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HANSARD

Wednesday, November 6, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall 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. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
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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Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
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Yukon Party

Stacey Hassard	Leader of the Official Opposition Pelly-Nisutlin	Scott Kent	Official Opposition House Leader Copperbelt South
Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

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

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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, November 6, 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. Mr. Streicker: I wonder if we could all please welcome several guests to the Legislature today, including: Dawn Underhill, Shawn and Michelle Underhill, Ashton, Zander, and Zoe, Kelly Underhill, Tash-Lee and Brandon, John Maissan, Tim and Mark Koepke, Carl and Robyn Friesen, Cathy Hines, Ellen Johnson, Brian Macdonald — the Assistant Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Relations — and Mr. Stephen Mills — the Deputy Minister responsible for the Executive Council Office — here today to hear a tribute.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming to this Legislative Assembly a former Member of the Legislative Assembly, elected in 1974, I think, and served as Minister of Education, Recreation, Manpower and Housing — I think it was called then — Eleanor Millard, also a writer and founding member of Grandparents' Rights.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would like members to join me in welcoming YEU president Steve Geick and vice-president Paul Johnston, who have joined us in the House this afternoon.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of Bruce Underhill

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise on behalf of all members and all visitors in the Legislative Assembly today to pay tribute to Bruce Underhill. I had the pleasure and the privilege to know Frederic Bruce Underhill — Bruce — through his work as a land surveyor and with Engineers Yukon. But for all of us who worked alongside Bruce professionally, we knew that he was first and foremost dedicated to his family.

So, to begin, let me acknowledge and thank Bruce's family — Dawn, his wife, Shawn and Kelly, Bruce's children, and their children — for sharing Bruce with all of us here in the Yukon. We know how much he loved you.

Bruce was born in 1947 at the start of the babyboomers in post-war Vancouver. He was born into a family of land

surveyors. Underhill and Underhill is a company well-known to Yukoners, established in 1913 — over a century ago.

In the 1970s, Bruce became a Dominion Land Surveyor, registration number 964. This is back when calculators were people, chain was used to measure distances, and star shots were common practice. Like so many surveyors, Bruce loved to work out on the land measuring lot boundaries of legal claims, mineral claims, and land claims.

His love of being out on the land is, I think, what led him to the Yukon. I can just imagine that when Bruce first came to the territory 40-plus years ago, the local surveyors and chainmen would not give him a pass — silver spoons don't go over well with that crew.

All of Bruce's colleagues will attest today, though, that he tackled his work with integrity, dedication, and good humour. Bruce was expected to toil and succeed on the toughest, remotest, and most difficult projects the firm had to offer. No matter the job, Bruce's performance was exceptional. So, it is no surprise that he became a leader at Underhill and in his field in general. He managed and grew Underhill's Whitehorse office to the largest land survey company north of 60, guiding surveys across the Yukon while also contributing significantly to the firm's many land claim surveys across all three territories.

In the words of his long-time colleague, Tim Koepke — and I quote: "One would be hard-pressed to find a Canada Lands Surveyor who has made such an extensive and valuable contribution to the profession and to the improvement of our practices in the ever-changing modernization, designed to better serve our clients, government and the public interest."

Bruce went beyond the technical aspect of surveying to help develop the profession. He sat on the Association of Canada Land Surveyors starting in 1984. In the 1990s, he went on to become the national president of the association, ushering it in as a self-governing profession.

On a more personal level, one of Bruce's lasting legacies was his mentorship of many prominent northern Canada land surveyors during his career — including Carl Friesen, Bob Gray, Brian Thompson, Joe Iles, Elden Pfeiffer, Michael Kearney, Katie Munroe, Sandy Cooke, Dan Boyle, and Robin Cunningham. This list includes the majority of the currently practising Canada land surveyors in the Yukon. As an engineer who worked alongside surveyors, I count myself as one of those lucky people to have been mentored by Bruce. Bruce was a surveyor who worked alongside engineers.

After Bruce retired from Underhill, he stepped up to serve as executive director of Engineers Yukon. He and his very good friend and partner, Carl Friesen, helped Engineers Yukon locate to a permanent office located next door to Underhill so that they could take advantage of shared services and supports. It was a win-win.

For many years before and after his term as executive director, Bruce volunteered in support of Engineers Yukon. In particular, he helped with chronicling the history of Yukon engineering and fostering youth engagement in the profession through the ever so exciting annual bridge-building and -busting competition.

Beyond Engineers Yukon, Bruce volunteered a lot — the Whitehorse Board of Variance, Boy Scouts, the science fair, Jack Hulland and Porter Creek school councils — the list is long, Mr. Speaker. As Ken Taylor noted at the celebration of life earlier this week, Bruce put up and took down a lot of tables.

For close to a decade, Bruce also sat on the Yukon Surface Rights Board. He was a strong supporter of the Yukon land claims process and of First Nations. As Deputy Minister Stephen Mills put it — and I quote: “Many things became clear very quickly, he knew the Yukon very very well and has likely set foot on more of the Yukon than most... Bruce also had an inquisitive mind and always made the time to talk with myself and I am certain, with all of you too. Bruce also had a great sense of humour which made working with him a real pleasure.” Bruce did have a great sense of humour.

He loved life — especially Christmas parties, Mr. Speaker. I am wearing one of his great ties that he gave to me a few Christmases ago. I never thought I would have the occasion, but here I am.

Bruce was a thoughtful, caring, and gentle man. So, in the end, the real legacy that he gave to all Yukoners who met him was a life well-lived. In the words of Alan Jackson — and I quote:

Remember when
We vowed the vows and walked the walk
Gave our hearts, made the start, and it was hard
We lived and learned life threw curves
There was joy, there was hurt
Remember when

Mr. Speaker, today all members of the Legislature remember Frederic Bruce Underhill.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have for tabling a legislative return responding to a question during Committee of the Whole two days ago.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling two documents. First of all, I am tabling the national cannabis survey second quarter 2019 report from Statistics Canada.

I also have for tabling a legislative return for questions asked by the Member for Whitehorse Centre in my role as Acting Minister of Justice.

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

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House congratulates the Victoria Gold Corporation on achieving their first gold pour in September 2019.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Community Services to explain to Yukoners how shutting down glass recycling and then charging people tipping fees for dumping the glass they are no longer able to recycle is a good environmental policy.

Ms. Hanson: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of any documentation, including analysis, that demonstrates that the Beaver River land use plan, the road access management plan, and the regional land use plan called for under chapter 11 of the *First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Final Agreement* can be reconciled with the objectives of chapter 11 regional land use planning of the *First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Final Agreement*.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cannabis Yukon retail store accounting

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I rise to provide an update on our Liberal government’s work to introduce a legal cannabis regime in the Yukon. I know how important this issue is to the members opposite. On October 17, when I rose in this House to discuss the closure and plan to sell the Cannabis Yukon retail store and/or its assets, the Member for Klwane asked — and I quote: “When you include all the start-up costs, all the renovation costs, and all the overhead, how much money has the government lost in its venture into cannabis retail?” Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that the answer to this question is none.

A few weeks ago, we announced the release of a tender for the Cannabis Yukon retail store assets. The tender is now closed, and I am happy to announce that the Yukon Liquor Corporation has accepted a proposal and deposit for the store assets. The sale, once completed, will recoup \$200,000, which will be returned to the Government of Yukon general revenue. The purchaser of the store assets is currently negotiating a new lease with the landlord, and once in place, the transfer of assets will be completed.

With the sale, we are now able to update this Legislative Assembly with overall financial results of the Cannabis Yukon retail store’s year of operation. The Cannabis Yukon retail store staff, working in conjunction with the Yukon Liquor Corporation, achieved their financial objectives of breaking

even while ensuring that cannabis prices were kept as low as possible in order to displace the illicit market.

The unaudited results indicate that the Cannabis Yukon store's sales from October 17, 2018, to October 17, 2019, were \$3,276,866, while the total costs were \$3,084,261, with a net gain of \$192,605. Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that: In the one year of operation, the Government of Yukon's temporary retail cannabis store paid off the roughly \$750,000 in store start-up costs and, beyond that, returned a net profit of \$192,000. Compare this to the Province of Ontario, which lost \$42 million. Just yesterday, the CEO of Cannabis New Brunswick couldn't say when the Crown corporation might expect to see a profit. He blamed that, in part, on the illicit market in that province.

Last month, the Member for Whitehorse Centre asked if we had more hard numbers in our efforts to displace the illicit market. We do. As I have said previously, the illicit market is difficult to measure; however, the best information we have from Statistics Canada indicates that usage in the Yukon and in Canada has not changed since before legalization. I quote from the National Cannabis Survey second quarter 2019 report: "Cannabis consumption in the second quarter of 2019 was essentially unchanged from the same quarter in 2018, prior to legalization."

The report goes on to state — quote: "From mid-May to mid-June 2019, about 4.9 million or 16% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported using cannabis in the previous three months. This was unchanged from what was reported one year earlier (before legalization) for the provinces and from the last time estimates for the territorial capitals were collected."

Mr. Speaker, this is the best information that we have, and if cannabis usage has remained unchanged since legalization, then all legal sales in the territory are displacing illicit sales. In the first year of legalization, the government store and private retail combined to sell just over 370 kilograms of cannabis. As stated previously, the estimate for overall consumption in the Yukon is between 900 and 1,100 kilograms per year. This means that, one year in, legal sales are displacing somewhere between 35 and 40 percent of the illicit market.

This is significant. Thank you again to the government retail team and the private sector for successfully introducing legal cannabis sales in the Yukon and assisting to displace the illicit market.

Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to rise today. This is an interesting ministerial statement. It's kind of a bit of a redo for the minister who was a little embarrassed that he was not able to answer simple questions about his file during the last ministerial statement.

As the minister referenced on October 17, he got up and delivered a statement on the cannabis corporation. At the time, we asked the minister what the total profits or losses of the cannabis corporation were and he refused to answer. We were surprised he was unable to answer these questions. This was especially odd because, two days prior to that, we asked the Premier the same question and he didn't answer it either. This

backfired on the minister, as he ended up not getting positive media coverage.

I would also like to go on to quote from the ministerial statement — and it does say, "Just yesterday, the CEO of Cannabis New Brunswick couldn't say when the Crown corporation might expect to see a profit." I would just remind the minister of the old saying that "those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones", because it was only 21 days ago when the minister himself was unable to answer basic questions about his own portfolio. In fact, that's the reason we're standing here in this House again — so that the minister can do a mulligan on his first statement. Adding to this, while the minister was not able to answer questions about the corporation he was responsible for, he for some reason was already good to go to answer questions on Ontario. Maybe the minister should pay more attention to his own responsibility and let the other provinces worry about themselves.

Another question that remains outstanding for the minister — on October 24, 2018, I asked the minister about packaging for shipping containers. This was in relation to a CKRW story where they spoke about one single, tiny joint being shipped in a massive shipping box. At the time, I asked the minister why their government would be using such a large shipping container to mail small products. At the time, he explicitly stated that the use of large shipping containers to mail the products was due to federal regulations. But, in discussion with the corporation after the minister made those comments, it turns out that he was incorrect. In fact, according to representatives of the corporation, there was no federal regulation for what it had to be shipped in — only for the retail packaging — so a bit of a trend here from the minister not providing accurate information about this file.

In the e-mail I sent to the minister on October 22, I asked the minister: (1) Do Canadian regulations, in fact, require Cannabis Yukon to ship one joint in a large box, or did he misspeak? (2) Would he also be able to provide me a list of all of the shipping packaging purchased by Cannabis Yukon since start-up broken down by product and price with a cross-reference of what was actually shipped in each box? I think it would be interesting to see how many times larger-than-necessary boxes and wasteful packaging were used to ship products.

So, I am hoping that when the minister gets back up to respond, he can answer those questions today.

Ms. White: Today, in response to the ministerial update on cannabis sales numbers in Yukon, the first thing I thought when I heard the one-year sale results of \$3.2 million was, "Dang, I am in the wrong business." When I heard that Yukon consumes between 900 and 1,100 kilograms of cannabis a year, I thought that we must be the highest consumer per capita, but then I did a quick search and that revealed: no — indeed, it is Nova Scotia. It is no wonder those Maritimers always seem so chill.

So, I do appreciate that the minister was able to provide some analysis and insight into the displacement of the illicit market. I do understand his reasoning and concede that it is

difficult to estimate Yukon's illicit market. The minister mentioned the National Cannabis Survey which surveyed cannabis users to get a sense of usage metrics and the size and scope of the illicit market. Perhaps, instead of relying on a national survey, a similar Yukon-specific survey could provide the Yukon government with insights on what steps they could take to further displace the illicit market here in Yukon.

There is a Canada-wide assumption that the illicit market will continue to fall in relation to legal sales. While the downward trend may continue, there is a very real possibility that it may hit a plateau under our current structure. I will say this anecdotally, but many Yukoners will tell you that the stuff they got before legalization was both better and cheaper than what is offered legally in Yukon.

So, maybe this is an opportunity to draw lessons from the most successful evil mega-corporations in the world — and I don't mean ExxonMobil or Nestlé. I am talking about Walmart. Walmart has been known to enter a new market and sell goods below cost to drive out the local mom and pop stores. This model is called "predatory pricing", and while it is awful when Walmart does it, it may be a model for Yukon government to look at when we are talking about cannabis. We don't want an illicit market, so let's figure out how we can create the market conditions to price that illicit market out. My colleague from Whitehorse Centre referenced efforts in Québec to create a product that was both affordable and of high quality with the explicit aim of displacing the illicit market.

Overall, I believe that this government has done a good job on cannabis legalization. We will be following things closely in the coming months and years with an eye toward edibles, legal Yukon production, and continued efforts to eliminate the illicit market.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to close by thanking the minister for the statement that had new information and that was delivered quickly and concisely without much window dressing. I hope that the minister's colleagues are taking notes.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will begin with the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I thank her for her suggestion about working with the Bureau of Statistics. I will look into that.

I think that where we have been thinking about working on how to make sure that there is continued pressure on the illicit market and continued reduction of the illicit market is by working with the private retail market right now, because they are in the ideal place. We want to work with them to help increase their share of the market.

By the way, I wouldn't agree that the product that is sold legally here in the territory is not better. I think that it is better. Every Yukoner can rest assured that they know the origin of that cannabis and that they can feel safe in that. The people in the private sector right now are extremely knowledgeable in the retail market.

I will agree, though, that it is about price, and we do have to work to get the price down — again, happy to work with the private sector to do that.

For the Member for Kluane, suggesting that this is a redo — I actually went this time and underlined everything that was

new in the ministerial statement so that I could actually help to emphasize those points of information that are new.

By the way, I did not not answer the question about where we were with the revenue for the Cannabis Yukon retail store. What I said was that we were still getting the last numbers in but that overall we were heading toward breaking even. We sought to break even. It was the opposition that somehow speculated rather randomly that we had lost \$1 million. I'm happy to stand up and emphasize that it was not the situation.

If my biggest issue is with boxes with Canada Post, I'm pretty happy with the work that the corporation, the retail store, and the private sector have done. It is an issue, and we will continue to work on it.

Overall, cannabis legalization in the Yukon has been profitable. We are displacing the illicit market, and the rollout has been safe and well-executed by both the private sector and the public sector. I thank them for their work and will continue to do so.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Mining project oversight

Mr. Hassard: On March 16, 2017, the Liberal government promised the mining industry that they would establish a collaborative framework to address industry concerns over timelines and reassessments for mining projects. That was over two and a half years ago, and unfortunately, the Liberals have taken no action to live up to this promise.

When we asked about this in the past, the Premier and the minister have suggested that these changes will be accomplished through work on the YESAA Reset MOU. Yesterday, there was a YESAA Reset MOU meeting, and the government refused to even put these issues on the agenda. Timelines and reassessments are the primary issues for the mining industry, and the reason that they agreed to support Bill C-17 was because the Liberals promised that they would address these issues.

The government's refusal to even put these topics on an agenda is a slap in the face to the industry. Can the Premier tell us when he will live up to his promise to address timelines and reassessments of projects?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite noted, the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* — YESAA — Reset Oversight Group is a joint effort between the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, and First Nation governments to collectively seek efficiencies and other improvements to the YESA process. I do recognize that this process has taken longer than anticipated. The three parties of the Oversight Group are actively working on progress on this file and will be making the terms of reference, a list of priorities, and records of decisions available online as they go through the Government of Yukon and the Wiki platform — that was all done in October.

The member opposite is correct that there was a meeting to advance the dialogue of a technical work — a YESA forum, per se, is what it was being called. That was held yesterday —

invitations to all of those governments, to the YESA board, as well as the transboundary and non-settled First Nations, NGOs, and industry organizations.

Whether it's the YESAA reset or the substantial changes that have been made through a memorandum of understanding with the Water Board to identify and clarify the roles of the Premier, the chair, the secretariat, and the board, we are moving forward always to make sure that we have an industry that protects the environment, but also doesn't overlap processes.

Mr. Hassard: I'm not sure that changing the name of the committee is what the Premier considers progress, but it is clear that the Liberals either don't care enough about industry concerns to even make an effort or they just don't understand that governing doesn't stop at the press release.

It has been almost 32 months to the day since the Liberals promised the mining industry that they would address their concerns over timelines and reassessments, and here we are today — and, well, nothing accomplished, not even a timeline, Mr. Speaker. The government even refuses to put the topic on the agenda when they meet with industry.

Will the Liberals agree to hold a meeting with all parties before or during the 2019 Geoscience Forum, which begins on November 16, to specifically discuss the issue of timelines and reassessments of mining projects?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Accomplished — Mr. Speaker, we're no longer in a recession. We have the largest gold mine in Yukon history moving forward. I would say that, as far as industry and talking with us — whether it be through the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources with his responsibilities or through my responsibilities with the Water Board — I believe that industry is extremely happy with the progress that we're doing. Is everything fixed? Is everything completed? No.

We do remember the MLII process being delayed for years under a previous government, and hopefully the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources can come up and speak to that.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we are doing lots of work to make sure that we're streamlining processes. We're engaging with industry. We're going international as well to help drum up the business, and it's working. We have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. We have the largest gold mine in history that is in production now. I want to thank John McConnell and his team for that endeavour.

We know that the industry is eager to be involved in this conversation — absolutely. The Oversight Group has had engagement with industry over the last year and half on the trilateral, joint priorities identified at the YESAA forum, and the Oversight Group is very eager to get a deeper conversation with industry. Nobody wants to see that more than the minister responsible, and I am very, very confident in the leadership of the chair of the Water Board, the chair of YESAB, and also the work that we're doing in the government.

Mr. Hassard: So, it's interesting to hear the Premier say that industry is happy with this progress, because I tend to disagree.

The Liberals have made zero progress on their commitment that they made to the industry in March 2017 to

address industry concerns of timelines and reassessments, as I've already said. We continue to hear from companies and individuals who are concerned that the Liberal government has been unable to deliver on this promise. Frustration continues to mount in the industry, and the government refused to even put the topic on the meeting agenda.

Can the Liberals provide one tangible action that they have taken over the last 32 months to address industry concerns over timelines and reassessments, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Speaking directly to the question that was just asked by the Leader of the Official Opposition, there is something called the mineral development strategy. The opposition would remember that from 2015. They announced it at Roundup, but it never happened. It never happened because they went out with communications before they ever had a plan set and a partnership in place.

Over the last year, 11 self-governing First Nations, in each and every case, passed a resolution at the chief and council level. An independent group that has met with all three political parties is now underway, and they are focused on ensuring that all issues — whether it be reclamation, security, timelines, or the future of mining in the territory — are addressed. I think that's pretty concrete.

Question re: Yukon mineral exploration program

Mr. Kent: The Yukon mineral exploration program, or YMEP, is a funding program designed to support individuals and companies exploring for placer or quartz occurrences by shouldering a portion of the risk capital required to explore. This year's budget cut the program from \$1.6 million to \$1.4 million. According to an article in *North of 60 Mining News*, the Yukon Geological Survey indicated that the Liberals made this \$200,000 cut to this incentive program to assist with the Beaver River land use plan.

Can the minister explain why the government cut money from this incentive program to support the Beaver River land use plan?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: If you look back at the trending use of YMEP, you will find that it was underutilized in the previous year. What was requested internally, as I understand it, is that, through discussions in the Mineral Resources branch and in discussions with the Yukon Geological Survey — of course, all the while, speaking to industry groups — there was a discussion about using those dollars internally so that the Yukon Geological Survey could do more advanced work.

Of course, the Yukon Geological Survey is at the forefront — not just nationally, but globally — in the work that they do. A lot of the investment that comes into the territory is because of the data that they collect and their expertise, all the while ensuring that, if funds need to be reallocated to ensure that there is more incentive for investment, those are things we can do — broad dialogue inside of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources with all players at the table and deciding the best way to use that money.

Mr. Kent: We would be interested in getting the current information from the minister on how many applicants used the mineral exploration program in previous years before it was

cut. In particular, I am interested in knowing how it leverages investment in the territory. This information would be useful in helping us to understand how the government arrived at the decision of cutting it.

If the Liberals were set on funding the Beaver River land use plan through cuts to other programs, presumably they could find cuts in other areas of government spending, such as the one-quarter million dollar increase to the Liberal Cabinet Office or the raise given to the Premier.

Could the minister explain how they arrived at the decision to cut the Yukon mineral exploration program?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the member opposite is mischaracterizing a reallocation. There were no cuts. There was work that was increased in the Yukon Geological Survey. The money stayed within the Energy, Mines and Resources budget. There is continued work.

I think that the member opposite would agree that the work that the Yukon Geological Survey does is fantastic work. I truly believe that putting the resources in their hands at a time when it was underutilized — and even through the application process. I'm happy to come back with a bit of a trend on the previous years of use of the program. I think that is a good expenditure for Yukon government. I know that when we are out on the road — whether at Vancouver Roundup or at the Prospectors and Developers Association conference in Toronto — the key people whom companies across the world want to meet with are from the Yukon Geological Survey. I think that ensuring that they have the right resources to do their good work is a good way to spend money in the Yukon government.

Mr. Kent: As we indicated, it was the Yukon Geological Survey that was quoted in a *Mining North* article saying that the Liberals' \$200,000 cut to the Yukon mineral exploration program, or YMEP, was so that they could support the Beaver River land use plan. What we are asking is: Why couldn't that money have come from somewhere else? The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee's work is due to be completed on March 31, 2020.

Once that work has been completed, will the Liberal government be restoring their \$200,000 cut to the Yukon mineral exploration program?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First, I think that it is important to touch upon the fact that the Yukon Geological Survey continues to — in their very important work — they are assisting on data collection around the Beaver River process. Of course, the whole process came about because of focus on the area and some of the exploration activity that had happened around the Rackla belt. So, increasing the data in that area is very important when you are doing a sub-regional plan.

I think that we have always been focused on the fact that, if there is a true need in some of these different programs, it is important for us to be nimble in the sense of how we ensure that we continue to see investment in the Yukon. My thoughts have always been that — working with the senior leaders at Energy, Mines and Resources — if it seemed that the application process continued to become more robust and there was more of a need for the money within the YMEP program, it would be a smart decision to put that back in place.

These are all things that we are always contemplating, and I look forward to more questions from the opposition.

Question re: Whitehorse Emergency Shelter and Housing First supports

Ms. White: A number of questions have been asked with regard to the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter. Unfortunately, what we haven't heard are many clear answers.

The community impacted by activities at the shelter have also been looking for answers and solutions to the concerns they have raised. Recently, the community had asked for clarification to a number of their questions. The department responded with answers that offered some information, but their vagueness left recipients with even more questions. When asked about plans and timelines, the answers referred to actions already taken and then mentioned that there would be more in the coming weeks — hardly reassuring to community members seeking information on the real concerns that they have today.

Mr. Speaker, when will the minister provide real answers with clear timelines to the real questions being asked by the community?

Hon. Ms. Frost: As Minister of Health and Social Services, it is my priority to enhance the well-being and quality of life of Yukoners — all Yukoners. Just this very morning, I met with the City of Whitehorse to speak about the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, Housing First, and the schematics and drafting for the 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street project.

Our government is investing in people. We are looking at prevention. We are looking at creating a stable place for our vulnerable population. We are looking at evidence-based decisions. We are working with our partners and the questions that have come to us. We have responded in engagement sessions with the downtown association, with concerned citizens, and with businesses. We will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

If there are specific questions that the member opposite would like answered, I would be happy to endeavour to get that back to the member. But the vagueness of the question — I can't respond specifically to the request, because I don't know what it is she is asking for. But I would be happy to do that.

We have gone above and beyond with consultation and engagement with our partners. We will continue to work with the Downtown Residents' Association. We will work with the citizens in that core area as well.

Ms. White: That could have been a quote directly from citizens communicating with the Minister of Health and Social Services. The community has been looking for answers, but more importantly, they're looking for action on concerns that they have raised. This morning, we received an e-mail from a community member. Included in the e-mail were photos of a fire made from pallets burning in the alley across from the shelter close to a building. The Whitehorse Fire Department attended, and luckily the fire was extinguished with no apparent damages. Imagine, Mr. Speaker — now with the cold weather — having to be concerned about fires being built next to homes and businesses in the middle of the night.

This government is trying to placate them with vague answers and promises that have instead left residents frustrated and angry. They're trying to be good neighbours, but instead, their patience is wearing thin. How will the minister address these new concerns around the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, and how will they be communicated to the community?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I want to just acknowledge the feedback just received, because I think that's really critical. It's critical that we look at the issues and the concerns that are brought to our attention and look at mitigating some of these concerns and pressures. We certainly have to look at the whole of our community, ensuring that we design a model that meets the needs of the residents, the businesses, and the clients at the shelter. Not one can function without the other.

We have to look at providing a resource and an opportunity for those who frequent the emergency shelter. We're not in any way turning a blind eye to the issues that have come to our attention, and we have addressed them, and we are working with our partners through the city and through the Department of Justice; we are working with the Kwanlin Dün; we are working with Ta'an Kwäch'än; we are working on a community safety plan and a model that will meet and address the concerns.

I absolutely am concerned as well, because there are new issues, and we want to ensure that, as we move into the winter months, we provide supports, but it has to be safe, and it has to be aligned with core principles of the city and of that region and of that particular part of our city, and that means that the partners have to be at the table. We will continue to endeavour to ensure that they are participating in the planning process.

Ms. White: The minister announced yesterday that the new Housing First apartments will be opening next week. The minister indicated that the community had been consulted and were aware of what was happening. After seeing the fallout from the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter on that neighbourhood, we would expect that a more thorough consultation would be done with this new project.

It would also make sense that clear plans would have been made public and shared in order to address the concerns the community or individuals might have. As with the community surrounding the emergency shelter, people want to welcome the individuals moving into this new housing project and see its success. They also want to know that the appropriate supports and services are in place before the new tenants move in.

Has the minister shared her department's plans for the Housing First facility with neighbours and nearby businesses? If so, did the plan include who will be staffing the building? What types of security are in place? What contact numbers should people call if their concerns are not being addressed?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Great questions, for sure. The Housing First residence was announced in November 2017. We worked on a tight timeline to address and bring into our portfolio of housing and housing availability in our city to the vulnerable populations — those who are precariously hard to house. We know that it requires special requirements. We need to ensure that we bring in programs and supports to make it successful.

Now, in terms of consultation and some of the concerns that have been brought to our attention — the Housing Corporation delivered letters to the neighbourhood at that time explaining the project. We discussed Housing First and housing philosophies, what that means, and how we provide answers to the public in this very House. We have had open houses. We will continue to do that.

We are working with — through the housing action plan committee, we have worked with F.H. Collins because they obviously have a school next door. We're working with the neighbours and we will continue to work with Kwanlin Dün and Ta'an Kwäch'än and the Safe at Home members to address the program design and the needs in that particular community. We are working on ensuring that we have continued open houses and dialogue and we will continue the invitations to the neighbourhood as we open up in the weeks.

Question re: Macaulay Lodge closure

Ms. McLeod: Last week, we asked the Minister of Health and Social Services what the government's plans are for the old Macaulay Lodge and the minister refused to answer at the time.

The 2018-19 five-year capital concept said that the government was planning on demolishing Macaulay Lodge in 2020. Can the minister confirm whether or not the government is still planning on demolishing Macaulay Lodge — yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am rising on behalf of Highways and Public Works, which manages the building supply for the Yukon government. The Yukon government manages and maintains roughly 600 government-owned buildings valued at approximately \$1.6 billion, and our building inspection program assesses all of our key buildings over a five-year period, including all buildings open to the public.

As far as Macaulay Lodge is concerned, that building is now empty — it's vacant. We are currently looking to see what the future plans for that building will be.

Ms. McLeod: So, I gather from that the government has no idea — after all this time — what they are doing with that. So, what are some of the things that the government is contemplating for the use of the old Macaulay Lodge?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Great question, because as the Minister of Highways and Public Works has raised and spoken to, we are looking at all of our resources and certainly looked at — as we closed down and moved the clients out of the Macaulay Lodge facility into the new Whistle Bend facility, we are now contemplating and working within government. We are looking at the facility itself and perhaps redefining, but at this moment in time, we do not have a specific answer on what we are going to do with that facility.

At some point in the near future, we will have a decision made, but that will certainly take into consideration the viability of that facility. For one thing, it's at the end of its life cycle. Is there a future use for it? Well, that will be determined once an assessment and a comprehensive review has been done.

Ms. McLeod: As I have stated, the demolition of the facility was in an old five-year capital concept, but it is not in

the most recent five-year capital concept. In its place are some new group home projects.

Has the government been approached by any other parties with a proposal for what to do with the old Macaulay Lodge?

Hon. Ms. Frost: What I can speak to is the fact that the government — our government, the Liberal government — is providing the essential services that are required for Yukoners so that they can maintain happy and healthy lives where they reside, whether it is for youth in care or seniors in care or collaborative models through the mental wellness hubs. We have taken the expanded scope of practice to ensure that we provide collaborative care for all Yukoners, Mr. Speaker, and I'm awfully proud of that.

Now, with respect to what we're going to do with the building that is sitting empty right now — we are providing the necessary dialogue to look at whether that would be a useful building in the future. While, at this point in time, that's not something I can respond to or answer, I can say that we are working very diligently with Yukoners to address their core needs, and we are very proud of that good work. We are essentially working to look at bringing services to rural Yukon communities, something that perhaps was not thought about in the past. But we are working to ensure that Yukoners are successful where they reside, and that means bringing the supports to them.

Question re: Mining sector development

Mr. Kent: In March of this year, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments released the *Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan*. In the plan, governments committed to six key actions to help support growth of the mining industry. One of those actions was a pan-Canadian geoscience strategy — and I quote from the report: “The federal, provincial and territorial governments and industry should explore options for increased funding for geoscience and examine ways to increase international collaboration on geoscience innovation.”

Can the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources explain what he has done since March of this year to support this commitment?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, this gives us a good opportunity to talk a bit about the collaboration around the federal, provincial, and territorial table on these topics.

The Canadian mines and minerals plan is, first of all, a very strong plan. There have been some challenges at the table. It started in Nunavut in August of 2018 when a number of provinces left the table. My feeling was that it was more for political reasons than for the content and the bulk of the work. A lot of private sector people across the country have fed into it. Again, we are in a key position. We will be hosting that exact meeting this summer. In July, we will have ministers from across the country coming in.

We continue to collaborate on this work with our other provinces and territories, but the other key thing is that, since the summertime, the federal government — which the previous minister would know from his work around the forestry table — there is a collaboration that gets done and coordinated through Ottawa.

Right now, we're looking to see who will be the new minister in charge of Natural Resources Canada, and we will continue the work around the metals plan at that time.

I know that the team will continue to do that work as we meet all those goals that have been laid out in the plan.

Mr. Kent: In July of this year, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources attended the mines ministers federal, provincial, and territorial meetings. According to the communiqué from that meeting, which the minister would have signed off on, ministers discussed a path forward on six key actions of the plan that I mentioned.

Another key commitment in that plan was on tax and financial assessments. To quote from this section of the report: “The federal, provincial and territorial governments should review Canada's tax position and adjust tax policies and other fiscal instruments to support cost competitiveness and attract investment.”

Can the minister update us on where Yukon is at in that review? Has the government reviewed our tax policies, and does he anticipate any changes?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think that it's important for Yukoners to know that these are things that we give direction to our departments on, and our departments — Energy, Mines and Resources, Economic Development, and Finance — are extremely capable individuals — as we give that policy direction.

On this particular topic, what we have been focused on, when it comes to the financial levers that help enhance investment, has really been working with the BC government and looking at pools of capital that can be used to enhance investment. It's an item that had come out of the AME work in British Columbia. We have done a bit of legal analysis of what it would look like. This is work that, under my critic, did not get done. We think it's important work. It is work to really look at how you can enhance investment, understanding that many dollars have gone into other industries.

That's the work we're doing. We're working with the BC government to analyze what the options are on pools of capital — not unlike Plan Nord with the Québec government — and where we can enhance the opportunity for junior mining companies to move forward on their programs. I'm happy to come back with more on that and I am always looking at our regimes that are in place to improve the investment criteria.

We must just touch on the fact that, last year, in the analysis, we were in the top 10 globally as a place to look for investment in mining.

Mr. Kent: The minister should maybe put a line in his briefing notes that says, “I don't know; I haven't read it”, because that appears to be what it is.

This report was released in March of this year. It was discussed at ministers meetings in July of this year. I haven't been the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources for quite a long time.

Another key action that the minister committed to under the *Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan* was enhancements to our regulatory system. Another quote from this plan on that is — and I quote: “The federal, provincial and territorial

governments should ensure that those government bodies conducting environmental assessments have the capacity to deliver advice and decisions in a timely and efficient manner.”

What actions has the minister taken since March when this plan was released to ensure that the regulatory bodies conducting the environmental assessments have the capacity to deliver decisions in a timely manner? How is the minister monitoring whether or not these actions are successful in supporting the regulatory bodies?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, we just would like to correct the record. Of course, sitting there and taking part in those meetings, getting ready to host this important event this year, and going through these documents — yes, of course, we have read it. You can take any one of the 400 notes here and cherry-pick a document and ask me if I can recite it, but yes, of course, I understand where we’re going; I understand where we’re going on this particular topic.

I think that the important thing to think about is — when you look back and you think, “What we can do on the regulatory side?” First, what we have done is, in our conversations with the federal government, we have always reminded them that there has been a commitment in Bill C-17 to ensure that the YESA group — whether it be the First Nation governments that are working with YESAA or in the YESA offices — that there has been a commitment for more federal funding. I have discussed that with the federal ministers, and I am looking forward to knowing who the next minister in charge will be and to remind them that we need those funds. That would be one thing that falls in line with the pillar.

But, of course, the mineral development strategy is a very important topic. This was something that failed miserably under the previous minister. I think that the fact that we have all 11 First Nations together — it’s great to be able to see the person who the previous government had as chair coming back to do that work, but now under a regime of partnership. That’s why we’re seeing the success we’re seeing.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 66

Clerk: Motion No. 66, standing in the name of Ms. White.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Third Party:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to conduct a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services from 2017 to 2019.

Ms. White: Today I rise to speak to Motion No. 66, which urges the Government of Yukon to conduct a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services from the years 2017 to 2019.

There are a number of reasons why we brought this motion forward today. This summer, Many Rivers, a respected Yukon institution for more than 50 years, closed its doors — potentially forever. There are many folks out there in the community — whether they be members, former board members, former clients, or former counsellors — who want to know why. They want to understand what happened and why it happened, and they want to know, beyond all else, who was responsible for the hundreds of thousands of dollars of misspent government funds.

We are also asking for a forensic audit because we think that government should care what happens to its money. We understand that this government would probably like nothing more than to put the Many Rivers debacle in its rear-view mirror, but there are still a number of unanswered questions and opportunities to learn from these mistakes so that it does not happen again.

To understand what happened at Many Rivers, we need to go back to the very beginning. At the same time that Many Rivers counsellors were very publicly saying that there was something wrong, they went on strike last November. Mr. Speaker, you just have to think about the lost wages, you have to think about the missed mortgage payments, and you have to think about the financial stress that these employees and their families were under — but they believed so strongly that light needed to be shone on this organization that they chose to go on strike anyway. Mr. Speaker, it was long. It lasted until after Christmas. I think it was 11 weeks long.

At the same time that this was happening, behind closed doors, there were problems developing with the way that Many Rivers was spending its money and the oversight — or the lack of oversight — from Yukon government. As the strike continued, Many Rivers was quietly spending money in a manner that was not consistent with the budget submitted to the Yukon government. Examples included a 58-percent increase in the travel budget and payments in euros to the Paris School of Business for a doctorate in the business administration program.

Mr. Speaker, everyone knows what followed: The Many Rivers strike came to an end, a collective agreement was agreed to, and when the doors reopened, staff were nearly immediately laid off. The embattled Many Rivers board was then replaced on April 26 by a board that committed to resolving issues with the registrar and getting the organization back into compliance.

Mr. Speaker, things were looking good. At that point in time, the minister even publicly pledged the government’s support. But behind the scenes, Health and Social Services clearly knew that Many Rivers was in bad financial shape. Their third-party review revealed financial mismanagement and they were meeting with the RCMP to review claims of potential criminal activity within the organization. Mr. Speaker, at the same time that this government was meeting with the RCMP, they were also encouraging Yukoners to come together and resurrect Many Rivers by volunteering, attending meetings, and joining the board.

Things finally came to a head when the newly formed Many Rivers board received a letter from the Department of

Health and Social Services that highlighted the outstanding debt being carried by the organization, stating that members would be liable, and then they were told to come up with a way of paying it back. This letter was effectively the end of Many Rivers, as the board resigned with a seemingly hopeless task of finding the funding necessary to resolve the outstanding debt.

Mr. Speaker, if you didn't look any further, you might think that this action was reasonable. Many Rivers spent the money after all, so they should be responsible. But what about the Government of Yukon's responsibility? Does the Government of Yukon have an oversight responsibility? The answer, I believe, is: Of course they do. Did they oversee? Did they make sure they fulfilled their role of financial oversight? No, they did not. That's the resounding answer: No.

When the Government of Yukon enters into an agreement to fund a non-governmental organization to provide services, it signs what is called a transfer payment agreement, or a TPA. These agreements set out expectations of both the Government of Yukon and the NGO. They lay out the amounts that will be transferred, where those amounts are allowed to be spent, and the services the government expects that non-governmental organization will deliver in return for that money.

An essential component of a transfer payment agreement is a requirement that the non-governmental organization submits regular reports on the funds spent throughout that year. These reports are called variance reports, and they indicate whether or not that NGO is spending the money in accordance with the terms of the agreement that they signed with the government.

You can ask any Yukon NGO and they will tell you that any funding is dependent on the due diligence of the board and the staff to ensure that reports and financial statements are completed accurately and on time.

In the letter detailing the findings of the department's financial investigation of Many Rivers, the department indicated that there were issues with Many Rivers' compliance with the reporting requirements — and I quote: "... reporting requirements state that quarterly variance reports and forecasts were to be submitted, and that these variance reports were to show actual expenditures to date, compared against budget..." Mr. Speaker, the letter goes on to say — and I'm quoting again: "YG never received these variance reports." So, if the government didn't receive the required reports, how come they gave money to Many Rivers anyway?

So, it is clear that this government failed to conduct their financial oversight role. They have an obligation with the transfer payment agreement. The way that this government very publicly laid the blame for the financial mismanagement at the feet of the newly elected Many Rivers board also does not reflect the concerns of potential criminal wrongdoing that were being raised throughout Yukon.

Even ahead of the strike, we know that staff were raising concerns of wrongdoing with this government, with the office of the registrar, with government officials, and with the RCMP. Our office raised these concerns directly with the Cabinet office. They were legitimate and they deserved a closer look.

Mr. Speaker, this government decided that a financial investigation or a third-party review was sufficient even though, according to the report itself, it says — and I quote again: "... we cannot guarantee that fraud, error and illegal acts, if present, would have been detected when we performed the requested procedures."

We have heard from this government about their third-party review of Many Rivers, but this review did not investigate whether criminal wrongdoing occurred. We have all had a chance to look at that report now and it begs questions.

The minister then argued that the Government of Yukon could not conduct a forensic audit into Many Rivers' finances because there was no evidence of criminal wrongdoing. The purpose of a forensic audit is to establish whether or not there is any evidence of criminal wrongdoing, and that is not something that the RCMP does — that is something that Yukon government needs to do in this situation. So, either the Government of Yukon does not understand the purpose of a forensic audit, or they have other motives for resisting one.

The RCMP cannot move forward with an investigation until they have access to more information. They have made that clear but, to date, this government has been unwilling to initiate the forensic audit that could uncover that information. More than that, it could tell us where the money that the Yukon government gave that organization went.

By their own admission, the government failed to provide financial oversight of the funding that they provided to Many Rivers, and when legitimate concerns about the spending were raised, they failed again by conducting a review rather than a forensic audit.

This government has sent a horrible message to volunteer boards throughout the Yukon — horrible — and it's hard to imagine how people will proceed forward, because essentially they have said that, if we screw up — as Yukon government — you, as board members, will be to blame.

So, Mr. Speaker, why are we calling for a forensic audit? I would like to think that it's really simple. We know that the Government of Yukon's third-party review did not investigate whether or not criminal activity occurred — and, as such, it was not shared with the RCMP — but what it did do was find information gaps that raised significant concerns about the practices and procedures of that organization, an organization that did not fill out its transfer payment agreement by completing its variance reports. Remember that government didn't receive those variance reports.

A forensic audit would fill in the information gaps that were identified by the third-party review that was undertaken by the Government of Yukon. A forensic audit would investigate whether or not criminal wrongdoing occurred, and if it did, it would collect evidence that would be admissible in legal proceedings.

The evidence produced by a forensic audit could also be shared with the RCMP and allow them to undertake an investigation if required. Yukoners want answers, Yukoners need answers, and Yukoners deserve answers.

More than that, we have had dedicated staff, we have had dedicated community members, and we have had clients who

have all cried foul, and what they want right now is for this government to show leadership.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the conversation, and I am hopeful that the government also wants to know what happened to their money, and more than through the third-party review.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 66, brought forward by the Leader of the Third Party. I would like to start by identifying some of the common ground that the Leader of the Third Party and I share with respect to Many Rivers. We both have serious concerns about the financial decisions that were made by the previous board of Many Rivers.

I would like to assure the member opposite and members of the Yukon public that we are working with our colleagues in the Department of Justice to review our options moving forward.

We conducted a third-party review of Many Rivers' finances for 2018-19. The results of this financial review did not reveal whether or not criminal behaviour occurred. It did, however, alert Health and Social Services to practices and procedures within the organization that were of significant concern. The member opposite has raised some of those today. These concerns include contracts that went over 430 percent over the original budget, computer and IT amounts that went 73 percent overbudget, and professional development training that was not related to mental health or counselling services. We are also aware of \$177,000 in debt owed by the organization.

So, as I have said, Mr. Speaker, we agree that there are concerns with the financial decisions made by Many Rivers. Given the work that is currently underway with the Department of Justice to review our options related to Many Rivers, I would like to propose an amendment to the motion.

Amendment proposed

Hon. Ms. Frost: I move:

THAT Motion No. 66 be amended by deleting the word “conduct” and inserting the words “consider conducting”.

Speaker: We have a proposed amendment to Motion No. 66 — if copies could be distributed to members for their review.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: In my comments right now, I will be singling out the Minister of Health and Social Services, but I would say in a general sense that, on Wednesdays, all members should be prepared with their amendments. Ultimately, the changes in wording which I believe are being suggested are relatively minor. In any event, an admonition today for the Minister of Health and Social Services — but, in general, if best efforts can be made for all members. I know that there are sometimes negotiations and that sometimes matters change on the fly. That's not what has occurred today, in my estimation.

I believe that we will have the proposed wording here momentarily — but, please, if members could endeavour to be prepared and to ensure that the House's time is used in as expeditious a manner as possible.

The motion is procedurally in order.

It has been moved by the Minister of Health and Social Services:

THAT Motion No. 66 be amended by deleting the word “conduct” and inserting the words “consider conducting”.

So, the motion would then read:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to consider conducting a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services from 2017 to 2019.

The Minister of Health and Social Services, on the proposed amendment, please.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I believe that the amendment I proposed is consistent with the desires of the members of the Third Party and reflects our shared concern with how things unfolded with Many Rivers. We too have questions about how money was spent under the previous board. As I mentioned before in this Legislative Assembly, we are currently reviewing our legal options moving forward. These options include, but are not limited to, a forensic audit. So, to be clear: This amendment does not rule out a forensic audit. It does not prejudice what course of action the government will take as long as it continues to look into the situation that unfolded with Many Rivers and identify the possible next steps. This amendment reflects our commitment to continue to work with our legal team to determine what appropriate actions and steps can and should be taken. We are committed to being a fiscally responsible government, and so we take these responsibilities very seriously.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the original motion and to be able to table this amendment, and I look forward to hearing from other members.

Ms. White: This is an example of “do as we say, not as we do”. We have heard in this House multiple times on opposition debate days or backbencher days that if we have, as members of the opposition, a suggested amendment, we should have a conversation with the Minister of Community Services or the mover of the motion so that we are all prepared here for what the conversation might be and what might happen next.

Here we are — blindsided by the Minister of Health and Social Services — although I'm not surprised. I was saying off-mic before to the Member for Watson Lake that I am forever optimistic — which is a wonder, considering that tomorrow will be our anniversary of election. In my case, I'm in my ninth year. So, we have a government that says, “You know, if you're going to move an amendment or if you want to strengthen a motion, talk to us first. Give us the opportunity. Give us the respect. Talk to us first.” Well, this is not a surprise motion. This has been on the Order Paper for a while. I'm open to conversations. I'm really easy to find. I'm around every day between 8:00 and almost 6:00. I'm here. I'm ready for conversations.

So, what we see right now is “what happens in vagueness stays in vagueness”. We have no timeline. We have no guarantee. We’re not even saying, “Well, it could happen in this calendar year. It might happen in 2020.” We can say right now that a year ago — a calendar year ago — the staff of Many Rivers went on strike and the house of cards fell from that point forward.

We have a government saying that they might consider — they might consider — a forensic audit. We have no timeline. We have no guarantee and we certainly didn’t have the respect of the conversation prior to this amendment being moved.

So, Mr. Speaker, do I support the amendment? The answer is no. I do not. I don’t find that it’s respectful, nor do I find the way that it was done was in consultation with other members of this House. We get told over and over that it is our responsibility to approach the mover of a motion with proposed amendments. We get asked not to do it during the Sitting. We ask that you do it before it comes to the floor of the House so that everybody knows what’s coming. Did I know this was coming? I did not, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, what happens in vagueness stays in vagueness. So, we will not be supporting this amendment.

Ms. McLeod: I can only echo the comments from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. Given the importance of this issue, the number of lives it has affected, and the number of lives it continues to affect, I find this dismissal of the importance of getting to the bottom of this issue to be disrespectful to Yukoners. Quite frankly, I find it somewhat despicable.

Obviously, I will not be supporting this amendment.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to say that when I have, in the past, invited or welcomed — I never required anyone to come and talk to me. I have just said that I would welcome it. What I heard from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King is that she would also welcome it and that she wished that it would have happened. I appreciate that. I think a heads-up is always a great thing.

I think that the language the Member for Watson Lake used is not — I don’t think that characterizes this at all. I think what I’m hearing is that there is a desire to try to find out — let me just see if I can find the wording.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: No, that’s not the wording I was looking for, thank you.

The Member for Takhini-Kopper King, in her opening remarks, talked about whether there is a caring to try to find out what is happening. The answer, from my perspective, is yes, and there continues to be that interest. We would like nothing more than to discern where this went wrong.

The challenge that lies before us is that the motion, as it is worded, is looking to be prescriptive — “do it this way” — whereas the investigation itself and looking at it with the Department of Justice may lead to a multitude of routes that are before it, possibly not including a forensic audit, if that is what is recommended.

What I think would be important is that the information be shared so that everyone understands why that is. Okay, Mr. Speaker — the question for me is that the minister is saying, “Yes, let’s have the look”, but it isn’t yet prescriptive. That is nothing — I believe that is a respectful approach.

Mr. Cathers: I just want to speak very briefly to this and note that this is a serious issue. People’s lives have been affected by the gap in services. In doing this, the way that the government proposed the motion — in fact, they didn’t get the wording of the amendment right — in bringing forward an issue that — as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King noted, they had plenty of notice that we were discussing this — is much in line with how they have handled the whole issue around Many Rivers.

They fumbled this issue from the beginning. They have left Yukoners, including clients and staff, paying for that failure of leadership on the part of this Liberal government.

It’s unfortunate that again today, when a motion is brought forward by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King regarding a serious request on a serious issue, all we see is more fumbling by this Liberal government and games-playing regarding the wording of the motion.

Speaker: Is there any debate on the proposed amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: 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. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are nine yea, eight nay.

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

Amendment to Motion No. 66 agreed to

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

Ms. Hanson: I think that, as I start out, I just want to express that, like my colleague, the Member for Kopper-King and the Leader of the NDP, who brought this motion forward, I am more than disappointed in the response of this government. There are a number of reasons for that, Mr. Speaker.

What we know is that this government and many members of this Legislative Assembly knew that there were issues and problems associated with the management of the former Many Rivers. The executive director had taken that board in a direction that was not healthy for the organization and ultimately led to the demise of it. On the opposition side, we don't have the obligation for due diligence or accountability to ensure that the money that was appropriated in this Legislative Assembly for disbursement to the Many Rivers society for those two fiscal years that my colleague identified as being the subject of a forensic audit — that's not our job, nor do we have the ability to do that oversight.

The Minister of Community Services has a compliance obligation to ensure that the society is in good standing. It was not. The Minister of Health and Social Services has a responsibility and an accountability to this Legislature and, in turn, to all citizens to ensure that the money that was appropriated in the budgets that she tabled for her department in this Legislative Assembly was spent according to the terms and conditions of the transfer payment agreements that they entered into with the Many Rivers society.

It clearly was not. At some point, there was a break in oversight. There was a break in the ability of this minister to stand, in all good faith, and say that things were going well at Many Rivers. It begs the question: What contact was there between the Minister of Health and Social Services and her senior management and Many Rivers over that period of time?

The minister referred to unauthorized expenses with respect to a pursuit of a doctorate in Paris and travel costs associated with that. That didn't happen last spring. That was not in 2019. It was during the period of time when this government was still flowing money to Many Rivers. Surely to goodness, a minister responsible for Health and Social Services and a minister responsible for funding one of the largest NGOs in the Yukon — an NGO that, up until two years ago, had a solid record in terms of service delivery, that started in Whitehorse as Yukon Family Services Association 50 years ago and expanded throughout the territory, a service that provided trusted service to many citizens who could not afford the services of experienced counsellors otherwise or who, for lots of personal reasons, were uncomfortable approaching those services provided by government — you can think of many reasons why that would be, Mr. Speaker.

When it started to be clear that there were problems — and I'll tell you from my own personal experience. My husband worked for many years for Yukon Family Services Association. That was an agency that was not unionized until they started having management problems, so it was not once, but twice,

that Many Rivers went on strike. It looked like it was recovering after that debacle a number of years ago. My husband and I were on the picket line then, because we believed — even though he had retired — in the integrity of the services and the people who worked there.

There has been a history in this territory — where we have had people who come into this territory and who take advantage of non-government boards. It's unfortunate, but it's true, and I would suggest to this House that we have just seen that again. What we are asking of this government is to stop blaming the victims here, but to actually get to the core of this, because we're going to see the same thing happen again.

If government backs down on doing a forensic audit, finding out where the rot started in Many Rivers, and, if charges need to be laid, making sure that those are pursued — but if government backs down now, then you can just watch over the next few years. This will continue to happen in this territory, and government — whichever stripe of government is on that side — cannot afford to let that happen. People need to have confidence that, when government is saying that they are doing something, they are actually doing it.

Mr. Speaker, I say this not only from the perspective of seeing and watching the workers from Many Rivers, who cared so much about the integrity of their organization that they were willing to stay on strike for those 11 weeks. After that, when it became clear that there was no money and no organization to keep running, when I attended those early meetings at the Gold Rush, at the High Country Inn, and at Yukon College — I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the minister cannot say that she was not informed or that she was unaware of what was happening or of the kinds of concerns and issues that were being raised. The deputy minister had his special advisor at all of those meetings taking detailed notes. The system was aware.

The system was aware of some of the background information that was being shared at those meetings by people with experience with the organization. They were aware of how deeply felt the commitment was to having an agency like Many Rivers able to provide them with services. There were heartfelt stories that were shared by people who put their names forward to try to revive Many Rivers, because they personally or their family members had benefitted from the services provided by Many Rivers over the years.

Then, in the meeting at Yukon College this spring when the board met and the concern was being raised — well, it's June, so what are we going to do? Well, the government has this special investigator. It's not a forensic audit — no, it's not a forensic audit. We can't call it that. It is a special review — a special audit that is being done. They think it will take two weeks.

These are volunteers, Mr. Speaker. They are volunteering to help highly paid public servants do this work, and the question is raised: What happens then? Well, at the end of that, the government says — then we will be in a better position to look at funding for Many Rivers because then we will know what the liabilities of the previous board are and we can move on.

There are words for that kind of communication from government to innocent citizens. I'm not going to use them in this House because they would probably be called unparliamentary, but it's true. This government allowed its officials or directed its officials to lead those citizens on — those people who were volunteering to try to revive a highly respected entity in this territory.

I think that the government has a chance to show that it's serious about this, that this is not a stalling tactic, that the amendment that was proposed this afternoon was not intended to simply say, "Get it off the table right now, because it's a lot easier, and we'll just punt it to someplace somewhere in the future, and hopefully people will forget about it." If that's the intent, the government sorely misunderstands the intensity of feeling that's around this issue.

I would ask the government to consider positively a proposed further amendment to Motion No. 66 that would indicate that the government is actually serious about taking action here.

Amendment proposed

Ms. Hanson: I move

THAT Motion No. 66 be further amended by adding "and report back to this Legislature before the end of the current Sitting" after "2019".

I have copies, Mr. Speaker. We are prepared.

Speaker: Thank you. The Member for Whitehorse Centre has a proposed amendment to the substantive motion as amended. There are copies for distribution to all members so they can have an opportunity to review the proposed amendment, and I will review the same with Mr. Clerk.

I had an opportunity to review the proposed amendment to the main motion, as previously amended, with the Clerks-at-the-Table. There are preferred drafting changes that I am going to suggest, with the advice of the Clerks-at-the-Table. It is just to specify it more particularly.

THAT Motion No. 66 be further amended by adding "and report back to the Legislative Assembly" instead of "this Legislature" — and then it would be "before the end of the 2019 Fall Sitting." That is more precise.

Is there any issue with that from the Member for Whitehorse Centre?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: No? With those proposed drafting modifications, the amendment to the main motion, as amended, is procedurally in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Whitehorse Centre:

THAT Motion No. 66 be further amended by adding "and report back to the Legislative Assembly before the end of the 2019 Fall Sitting" after "2019".

The Member for Whitehorse Centre, on the proposed amendment.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Clerks for their attention to the detail there. It does provide greater clarity.

I think I have made it quite clear that really what we are looking for is an indication of good faith and commitment to the same outcome that the minister had indicated in her opening remarks. My colleague and I had both indicated that we are optimistic and hopeful that the government was — and is — serious about addressing this issue.

So, by agreeing — and we have heard since the beginning of this Sitting that this matter has been "under consideration." We have heard and we have known that there has been work done since this whole debacle became public and Many Rivers previous board resigned and was replaced at a meeting at the High Country Inn on April 26. So, this is not a new issue. I am quite confident that there are public servants who have been tasked by senior public servants to be looking at matters related to this. So, we are confident that the government is quite capable — if they have the political will — to be able to report back to this Legislative Assembly by the end of the Fall Sitting.

We would look forward to hearing from them that they are serious about reporting back on when they will be — the considerations that have been given and the decision with respect to the forensic audit that this motion calls for.

It's really up to the government. Do they have the political will and commitment to the words that are used every day in this Legislative Assembly by members opposite — about how this as an open government, this is an accountable government, and this is a government that is committed to transparency?

It's very simple. It takes — I would say that, at this point of the game, it just would be an "agreed" and "we agree with this". But I will leave it to the members — my colleagues in this House. All joking aside — because our days — sometimes there are many days when being an optimist in this place is kind of like being a fool. But despite that, I remain optimistic that members want to do and will do the right thing.

We look forward to hearing from colleagues in the House and to a positive response from the members opposite in particular and from the minister and her colleagues in particular.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the new wording on the proposed amendment to the motion. I would like to acknowledge again that we are committed. I am committed — I have been from the very beginning — to ensure that we provide appropriate and adequate services to all Yukoners and we are doing that. We're doing that through the establishment of our mental wellness hubs, social workers in every community, counsellors in every community —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: The amendment is very specific. It has a timeline. So, I'm going to suggest that this is Standing Order 19(b)(i): "... speaks to matters other than (i) the question under discussion..." We're talking about a timeline here.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Are there any further submissions on the point of order? You could be at Standing Order 19(b)(i). You could also be in, as I recall, Standing Order 35(b), I believe.

I will listen carefully, but I tend to agree with the Leader of the Third Party that this is a fairly discrete and specific amendment that is being proposed.

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to timelines, what I was leading to is the fact that the non-compliance existed far before I arrived in this seat as the Minister of Health and Social Services. With regard to Many Rivers and their signed agreements, and where we are —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: Based on your suggestion, Mr. Speaker, this time I'm going to cite Standing Order 35(b): "a member, other than the mover, shall confine debate to the subject of the amendment."

Again, it's a timeline about considering the forensic audit.

Speaker: Minister of Community Services, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I heard the Minister of Health and Social Services talk about was timelines and what is affecting those timelines, which is exactly the point of the debate of the subamendment or the additional amendment.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I will have to continue listening closely, but if the minister were, as the Minister of Community Services is indicating, indicating that there were concerns with complying with the proposed timelines, that would likely be orderly and topical.

Minister of Health and Social Services, on the proposed amendment.

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the timelines of a forensic audit, it doesn't start as of October of 2018. The timelines that go back on the proposal that was brought —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: The amendment has been amended by the government member to say "consider". The proposed amendment right now to that amended motion is actually talking about reporting back as to whether or not we're considering that forensic audit or not. I ask that the member keep her comments to this. So, I can cite Standing Order 19(b)(i) or Standing Order 35(b) — whichever the Speaker decides fits best for the situation.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: The only issue I have is that the one amendment has "consider conducting" and then you're reporting back before the end of the Fall Sitting. What are you reporting back? I guess you're reporting back in some manner, but I do tend to agree with the Leader of the Third Party that it's just a discrete amendment. Whatever form that report shows — and it's obviously light on details before me — it's a timeline for reporting.

Minister of Health and Social Services, please.

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the timeline, reporting back in two weeks is not possible. Now, the expectation to report back — the requirement to do the analysis, to work with the Department of Justice, to work with the 20-some boxes that we have, the requirement and the recommendations that were brought — the concerns that were brought to our attention state — from the executive director and the board that existed — that they had some major issues that go back years, and that's exactly what's being assessed. It's impossible, Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely — we want to ensure that Yukoners are made aware of how the funds were spent. We all want to know that. I want to know that. Now the accountability lies — it certainly should fall on the people who were responsible. We have an obligation to report.

The reason I was going back in time is to indicate that this is what the board and the executive director brought to our attention — to state that —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: The amendment in front of us says to report to the Assembly before the end of the 2019 Fall Sitting. If the Minister of Health and Social Services wants to debate the motion after, that's fine. But what we're talking about right now is the very clear and direct amendment. Again, it's going to be Standing Order 19(b)(i) or 35(b).

Speaker: Member for Porter Creek Centre, on the point of order.

Mr. Gallina: I can appreciate members focusing on a specific timeline. What I'm hearing — and what I'm hearing from the minister — is she is explaining why she is not in support of a specific timeline. I think that the member could take time to explain to this House — why she is not suitable to this amendment.

When I look at Standing Order 19(b)(i) and I look at the annotated Standing Orders, it talks about there being some time to state their case as to relevance. I haven't seen much time being given to the minister to be able to state her case on this amendment.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: What I would agree with is that the Leader of the Third Party — I understand where she is coming from, but she has been fairly quick to jump up. The minister really hasn't

said much, so one could certainly — from what the minister has said in her limited submissions, one could certainly say that it is off-point and does not comply with section 19(b)(i) or with section 35(b). But I do take the Member for Porter Creek Centre's point to an extent that I'm prepared to listen a little longer to the Minister of Health and Social Services — but just a caution that this is a discrete amendment.

Minister of Health and Social Services, please.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would conclude by saying that the timelines proposed are not something that I or the departments of Health and Social Services and Justice can work with. I would propose that we would certainly be willing to put a timeline forward, but two weeks is not possible.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the proposed amendment. Right away, when we saw the proposed amendment, we quickly caucused and asked the very specific question: Did the minister believe that the department could make it in that timeline — to make it by the end of this session? Her description was that there were 20 boxes of materials or records that they were trying to work through and she didn't believe that they would be able to achieve it in time. It's just very clear that there is still this desire to get the answer for all involved, but we're just not able to meet the timeline, as proposed in the amendment.

Ms. White: The amendment, as I see it right now, is asking for a timeline. The Third Party, the Yukon NDP, had to respond to an amendment that we didn't know was coming by suggesting a timeline. We are open to timelines, but what we're looking for is a date. That's why we picked this date — because it's a date. It says that we will come back, that we will know that government is going to either do or not do a forensic audit — because it has been changed to “consider”.

So, what we're looking for in this Assembly is a response — yes or no — a forensic audit will be done. We're not looking for it to be completed. We want to know that one will be started or not started. We were hoping that the answer could come to this Assembly before the end of the fall legislative Sitting.

That's what this is about. It's about a timeline, and it's about asking — once it was changed to “consider” whether or not they were going to conduct a forensic audit — that they could respond not just to this Legislative Assembly, but to the community, to the people who were on the Many Rivers board, the people who were employed at Many Rivers, the clients of Many Rivers — whether or not government was going to move forward on this or whether or not they were going to conduct a forensic audit.

So, we're not looking for the completion — we're looking for a commitment that an answer would come — yes or no. That was why we have a timeline — because without timelines, we can be talking about this again in the spring and in the fall and again and again.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Disagree.

Mr. Gallina: Disagree.

Mr. Adel: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Disagree.

Mr. Hutton: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 8 yea, 9 nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the amendment to Motion No. 66, as amended, defeated.

Amendment to Motion No. 66, as amended, negatived

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

Ms. McLeod: I was all ready to get up and be very happy to speak to Motion No. 66 as presented by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, and I have got to say that I am a little less excited to speak to this new motion which really escapes the attention of what the Member for Takhini-Kopper was trying to do.

I am kind of having a moment of déjà vu here, actually. This whole debacle over Many Rivers and its management has me thinking about this spring when we had another mismanagement of epic proportions over the matter of group homes, but here we are.

We have not had much luck in finding out exactly where the government is in their work with Many Rivers. In fact, after the large number of questions posed to the minister this fall alone by both opposition parties regarding the mismanagement of finances and what the government was doing about it, the government has managed to muddy the waters even further. There was ample time to make a clear and satisfactory decision around the path the government would take to develop an adequate set of talking points and to stick to them — but here

we are with no real idea of what has been done or what actions the government is going to take on this.

The government has different responses to give to each of the opposition parties and the media, and we are left with even more questions than answers. In fact, not only is this government unable to keep their stories straight from day to day — we saw the minister contradict herself last week over the course of just 10 minutes of answering questions in Question Period. We have been talking about the challenges around Many Rivers for a very long time in this House, Mr. Speaker, and it is time for commitment and it is time for answers.

I am hopeful that this discussion today will lead to some concrete action by the government — ever optimistic. The evidence is there, and it points to the government conducting a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers.

We have heard time and time again from the government that they have a concern on how resources were spent by Many Rivers and have yet to hear a commitment to order a forensic audit. In fact, the minister seems to think that the government has done their — and I'll quote here: "... due diligence and monitor and track accordingly." That was from a discussion here in the House on October 23. The minister goes on to say — and I quote: "At this point, I am satisfied with where we are and we will ensure that we don't run into this situation again."

We've heard a number of different actions that the Liberals have allegedly taken on the discovery of financial irregularities within Many Rivers, but we're not entirely sure what those actions were. Third-party investigations, financial investigations, criminal investigations, no criminal investigations — we're not sure exactly what action the government has taken, but to be clear — and I believe the Member for Whitehorse Centre has said this in the House as well — each of these investigations differs greatly from a forensic audit.

My question to the government is this: How can the government be satisfied with their work and ensure that nothing like this happens again if they don't know what happened in the first place? A forensic audit would give answers to what happened to these resources and would provide solutions as to how to prevent it from happening again.

The minister has admitted to having a legal obligation and a fiduciary obligation to taxpayers. Unfortunately, the actions of the government appear to be falling short of those obligations. I would encourage the minister to view this entire situation objectively.

Now, laying blame isn't the answer. I hate to see the minister trying to blame the society or the previous government. That does not get to the bottom of the issue at hand, and it is simply time to launch a forensic audit.

I want to take a moment to recognize that Many Rivers, despite financial issues over the last couple of years, has provided communities across the territory with incredible services for decades. Their dedication to mental health and wellness should not go unrecognized. Many Yukoners have benefited from these important services. I know that both sides of the House have noticed this in the past.

I'm concerned that, while the government has taken on the full delivery of services in the communities, there are still communities that are feeling the pinch. They are not satisfied with the options for addressing their mental wellness concerns. Entering into counselling to address one's problems takes a great deal of strength, and then, to develop a relationship with a counsellor and indeed all of the support staff is an important part of the healing and wellness.

These front-line employees have suffered because of issues that were not of their making. We have heard concerns from many constituents in the communities who feel that they are no longer provided with the services they need. They simply do not feel comfortable sharing their personal and intimate details with government employees. I would encourage the minister to take a close look at the work that Many Rivers has done over the years with communities, ensure that service levels are up to the same standard, and also be cognizant of the fact that this situation could be more disruptive to individuals' care and treatment than the government is aware of. Not every individual who was receiving treatment and services from Many Rivers is content with having to be treated by government. It is important to remember that government-operated mental health hubs and government workers may not be adequate for those seeking private services.

We have heard that Many Rivers patient files have been collected by the Yukon government for storage. There have been concerns voiced by constituents who believe that they should have the option to take control of their own files, as they have never been clients under the Yukon government and do not want their personal information in the hands of government. I am interested to see whether this is something that the minister has considered and whether those who request their files are able to retrieve them from the government.

I would like to express again that this is a serious situation, and we have seen a serious lack of leadership from this Liberal government. The government should have taken the initiative to order a forensic audit, taken action where required, and made policy changes as necessary to ensure that fiscal mismanagement does not happen in the future. Instead, the minister is satisfied where they are. There is still time, Mr. Speaker, to get this done.

I urge the minister to listen to the concerns being brought forward to her today and for the government to take action, because with or without a motion on the floor to compel her, the minister could take the initiative and indeed report back to the House before the end of this Sitting on what action the government will be taking.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Let me begin by echoing some of the remarks from the Member for Watson Lake — that mental health and counselling services are so critical for all Yukoners and for our communities in particular.

It is essential. I heard her criticizing the mental wellness hubs — okay. I hope that, if there are citizens with those concerns, that — if they don't feel comfortable using the services that are provided, I hope they're able to share those

concerns so that we can continue to refine those services for Yukoners.

But I think that, first and foremost, mental health and counselling services are critical. I would like to thank Many Rivers for 50 years of work that they did. I would like to thank all of the volunteers over the years who have worked with Many Rivers — it is quite something — and the staff who have worked there, but for all those people who have worked to try to support Many Rivers over the years.

When Many Rivers first started having some challenges and it was coming to my attention, I noted at that time — I would say that societies sometimes — and this wouldn't be the first society — fall behind on their reporting. We always do our best to try to support those societies to get back into compliance while living within the rules of law that are in front of us, but I would say there is an interest to do what we can to try to support those societies to get back into compliance.

I recall being in this Legislature some time ago — I think it will be a year ago this past spring. There were societies that were here, and I heard from members opposite that we should not be judging those societies, that we should be supporting them, that we shouldn't be looking at them — and I heard that we should trust those societies to do their work. I heard that we should allow them to be doing the good work that they're doing.

I also heard from members —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please. The Minister of Community Services has the floor. I'm having some difficulty hearing him at points.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I also heard in this Legislature suggestions that we step in on the labour dispute that was taking place. At that time, when I got those suggestions, I called up the head of the union for the Yukon Employees' Union to ask him for his personal advice about whether we had a role of stepping in on a labour dispute. His advice to me was "Absolutely not." So, I gave those words.

So, I get different levels of — "should step in" or "should not step in". There is a challenge at all times about whether we should — how far we should go. If a society is taking decisions under its board and under its constitution and is doing so in a healthy and respectful fashion, I don't think there is the job to step in. The question comes when it is not in a good place and where that role comes for us to engage.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the issue of administration and regulation of societies has had a high profile in the media over the last few months. That being said, Yukon societies' legislation and the office of the registrar of societies have been functioning precisely as they should be. The role of the registrar of societies is primarily to enable the creation of local societies, enable outside societies to expand their operations to the Yukon, maintain a public registry of all societies, and facilitate the maintenance of societies as valid, not-for-profit corporations under the legislation.

All societies are obligated to file ongoing reports and financial statements with the registrar to maintain their status of compliance. If a society breaches legislation, the registrar can investigate; however, the registrar does not have a role in overseeing societies' day-to-day operations or to manage their contracts or funding agreements. The Yukon's new *Societies Act*, which follows the national trend, received assent here in this Legislature last year on November 22. Consultation on regulations is planned for later this winter and the new act will come into force once regulations are complete in 2020.

Yukon's current societies' legislation provides for a complaints process for raising concerns related to alleged breaches of the *Societies Act* regulations or the societies' bylaws. The registrar can look at breaches of the *Societies Act*, but it has no authority to consider internal operational matters, including how a society carries out its purposes or how directors ultimately spend its funds.

When questions arose about public funds intended for providing Many Rivers' clients with mental health services, the Department of Health and Social Services, in its role as funder, arranged for an accounting firm to review Many Rivers' financial statements. It is our understanding that the review shows discrepancies between the budgeted amount authorized by the transfer payment agreement and actual spending in several areas. Health and Social Services is doing its due diligence as the funder and continues to consider, with the assistance of legal counsel, the appropriate next steps regarding questions of financial management.

Let me turn to that, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that the members opposite would like to see a timeline. Their expectation is that it should be possible for department officials, working with accountants and talking with the Department of Justice, to have a full review of the documentation that they have for Many Rivers and report back by the end of this session.

I heard the minister explain that she is not able to do that. I know that she spoke with her department to try to understand what an appropriate timeline would be, and she has passed me a note, which I will share here, regarding what is possible — so a status report by spring 2020, which may or may not include an audit. They are assessing the next steps, based on the information that they have now and in these historic files.

I understand that the members opposite are scoffing at that timeline. Respectfully, that came from the public officials. They were asked what kind of timeline they could provide. I get that the members opposite don't think that is appropriate. I understand that there are 20 boxes of files — complex files — which go back to 2013-14 and it will take time to review those and it is not possible to resolve that in the coming weeks. But what I think is important is that we do care what happens with that funding and we do care to try to find out where there is responsibility to be attributed.

Both the Member for Watson Lake and the Member for Whitehorse Centre talked about this as blaming the victims, or blaming. The Member for Watson Lake said, "You know, we shouldn't be laying blame. That is not the answer." But the whole point of looking at these files is to understand where

responsibility lies and to attribute it so that all Yukoners will know what happened here.

The challenges of Many Rivers go back many years, Mr. Speaker. I wish that there was a way to get an answer today. I thank the officials who are looking at these documents to try to understand where things went wrong, but what I will say is that the concerns that I have heard — even raised by the members opposite today — talk about problems that go back in time. At what point in time did this happen, and where is that documentation inside of these files? We look forward to an answer — just as the members opposite do.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, she will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard in debate on Motion No. 66 as amended?

Ms. White: Opposition Wednesdays are always — they are fascinating days. On my very first opposition Wednesday, I learned the power of language, and here we are almost over eight years later learning it again.

The addition of the word “consider” — I can consider whether I’m going to have chicken or pasta for dinner; I might consider whether I’m going to go for a bike ride tomorrow or if I’m going to take the dog for a walk. What we were looking for with the attempt to add a timeline is that the government could consider whether there was going to be a move forward.

Now we have a motion that — I mean, it does have the words “forensic audit”, so maybe I should view that as a win. But what we were trying to do here in this discussion today was talk about the seriousness about both the importance of government departments that have transfer payment agreements with non-governmental organizations and their responsibility to look at the variance reports as they’re submitted by those organizations.

The reason why I mention that again, Mr. Speaker, is I’ve had conversations with other NGOs in the community. I say, “What would happen if you didn’t submit your variance report?” Across the board, it is a resounding, “Well, we wouldn’t get any money; we wouldn’t get any more money.” But what we see in this example is that variance reports were not submitted. They weren’t submitted, but Yukon government still funded the organization.

The review highlights all sorts of things that we should all be concerned about. I heard the Minister of Health and Social Services say that there was concern. Those reviews highlighted concerns. We agree.

We have been told that Health and Social Services is working with its colleagues in Justice — but what exactly does that mean, and what kind of timelines are we talking about? I’ve mentioned before in this House that, without timelines, I have learned that this can be a conversation in perpetuity.

So, I appreciate that the Minister of Health and Social Services sent the Minister of Community Services a note that said maybe by spring we would have a decision. My commitment here is that I will bring back the motion in the

springtime asking if we’re going to conduct an audit, if I don’t know — a forensic audit.

I appreciate the conversation today. It is true, I am highlighting that I will bring this back. I’m not done with it yet. I think some of the disservice to the community, at this point in time, is that — essentially, it has been just about a year since the strike started and just under a year since the organization completely folded, and at this point in time, people still don’t understand how it happened and how it went wrong — how a non-governmental organization that is responsible to submit variance reports didn’t. How was that organization still funded through government? How did they still collect money? That is the big question.

There is responsibility on all sides, Mr. Speaker. We didn’t think it would be an easy issue, but as I was saying earlier and I will say again, I remain optimistic. I look forward to a press release or a ministerial statement in the Spring Sitting saying that government is moving ahead with a forensic audit. That would be fantastic. I look forward to responding to that.

It is not cut and dried — how I feel about this motion now that it has been amended. To me, “consider” is such waffling language that it’s hard to say, “Well, I’m going to vote in favour of it.” Because what I’m saying then is that I’m okay with not having concrete timelines and that I’m okay with the fact that we might consider, sometime in the future, whether or not we move forward with a forensic audit. I am left torn here; I am left torn. Do I vote in favour of the motion that I originally tabled or do I not?

With that, I am just going to wrap up my comments and I guess look forward to another opposition Wednesday sometime in the future.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Member: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: 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. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are nine yeas, eight nays.

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

Motion No. 66, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 77

Clerk: Motion No. 77, standing in the name of Mr. Hassard.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition:

THAT this House urges the Members' Services Board to waive confidentiality regarding all e-mails and correspondence between members of the committee related to the August 2, 2019, letter from Floyd McCormick, former Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak this afternoon on Motion No. 77. As you have just read the motion, Mr. Speaker, it is very clearly an important motion.

As we all know, the letter that former Clerk, Dr. Floyd McCormick, sent to Members' Services Board was on the Liberal government's flawed and unfair electoral reform process. There has been much discussion about how the Liberal process stacked the deck in favour of just the Liberal Party so that they could force through whatever changes they wanted to the electoral reform system that suited the needs of their political party.

It was this potential for abuse by the Liberals that Dr. McCormick raised concerns about, but our democracy does not belong to this Liberal Party. It belongs to all Yukoners. The fact that this Liberal Party and all of its MLAs in the Legislature have supported this process is very concerning. I think the fact that efforts have been taken by members of this Liberal Party to prevent this issue from being discussed in public is also very concerning.

For that reason, I think it's important to thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for bringing this issue to light by tabling the letter that Dr. Floyd McCormick sent to Members' Services Board.

It was important that the letter was brought forward so that Yukoners could see the concerns with this approach to electoral reform, because, as I said, Mr. Speaker, these are serious concerns. Having that letter remain secret is bad for democracy and bad for transparency.

My remarks today will focus on two things: first, the motivations for bringing this motion forward; and second, the importance of this motion.

First, just for everyone's background, according the Legislative Assembly's publicly available website, the Members' Services Board is made up of five MLAs: the Liberal MLA for Klondike, the Liberal MLA for Riverdale South, the Yukon Party MLA for Lake Laberge, the NDP MLA for Takhini-Kopper King, and it is chaired by the MLA for Riverdale North, who is responsible for setting the agenda and who is also a member of the Liberal Party.

As members may know, the deliberations, including the agenda of the Members' Services Board, are confidential. As we pointed out on a ruling by the Speaker on November 28, this means that we are limited in what we can say and talk about when it comes to the topic of the Members' Services Board and its agenda. But it would appear that the Premier and the Liberals have a double standard on this, because some of us are limited in what we can say. The Premier has probably broken the record for the number of times that he has complained or tried to shut down debate about committee proceedings and agendas being discussed, but he seems to think that he should be provided the latitude in what he is allowed to say about Members' Services Board, its agenda, and how they characterize discussions at the board.

So, on October 15 of this year, the Premier — during the course of debate in this House — referenced and began to characterize discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board not once, but twice. Then, on October 17 of this year, the Premier once again began to discuss and characterize discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board. On October 22, the Member for Whitehorse Centre tabled the letter from Dr. Floyd McCormick to Members' Services Board detailing concerns with the Liberals' unfair approach to electoral reform. On October 23, I referenced that letter here in this House. Also on October 23, the Premier began to characterize discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board regarding this particular letter. On that same day, the Premier once again referenced Members' Services Board, and this time he began to explicitly discuss the agenda of Members' Services Board.

I will just quickly quote him in his second reference to Members' Services Board from that day, where he said — and this is an exact quote from Hansard: “Without indulging in the confidential agendas, it wasn't me who put it on the agenda, but it was opposition who put this very issue on the agenda to speak about in the Members' Services Board.”

That's a quote from the Premier with respect to the agenda for Members' Services Board. Obviously, it's important in the context of all the times that the Members' Services Board, its discussions, and its agenda have been discussed in this House by the Premier, but it's actually important for other reasons as well, and I'll return to discuss them later as I proceed.

Back to October 23 — the Premier began to discuss Members' Services Board discussions around the electoral reform letter once again, so we're up to three instances on that day of October 23, but we aren't done. Once again, on that same day — October 23 — the Premier divulged more information about what was said at Members' Services Board, so we're up to four instances on that particular day.

Then, later on that day, the Premier for a fifth time went on further to discuss Members' Services Board discussions around the letter to the board highlighting concerns with the Liberals' unfair approach to stack the deck. That makes five references by the Premier just on October 23 explicitly discussing the agenda and the conversations that occurred at Members' Services Board.

Let's move on to the next day, Mr. Speaker. The Premier once again referenced Members' Services Board. Here's his quote from that day: "It's interesting that the agenda of the Members' Services Board is now being discussed in the Legislative Assembly." The fact that the Premier delivered that line with a straight face without a hint of irony certainly was Oscar-worthy.

On October 23, the Premier not only spoke at great length about discussions that happened at Members' Services Board, but he also spoke about a Members' Services Board agenda. He even went a step further and made claims about who put something on the agenda, and I'm happy to read that quote again: "Without indulging in the confidential agendas, it wasn't me who put it on the agenda, but it was opposition who put this very issue on the agenda to speak about in the Members' Services Board." That's the Premier on October 23.

Again, just so Yukoners and those listening at home can see the true extent of the gaslighting that this Premier conducts on a regular basis, here's a quote one day later from October 24 — and again, it is an exact quote from Hansard: "It's interesting that the agenda of Members' Services Board is now being discussed in the Legislative Assembly."

So, Mr. Speaker, one day the Premier has no problem not only speaking at length about Members' Services Board discussions, but also about speaking about the agenda. Then the next day, he is shocked that anyone would bring up the agenda. I think I will leave it up to Yukoners to decide if the Premier is purposely being disingenuous or if he just can't remember what he said after he says it.

We will move on, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Minister of Community Services, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Well, what I will stand on right now is that I just heard the Leader of the Official Opposition talk about being purposely disingenuous, which sounds like a deliberate falsehood under Standing Order 19(h).

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I can look at Hansard. If that is what the Leader of the Official Opposition said, then those phrases together should probably be avoided. I agree. But like I said, I didn't entirely hear that. I will review Hansard and return if necessary.

The Leader of the Official Opposition, please.

Mr. Hassard: On October 28, the Speaker made a ruling in this House stating two things: (1) that the Member for Whitehorse Centre shouldn't have tabled the letter that was sent to Members' Services Board from Dr. McCormick, and as a result, that letter would be tossed down the memory hole and erased from record; and (2) that —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

The members must take care to not involve the Speaker in the debate on this motion. I remind members that the Speaker is not a part of this debate. The Speaker is the impartial arbiter of the debate. You may discuss this issue to a large degree, as the Leader of the Official Opposition has done so far, but now you have, in my view, engaged the Speaker in the debate going forward with that phraseology. Of course, the Chair or the Speaker is not in any position to respond or participate in debate.

So, I would ask the Leader of the Official Opposition, going forward in the material that you have before you, to be cognizant of that admonition.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker — duly noted.

So, the second part of the ruling was that I, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, should not have discussed the Members' Services Board in the Legislature.

Of course, we have to feel a little concerned when some members of the House are limited in what they can say or do with respect to Members' Services Board — and I will put a heavy emphasis on "some members", because members from the two opposition parties have apparently been told that they aren't to talk about it. But, as pointed out, the Premier has referenced Members' Services Board — including the agenda, including characterizing discussions that occurred at those meetings — on many occasions, and that appears to be okay. I will leave it to Yukoners to decide why it might be that members from the Yukon Party and the NDP are prevented from talking about that letter, but the Premier is not.

At this point, I should also mention that again on October 29, one day after the ruling, the Premier once again discussed the board's agenda. Then again on November 5 — which was just yesterday — the Premier went on at length to detail discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board.

It is this existence of what appears to be a double standard in the House for what can and cannot be discussed around Members' Services Board, and that is a large reason for today's motion and it really speaks to why we need to pass this motion — because, as I have stated, there is one set of rules for the Liberals and another set of rules for the opposition parties. That is how we have gotten to where we are today.

Now, let's talk about why this motion needs to pass. First off, I think it's obvious that discussions about changing our democracy should be done in the open. In fact, the Official Opposition has raised this issue with the Liberals and the Premier many times, but for some reason, the Premier has been very reluctant to have these discussions in the open. We have written to him half a dozen times with lists of questions about his unfair electoral reform process, and these questions highlight many of the concerns that were in Dr. McCormick's letter as well.

So far, the Premier has refused to answer these questions. It appears that he doesn't want things in writing, and he appears to be trying very hard to avoid a record of anything. When we raised the issue in the House so there is a public record, the Premier said that he didn't want to have these discussions in the House. He did not see that as productive. In his words, he would

prefer that we have a meeting between party leaders to discuss these issues.

So, on Monday, I wrote to the Premier asking for a meeting to discuss these issues. Then during debate yesterday afternoon, the Premier criticizes us for wanting to have a meeting instead of wanting to discuss it in the House. This is just another example of the Premier gaslighting Yukoners. One day, he refuses to discuss electoral reform in the House; he would prefer to have a meeting. The next day, he refuses to have a meeting and would prefer to discuss this issue in the House. In fact, we only suggested a meeting in my letter because of what the Premier had previously said last week. So, he wants a meeting; he doesn't want a meeting — no wonder he has mismanaged this process so badly that it has gone off the rails.

The inconsistencies and the flipflopping by this Premier are really something. He flips, he flops, he rewrites the facts — all to serve his purposes. Those purposes are to cover up for lack of leadership, as near as I can tell, Mr. Speaker — to cover up his government's inability to get anything done and to avoid public accountability.

It really is a disturbing trend that we see from this Premier — that he would show so little commitment to any sort of principle that he would mischaracterize and gaslight people on a such a frequent basis. But the concerns raised by Dr. McCormick to Members' Services Board are very serious.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

I'm just not — pardon my ignorance, but I'm not entirely sure about the definition of "gaslighting". I have certainly read about it in the context of American politics. I will do some research. I'm certainly — in the context of the Leader of the Official Opposition's presentations — I'm virtually certain it's not congratulatory or laudatory.

My tummy test is approaching that it's close — it might very well be close to unparliamentary. If the Leader of the Official Opposition is proceeding with that terminology multiple times again — like I said, I will get back to the House specifically with respect to that word. In my recollection, it doesn't appear to have been a word that has actually been utilized in the 34th Legislative Assembly. Maybe it has, but it seems to be new. Like I said, my gut reaction is that it is at best close to the line.

Leader of the Official Opposition, please.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. So, as I was saying, the concerns raised by Dr. McCormick to Members' Services Board are very serious, and they highlight major concerns with the Premier and the Liberal government's one-sided and unfair approach to electoral reform. As discussed, the Premier has gone to enormous lengths to prevent a written record on his electoral reform process, which, quite frankly, stacks the deck in favour of the Liberals.

Of course, the Liberal approach not only skirts around access-to-information legislation, but it ensures that no one knows why or how decisions to change the way we vote were

actually decided. We know that the Liberals have now hit the pause button on electoral reform, and we now see that the reason for this is that the former Clerk of the Assembly wrote to the Speaker on August 2.

Mr. Speaker, if I could just quote from that letter — Dr. McCormick says, "No one party should, therefore, be allowed to control the reform process or the outcome."

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

I am not quite sure how this can occur. I would say parenthetically — anyway, I will keep it brief. I am the arbiter. I am the holder of the Standing Orders, and I interpret the Standing Orders. I receive advice from the Clerks-at-the-Table, and it is up to members to change their rules. The Members' Services Board has been, based on the information that I received, in camera since 1978. If Members' Services Board wishes to change that, they are certainly open to.

My query is: First of all, Dr. McCormick's letter — in some respects, I would just urge him to publicly distribute it, if that is what he wishes to do. The problem is that it became within the control of Members' Services Board, and therefore, if members could read my ruling from a number of days ago, rules apply. I am here to enforce those rules without favour and with the best advice that I have received from the Clerks-at-the-Table.

I am not sure how members can get around the fact that the document has been received by Members' Services Board, is deemed to now be the product of Members' Services Board, and Members' Services Board hasn't changed their rules yet that appear to apply.

Like I said, I would certainly go on the record and say that I would urge Dr. McCormick to publicize everything that he writes to the general public. He is a private citizen; he can do whatever he wishes. I feel that, based on the advice that I received, I was constrained by the rules that I have been tasked by all Members of the Legislative Assembly to uphold. I would certainly be chastised if I wasn't doing that.

Perhaps the Leader of the Official Opposition can make his point without quoting, because in my view, that seems to be a backdoor way of getting what Members' Services Board has received as a confidential document back on the record. In any event, at a previous Sitting — and the general public can read Hansard — another member of the Legislature has quoted fairly extensively from Dr. McCormick's letter, so it's available. It's available to the general public, I think.

Mr. Hassard: Of course, that letter is on the *Yukon News* website, so it is out there and is certainly very public. I mean, I just was quoting from that very public letter —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: My quick question to you is: Will you be quoting extensively from this letter?

Mr. Hassard: No, sir. I planned on one more quote coming directly from that letter.

Speaker: Fine. You can proceed.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, we know that the Liberal electoral process was designed specifically to give only one party, the Liberal Party, all of the control over the process and the outcome. It's curious why the Premier and the Liberals wouldn't want Yukoners to see this. As you know, this letter is 10 pages long, and luckily, the *Yukon News* has posted this letter online so it's there for the public to see, and I certainly encourage all Yukoners to read it.

The letter states that the Liberal electoral process undermines the Legislature. I will take my last quote from that letter, Mr. Speaker, where it says, "... the electoral reform process infringes on the Legislative Assembly's fundamental right to govern its own proceedings."

The former Clerk indicates that he would be willing to meet with Members' Services Board to discuss these matters. It was such a damning letter, indicating that the Legislative Assembly would be undermined, that I would think that the Members' Services Board would want to meet as soon as possible to discuss that letter.

In response to questions on the topic of this letter that I asked the Premier in the House, he stated that the letter was actually put on the agenda of the Members' Services Board.

Once again, I would like to quote the Premier, because this really is, I believe, an important quote from him for a number of reasons. The Premier said — and I quote: "Without indulging in the confidential agendas, it wasn't me who put it on the agenda, but it was opposition who put this very issue on the agenda to speak about in the Members' Services Board." Again, these are his exact words from Hansard.

We know that the Premier stated that: (1) Dr. McCormick's letter was put on the agenda for the Members' Services Board; and (2) the opposition put it on the agenda. This motion is very key today, I believe, and it will let us know whether or not the Premier was being completely truthful. Was the letter ever put on the agenda? The Premier says that it was, so let's let the Members' Services Board waive confidentiality to see if, when the Premier spoke about the agenda of the Members' Services Board here in the Legislature, it was, in fact, completely correct. If for some reason it wasn't put on the Members' Services Board agenda, I think Yukoners would be very interested to know why. Why would it not be put on the agenda? We already established earlier whose job it is to set the agenda. By waiving the confidentiality of the board, we could find out those two things. Was it on the agenda, and if it wasn't, why?

I believe that both of these points are very important to Yukoners, because they speak to the credibility of this Liberal government. Can the Premier do something as simple as tell us what, in fact, took place on the agenda of the Members' Services Board — a board that he knows the opposition parties are essentially muzzled from talking about? If he mischaracterizes anything, we are prevented from correcting the record. I really hope that the Liberals are confident enough, in the words of the Premier, that they are willing to waive the confidentiality to see if this was ever put on the agenda.

If they vote against today's motions, I think that will make Yukoners wonder why. Why do the Liberals not want us to know what the discussions were around the former Clerk's letter expressing concerns over electoral reform? Why do the Liberals not want us to know if the Premier perhaps didn't tell the entire truth?

At this point in time, I think it's important to read from the Twitter account of CBC investigative reporter Nancy Thomson. On October 24, after the Premier made his claim that his letter was put on the agenda of Members' Services Board, this reporter tweeted a copy of a leaked letter. This leaked letter is now part of a public letter that is publicly available online for anyone who goes to this Twitter account. If I can just — this letter is from the chair —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order. I don't think so; I don't think so. No, I'll just say — do you want me to go on the record again? You can sit down for a second.

Members must take care not to involve the Speaker in the debate on the motion. I'll remind members that the Speaker is not part of the debate. The Speaker is the impartial arbiter of the debate. You'll have to govern yourself accordingly.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, I guess my question would be: Am I allowed to quote from this Twitter account?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: I mean, my initial reaction is that you can quote — you mean from what Ms. Thomson has said?

Mr. Hassard: I'm quoting from a letter that is on her Twitter account.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Well, okay. This is the deal, in my view. We are the MLAs and we are bound by the confidentiality. I don't disagree that the letter is in general publication, but we as MLAs can't circumvent our own rules. We have to change our rules.

I have no particular issue with that letter, I suppose, but once again, I cannot — or any previous Speakers or future Speakers cannot — be part of the debate. Like I said, that letter ended up in general circulation somehow.

I'll read the motion to the House again:

THAT this House urges the Members' Services Board to waive confidentiality regarding all e-mails and correspondence between members of the committee related to the August 2, 2019, letter from Floyd McCormick, former Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

In some respects, some of your submissions today — Leader of the Official Opposition, you're getting the relief that you're seeking in this motion by reading some of the documentation that you're seeking — which in some respects, would make your motion at least partially moot. By putting whatever additionally on the record, you're publicizing that which you're actually asking Members' Services Board to do. You're asking Members' Services Board to do something, but

arguably, by broadcasting it, you're achieving the relief that you're seeking in the motion.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, I believe that — if we don't have all of the information in front of us, how do we make informed decisions on how to vote on whether we should allow Members' Services Board to do this?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: In my view, you're requesting documents, so you can particularize, I suppose — if you wish, for the purpose of the debate, to particularize the documents — but in my view, as members, we can't — you will achieve the relief that you're seeking by reading the content. As I said before, I think it will make the motion essentially moot. What you want is Members' Services Board to waive confidentiality. That's the relief that you're seeking. So, you can focus the remainder of your comments on that topic.

Mr. Hassard: I think we may have to agree to disagree on some of that, because I don't believe that we are getting everything just from what we are saying. I think that the important fact here is that the Members' Services Board be allowed to waive confidentiality. It is very challenging to make an argument as to why they should be allowed to waive confidentiality if you're not allowed to provide the information as to why that would happen.

It is disappointing that debate that is critical of the Liberals is being — for lack of a better term — censored here in this House. I do want to assure the House that all of my concerns and all of my intended speech for today certainly will be sent to the media so that they can see everything that I had hoped to say here today.

Unfortunately, it is going to have to come to that because we don't get to provide the full details of what we had hoped to say here today to try to accomplish what we set out to accomplish in the first place.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I will just close by saying that democracy dies in the dark, so let's shine a light on this issue.

Mr. Gallina: Today I am speaking to Motion No. 77, which brings forward the important topic of confidentiality and how, as MLAs, we are transparent in reporting to this House and being accountable to Yukoners.

I am sure that all members of this House agree that transparency is a vital part of a democratic government. It is a value that we hold strongly here in the Liberal caucus. As well, we value the ability to have meaningful discussions that could include Yukoners' personal information or opinions that they have which they may or may not want to share in public but still feel are important to bring forward.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the experience that I have as a member of four all-party standing committees that report to this Legislative Assembly and how transparency and confidentiality are applied within these all-party committees. I am the chair of SCREP, which is the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges. This committee has a mandate to review parliamentary procedure and practice in this

Legislative Assembly. It also deals with questions surrounding parliamentary privileges of the Legislative Assembly and its members. I am the vice-chair of PAC, which is the Public Accounts Committee. There, we are responsible for reviewing the Public Accounts and all reports for the Auditor General. As well, Mr. Speaker, I sit on the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees and, finally, the Standing Committee on Statutory Instruments.

These committees adhere to Standing Orders and rules, of which confidentiality and transparency are important elements. Mr. Speaker, standing committees can call witnesses to appear in camera or appear publicly to provide information or to be asked questions by members of the committee. Standing committees are accountable to Yukoners in many ways. One of those measures is through committee reports tabled in this Assembly, which are, of course, debated publicly.

In PAC during the 34th Legislative Assembly, we have held public hearings for three performance audits brought forward by the Auditor General of Canada. In these hearings, witnesses were called to answer questions in public and provide information, and these hearings were recorded by Hansard so that a formal record of proceedings is available. One of the reasons that not all of the business that we do in committees is public is because we are often dealing with personal information submitted by Yukoners. This could include — but isn't exclusive to — personal opinions, resumés, cover letters, and the list goes on. If committees no longer had personal elements, members of the public may be discouraged from submitting information that they felt was confidential, and they may be concerned that they could garner unwanted public attention.

Mr. Speaker, in looking at addressing this issue from the complete perspective, as opposed to a one-off situation where a motion has been made to share communication on a specific matter, with this motion, I feel we could be setting a precedent that may raise concern among Yukoners knowing what information is considered confidential and what information is considered public when it comes to dealing with committees of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, to be clear, I'm not opposed to making our committees more open and transparent. In fact, I would be in favour of having those discussions, and I know that the Premier has stated in this House that he would welcome those discussions as well.

So, if it's the desire of members of this Legislative Assembly to have a discussion about making committees more open and transparent, in my view, that should happen. It should happen at the specific committee level or even through the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges. I believe that the focus should be on how the committee is governed overall rather than deciding if one matter or the other should be made public. Again, by focusing on one-off situations, I believe that we could be creating uncertainty among Yukoners about what committee information is confidential and what information is public.

In closing, confidentiality and transparency are important to this government and, I believe, to all members of this

Assembly. There are a number of House committees that have rules that structure how they are governed, how they conduct business, and in particular, how these committees interact with the public and Yukoners. If it's the desire of members to amend how committees of this House are governed, I believe those conversations should happen at the committee level and, in this case, at Members' Services Board or through the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges.

Speaker: Is there further debate on Motion No. 77?

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Just before the member speaks, I just had a clarification from the Clerks-at-the-Table which is consistent with what my gut reaction was on the motion. The House has not decided the matter on releasing documents — and a number of the other matters that I talked about as far as the general confidentiality going back to the Members' Services Board from 1978. Until the House does or until a separate committee does, members — as I think I articulated, but I will articulate clearly as a ruling — you cannot quote from documents, because, by doing so, you are doing something by another means that the individual could not do in the ordinary course.

As I said, that's consistent with what I have said this afternoon, but that is the motion — that's what the Leader of the Official Opposition is urging the Members' Services Board to do.

If 50 percent or 75 percent — or whatever percent — of what is being sought formed part of the submission, then in my view, that doesn't make a great deal of sense and is procedurally not in order.

Ms. Hanson: I just wanted to make a couple of comments. It strikes me, at the outset — I am somewhat agnostic on the merits of the argument put forward, but I would note that, at some point — and I have said this before — we in this Legislative Assembly are going to have to come to terms with the fact that we have a system that's dysfunctional.

It's good to say that we should talk about these matters in these various committees, but quite frankly, when you have a majority government and you have the chair who says, "Our position is...", the conversation doesn't go much further than that.

I enjoin members of this Legislative Assembly to find a creative way to actually act as elected members, representing all Yukon citizens, to find a way to use this Legislative Assembly to have that conversation.

We talked about how, 40 years ago, we came another step in terms of representative government. In 2003, we went another step in terms of having the responsibility for management of land and resources, like a province. In 2019, surely we can find a way to have conversations about things that are really materially impacting this territory and not be stultified by rules that were established prior to representative government in 1979.

I will disagree on the floor with the notion that the conversation be sent back to the various committees that are

there, because they don't work. They don't work to the extent that the voice of the opposition, official or not official, is not heard. It's not heard when the declaratory statement is made at the outset that "Our position is..."

By default, I will support this motion because it is an expression of frustration and people may want to feel complacent about how those are the rules and that's the way it is. I would challenge that things change; perspectives change. As members, if we're elected to represent all Yukoners — I don't care if you're government or opposition, you are supposed to — we are supposed to be hearing Yukon voices. This has generated a lot of conversation, and we don't look good. We don't look good as members of this Legislative Assembly and that's not good for democracy. We can't be seen to be undermining democracy when we're seeing what's going on across this country and south of us. It's not healthy.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to stand today other than to just say that my reason for not supporting this motion is the one-off notion of it. I have had conversations with members opposite about how I do agree that we should change the rules of Members' Services Board — absolutely. I think more open and more accountable government is a good thing. But what I don't think is proper for any Legislative Assembly is for a particular member to feel that we can go back in time with the current rules — go back in time and one-off — well, in this case, let's change the rules for this particular item that — to your point, Mr. Speaker — is already out in the public anyway. But it's the practice. It's that dangerous practice that, in my opinion — maybe not so much in this because, in this case, we're talking about almost a moot point for two different reasons: (1) we've already said that we are more than willing to work with both opposition parties — to the Yukon Party's credit, they want to restart — we're more than willing to consider that; (2) to the NDP's point, not having ECO in the process — no problem. We've already got to a place where we're willing to compromise. We're willing to change direction.

For one point, it's interesting that we're even having this conversation; second, it's interesting we're having this conversation because, to the member opposite's own credit, he said this is all out there anyway.

Again, that's all beside the point as to why I think it's dangerous for us to take one particular board with one particular set of minutes or one particular piece of that under the current rules and say, "The current rules shouldn't apply for this one particular piece." That's my issue. As I said to both parties in the past, if we want to change how Members' Services Board sits, how SCREP sits, how all of the select committees or special committees or Members' Services Board which the members opposite — the Yukon Party enjoyed that anonymity for 14 years — no problem. We can move forward from this day forth and have that conversation — absolutely — no problem.

But I believe it is, in my opinion, a bit reckless to go into a process that allows us to pick and choose on an issue that —

again, it is hard to see past that concept, for me. That is my main reason.

Again, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for my opportunity to speak today, and thank you to my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly for this debate.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard on Motion No. 77?

Mr. Hassard: I think it is interesting that the Premier can stand here and say, “The more open and accountable, the better. That’s a good thing.” Yet, in the same breath, he says that he can’t support this motion to be open and accountable.

We have heard that we can’t do things on a one-off. I think there have been a lot of things done on one-offs, and a lot of things will continue to be done on one-offs. That is a reality of life.

When we are talking about something as important as how we elect our government — you know, this is an integral part of what we call democracy. So, does the public not have a right to know how this process is being done and what is wrong with the process currently?

We have someone with a doctorate in political science who worked in this Assembly for 18 years — we took his advice every day — and when he writes to the Members’ Services Board to say, “You know, there is a problem with what’s happening here” — don’t we owe it to Yukoners to do a one-off and allow Members’ Services Board to waive confidentiality and have some real and meaningful discussions on this extremely important topic? It is just mind-boggling. It is very unfortunate.

I had hoped that the government would see the error of their ways and agree to this motion, but I guess we had a discussion earlier about being optimistic and realistic. It looks like we will have to have that discussion again. It’s very sad to say that it appears the Liberal government is going to vote this motion down.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Disagree.

Mr. Gallina: Disagree.

Mr. Adel: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Disagree.

Mr. Hutton: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are eight yea, nine nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the motion defeated.

Motion No. 77 negatived

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

Speaker: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker 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

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I want to again welcome Chris Mahar, Deputy Minister of Finance, who is with us here today. I do have some remaining answers to questions that were either partially answered or I endeavoured to get the information back to the member opposite. I put three on the record last time, and I will now just kind of keep on with that list.

We were asked, specific to mineral, oil, gas, and forestry — and I’ll quote: “On page 113, on resource revenue — mineral, oil and gas, and forestry — the actuals for that category are down \$292 million from 2018.

“Could the Minister of Finance provide a breakdown as to where the big deviation was from the year previous?”

First, I would like to clarify that the member asked about a decrease of resource revenue of \$222 million. That amount shown on page 113 of the Public Accounts is in fact \$292,000 — a difference of a lot of money. The bulk of that decrease in resource revenues is attributable to a reduction in quartz application fees in this fiscal year. Quartz application fees vary annually based on activity. While it is down year over year by 27 percent, the quartz application fees were actually quite comparable to the 2016-17 year — less than 10 percent, actually, down from that fiscal year. That is just to clarify the numbers there that were quoted. The members opposite might want to check that.

There was a question from November 4 in Committee of the Whole on supplementary estimates for Economic Development. The question that was asked by the Third Party at that time was: What is the purpose of the contribution to the Gold Mining Alliance on page 176 of the Public Accounts? Why is it not in the main estimates?

Again, we did have a bit of a conversation on the floor of the Legislative Assembly at that time, but I have some more information. The \$301,500 was part of a three-year \$904,500 commitment with the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance that ran from 2016-17 to 2018-19. It was \$301,500 per year for three years. The contribution was to support strategic marketing initiatives to promote Yukon as a smart place for investment in the mineral sector.

The contribution supported the planning and hosting of the Yukon Mining Investment Forum and property tours, representation at Cambridge House at the Vancouver Resource and Investment Conference, representation at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada conference in Toronto, creation of a Yukon investment video, and representation at the Denver Gold Forum.

The allocation was previously under 0200, but shifted to 0300. The budget was not realigned until this year — the 2018-19 year — when it was decided that the arrangement works for the department, and it included adding the property tours part, hence the increase in the budget to \$397,500 from \$301,500 and some minor inflation adjustments for the costs of the various events. This is an example where, historically, it was listed as a contract rather than a transfer payment. So, in the main estimates of 2017-18, this funding would have been in the “Summary of Expenses” under “Other”. By moving it to a transfer payment, it has its own line item in the Public Accounts. It is not an example of last-minute spending, but rather an informed decision regarding a contract that shows value.

I have more answers to questions from the November 4 Committee of the Whole. We were asked specific questions for Finance on some of the rural community banking. We did answer the question, but I just want to verify and add a little bit more content to those answers, Mr. Deputy Chair. The Government of Yukon has an overall banking contract that delivers all commercial services for the government. Community banking is an important part of the overall banking contract, because it ensures that banking services are provided

in communities that otherwise might not warrant a commercial service.

Another question that was asked was: How many rural banking arrangements are in place? We did answer at that time that there are 10 communities that currently have rural banking facilities. Those communities, to be more specific, are Beaver Creek, Burwash Landing, Carmacks, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Old Crow, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, and Teslin.

We were asked also: Is the arrangement with TD a multi-year contract? The current term is for an individual term of five years, with three one-year renewal options. To clarify that, I believe we said five years, but the complete term is five-year terms with also three one-year renewal options.

When will it come up for renewal and how is it assessed? The current contract expires, and it is not eligible for any more renewals, on July 31, 2020. There is currently a request for proposals process underway. Assessment of the NRFP will be done by an evaluation committee representing key stakeholders within the Government of Yukon. An internal contractor has been engaged as project manager and advisor. Evaluation factors are a balance between community banking, rural community banking, northern knowledge and experience, and Yukon First Nation participation.

I think there was one other question, and this question was specific to Highways and Public Works on November 4 Committee of the Whole supplementary estimates. I believe it was the Member for Copperbelt South who asked: What was the latest number for the francophone high school? What is the total number for the francophone high school — an update on the initial estimate that we gave of \$34.5 million. Does the Premier have an update on what those additional costs are for? Also, they asked for an update on how much the additional costs are expected to be.

The current construction contract with Ketz Construction is \$29.6 million. The original contract was \$29.4 million. Other costs required to build the school include property management, traffic studies, geotechnical studies, furniture and equipment, landscaping, design, site work, and contingency. These other costs total \$5.8 million. The total cost of the project for the school is \$35.4 million. The project is on budget and will be completed within the \$35.4-million budget.

I believe that's the end of the outstanding questions. So, I will pass the floor off to my colleague across the way.

Mr. Kent: As I advised the Acting Government House Leader this morning, we're going to focus in on some questions, in the little bit of time that we have left here this afternoon, on Energy, Mines and Resources.

Members will recall that, when we debated this department in the mains in the spring, the Member for Lake Laberge and I have split responsibilities, so he was asking some sustainable questions with respect to agriculture, forestry, lands, and those types of things. I had hoped that the department would be recalled for me to ask some questions on my responsibilities, which are mining, oil and gas — those types of things — but we never got a chance to get back into EMR. So, that is one of the reasons why I will be looking for some updates here from

the Premier during general debate on Energy, Mines and Resources.

As I did with Education, I wanted to start by just having a look back — because the Premier has updated the mandate letters for his ministers. So, a few things jumped out at me from the 2017 letters that I was kind of hoping to get an update on here today.

The first question that I would like to ask the Premier is — in the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources' mandate letter from the Premier — and I will just read the text here that will lead to the questions. It says, "Increase the availability of renewable energy solutions, while reducing the reliance on non-renewable sources and lessening energy consumption by..." — and in one of those bullets, it says, "... allocating \$30 million annually for an energy retrofit program for residential, commercial and government buildings."

I know that the minister has, in Question Period earlier this Sitting, outlined some of the numbers, but can the Premier let the House know if that direction was met — if \$30 million was allocated annually from the publishing of this letter, which was January 6, 2017 — so the first budget or the first fiscal year it would deal with would be 2017-18, I guess, and then going forward from there? Was that \$30-million-per-year target for the energy retrofit program met?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, we have had this conversation on the floor of this Legislative Assembly a few times on the question of the \$30 million.

I believe the last time that this question was asked, the minister for both Energy, Mines and Resources and Community Services spoke of the \$120 million over the next four years for these endeavours and issues. At that time as well, he listed a whole list of these different projects, of these different programs, that this money contains.

Mr. Kent: The Premier mentioned that it's \$120 million over the next four years, and there were a number of projects. I can appreciate that he perhaps doesn't have that information with him right now. That's going forward.

So, this mandate letter was written in January, as I mentioned — January 6, 2017. We would have expected that \$30-million annual allotment for the energy retrofit program for residential, commercial, and government buildings — as was stated in the mandate letter — and the responsibility to the Deputy Premier, in his role as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — we would have thought that would have been for 2017-18, 2018-19, and the current 2019-20. Is that not the case? Was that \$30-million allotment not met in those first three budget years?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Members opposite have had this conversation, I believe, every year so far. Last year, we allocated \$14 million for the retrofit-specific program. Our government now has allocated over \$120 million over four years, starting this year, in the territorial government and federally secured funding, as well, to implement the energy efficiency initiatives throughout the Yukon. This does work out to an average of \$30 million annually.

This is thanks to a joint investment with the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon. Through that joint

investment, we're able to dedicate this funding for energy efficient retrofits for residential, for commercial, and for institutional buildings as well. Being more energy efficient is our first line of action in addressing increasing demands for energy. This is why the Government of Yukon is offering retrofit incentives to make upgrading insulation, improving window quality, and draft-proofing a home, commercial, or institutional building accessible and affordable.

To date, Mr. Deputy Chair, our retrofit programs are delivering measurable benefits by relieving pressures on our energy-generated needs, reducing our collective greenhouse gas emissions, and creating green jobs that stimulate Yukon's economy.

I have had some great conversations with folks in the construction industry who have really redesigned their small business to focus on the millions of dollars that are available for these programs. In a booming economy, it is nice to be able to specialize and to work in partnership with the government for these dollars. The federal funding is specifically designed and designated for working with First Nation governments, municipalities, and also businesses, local industries, and homeowners to retrofit buildings and residences to improve that energy efficiency.

Just a little bit of background: We did successfully negotiate funding agreements with the Government of Canada. I know the members opposite are asking if this started in the first year, and it didn't. The members opposite know that it didn't, but we got there. This work does average out to \$30 million a year, as of this year — so, \$120 million over the next four fiscal years. The total funding amount includes territorial and federal contributions. This funding is available across government departments as well — specifically for energy-efficiency retrofits of those existing buildings in Yukon.

Looking at some of the private investment in my town of Dawson — Dawson City in the Klondike — there is one particular construction company — and, of course, I am not going to name it, but this individual and his family are fourth-generation Yukon placer miners, but they are also in the construction industry. It was his family and these are his words — he said, "The best thing you could do as far as being environmentally conscientious is — see all these buildings? Let's retrofit these buildings. Let's not throw these building and the materials away. Let's make our best efforts to make sure that we use the infrastructure that we have to be able to not only modernize those buildings, working in partnership with the territorial and Canadian governments, but also to preserve that history."

This individual spent his youth walking through buildings and playing in these buildings that look like they were abandoned on a day's notice. It is pretty interesting to see that in a boom-and-bust economy that Dawson has historically had over the years. To be able to breathe life into those buildings is an extremely important part of us — not only working with an environmental conscience, but also with a view to preserving our history as well, which is extremely important.

As I said, the funding is available across government departments, specifically for energy retrofits in existing Yukon buildings. These government energy-efficiency retrofit programs are targeting a whole bunch of different initiatives, and we're glad to see that money coming out.

There is a funding breakdown over the next four years by each design recipient. We have — homeowners and businesses and commercial and municipal interests can benefit from a total of \$23.7 million in initiatives for residential. For commercial and institutional building retrofits, that would be led from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. First Nation governments can benefit from a total of \$10.36 million, and that's designated for their housing or community building retrofits, including installing biomass-based heating systems. That, again, is being led by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, but also by the Yukon Energy Corporation.

All Yukon communities, whether First Nation governments or municipal town councils, can benefit from the \$31.6 million available for energy audits and institutional building retrofits. That is led by Community Services, alongside the good work of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

The Yukon government has a total of \$58.9 million to do energy-efficiency retrofits to its social and staff housing, as well as its larger institutional buildings. That's led by the Department of Highways and Public Works and the Yukon Housing Corporation.

I will give credit where credit is due. We are in a building right now that the members opposite, in their term in government, put money in to retrofit. I can't speak of the past Premier's experience in the office upstairs, but I heard that it was pretty drafty at times and that sometimes the ice was coming in on the windows. I have to say now that the building has definitely benefited from these retrofits. Again, to be able to give credit where credit is due is extremely important.

I also want to say that there are some really interesting companies, such as Solvest, that are expanding and hiring more Yukoners to be able to do this good work.

We have a list here. The member opposite was looking for some details. Whether it be the building retrofit incentives through those designated recipients led by EMR or through the other initiatives, the combined funding — as we listed them — and I could add them all up together here. Suffice it to say, all of this information is readily available through the department websites, and it does total \$120 million for four years, totalling an average of \$30 million in retrofit money moving forward.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Deputy Chair, I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by the Acting Government House Leader that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following legislative returns were tabled November 6, 2019:

34-3-6

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Kent related to general debate on Bill No. 200, *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — new French first language school (Mostyn)

34-3-7

Response to oral question from Ms. Hanson re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre segregation cell (Streicker)