working with the deputy minister were really around — the Yukon is similar to other parts of Canada where there are a lot of family-owned businesses, and they play an integral part of our economy. In many cases, there is not appropriate succession planning put in place for these key businesses.

We have seen in some parts of Canada where there are now master of business administration programs specifically built with curricula to ensure that companies such as this have investors that can come in and take part in that. In many cases — because of family dynamics, what is very interesting about those types of businesses is that there are sometimes efficiencies that are available or expansion opportunities, but of course they are stymied by even relations — or how difficult it is to run a company with your family.

That is one area in which I have always had the belief that it is really important for us to see individuals come in — but what we've seen is that — most of the individuals who I have had the opportunity to sit down and talk to have been entrepreneurs who have come from Germany and Ireland, for the most part. Some were here previous to 2017. One thing we are seeing is — we are seeing individuals who have been very successful in their professional life, and that has now afforded them the opportunity to devolve themselves or have an exit strategy from that original investment. They are now able to move to the Yukon, take part in business, and change their pace of life. We have also had conversations with those individuals about helping Yukon companies through

mentorship — because there have been some amazing experiences that we now see in the Yukon. We have one individual who has just a phenomenal background in the tech piece at a global level, but has focused on agriculture.

These are things that we think are important. I think that it will be a chance to look at where we go over the next while. We are coming to the end of the immigration strategy that we currently are using. So taking into consideration not just how we see nominees come into the Yukon, but also how we look at the express entry program. Of course, we have been party to a federal strategy that is really focusing on francophone immigration. That has been something that has been pretty key. So it's all of those pieces coming together, but also what is an appropriate amount of activity within the business program — is it seven or 10? Do we want more or do we want to focus it very specifically — not just on some of those opportunities of existing businesses, but businesses that can expand and provide other services beyond just the family-run business?

There seems to be a real interest in agriculture, but also a real interest in the tourism sector. I think that plays a very vital role in building the building blocks that we need in place to look at the expansion of tourism and its contribution to our GDP — moving it from that 4.4 into a more significant number, although it's very good right now.

Things are still being worked out on the overall strategy, but I hope that information was a bit helpful for the Leader of the Third Party. I will have to make sure that we go back to the original question that was asked during the briefing and that we provide that information, as requested.

Ms. Hanson: I do appreciate that.

My next question for the minister really has to do with the alignment of information to how the organization is structured. When I look at the budget document before me and when I look at the comments that the minister speaks to in his opening comments on April 10, it doesn't align. So I will give you one example.

The budget for the Technology and Telecommunications Development directorate — blah, blah, blah — and I will come back to that in a moment. There is no directorate set out in the budget. When I look at the Department of Economic Development, I would think that when I look at the budget document, I should be able to see Regional Economic Development — which I can — Technology and Telecommunications Development Directorate — which I cannot — Media Development unit — which I cannot — Business and Industry Development — well, that's the big catchall in the budget document on page 7-8, for a whole bunch of these things — Immigration unit — which I cannot. Again, in the interest of transparency, accountability, and being able to link where government expenditures are working, I can see transfer payments that talk about technology and communications, but it doesn't say — there is a line there that says "Immigration", but it doesn't tell me particularly what any of that does. So there is nothing that says, "This is what we are doing."

I will go back to the Technology and Telecommunications Development directorate. On April 10, the minister indicated that "...the directorate provided funding for community engagement workshops, bringing together angel investors, First Nation development corporations, local businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs."

Can the minister tell me on what page — I see aligned with the information and technology directorate — the appropriation for that — the amount that would be aligned with the Technology and Telecommunications Development directorate?

I am not questioning the need for this directorate, Mr. Chair. I just want to have clarity as to how it is set out in the budgets, because we are being asked to respond to this and we can't.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Concerning my comments — at that particular time, I was just commenting on the work that was being undertaken. There was a specific event that took place. I believe the number was about \$80,000 that was provided. Through our work and our budget last year, this wasn't a specific appropriation for it — from this year. It was money that was provided. I am going to take the advisement from the Leader of the Third Party — from somebody who has very extensive experience as a senior public servant and as a leader in government — I think there is some very good food for thought that I can bring back and work on with the deputy minister and our senior team on, because I think there is some very good insight into making sure that it aligns. I will certainly discuss that.

Just to touch on that one specific event that was discussed — we worked in partnership with TechYukon, Mr. Chair, and YuKonstruct Makerspace Society to deliver programming that supports Yukoners and Yukon businesses working in the technology, innovation, knowledge, and economy sector. We support the development and commercialization of innovative products through our contributions to the Cold Climate Innovation entre in Yukon College. We worked with YuKonstruct Makerspace Society to secure funding and undertake the renovations of course, which we touched on.

We are working with the group — the National Angel Capital Organization — NACO — to improve access to capital for early-stage development.

I will leave it at that, but I will definitely take the comments under advisement. I will also follow up offline just to get further insight into understanding how to better reflect our budgeting and the work that we do.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister's comments. The point I am trying to make here is that we should be able to look at an org chart. When I see that there is a director and two staff working in the telecommunications directorate, then I should know what their objectives are and what their priorities are.

So yes, we know that there is some good work being done in various groups across the territory and what has evolved into NorthLight Innovation.

The next question I would ask — in the interests of time — is that we have a Regional Economic Development

directorates which is reflected in the budget documents that are tabled for review by Members of the Legislative Assembly. The minister should anticipate this question by now. There are 12 positions associated with Regional Economic Development. Are any of those positions located in a region of the Yukon other than Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: We have had one position, really through the secondment process, in the community of Watson Lake. We have, as an organization, been open to being flexible to try to provide that on-the-ground capacity. I think it is a great point. It is something that we were very happy to see our one staff member play a role in economic development in Watson Lake. It is difficult, because a lot of different organizations in communities — because they do not have sort of a decentralized regional economic development approach, our people are getting out there and they are providing value and spending time, but at the same time, a lot of organizations have had different interests. It is program funding that comes through Regional Economic Development.

I would say that I hope that the Leader of the Third Party would understand that our approach to communities is still a strong commitment. We saw this weekend activity taking place in Haines Junction, which was of course a very robust conversation. It was driven as much by the community and the communities as it was by Regional Economic Development.

I sat with two members from the Haines Junction chamber of commerce in the summer of 2017, and they had asked for us to look at a project like this. At the same time — as many people were commending the work that had taken place in Teslin over the last number of years, which was phenomenal work in that community — our plan was to — last year, in the summertime — around this particular topic — was to focus on — we were going to meet in Teslin — not enough capacity — so even better — I'm happy that we had the opportunity to be in Watson Lake.

Those are the committees that we have — Teslin, of course, had representatives who spoke to the conference this week.

One thing I would say is that what we have tried to do — because I agree with the Leader of the Third Party. How do you make sure that you get that capacity into your communities? Beyond the fact of understanding the real values and understanding what is happening in a community, even from a logistical standpoint — for probably every single person in this Assembly because of one role or another that we have been in — if you have been centred in one community, just your travel time takes away from so much of your contact time to be able to work through this. One thing over last year, remember that we doubled our RED budget to \$800,000 specifically because we felt that we needed to have as many tools as we could to help in communities. Within that, we have our fund which supports a maximum of 75 percent of eligible expenses up to a ceiling of \$50,000 per application. The focus for RED has been economic development planning, capacity development, opportunity identification associated with research, needs assessments, and training plans incorporating organizational training. What we

have seen is a number of organizations meeting with our RED team and putting projects together where they are getting advisement in those communities on a consistent basis from capacity that they have identified. Those people are then working in concert. If we have a staff member at Economic Development — because of course there are the sensitivities — and I really have to defer all of the policy around that to the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission — but we have been open to seeing flexibility around our team. It is something that we will continue to do — but a really strong focus on the community and making sure that the community corporations, the municipalities or the development corporations — whoever is a lead in those communities — has an opportunity to further it. We are there to support them.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate that. I think the minister would agree that project funding is no substitute for actually having somebody who is part of the community, integrated in the community, understands what is going on and forms part of the stimulus in terms of connecting the dots and then working within the system.

For goodness' sake, this is 2019. We are not talking about the impediments of technology or communications. Driving is much easier now than it was 30 or 40 years ago in this territory. There is no excuse for why we can't have people actively involved as integral parts of the public service living, working, and contributing to the economies throughout this territory as opposed to having it so Whitehorse-centric.

That's a concern we've heard over and over and over again. It's not just Economic Development; it's Tourism; it's other departments as well. We used to have superintendents of Education who lived in the communities.

It's disappointing. I get it. I get that there's a locus of control in Whitehorse; I just don't agree with it, Mr. Chair. I can tell you from 30 years' experience working with the feds that it's a lot harder to communicate across 3,500 miles than it is 500 miles — but you can do it. You can do it with the right people and get the job done.

I would like to come back to the — I point out that the RED funding hasn't doubled in the last two years. It was \$714,000, \$800,000, and it's \$800,000 again. The terms of reference — so the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance went from \$302,000 in 2017-18 to zero last year and then up to \$397,000 this year. Could the minister set out what the terms of reference for funding that organization are and what the expected ROI is?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Chair, I think it's important — in some ways, I know the Leader of the Third Party touched upon under those past comments — when we talk about supporting our communities — how it's easier to drive there but also made that great point about how it is 2019, and there's technology. I think it's important to note that because there is that advancement in technology, the ability to communicate certainly is much different from what it was 20 years ago or 15 years ago even. My experience has been — in the last position I was in, we had a peak sometimes of 150 staff members. Those staff members could be found in two or three communities. At some points, I had seven or eight

directors depending on programs we were running. We would meet on a biweekly basis. Of course, there were times where our directors were in positions that it was very difficult — so either through teleconference or videoconference, we would have — of course, there are two offices with that particular organization — one in a community 1.5 hours away and one here. You use the tools that were there. You might have an Education director who is located in Whitehorse. Of course, there are times where you need that touch point because they're working with somebody through application processes. I think that we did very well from time to time. But I do get the point: There are also very important times where everybody has to be in the room together.

The question concerning the Yukon Mining Alliance — of course, the mining industry is a key economic driver for Yukon's economy, providing of course well-paying jobs and contracting opportunities to Yukoners. The Department of Economic Development of course provides support and works collaboratively with a variety of mining and industry stakeholders to help maximize benefits to Yukon. We provide support to First Nation development corporations seeking to maximize their commercial participation in this sector.

Upon coming into this job, I had the opportunity to start to work with the Yukon Mining Alliance. One thing I came to realize throughout meeting with organizations in Canada or the United States was — and credit has to go where credit is due — that work was looked upon as leading edge in the sector across most of North America. It was something, I think, that was pretty visionary to put into place. What we have seen is the ability for Yukon to tell its story in a very effective way.

We also saw a situation where markets were compressing and there was difficulty at times within our commodity cycle, and Yukon junior mining companies had the opportunity to continue to work in our communities. Much of that, I think, was because government partnered with industry in order to go out and tell the story. The contribution agreement that was in place concluded last year — this past fiscal year. The new recommendation is a three-year funding agreement for 2019-20 right through to 2022, with \$397,500 per year. Of course the funding will permit the Yukon Mining Alliance to offset costs of its global investment attraction activities that are conducted in close collaboration with the department.

As part of the increased funding request, the YMA has indicated that they would assume the financial cost and administration of the coordination of our annual property investor media tours, which is currently a joint initiative between the department and the YMA and for which the department currently incurs a direct cost of approximately \$85,000.

The department, looking at our expenses over that time, felt that it would be appropriate to take expenses that have been traditionally there every single year — something that we believe in and support around the Dawson event that happens, but really, it's not. It has now spread out from Burwash Landing to Mayo to Carmacks — really, all of the communities are touched by parts of this. Each year, they try

to come up with innovative ways to look at it. What we've really done is we have taken a look at the last three years and the costs associated with the project. Some of those costs have now been added in — the funding has been added in — so that the same activities are happening and the same costs are incurred, but it's now part of the contribution agreement.

The latter part of the question was: What is the ROI — what is the return on investment? I can go back to our department and then ask our team to do their best, working with the Department of Finance economists. What I can say is that we believe that this is a very effective tool.

We have seen numbers over the last number of years — significant — in the last couple of years, we have seen numbers — this last one of — what was it — \$86 million being spent — around \$100 million pretty much year after year, and then big jumps. In all of those cases — hearing the finance community and other larger players specifically coming to me or officials and saying that the Yukon Mining Alliance activities are something that are very unique and that they do a very talented job. What we see now is the NDP government in British Columbia coming out with a big announcement during their budget that they had this very unique approach that they were going to have — where they were going to have essentially the mining alliance of British Columbia, and they would work with industry as well as regions to go out and tell their story and put in — I apologize; I think it's about \$1 million, but maybe it's more — to try to compete with what we are doing. We are seeing the Northwest Territories trying to change how they tell their story and of course having a larger representation at the London mining show as well as Asia. We now have Idaho, which has now tried to actually poach some of our team who have worked on the Yukon Mining Alliance to go there and to do the exact same thing as the Yukon.

In my discussions with Yukon Mining Alliance — our role now is to stay ahead of everybody else when it comes to the innovation. What are we doing? How are we going to look at a digital strategy, along with the processes that have worked very well? So I know that the team and the leadership there have looked into these particular strategies as we've gone along.

I will get back on an overall ROI, but when I look at our total investment and I look at this year — if we apply on at budget passing, it would be at around \$400,000 almost. Some of that, the same activities — but what we are also seeing is a massive driver in our economy pending the opening and seeing 400 jobs created. I urge the Leader of the Third Party to sit down with the CEO of Victoria Gold and ask — specifically, sit down and say, "Was the Yukon Mining Alliance an important part of what is happening in Mayo?" I will leave the answer to that conversation between the both of them, but that is what we are seeing. This summer, we saw \$300 million to \$400 million spent in the Yukon. We will get back with a legislative return as best we can. From an economic standpoint of course that's difficult to do. I think the member opposite knows well that it is not as cut and dried as

one would think, but I still believe in the work that was previously done and the work that is currently being done.

Ms. Hanson: I don't doubt the importance of investing in sectors. The curiosity I have is: What's different? There was no money given last year, and things went just great. Why are we giving \$397,000 this year? What's the difference?

If there is an inaccuracy in the budget documents, that is also curious — but it shows zero and zero for both the estimates and the forecast.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I will go back and confer. There was money — I just want to make sure — that was provided last year. It was the last year of the budgeting, and so we will go back to see what the member is referring to. Last year was the end of last year's agreement going into this year and then a renewal from there.

Ms. Hanson: When the minister does look at page 7-13, he will see zero and zero in 2018-19 and 2018-19.

I realize that members are anxious to get on with other areas. As much as I would love to spend way more time on Economic Development, I appreciate that we need to move on.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development?

Seeing none, we will proceed to line-by-line debate.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, cleared or carried, as required.

**Unanimous consent re all lines in Vote 7,
Department of Economic Development, cleared or
carried**

Chair: Ms. Hanson has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$16,753,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$1,062,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$17,815,000

Department of Economic Development agreed to

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 210, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a 10-minute recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 210, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Streicker, you have 17 minutes and 50 seconds.

Department of Community Services — *continued*

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, I certainly won't need that. All I am looking to do is introduce the officials who are here today. I would like to welcome back to the Legislature Deputy Minister Matt King. I would also like to welcome, for his first time here, Mr. Phil MacDonald. I didn't have a chance to warn him about how difficult the chairs are, but we are looking forward to further questions and answers on Community Services.

Mr. Cathers: I would like to welcome again the officials here, and I look forward to resuming debate on Community Services with the minister. Previously in debate, we have covered matters such as — we spent a fair bit of time discussing wildfire risk reduction, so I'm not going to recap matters we previously did since time is growing short in this Spring Sitting. We are running out of time to ask questions, so there are some matters we will have to revisit with the minister via letter or other correspondence.

I am just going to move to the area of Emergency Medical Services. As the minister knows, we have had correspondence on a number of occasions regarding the needs of EMS — especially rural EMS. The Yukon's ability to provide emergency medical services in most of our communities is dependent on the willingness of people who volunteer to serve their community as part of the Yukon Emergency Medical Services team.

The issues that I am concerned about and I'm hearing about from some of the volunteers relate to what appears to be a growing frequency of gaps in coverage and that the sustainability of this service is facing increasing challenges. I think I want to emphasize, in introducing this topic, that it is important to recognize that the service that is being provided — without volunteers being willing to provide those services to their communities, the cost would go through the roof or else the service would not be available. As I noted in speaking at the dinner on Saturday night, I also want to specifically note the fact that, in several of these communities, the fact that we have had services for years is dependent on a few volunteers — or in some cases, even just one volunteer — who have been the linchpin and the core of that community's EMS.

My first question for the minister in this area is — I heard from one of the volunteers — I believe the minister made mention of 25 new rural volunteers in EMS this year, and I had heard from one of the volunteers that they believed that this was more than offset by the loss of 30 volunteers. If the minister can confirm or correct those numbers, that would be appreciated. Again, that was not an official departmental

source, but was relayed by one individual who clearly believed what he was saying and was concerned about it.

I would also just note the importance, as we're dealing with volunteers, that there needs to be recognition of everyone within government — beginning at the top at the minister's level and continuing through the department — of the need to inspire our volunteers. They are dealing with difficult situations — in some cases, dealing with health emergencies affecting members of their own family, close friends or certainly members of their community — and they are out there at all hours of the day, dealing with tough situations. We need to remember that we need them more than they need us and, at all times, I would encourage the minister to ensure that the department is focused on the need to inspire volunteers, not to focus on giving orders to volunteers.

My two questions — I asked the question about the number of rural volunteers. I would also ask the minister — in the area of gaps, the community of Haines Junction especially has faced significant challenges in maintaining coverage. Can the minister advise what the situation is with those two specific areas?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I would like to support what the Member for Lake Laberge has just said about how important our EMS volunteers are. I think he knows that I believe that, and certainly I will say that it has been my experience with the department that they believe that as well. I think we recognize that EMS responders are very critical for our communities and they do a wonderful job.

I did share with the member opposite, through some correspondence, some analysis of the numbers of volunteers. I will have to look back to see what the volunteers have been in past years. I don't know how they compare over time. My sense of it is that there are times when the number of EMS volunteers across the territory does ebb and flow. The upside is that — and this was announced at the Volunteer Ambulance Services Society meetings and awards banquet, this past weekend, where they did acknowledge many new members. I will say right here that my wife is one of those new volunteers.

With respect to Haines Junction — I did go out to Haines Junction and sit down and meet with the volunteer crew there to have some conversations about how we can continue to support volunteerism and volunteers within the community. When I look back through the numbers for Haines Junction — while I am sure that every community would like to have more volunteers, they are not where I think the critical pressure lies. Just looking around in terms of call volume, in terms of number of volunteers, and in terms of the size of the community, Haines Junction is not bad. That doesn't mean that we can't seek to get more volunteers there and support our volunteers better there. What it means is that they're not where — I think we have more critical issues.

But, just in principle, I agree with the member opposite that we need to be very supportive of EMS. They provide a very critical role for all of us.

We rely on those volunteers to put forward schedules and every community approaches this a little bit differently. There

are times when volunteers are on call and times when they are not, but they all try to respond whenever they can. When there is no response — when we do have gaps — as I think I wrote in the letter; I will have to check back — we have mutual aid agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions for Haines Junction that I think is Whitehorse itself. If there is a gap and it's going to be filled, it would be filled from here. So at all times, we look to cover off those contingencies and work with the community with the resources that it has in front of them.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the answer from the minister.

I do want to make it clear for the minister as well as the managers in his department that I'm not questioning whether people have the best of intentions; the issue at hand is that good intentions don't always equal good results. It's my belief that the government needs to do more to support the volunteers and to help inspire them and make it an environment where they feel that the government has their backs at every turn rather than feeling like some of the challenges that they deal with are in fact imposed on them through requirements such as paperwork and dealing with administration.

Again, I want to be very clear about the fact that I'm not questioning anyone's intentions; I'm simply saying that good intentions are not enough. If they're not achieving a perfect result, then government should always be looking at the question of: How can we do better in this area?

Moving on to an issue that has been at hand — an ongoing concern for volunteers has been the challenge around getting uniforms that, in some cases — including one that I heard on Saturday night — they had apparently been a volunteer for a year but did not have a uniform kit yet. Can the minister just advise what they're doing in this area? Would the minister consider, rather than simply going to — as he indicated in his most recent correspondence to me — the minister did talk about steps that were being taken to acquire uniform kits. Will the minister consider actually acquiring a modest inventory of uniforms? I'm not talking about massive quantities by any means, but simply having some uniforms in stock so that if a volunteer has either a damaged uniform or a new volunteer comes on — that they have the ability to respond rather than waiting for the next order or the next standing offer agreement to simply pull something out of a stockpile and respond in a timely manner to that, because that's an issue that may seem like a minor one, but it does come down to — for many of the volunteers, it comes down to their feeling of a sense of respect that they have from government. If it takes a long time for them to receive it, it leaves them feeling unsupported and unappreciated.

So I would encourage the minister to consider that suggestion, and I would ask another question with regard to — if nurses are volunteering for EMS, can those nurses operate within their training, or is their scope of practice while volunteering for EMS being restricted? If it is being restricted, why aren't they being allowed to practice within the full scope of their training?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First, with respect to the uniforms — this is a great example where the intentions of the department to be supportive are there, yet there were issues with the supplier. The issues weren't just once over; it happened a couple of times. In fact — to the suggestion from the Member for Lake Laberge — after the first order fell short, what the branch did was to try to over-order in order to create a bit of a stock, and then that order fell short as well. So they had to find a new supplier. I think those things are getting ironed out. We are looking for a new supplier right now. I think we will get that sorted out. Again, just as I said earlier, we definitely want to support our volunteers.

We love it when nurses come and volunteer to be paramedics, because they bring such a range of medical background and how to respond, but they are governed differently. When they act within EMS, they have to be governed under the regulations of EMS. I believe that would be considered as a paramedic. I will check my language on that.

Even my wife, who has 30-some years at the hospital, still has to go back through different types of training. She has told me that she appreciates that training. There are certain things that she gets right away — no problem — because of her background, but she appreciates the context that she is trained for and judged for in her ability to perform. She has told me in several instances that she doesn't want to use her full scope of practice because some of that requires a hospital around her. There are certain things that you want to be careful about doing. So it isn't just a straightforward answer.

I take the principle that the member opposite is talking about — that we want to use our volunteers to the best of their ability — yet we also have to be careful that we are ensuring safety for the public at all times.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the importance of public safety, of course. I also recognize that there are certain things within the scope of practice of a nurse which, as the minister mentioned, there is indeed a requirement for those elements — or I should say that safety requires perhaps that those particular parts of the scope of practice not happen when they are out in the field and not in a health facility.

The concern that I have heard is that, in some other cases — certain other parts where it would be, in the view of those raising the concern, perfectly appropriate for a nurse to exercise their full scope of practice — that they are being prevented from doing. What I would encourage the minister to do is to just look into this matter further and to look into the details of it. My suggestion would be — first of all, I don't believe that regulations are in fact restricting that. I believe that it is policy. If I am incorrect on that, the minister is welcome to correct me — but I believe that it is in fact policies, not regulations, which are restricting that. In that particular case, whether it is policies or regulations, I would just urge the minister to ensure that they are looking at that, and if there are areas where a nurse volunteering for EMS would be able to safely use their full scope of practice — I shouldn't say "full scope of practice" — that they should not be restricted needlessly in their scope of practice and, if there

are things that they are trained to do and that they can do safely in the field or on an ambulance, that they should be allowed to do so rather than be restricted by policy or regulation — which, in that case, would be needlessly interfering with public safety and quality health care outcomes for Yukoners who are patients of EMS.

Moving on to another related area — I would just note for the minister that the LMS system that provides training online — there continue to be concerns from volunteers about the range of the training that is provided through this, with some parts of it being appreciated through the online Learning Management System, but I consistently hear from a number of volunteers that some of them feel that the training module is more based on an urban environment. It provides some instruction in some areas where they can't really use those elements of training because of the lack of resources that would be available in a city, and it doesn't properly prepare them for some of the challenges that they deal with. One example often used is ditch extractions or dealing with transporting a patient who is beside the highway or a little bit away from the highway safely to the ambulance without hurting their back or causing some other injury to themselves or to the patient. I would encourage the minister to take that concern to heart and to take a look at having the department work with VAS to determine where that LMS could be better adapted to the needs of Yukon volunteers and provide them with the training that they require. I would be remiss if I didn't note that some have also suggested that, in some of those cases, if the government were able to look at adding winches to the ambulance — it might need to be some sort of modified winch system — it could, in some cases, prevent volunteers from suffering from back strain or other injuries as they are trying to transport a large patient to an ambulance.

In one case, there was a situation — actually, I won't get into specific examples at this point here, but I have heard some specific examples of cases where, even with two volunteers, a patient was heavy enough that some sort of mechanical assistance such as a winch might have reduced the risk to the volunteers.

Another area in terms of supports, Mr. Chair, that I should note is the importance of having the mental health and counselling services through the employee assistance program available to volunteers. I understand that has sometimes occurred, but there have been some challenges with it. I would just draw that to the minister's attention, and if he is able to provide any information, I would welcome it.

Since I have put a few questions out there, I will just sit down at this point and give the minister a chance to respond to some of those points and concerns.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I thank the member opposite for his suggestion about nurses and whether they can operate to — I'll say "a fuller scope". I don't want to say the words "full scope" because there are some things that I don't think are likely going to be appropriate. I think it depends on equipment; it depends on qualifications; and it depends on their licences. I am not worried, as well — as the member opposite noted — whether it is policy or regulation, because it

is really all about safety and about trying to provide as much scope as we can to our volunteers because we want them to operate — so I am happy to look into it and check into it.

I am also happy to take feedback from EMS members regarding the modules. This is the first that I have heard of those comments, but I welcome hearing them. We think that the system overall is a good thing because one of the things that it is doing now is it is providing more accountability about training across all of the volunteers. Before we didn't — there would be some training, but there would be differences, so this gives us a standardized level of training — so that is an upside.

Is it well-suited for the Yukon? I think that is a great question — let's have a look into it. We always want to check out how to improve it for our members.

I might have missed the last one — I think there was just a comment about heavier patients these days. We do have some money in our budget for specialized tools, especially when people are further away from the ambulances or roads, but I want to say that this is actually a challenge across probably our whole society. We are getting more calls where people are heavier, and so we need to address that. I think that is true, not just with EMS, but probably Health and Social Services and other places where we're working — our fire departments, as well, have been talking about it. There are challenges that we have these days, and if I have missed anything in those responses, I am happy to pop back up.

Mr. Cathers: The point the minister had missed — which he mentioned he had not heard fully — was the point I made about supports for mental health — and by that, I had also included counselling and post-incident support — critical incident stress management — that range of tools that is available through the employee assistance program and other areas.

I have heard from EMS that those services have been available at times, but there have also been some challenges in accessing them. I am just encouraging the minister to look into that. I am sure he is not going to have any detailed answer at this point — really, in this case, it sounds like, generally speaking, the services may mostly be available, but the devil is in the details and there have been problems when it comes to actually accessing it in some situations. I am just urging the minister to look into that and to get back to me at a later date.

Just before moving on to other areas, since we are running short of time in this Spring Sitting, I just want to emphasize one point that there are some people within EMS who are feeling a lot of challenges these days. There are problems with morale. In saying that, I'm not meaning it to be critical of anyone's intentions; I am just again reiterating the point that good intentions don't always equal the best results. If the outcome isn't as good as we would like to see, then government needs to do more. In this case, government needs to do more to support these volunteers.

I also want to emphasize the fact that — based on what I've heard from a growing list of volunteers across the territory — respect, inspiration and having your back are even more important in dealing with these volunteers than training

in clinical guidelines. Of course, the latter two are very important, but it's important that they feel from government — starting at the top and continuing through — that they are respected, that there is an attempt to inspire them and that government has their back.

Mr. Chair, I have corresponded with the minister in suggesting that the government do a Yukon emergency medical services community status report. I recognize that the minister has provided parts of that information, and I recognize, based on his response, that there may be challenges with providing the level of detail I had suggested. But I would just note that providing more public information and providing more information — to not only MLAs, municipalities and advisory councils, but also in fact to neighbouring EMS response areas — is something that would be helpful to provide an increased understanding of gaps in coverage. I have heard as well from volunteers that they would find it useful to have a better understanding of what is going on in neighbouring jurisdictions and the problems being felt across the territory. I would encourage the minister to just give more consideration to the concept that I have outlined and perhaps come back with something that may be different in details, but reflects the principle of that suggestion.

The minister would be surprised if I did not again raise the issue of rural EMS dispatch by helicopter, I am sure. I would just ask the minister if he could provide an update on what training has been provided to volunteers — if any has been.

Again, as I have in the past, I would encourage the government to do more to move toward a model where, instead of relying on Whitehorse to dispatch via air — breaking it down to its simple terms — in areas of the lower risk helicopter responses that are similar in their level of risk to mining exploration crews getting on the helicopter after the briefing or ministers travelling on helicopters or kids even travelling on helicopters and relying on the safety briefing by the pilot, that they look at doing more, including providing more training, so we're in a situation where, if there is an urgent response need in rural Yukon, volunteers who are willing to go are able to respond to that by helicopter without having to wait the longer time and incur the higher cost of having Whitehorse air operations dispatch to that community. Just simplifying it down — to clarify for the ministers and others who may be listening or reading — I'm referring to a situation where, for example, if someone had a suspected heart attack or stroke in the bush 30 miles away from Ross River, if there were a helicopter in the area and there were volunteers willing to respond, that responding in a timely manner would be the best chance of saving that person's life — as the minister knows — whereas waiting a longer time could significantly increase the chance the person would not survive. In those types of situations, in the urgent response situations especially, it's important when it's not dealing with the more challenging situation such as towing into a mountain or entering a potentially risky situation that requires a higher degree of training, that government focus on a common-sense approach to allowing volunteers to respond to urgent

situations without significant delay while waiting for approval from Whitehorse.

Just in the interest of time here, I'm going to move on to asking what government has done as far as training for search and rescue volunteers — if they're looking at providing increased training in those areas. I would also note in the area of both EMS and volunteer fire departments, that it has been awhile since the honorarium structure was reviewed or increased, and I would ask whether the government is looking at reviewing the honorarium structure for EMS and for volunteer fire departments and, if not, whether the minister will consider doing so.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I seem to always be one question back, so I didn't hear the very last question. I'll do my best to try to respond, and again I will pop up.

There is no doubt that people who are EMS volunteers do a hard job. It's a difficult job. They're dealing with people who are in stress and distress. Sometimes they are first responders to scenes that are incredibly challenging. We recognize that can always — no matter what system we have out there: paid or unpaid, volunteer — that's a stressful situation and we need to support those people who are responding.

If there are gaps or times when the system isn't working well to provide employment assistance programs for our volunteers to access mental wellness supports, I want to hear about it so that we can sort those out. I think that we are generally providing those supplements, but I can check to make sure. I also agree with the Member for Lake Laberge that it is incredibly important to be respectful and thankful to those people who are out there helping us — whether they are paid or unpaid but, in particular, in our communities — when they are doing this as volunteers.

The thing about planes and helicopters: It's not just about whether it's safe for someone to ride on a plane; it's that you are dealing with an emergency situation and that requires some very specific training, some very specialized training. So it isn't just as straightforward as: With a 10-minute brief, you can ride on a helicopter. You may be dealing with remote terrain; you may be dealing with all sorts of things. We have a group — for example, the special operations medical extrication team which we have been training up. This is their very purpose. They are specialized folks who deal with remote and rugged types of terrain and specialized types of extraction. That is exactly what we have there. I would be happy to get as much training as we can for all of our volunteers. Those who want to go further — I am happy to try to get it for them, but I just want to be careful to acknowledge that doing something like air transportation — fixed wing or rotary wing are both rather specialized skills.

I will stop there. I think there was another question about search and rescue and our teams there, but I will pick it up again from the member opposite.

Mr. Cathers: Yes — the other question I had asked was: What is going on with regard to search and rescue and training being provided for volunteers around the Yukon? For

search and rescue, what types of training are currently being made available to volunteers?

The other question that I think the minister missed is — I noted the fact that in the area of both EMS and fire that the honoraria structure for the volunteers in both respective areas has not been changed for quite some time. I asked the minister if they are reviewing that and, if not, if he would be willing to look at reviewing the honorarium for both areas to ensure that the structure is appropriate — including in terms of what is provided for both support and honoraria to rural EMS supervisors as well as fire chiefs. I am not just referring to financial, but also the administrative supports in those areas provided by government.

On the area of rural helicopter extraction, I could easily spend quite a bit of time with the minister, but in the interest of how short we are for time, I am going to move on. Just for the point of noting that, while I agree that the minister has a point, I do think that point is being taken a bit too far and that government needs to take a common-sense approach and recognize that there are times where, if you trust your people and your volunteers to act appropriately and use some common sense and if they are able to respond to an urgent medical situation — whether it be a heart attack or a trauma or some other type of incident — by helicopter without having to spend time waiting for Summit to dispatch from Whitehorse or having to wait a long time for approval of using a helicopter — in issues of certain urgency, they would be able to respond quicker. There is a good chance that it may save someone's life one day if they are able to do so and rely on the judgment of the volunteer and whoever is in charge on that crew, as well as the pilot, to avoid landing in an unsafe situation that would imperil the safety of the helicopter or the volunteers on board.

I am just going to move on from that point. I doubt that we are going to reach agreement here this afternoon.

I also want to ask the minister questions in the area of fire and structural fire. What is the government currently doing in terms of contributions to municipalities? I understand that there is some contained in the comprehensive municipal grant, but is government doing anything outside of that? Also, what, if anything, is government doing in areas that don't quite fit inside the box? For example, in Pelly Crossing — if I understand correctly, the fire truck is owned by the First Nation, but I have heard repeatedly about the age of that fire truck from people within the community. If the minister could just clarify whether I am correct in understanding that the fire truck is owned by the First Nation but the equipment is owned by the Fire Marshal's Office — and if the minister could indicate what, if anything, the government is looking at doing in cooperation with the First Nation to see that fire truck replaced by one that is modern.

Before sitting down, I am just going to ask two more questions about fire. Could the minister provide an update respectively on the status of the work on the Mayo fire hall as well as the Carmacks fire hall? Could he indicate what is occurring in those two specific areas?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will do my best to respond to the questions.

First of all, talking about search and rescue training — I will have to look back at our agreement with them, but in general, if there are people who want to get the training, I am happy to try to get them the training. It is one of the ways. The member opposite was talking about EMS and fire honoraria and how they haven't changed over time. I can look into that.

When we were talking about respect, it is not just about how they receive that compensation, which, even if it goes up, is still going to seem modest to me. It is about how we do respect them — with education and training, with facilities, with equipment and with recognition. I think those are other ways that we also have to be watching and looking at. I want to try to think of it from the whole approach.

I am not quite sure what the member opposite is suggesting — that if there was some sort of common-sense approach, we could just let people get on a helicopter to help them if there was a heart attack or something. I am not trying to belittle this in any way.

Let me give a small example: I have arrived, a couple of times, at the scene of a motor vehicle accident and I can feel my adrenalin move up — and I watch my wife, who is a nurse — and she is calm and she is steady. She doesn't rush. She gets me off to the side. She is there providing reassurance; she is checking to make sure that things are safe. That is what we have to look at. It is about ensuring that, if we are going to do a more remote type of extraction, how we can do that in a safe way.

I think people need to be trained for that. I have said that I'm happy — if people want that training, we would try to get it for them. I think that there are so many things that we need to get people trained up for, but if that is their priority, that's fine. What I don't think we can do is just say to people who aren't trained yet, "Go ahead". But again, I will check on it. I think that is not a critical issue around our EMS folks or fire folks. I really think it is burnout and supporting volunteerism.

The Member for Lake Laberge asked about structural fire and funding for structural fire within our communities or municipalities — I think he asked first. What we did was — \$50,000 a year went into the comprehensive municipal grant, and I am very happy to say that, as of last year, the comprehensive municipal grant — which had levelled off for several years — now is starting to increase again. So there is increasing support for municipalities, and that included some of that money that was for structural fire — although we didn't prescribe it. In other words, it was up to the municipality to choose where to utilize its resources to best suit its situation and needs.

With respect to the unincorporated communities and our First Nation communities where we have fire equipment around there — the Fire Marshal's Office has rotating equipment. What they do is they prioritize the most out-of-date equipment across the territory and then they rotate that through.

When I went and sat down with the folks in Pelly, the issue there was volunteers again, not equipment. It was that

they needed more volunteers. That is the critical issue, as I mentioned earlier.

I will work to get an answer on the Mayo fire hall and the Carmacks fire hall. I will say that the last time I checked, the Mayo fire hall was on track — I believe it is for this year, but I will check that and confirm it.

The other one — for the Carmacks fire hall — I'm not sure on the timing on it, but I will say that when I sat down with Carmacks, their number one priority was the rink, and so we have invested there. We know about the fire hall for them, and we're happy to get it in the queue — but I'm not sure of timing at this moment.

The last thing that I will say is that the honoraria for our EMS folks did increase in 2016 — always happy to review that and look back. The last thing to note is that for search and rescue — their job is really about searching and finding people. They are typically coordinated through the RCMP, I believe, whereas if we are talking about something medical — if the focus or the issue is medical — then that is where we have created this special operations medical extraction team — sometimes using the acronym SOMET. That is where we do the training. They are a multi-disciplinary group and medically focused. We are training them to be able to deal with things like air transportation and remote extractions.

Mr. Cathers: I guess the minister and I are not going to agree to the handling of helicopter situations this afternoon, but in the interest of time and moving on to other departments, as well as providing the Third Party time on this department, I will move on.

I am just going to ask the minister a few questions here. One is if he can provide an update on what the expected timeline is for the work on the Pelly airstrip, and whether they are looking at providing the appropriate lights, et cetera, that would allow evening flights. If that isn't something that the minister has at his fingertips — since it is partly under the Department of Highways and Public Works — I would be happy if he could commit to asking his colleague to get back to me with a legislative return. Of course the connection in this case is the ability for medevacs to fly into there and the fact that currently EMS volunteers often have to meet volunteers from Mayo if a patient in Pelly requires a medevac.

Just moving on to a couple of areas, the minister has talked before in debate about implementing tipping fees at dumps. I have a couple of questions related to that. One is that previously, when I was the minister responsible, the department had done a cost analysis of the feasibility of that and had determined at the time that they estimated it would cost more at some of the facilities to administer tipping fees than they would recover in them. Has the department done a more recent cost analysis and business case? If so, will the minister make that public? If not, can the minister explain why they are doing something that will see not only fees implemented on Yukoners at dumps that are run by Community Services, but — according to the last report that I saw from Community Services — that the department itself recommended against doing that because of the cost?

Secondly — in the area of dumps and dumping — there continues to be a problem with illegal dumping. I know that it's not just my constituents who see it. A few of the examples that have occurred in my riding recently and in previous years include a couple of sites in the Ibex Valley, dumping by mile 5, dumping in ditches — and recently I heard of dumping off of Parent Lane inside city limits but within an area that, if I understand it correctly, was previously the Old Alaska Highway right of way. There has been some question about who is responsible for cleaning it up.

The upshot has been that there's illegal dumping that occurs and no one has cleaned it up, and people who are using the area see not only the unsightly pile of dumping — which is growing — but there's some risk. There's a mix of various types of waste, some of which might even be hazardous, in an area where, when people are out trying to enjoy the neighbourhood and their environment with pets, children, and so on, that can be a safety risk.

My question for the minister is: What's the government doing in terms of addressing illegal dumping and cleaning up? Since the illegal dumping in the Whitehorse periphery clearly increased after Whitehorse implemented tipping fees and increased when Whitehorse bumped those tipping fees up — if the Yukon government is then going to tipping fees at its facilities, people are concerned that illegal dumping may increase. Since government isn't even addressing the illegal dumping problem adequately now, I'm hearing from people who are concerned about what the government's plan is for dealing with illegal dumping. Do they have one? Are they simply hoping that this won't occur or pretending it won't? If not, what are they planning to do in this area?

That question may have sounded more aggressive than I meant it to. I'm just expressing the strong concern on behalf of people who are seeing a problem now that is currently not being adequately addressed. I have recently heard concerns from constituents about the volume of trash in the ditches along the Mayo Road on the way to Deep Creek — some of which is probably due to improperly secured loads — but the root of the issue is that people are concerned that there is already an illegal dumping problem the government isn't adequately handling, so how much worse is it going to get? Does the government have a plan to actually improve the cleanup that's being done? Right now, people are concerned about what isn't happening in that area.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'll try to respond as best I can. One of my experiences — I remember when we used to burn. Then we went to stop burning at our landfills; people said this is going to create a lot of illegal dumping. There were some people who went off and would dump illegally. Mind you, Mr. Chair, I can go back and find places where people dumped decades ago and beyond.

So this has been an ongoing problem. I don't know that it is worse now than it has been. If the member opposite, when he was Minister of Community Services, had some access to that information, I would be happy to get it. Every time we make a change — when we first started saying there were going to be gates and hours, then the spectre rises again.

What I want to say is that the problem here is people who are illegally dumping, and I think that they are the problem, not that these changes are happening. I also want to say that, when I landed as minister, I came back to ask to form a committee that was built up from municipalities across the territory to ask them to provide advice on how we could make sure that our solid waste was more sustainable. Their suggestion was to make sure we have tipping fees across the territory in all of our communities.

That suggestion — which comes from them — is a good suggestion. I am not trying to dump that suggestion on them. I support it. Will it create some additional dumping? Usually what happens is, when rules change, there is a spike in illegal dumping and then it tapers off. What are we planning to do about it? Well, we have been discussing enforcement — carrot and stick. I am happy to talk further about that, but what I really want to say is that no matter what we do, there are still some people out there — even if you had the simplest of rules, they will still choose to dump illegally, so it is difficult to change a moral compass.

Will we put in place the systems that will allow us to do our best to enforce it? Yes. We want people to work appropriately within the system.

With respect to the costs — yes, there has been analysis done to look at the cost of each of our sites across the territory. Typically, the smallest sites across the territory cost the most money per person. There is an additional cost to introducing a tipping fee. For example, you typically will need scales. You will need some way to charge, and so you have to collect some money. On the other hand, nowadays, we have already gotten to the point where we believe that our solid waste facilities need to be gated and staffed for this very reason — because if you don't, what happens is someone comes in and dumps a bunch of stuff inappropriately and costs tons of money. So it is that avoided cost that we are talking about. Even if they didn't, what is happening right now in the member opposite's riding and my own — some Yukoners, in order to avoid a tipping fee — at least they're not dumping — but what they are doing is they are dump shopping. They are heading to a dump where it's free — or a solid waste facility where it's free — to get away from paying the tipping fee, and then we pay to bring it back and pay a 70-percent premium, I think, on top of it. There is no way that this is cheaper.

So I think that tipping fees are economical when you look at it holistically. I am happy to try to get that analysis for the members opposite. This is work that has been ongoing with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

I will leave it there. I am sure that we will have more conversation on this, and I will look forward to further questions.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the minister's undertaking to get back with more information. I want to note in that area — I understand the argument that is made for tipping fees. At this point, I am not here to argue against them. I am simply saying that the previous analysis done by the department had recommended against it because of cost of administration. There is also the concern about potentially increased illegal

dumping. With those areas, I am asking the minister — in keeping with the government's commitment to evidence-based decision-making — to actually make the decision on the basis of evidence and an appropriately thorough analysis which looks at things including the unintended consequences which may occur, such as if there is increased illegal dumping.

What I didn't hear a specific answer on — if the minister doesn't have that now, that's fine, but I would encourage him to develop one — to come up with a better plan for dealing with the illegal dumping that is already occurring as well as any potential increase that might result from this.

I am just going to move on to two related areas — the question of what the government is currently providing in terms of diversion credits to recyclers — and the recycling fund is a restricted fund in the government's budget, but there is no detail provided within the budget on what actually makes up those multi-million-dollar numbers. I did ask at the briefing but I haven't seen it yet. Just in a more formal manner, I am requesting a breakdown of the recycling fund — what the expenditures are and what the revenues are in terms of the details of where those are coming from — which entities, organizations or companies are being paid and how that is structured.

If the minister could provide that information, that would be appreciated — even if he doesn't have it here today.

I am just going to move on to another area — protective services. Can the minister indicate in which areas of the Yukon the building code is enforced for? How is that established? Where does the authority originate from? How are the communities in which it is in place identified? Again, if he doesn't have that information in front of him, I would be happy to receive a legislative return or a letter.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will again apologize. I get most of the questions and then I miss a couple at the end.

By the way — because the Member for Porter Creek North has asked a couple of times about an economic impact analysis on the bag study — I have been looking to try to find the economic impact analysis that the members opposite did previously when designated material regulations were first proposed for tires and e-waste. I haven't yet been able to find those. I am looking for them, so if they know where those are, I would be happy if they could point me in the right direction.

I do agree that we need to be evidence-based, but I also think that there are several things at work here. We also said, "Local solutions to local problems." The municipalities came to me with that as a significant motivating factor.

We have been working on illegal dumping. There will be more of that as we work with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the municipalities.

With respect to diversion credits — last year, I believe that, overall, there was \$650,000 in diversion credits. This year, we are forecasting them to be closer to \$850,000, and maybe just over. I can talk about those and how they have been changing over time.

There was another question about the recycling fund. I will just ask the member to give me those questions again.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the information that the minister provided.

I just note that when it comes to the information that we had in making decisions as a previous government — I do have to remind the minister that, of course, when it comes down to anything that were Cabinet documents previously, as the minister knows — that we lose access to those Cabinet records with the change in office, so we simply do not have access to some of the information that we did in making those decisions.

My question for the minister — I just note the fact that while the recycling fund is identified within the government's budget and it shows the total revenue and the total expense, there is no breakdown of that, and I am just asking the minister to demonstrate increased accountability in this area and to provide us with a more detailed breakdown of a list of revenues and expenditures within the recycling fund. It is a concern and question that I have heard from some people. It is of course ultimately taxpayers' money, even though held in a restricted fund.

I also asked the minister a question related to the building code, but I would just encourage the minister to take a look at that in Hansard and get back to me with that information — I doubt that he has it here.

Mr. Chair, just pursuant to a commitment that I made to a member of the Third Party, with that, I will wrap up my questions this afternoon on Community Services in the interest of allowing the Member for Takhini-Kopper King to ask some. I would just thank the minister and officials for the information that they provided and ask them to get back to me with the outstanding information that I requested at a later date via a letter or legislative return.

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank my colleague for Lake Laberge for ceding the floor. I welcome the officials — especially the first-time appearance here in the House.

I have a series of questions. For starters, I just want to know the difference between a value-driven and a price-driven contract in terms of looking at the transfer stations — so Marsh Lake transfer station or the Robinson transfer station. What is the difference between a value-driven contract and a price-driven contract?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just steal a little bit of time to respond to some of the things that the Member for Lake Laberge mentioned, and then I will get to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King's question.

I am happy to look back at the question on building codes. Also, I'm happy to try to get a breakdown of the \$4.118 million in the recycling fund. Then, lastly, the economic analysis that I was talking about — is nothing about — I fully expect that "advice to the minister" gets sealed, and off it goes. But if there was an economic analysis that was done on the *Designated Materials Regulation* which has been asked of me, surely that would be something that we would share with the public. I would think that was the whole point of asking for an economic analysis. If you can point me to it, I will happily look at that. That would be great.

With respect to the value-added projects, or RFPs — for example, with respect to the solid waste facilities — what we did was we went and had a community meeting — one in Marsh Lake and one in Mount Lorne. We sat down with the community and we asked them what sorts of things they would like to see, more than just price-driven, that they would like to have as a way to assess.

I would have to look back to see exactly what went into the RFP, but there were certain things around — I believe the free store was one of them. There were certain aspects within each of the communities that they said they would like these things to be considered and weighed in assessing the bidders that came forward for those contracts.

There was some stuff that we could ask — you could put a little bit of weight toward relationship with the community and things like that. I think those were typical things that were in those contracts. I'll wait to see if I've covered off the question or if there's more.

Ms. White: There's more; there's so much more.

Today if you were to go to the Marsh Lake transfer station, there's actually a sign up. It's on a whiteboard that says refunds or donations no longer accepted by the MLSWS — complaints, please call Community Services.

The reason why I bring this up is I want to know why the Marsh Lake transfer station is no longer accepting refunds.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This issue goes back before the RFP actually; it pre-existed. We have still been working to try to find a solution. This is different from recyclables; this is refundables. The refundables there — we have been asking around whether there is someone who wants to take on the work. It's not necessarily a part of the landfill itself; it certainly can be, but it doesn't have to be.

We have been trying to find a way to do it within the community. We approached the Marsh Lake Community Society to see if they want to do it. We have a meeting coming up shortly with a past president of the Marsh Lake Solid Waste Management Society to discuss potential solutions. It's about trying to find a group we can support.

Typically, this is done by a group that is looking to generate a little bit of revenue for themselves to support that group and/or agency. So often what we used to do at the Marsh Lake facility is have one bin for the fire hall, one for the community society and one for the Marsh Lake Emergency Services Society. If we're not able to find one of those, then we'll regroup and check to see whether we make it part of the landfill contract as well, but right now we're still trying to find a solution within the community.

Ms. White: It's our understanding that the Marsh Lake transfer station was recently tendered as a value-driven contract, which is why I was asking what "value-driven" would mean in this case. We know now that there are no refunds there. We know it was definitely recently tendered as a value-drive contract, yet providing refunds was a required responsibility of the contractor — it was our understanding that was within the RFP.

I'm just asking for clarification — whether that was included in the tender, the value-driven contract, or not.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will go back to confirm, because we're down into some very specific questions, but my understanding is that it was not a part of the contract, and the reason was that there were efforts to see if it could land with a community organization first and foremost — but I will check for the member opposite.

Ms. White: I guess that leads us to the next question, which is: If it wasn't included in this contract that was recently tendered and I believe was higher than what was being paid for before — that is my understanding — why wasn't it included? The minister has just said that they were looking for an organization to be in charge, but why wouldn't that fall under the contract of the contractor who had just won the contract to run that facility?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, I will have to go back and follow it through the thread to be sure, but I believe that the reason it happened that way was because it was always seen as an opportunity for a local group to earn a few dollars. That is all.

Let me say it this way: We want to make sure that, as much as we can, we have the ability to collect refundables in our communities. I want to support that. I certainly want to support it in my own community. I just understand that is why it wasn't in the contract in the first place, but I am happy to check.

Ms. White: If there needs to be a change, will that be an additional payment that will be given to the contractor to then take care of the refundables?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: One of the things about refundable contracts is that there is compensation due to the fact that the materials are being collected. Sometimes they pay for themselves. It wasn't originally part of the contract bid. Again, we were looking to first consider whether there was an organization within the community that wanted to take it on. I have a meeting coming up about that. If we get to the end of that exploration and find out that there isn't a group that wants to take it on, can we turn back to the company? I think that the answer to that is yes. My understanding of that contract is that we issued it as a one-year contract with the possibility of an extension, so there may be an interruption of service, but we can work to get it back into place. It may mean that there is some additional money going to that contractor, but it may not. The nature of refundables is that they often pay for themselves.

The work for it happens out of a separate fund — the one we were talking about earlier — the recycling fund, for which I was going to get a breakdown. So I will just leave it at that for now.

Ms. White: I do appreciate those answers, but it appears that we are relying on Yukoners to be running the recycling and the refundable program in the community as opposed to the contractor that has just been awarded the contract. It is just about trying to find out how all of that works.

Since the sign has gone up that says that people with complaints can call Community Services about the refundables, have there been any complaints made so far?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will check to see whether there have been complaints that have come into the department, but I can tell you that I have certainly had some calls and some conversations with a few folks. Again, as I said, I have a meeting set up shortly to talk to some people about it. Regardless of what the department has heard, I certainly have heard that there are concerns.

Ms. White: I, like many others, look forward to those concerns being addressed in the future.

This is a broader question, keeping in mind that our information on these matters comes from residents. Definitely, there are people — I am not sure if everyone hears them, but lots of people spend time on the contact registry, myself included. Once you go down the rabbit hole, it's like getting sucked into YouTube videos that are weird. The contact registry is actually really quite interesting.

The next question comes along the fact that — it's our understanding that the contracts for operating the Marsh Lake solid waste facility, the Mount Lorne solid waste facility, the Tagish solid waste facility and the Carcross solid waste facility all went out to tender. When you look at the contact registry, it's our understanding that Tagish and Carcross — the tender processes were purely price driven, while both Marsh Lake and Mount Lorne tender processes were value driven. I wanted to know why that was, and what the differences are between those four facilities.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The way it evolved was that Marsh Lake and Mount Lorne used to be run by societies. We approached those societies and let them know that we were happy if they would continue to run those facilities but that we needed them to compete in a process. So we had community meetings which occurred. In both those communities, there was a request to have value-driven contracts. We had a conversation. We agreed on what elements could go in as part of that value-driven contract.

In the meantime, the other contracts in Tagish and Carcross came up. Since then, I spoke to the local advisory councils and said to them, "Hey, this is what we've just done in these communities. What would you like to see happen next time in yours?"

We just didn't catch it in time. So I did have a conversation with them to let them know, if they would prefer to have a value-driven process. My recollection of what we agreed to do was to put it on one of their agendas and have that conversation with them to see whether that is what they would prefer or not.

There are subtle differences between the facilities. The biggest one is that — Marsh Lake, in particular — just to go back to a point that we were discussing earlier about dump shopping — has a lot of material which is being dropped off. The volume has increased dramatically over the last several years. Not all of it, but some of it has to be from leakage from Whitehorse. In Tagish, there's not as much. So there are some subtle differences across — for example, in Tagish, I think that they have a place where you can drop off refundables, but I don't know that they provide refunds. It's just a donation.

Ms. White: Have the contracts been awarded for both Tagish and Carcross landfills?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: If we can just keep responding to further questions — as soon as I hear from the department, I will let the member opposite know. I know that Marsh Lake has been awarded. I will check on the others.

Ms. White: The reason I am asking is I would like to know what it cost before they have recently been retendered — so what was paid by Yukon government prior and what is being paid currently — Marsh Lake, Tagish and Carcross. If there could be answers for that, I would appreciate it.

We have talked before about tipping fees — how there are tipping fees currently in Whitehorse, and then the minister said, "Well, instead of doing just a pilot project just in the periphery, we are going to look at putting tipping fees in all landfills." So I wanted to know what kind of timeline we're looking at for tipping fees.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: With respect to tipping fees — I sat down recently with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. They gave me an update on their work. Part of tipping fees has been this look at liability issues around the solid waste facilities across the territory, and I have recently turned to Cabinet to get their support — basically at the high level to describe it — I am now authorized to have the department go out and negotiate with each of the municipalities around creating those regional landfill agreements, which will include things like landfill liabilities — closure liabilities, in particular — but also groundwater monitoring. I am just blanking on one other piece of it — but that is all going to take place now-ish.

Once those agreements are in place — I am still hopeful that this spring/summer, those agreements get roughed in — then there will be a window of time, roughly six months — it might be a little bit longer — but there is work we have to do to: (1) to engage with citizens in those communities; and (2) to put in some infrastructure in those regional landfills to get ready for tipping fees — and there may be some other work which we have to see yet that will come out of the negotiations on those regional agreements. Our optimistic timeline would be this fall; our less optimistic timeline would be somewhere in the winter or early in the spring. Those are sort of the rough timelines that we're looking at.

I should note that Watson Lake and Whitehorse have tipping fees around the territory, so it isn't just Whitehorse. I will also just respond to the previous question, or at least part of it — Carcross, Tagish and Marsh Lake contracts have been awarded. Mount Lorne is currently in assessment. I will have to look back to try to see what the differences are in cost over time.

Ms. White: I would appreciate that, because it has been said here before that — and I will say it again — the information in the budget documents is less than it was before. Sometimes, you could ask and get deeper into it — there is a reason why I'm asking the question — just so that I can compare numbers ahead of time.

When the word "regionalization" happens, it is kind of like "efficiencies", where you think about money being saved. When the minister refers to "regionalization", is he implying

the closure of redundant facilities? If he is, has the government decided which transfer stations will be closed in the future? If so, which ones, and when?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Overall, what we think — and this goes back to the question earlier about tipping fees and the cost — our analysis says that we'll have to lay out some additional money for the next year or two, but by the third year, we'll get cost-savings. We also hope our municipalities will be better off. Their bigger concern, I believe, has always been the liability question, and they're just very nervous about liability and want to resolve it, so we're going to work with them to try to resolve it.

We'll be partnering with them in the sense — take any community, let's say Mayo, and outside of that community, you have a lot of peripheral users, and they're not paying into the tax base that's paying for that landfill, but they are paying into our tax base — so we will think of it as a facility that is regional in nature. So it's the municipality and the territorial government that are chipping in to deal with it.

Yes, we have a sense of which facilities we should not sustain. They are the most expensive and the smallest of the lot. The four we're looking at right now are Johnson's Crossing, Braeburn, Keno, and Silver City. Those are the four. Their cost — I would have to get some numbers for you, but those areas would work with a regional landfill. For example, Silver City would use the regional landfill in Haines Junction, Keno would use Mayo, et cetera. It's not that they don't have access to a facility; it's that they don't have access right in their community.

Those facilities are costing — I would have to look back at the numbers, because each one is slightly different, but they're roughly 10 times per capita the cost for those facilities compared to others, so we're trying to concentrate those into those regional facilities.

Ms. White: It's not that I disagree. I was curious — and the timeline for those closures?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The first step is to get those regional agreements in place, because without them, this doesn't go. Then there is at least a window of time, as I said, to get those regional facilities up and running which, as I have said, is a minimum of six months. So let's say the earliest is the fall, maybe into early next year, and then it's after that point in time when we would look at phasing out those smaller transfer stations. The earliest we would — I think it would be next year at some point, but there's a sequence of events that we have to get through.

Ms. White: Once that happens — and we're looking toward the regional landfills as opposed to the smaller ones — and looking at expanding that ahead of tipping fees — are we going to look at having them gated and peopled prior to actually implementing tipping fees?

The reason I ask is, if we think that lots of household garbage makes it out to Mount Lorne or Marsh Lake, when Ross River received construction debris from Faro — I mean, that was incredible. It was unexpected. They didn't know it was coming, and it appeared. It said that the planning process was out of whack, and that was because it wasn't peopled.

Will they be gated and peopled as we go forward?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The point that the member opposite is raising is exactly what the Solid Waste Advisory Committee has been talking about. They need to be gated, they need to be staffed, and they need to be roughly consistent and have tipping fees that are at least regionally consistent. We want to serve all Yukoners. We want it to be fair across the board as much as we can make it. This is a big change. I want to thank the municipalities for stepping up and asking us to work with them to achieve this. I am just trying to acknowledge that this is a big deal, and I completely agree. I echo the comments about illegal dumping. We have to look at how we are going to be enforcing that more and putting more teeth in that. There are a whole bunch of things that have to click into place.

The first step is, yes, to get those agreements in place. The next step is to get them gated and staffed — that way, we can start to do the education about those tipping fees and about what is going on and to engage with the community for a period of time before we ever get to those tipping fees. That's the whole point — that you would have to be doing that public education right there at the sites to help us all get there together as a territory.

Ms. White: I fundamentally believe in the importance — it is no different from when we talk about recycling and how recycling isn't free — neither is garbage. We have been under the misconception for a great number of years that, once we get rid of it, it is gone and we don't have to worry about it anymore — whereas the cost of replacing, for example, the Whitehorse landfill will cost millions and millions of dollars, so the longer that we can keep it operational without filling it with useless trash — which is why we talk about diversion, why we talk about recycling and why we talk about landfilling. Those are all really important.

What I would really love to see from the Department of Community Services and from communities is an education campaign on the cost of garbage. We are really lucky in North America — we don't see it quite in the same way as you might in a Third World country, but in a Third World country, you understand the cost of garbage because it is everywhere. When you can start to see it in that way, you understand that the temporary item that you use for a couple of days — what it costs into the future is a lot more than what you paid for it.

This brings me to single-use plastic; that was just a nice little slide in there to single-use plastics.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Community Services and the department and the Mayor of Whitehorse — Dan Curtis — and the City of Whitehorse for how effective having those bales of single-use plastics around town are. I love seeing photos of people trying to lift half a tonne — or however much those weigh — of plastic and just being gobsmacked by it. I think that was a really incredible and effective way to talk, again, about the cost of garbage and, in this case, single-use plastics.

It is interesting, because the minister has emphasized the importance of eliminating the amount of single-use plastics — which I agree with — that end up in our landfill, but he

continues to talk about a 70-percent reduction target. He says “70” and I say “100”; then he says “70” and I say “100”. He says “70” and I say “Why don’t we just ban it?” We have had that conversation at length here.

I want to know if the minister can make the case for us about implementing a fee over an outright ban on single-use plastics. So we are getting ready — we’re doing the consultation and we’re talking about coming up with a fee for single-use plastics — including paper bags, perhaps. I am going to ask the minister if he can make the case for me right now as to why we would go for a fee over an outright ban.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will do my best, but I may have to turn back to folks such as Raven Recycling and Zero Waste Yukon. They signed a petition to put in place a fee because they understand some of this devil-in-the-details piece. I want to, in principle, say 100 percent — I think that is the goal. I want to agree with the member opposite. What I was saying with 70 percent is this step, but that’s not the full step.

The bales that we have out there around Whitehorse right now — I’ve asked if we can’t get some of them to our communities so that we see this around the territory a bit. Each one of them is one-third of a tonne. We send Outside for recycling three of those a day — so it is one tonne a day. But do you know what? There is another 18 every day that make it into our landfills. So that’s six times that. Whatever we are recycling is not the lion’s share yet. It is not enough.

One of the challenges with a system around bags in particular is that one of the things that happens — it’s one of those perversities — is that once you introduce a ban, some people just turn to the heavier weight bags, for example, the ones you might buy for your kitchen garbage cans, and then they start using those. There is more plastic in them, so it is a little weird. In principle, I agree with the member opposite: The goal is to get to no bags. That is one step in many steps in trying to reduce the overall amount of plastics that are making it into our landfills.

Right now, we have just closed up the engagement period. We are just going to start to look through it. I got a bit of a mixed response from the chamber. The chamber said to ban the bags — plastic bags, that is — but don’t ban paper bags. So to leave those in — and don’t put a fee on paper bags. It is a pretty mixed response and I will have to work through it with them and with the Department of Environment.

Lastly, I just want to also say that the member opposite is totally right — we do need to do a lot of public education. Those bales were our first step in that whole public education campaign. Spoiler alert here: The tag line that they came up with is “We need to do the heavy lifting.” I loved it when some of the staff — I think I encouraged them — tried to lift it. That sucker is heavy. It’s a lot — and that’s three of those a day from us and another 18 a day that make it into the landfill.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Chair: If I could beg the indulgence of the House, I would like to ask all members of the House to welcome

Mr. Ted Staffen, the former Speaker of the 31st and 32nd Legislative Assemblies. Welcome.

Applause

Ms. White: I thank you for that. I heard the door but didn’t look back.

I do appreciate what the minister has just said. I was looking for the wording of the zero-waste petition, because I actually had a really interesting conversation with Zero Waste Yukon when I tabled it. I said, “I appreciate what you’re saying right now, but I’m not going to sign it.” I said, “I’m not going to sign it, because I believe the last line in the petition talks about implementing a fee as we move toward banning.” I said, “I have argued on the floor that we should move straight to banning, so I appreciate what you’re asking, but I’m not going to sign this because I’m not going to wear this later on about how I signed a petition that said to put on the user fee as we work toward the ban.”

The reason why I’m bringing that up right now is it was our understanding that the business community stated that they would actually prefer a ban over a fee, because they have said it’s them having to manage another surcharge. One of the questions we have is: What’s this going to look like?

For example, I’m a business and I order the packages, so — I worked at Shoppers Drug Mart as a teenager and the bags would come in boxes, and there would be, let’s say, 50 — they’re called T-shirts, T-shirt plastic bags for a thing that you would jam on your rack. Does the business pay the fee to the supplier of the bags? When you collect the fee, where does the fee go? Does it stay with the business? Does it go toward YG? I just want more details about what that will look like.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, what the business community — or sorry, let me be careful here. I got a letter from the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, which is a big part of the business community, but certainly not all of it. That letter suggested yes, a ban on plastic bags, but no to any surcharge or ban on paper bags. Originally, when we were trying to come up with a notion about how to get there, we were trying to not just divert people to a new type of bag. We didn’t think that was an advantage overall. We were trying to not get there.

So their suggestion isn’t one that we have been trying to head toward, but I appreciate that’s what they have suggested and I will certainly have conversations with them about it. If they had said to just put a ban on all types of bags, that would have probably got our eyebrows up and thought, “Well, maybe.” So we’re sort of in a middle ground, which is not — we haven’t reached a conclusion. So the first thing that is going to happen is a “what we heard” and the next is we’re going to start to crunch this out and maybe have some more conversations with them and just try to think what we can do.

What I want to say right now, today, is that any of those businesses can get away from the whole surcharge thing. They can introduce a ban today and I will stand up and sing their praises, and I’m sure the member opposite would as well. If they want to just avoid some of the rigmarole, by all means, I encourage them to do so. This is the goal.

How it will work hasn't been worked out entirely, but we will look for ways that don't add overhead to the business community, so probably the simplest way is just that you track how many bags come into the store over time, and that's what you charge out against, because they could choose whether or not to charge the 25 cents or not, but that is how we would collect. It's like, okay, you have gotten this box — there are this many bags in that container of bags — and this is what you are going to have to pay over time. You know, it would work out over time.

Where does the money go? It goes into the recycling fund. That is what would happen and so this would offset the cost of recycling, which is one of the challenges we have right now — that the commodity market has been changing again around plastics and so that is what it would do.

We want to keep the overhead low, but what I do want to say and what I did say to the chamber is that if you have businesses that want to stand up and say they are going to put in place a ban, then let's find a way to champion those businesses and sing their praises.

Ms. White: I think it sounds great. I will talk about them often when that happens.

I just think that, you know, I have talked about the issues that I have when we put motions in place or we do things and we don't put a deadline on it, so it goes into perpetuity. In our debate on banning single-use plastics, we didn't even talk about three years into the future; it just said that at some point in the future we're going to have a ban on single-use plastics. It is just one of those things — plastic bags — often they get reused. People talk about how they reuse their bags and I appreciate that. When Whitehorse Connects happens at the end of May, I will be taking every single-use plastic bag from my house that my roommates bring home because I would rather juggle 14 items of groceries in my arms and my pockets because I have talked about bags and I will get called out every time I have a shopping bag, so I just avoid it. I would rather, with pride, juggle my groceries than put them in plastic bags, but not as many people speak as publicly against them as I do. It is my gift to bear on that one. I do look forward to the time when we are not talking about a fee; we're talking about banning altogether.

I have a completely different question actually — one about the North American Indigenous Games. What I want to know is a yearly breakdown on the funding. If we could go back to 2016 to 2018, for example, or even 2015 to 2018 — just the numbers for each of those years.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can get some of those numbers for the member opposite. This year, we have \$202,000 going to the Yukon Aboriginal Sports Circle, which is not the North American Indigenous Games, in particular, but they are the group that supports the North American Indigenous Games. Last year, for the North American Indigenous Games: \$50,000; next year: \$50,000; and in 2020-2021, we will have \$300,000 because that is the year of the Games, so there is much more travel.

I should also note that the ministers of sport, in the last meeting ahead of the Canada Winter Games, agreed on a new

funding model for the North American Indigenous Games nationally. They are now going to be a more regular set of games. They used to alternate between the United States and Canada. The United States hasn't been able to deliver on that, so I think we are moving to a Canadian model where we invite US teams. I don't have numbers in front of me, but that was — sort of nationally, we have agreed on a new funding model for the North American Indigenous Games.

I just want to say, Mr. Chair, that I know that sometimes we can be slow. All governments can be slow. But I thought that it was not bad that, after we had a motion here in the fall, I reached out to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. I asked them if they could start work on this, and they came back with this pretty quickly. Is it as much as we want? No — but I really felt that they did a great job in trying to get us started down the path, and I just wanted to acknowledge that as well. So not as fast as we would hope, but faster than we might have expected — how's that?

Ms. White: I would say that the work within the public service is always lightning speed, but it's the politicians who I have concerns about. I appreciate it, yes. They did, very much so, move quickly, but they would have been able to move farther had we set the bar. So I will just leave that there — yes, it's true.

This year, in community infrastructure — it has \$250,000 toward Hamilton Boulevard. I have been here previously, and I had a different Minister of Community Services, and we talked about Range Road north from 2012 until probably mid-2014 or 2015. The reason why Range Road north is such a big deal is that, at one point in time, there was one house in Whistle Bend, and now there are hundreds of houses in Whistle Bend.

Range Road north — just for the minister — you go from Mountain View, Range Road continues, it goes past Takhini trailer park — which has a beautiful newly done road — it goes around a corner, it passes Crow Street, and then the road stops. The road improvement stops. There is a pothole that eats full-size pickup trucks. It continues on in front of Northland. There are the potholes. We have Northland — we have three condo associations to the right-hand side of the road. You continue on. You have the second entrance for Northland. You have a couple more potholes that will destroy small cars. You go on. You get to the dandelion heights corner, which is the old dump facility. It is the Ta'an property with the beautiful lookout. You go around the corner, and it gets decidedly better when you get around the corner. Then you hit the bridge where it crosses over McIntyre Creek, and it's paved all the way to Whistle Bend. But the people who live in Northland Trailer Park, the people who live in Condo Corporation No. 69 — the people who live in that area deal with a part of road that has seen a huge increase in traffic.

The potholes are amazing, Mr. Chair. They grow every year. They appear probably in similar spots. They get filled in by City workers, but every year, they come back — and unlike Hillcrest, they haven't put rubber duckies in them, probably because it would be a danger — just by the size of them.

I wanted to know when Range Road north was going to come back for community infrastructure. At one point in time, I was told that it was funding that was coming from the feds and that it was going to be directed to the City of Whitehorse. Then we had talked about how it was going to come and that it was going to happen — it was going to happen — and then it never did. I just wanted to know where Range Road north might be in government spending as far as road improvements for the City of Whitehorse.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am going to have to ask for some more information about this.

I know that we generally work in partnership with the City of Whitehorse. We have been seeking information on the status of this. We understand that discussions between Kwanlin Dün and the City of Whitehorse for land planning in the area are ongoing. Kwanlin Dün — we are still seeking some more input from them. We will continue to work with them.

Sometimes the situation is that — for example, with 2nd Avenue — it is not our piece of infrastructure, but the municipality sets it as their priority. They tell us that it is their number one priority, and then we seek to get the funding there on that — on whatever the municipality identifies as their number one priority. Sometimes, we have another obligation because of some past relationship — and maybe that is the case with Range Road. I have to admit that I am not up to speed on it — or Hamilton Boulevard. There are a couple where we have some obligation, but we will always try to work with the municipality and/or the First Nation that is there. I think that is what we are doing at this point, but I am happy to get some more information for the member opposite.

Ms. White: Talking about Range Road north — it definitely feeds into the sentiment of people who live in that mobile home park where we already have issues around pad rentals and security of tenure and those things, and then you add a road outside their house that destroys their cars. I get lots of interesting phone calls about how they pay property taxes, how they pay territorial taxes, and how this is what they live through.

If the minister ever wants to drive down Range Road north, I will hopefully have a pickup truck in the future, and I will show you those potholes.

I have questions about the future of minimum wage — if the minister can tell me where we are in the process. I believe the terminology was that it has “gone back for review” — anyway, if he could just tell me where we are. We just had the increase on April 1, and I want to know what the next steps are.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, if the road within any municipality is the jurisdiction of that municipality and if that municipality identifies it as a priority, then we are happy to deliver funding through the funding programs that we have access to. In that instance, I am looking for the municipalities to identify it. I just have to figure out who has the responsibility for this road — or, if it is shared — how that looks.

I would like to give a shout-out to the federal government, because some of those funding programs we’re talking about — whether it’s the investing in Canada infrastructure plan or the community water and waste-water fund — they’re 75 percent funded by the federal government and so far have been 25-percent funded by the territorial government. Realistically, that’s a lot of money that is coming. It’s not actually mostly the local taxpayer dollars; it’s actually a great deal for our citizens.

Moving on to minimum wage — for the Employment Standards Board, we lost our chair, as the member knows. I think the new chair will be replaced shortly and then we’ll begin work. The work I understand will happen is — I promised them we would do some economic analyses on the minimum wage and that we would share that with them. I asked them whether they would please keep an eye on inflation, on the consumer price index, because in their original suggestions to us, they had estimated what we thought was low, and sure enough, it was low for this year.

We’re still watching to see what’s going on with that. Those are the stages I anticipate in the next coming months — getting in place a new chair and working through the department to get some economic analyses done and to share that with the board.

Ms. White: Just to ask the minister — I mean, I can go to the Statistics Bureau, and I have at different times, but he has staff present and they have access to more staff — how many Yukoners currently earn minimum wage?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: When I have asked the Bureau of Statistics that question, the answer is that is not a known number. I would have to check back to what they said — maybe even the Employment Standards Board, when it did its analysis, provided in its report some sense of numbers, but there isn’t an exact figure about the number of people who earn minimum wage.

Ms. White: Valuable numbers when we talk about the minimum wage rate.

I have asked this next question a couple of times, including probably most recently on March 28. I am just quoting to the minister from November 22, 2018 in response to Petition No. 3. He said — and I quote: “In the Yukon, many mobile home parks are located on property which has become increasingly scarce and more valuable. Some owners have indicated that should rent controls be instituted or the cost of owning and operating a park becomes too much to recover, they would be more likely to close their business and/or convert the park to another use.”

Then, later on in that conversation — because I asked this question on March 28 — the minister said that some of it was anecdotal and that he would go back and he would get further details about those comments. He said on March 28 — and again I quote: “... I have had a few anecdotal conversations. That is where I think that statement came from. As I said, I don’t have anything substantial to put in front, but I will check back with the residential tenancies office because I think some of that was generated — they will have drafted the original response...”

So I wanted to know if there is more information to share with me because we are a month and a day away from the last time I asked that question. I just wanted to know where the information came from when the minister said that he believed that more than likely the parks would close.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't have anything more today. Unfortunately, I haven't had the opportunity to turn back. I know that we are a month after that and I apologize that I haven't followed up yet, but I haven't. I am happy to go back and check, although some of this conversation is dealing with privately owned land. Sometimes I will hear through the landlord and tenant office, whatever they might be picking up on, but some of it also is just conversation that is happening. I will do what I said I would do, which is to check back with the office and see if there is more that I can update you on.

Mr. Chair, noting the time, I move that you report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: Order, please. 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

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 210, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2019-20*, 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.

The time being 5:30 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled April 29, 2019:

34-2-96

Annual Report — Working hard for Yukoners — Yukon Ombudsman, Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner,

Yukon Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner (Speaker Clarke)

34-2-97

Annual Contributions to Political Parties in the 2017 Calendar Year — Elections Yukon (Speaker Clarke)

34-2-98

2018 Annual Report on Political Party Revenues — Annual Revenue Returns Contributions Made To Political Parties — January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018 — Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (Speaker Clarke)

34-2-99

Report on Subsistence, Travel & Accommodations of Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly 2018-2019 (Speaker Clarke)

34-2-100

Department of Education Annual Report 2018 (McPhee)

The following legislative returns were tabled April 29, 2019:

34-2-210

Response to Motion for the Production of Papers No. 20 (Streicker)

34-2-211

Response to oral question from Ms. Hanson re: *Pharmacy and Drug Act* regulations (Streicker)

34-2-212

Response to oral question from Ms. White re: land development within Whitehorse (Pillai)

34-2-213

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Hanson related to general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 210, *First Appropriation Act 2019-20* — off-road vehicle regulation (Pillai)