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HANSARD

Tuesday, April 26, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2022 Spring Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Jeremy Harper, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Annie Blake, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Emily Tredger, MLA, Whitehorse Centre

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Deputy Premier Minister of Health and Social Services; Justice
Hon. Nils Clarke	Riverdale North	Minister of Highways and Public Works; Environment
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Government House Leader Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Public Service Commission; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Minister of Economic Development; Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Jeanie McLean	Mountainview	Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Takhini-Kopper King
Emily Tredger	Third Party House Leader Whitehorse Centre
Annie Blake	Vuntut Gwitchin

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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, April 26, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. McLean: I ask my colleagues to please help me welcome a number of special guests here for a very special tribute to Adeline Webber. First and foremost is our guest of honour, Adeline Webber, and her husband, Bill Webber; her niece, Sharon Shorty; her nephew, Dan Shorty; her sister-in-law, Helen Holway; and, from the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Chief Amanda Leas, who is also attending today on behalf of Kluane Adamek, the regional AFN chief; from the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, we have executive elder Judy Gingell; from the Teslin Tlingit Council, deputy Naa Shaáde Háni Alex Oakley — welcome; from the Teslin Tlingit Council, executive elder Barb Hobbis and her husband, Dave Hobbis — welcome; from the Council of Yukon First Nations, Grand Chief Peter Johnston and also a member of the Teslin Tlingit Council — welcome; from the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, Sharon Shadow; Natalie Taylor, executive director; Susan Power, admin and project coordinator; and Jerry Soltani, secretary treasurer. We also have the Deputy Minister of Education and the Deputy Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equity Directorate, Nicole Morgan. Welcome. Thank you so much for being here today.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We have another tribute that is going to happen today, honouring Anne Lewis. Anne is here with some guests. Could we please welcome Leneath Yanson, Bonnie Dixon, Candice Gottschall, Jennifer Walters, Andrea Kenward, Monica Nordling, and Jasmine Sangria and, from the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board, we have Heather Burrell and Wendy Tayler, and from Anne's family, Randy and Stuart Lewis.

Can we welcome them all, please?

Applause

Speaker: Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Adeline Webber

Hon. Ms. McLean: I rise on behalf of our Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to someone I am proud to call a mentor, a colleague, a friend, and one of my heroes — Adeline Webber.

Earlier this month, Adeline, a member of the Teslin Tlingit Council, along with 12 indigenous delegates, travelled to Rome to hold historic talks with Pope Francis to discuss the Roman Catholic Church's role in residential schools. She made our entire territory proud as she made the long journey to Rome and represented our region. She went on behalf of survivors and those who did not survive, their families, and for future generations.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank other Yukoners who also went to Rome to support the delegates: her husband, Bill Webber, who always takes his spot at her side — at the side of our beloved Adeline — to support and encourage her; as well, cultural leaders, Elder Frances Neumann and her nieces, Marilyn and Megan Jensen, who drummed and sang to hold up our delegation in St. Peter's Square as they entered and emerged from the Vatican — thank you.

It is because of the bravery of this delegation that we witnessed the Pope delivering a long-overdue apology to the indigenous people of Canada.

This apology could mark the beginning of a new relationship. It is an acknowledgement of the hurt and the suffering that our communities have experienced through residential schools. I am hopeful for the future, but there is still a lot of work to be done, as Adeline well knows. She has been doing this work nearly her entire life. Adeline has lobbied and advocated for the rights of indigenous people for many decades, with a particular focus on indigenous women. Her tireless work to advocate for the support, equality, and dignity for indigenous women has played no small part in major achievements in our history: the Yukon regional roundtables, the national inquiry, and now Yukon's MMIWG2S+ strategy.

She is a respected auntie and friend to countless youth, and I know that she is a role model and mentor to many women and girls in the Yukon and throughout Canada. Adeline is a living testament to the strength and resilience of indigenous women, so I am thankful for the path that she has paved for me and many other indigenous women in leadership positions.

Our government remains committed to supporting the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. We are also committed to working with our partners to implement Yukon's MMIWG2S+ strategy.

I raise my hands to Adeline Webber. Thank you for your wisdom, your strength, your tenacity in seeking equality, dignity, and justice for our people.

Günilshish. Thank you.

Applause

Mr. Dixon: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to honour Adeline Webber. Adeline was chosen as the Yukon representative for the Assembly of First Nations' delegation to Rome. To have an audience with the Pope at the Vatican is something that certainly has an impact, and last month that took place.

Adeline was born and raised in Whitehorse and is a member of the Teslin Tlingit First Nation. Adeline is a residential school survivor — seven years of her life in that system. Being taken from her home and sent to the Whitehorse

Indian Baptist Mission School was one thing, but I understand that she was also separated from some of her siblings, as they were sent to different schools. Adeline's career is, quite frankly, outstanding. She worked for the Council of Yukon First Nations as an enrolment officer and chair of the Yukon Enrollment Commission. She was instrumental within the Council of Yukon First Nations during the land claims settlement. Then, as Yukon district director within the federal government, Adeline helped to create the northern careers program. She retired, but that didn't stop her passion to give and share her expertise.

We would like to recognize Adeline for the incredible work that she has done throughout her career advocating for indigenous and aboriginal women's rights. She is the founder of the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, which is a forum for aboriginal women to socialize, network, support, and address issues of interest and concern. She worked tirelessly for the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre as a board member and as a president, of which she is now an honorary lifetime member. Adeline was appointed Administrator of Yukon in 2018 and has been extended for another term.

The list is so extensive that our allotted time is not long enough to list all of her accomplishments and work, let alone her awards and recognition for that work. So, to a leader, an advocate, a volunteer, a hard-working community citizen, and a very respected elder, we thank you for all that you contribute to Yukon and for representing Yukon First Nation people on the international stage. Of her visit with the Pope, she said — and I quote: "I just really hope that he is very serious about dealing with us." Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that, when dealing with Adeline, he sat up and took notice.

I would also like to recognize those performers who joined the AFN delegation in Rome from Yukon, including the mother-daughter duo from the Yukon, Marilyn and Megan Jensen from the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers. Thank you to Marilyn and Megan, and thank you, of course, to Adeline for representing Yukon in Rome.

Günilschish. Thank you.

Applause

Ms. Tredger: It is truly an honour to pay tribute to Adeline Webber on behalf of the Yukon NDP.

As shared by the previous speakers, when meeting with the Pope, Adeline Webber represented not just the Yukoners who survived Yukon residential schools, but she also represented the generations impacted by the legacy of residential schools from across Canada. A moment that stood out for me was seeing her take the tiny beaded moccasins that her mother had made and share them with the Pope. Seeing her hold those lovingly in her hands and knowing the family's story, it is an image that is more powerful than any words.

This wasn't a one-off for Adeline. She has worked, and continues to work, day in and day out to support survivors of residential schools and to research and shine a light on the injustices that so many experienced so that there truly can be reconciliation and healing.

Our heartfelt thanks to Adeline and all those in our communities who recognize the impact of residential schools on so many and are working to bring us all closer to truth and reconciliation.

Applause

In recognition of Women in Mining Canada 2022 Trailblazer Award recipient Anne Lewis and Yukon Mining and Geology Week

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise today to pay tribute to Anne Lewis, a lifelong Yukoner, who is this year's recipient of the Women in Mining Canada Trailblazer Award. The award recognizes women who embody the trail-blazing spirit, the leadership mindset needed to make extraordinary personal strides to navigate the Canadian mining industry.

You could say that Anne joined the mineral industry at an early age. Starting at just six months old, she began travelling with her father Randy to Yukon mines and contaminated sites, seeing first-hand at an early age mine reclamation and remediation, training and education, and indigenous and community economic development. These early experiences must have made an impression. After completing university, Anne spent the past 15 years working to make the mining industry in the territory more diverse and equitable. In 2009, Anne joined the Yukon Mine Training Association as a training coordinator. During her two-year tenure, she launched the first-ever heavy equipment operator simulator in the Yukon.

She also managed inclusive wage subsidy programs and developed training programs for Yukon First Nation residents at mineral exploration and mine sites. Since 2011, Anne has served as the executive director of the Yukon Mining Alliance to help build the Invest Yukon brand, promoting the Yukon's competitive advantages and opportunities for international investments. Just this morning, Anne was sharing stories with me about flying in with investors to beautiful Yukon locations without a tree in sight.

Building on this model, Anne went on to create Invest Canada North with the help of leaders in government and the mining industry from the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. This project put the north's competitive advantages for mining in the spotlight of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, the mining industry's largest annual gathering.

In 2012, Anne founded Yukon Women in Mining, and she has been involved with the organization's board ever since. She became the organization's president in 2018. Anne has championed the recognition of female leaders in the Yukon. She helped lead a successful push that saw Kate Carmack inducted in 2019 into the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame, recognizing her critical role in the discovery of gold that spurred the Klondike Gold Rush.

Yukon Women in Mining also does more than advocate for greater equity and diversity in the mining industry, Mr. Speaker. For example, it's helping to organize events for Yukon Mining and Geology Week coming next Monday.

When it comes to women in mining, the Yukon is firing on all cylinders, leading the pack, breaking glass ceilings: Tara

Christie from Banyan Gold, who hosted an event for Every Student, Every Day just last week; Lorelee Johnstone and Brianne Warner, the president and executive director of the Chamber of Mines; Brooke Rudolph, the executive director of the Klondike Placer Miners' Association; and Heather Burrell, chair of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board. Mr. Speaker, to all of these leaders — and in particular, Anne — thank you for all of your hard work to make the mining industry more equitable, inclusive, and productive.

Applause

Mr. Kent: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize the 2022 mining week and to congratulate Anne Lewis, the founder and president of Yukon Women in Mining, who has been honoured with the national Women in Mining Canada 2022 Trailblazer Award.

Yukon Mining and Geology Week takes place this year from May 1 to 7. Yukon Women in Mining, as the minister mentioned, is hosting events this year, and it looks like there will be something for everyone, and, of course, it will be much welcomed to be held in-person this year.

Workshops on equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as a speaker's luncheon, will take place at the MacBride Museum on May 3. Perhaps the most anticipated event during Yukon Mining and Geology Week for Whitehorse students will take place on Friday, May 6. This year, the exploration and discovery camp will be held indoors at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

For many years, students and children have gathered for some hands-on learning about all things mining and exploration. Past events included crafts, cracking geodes, gold panning, science experiments, history, robots, and much more.

Mining has played a leading role in helping our economy navigate the pandemic, and for that, we thank the entire industry. Those same companies support so many of our community initiatives, no matter the cause, and for that, we also thank them. From prospectors to producers and everyone in between, we wish you all a successful year and look forward to gathering again at geoscience in November for an update.

Now turning to Anne's award, which is much-deserved and due in large part to her commitment and leadership to the industry, I was so pleased to be asked to join a number of individuals in nominating Anne for this prestigious award and even more pleased when I heard that she was the successful recipient.

As I mentioned in my nominating letter, if individuals want to know what's happening in the Yukon mining industry, a call to Anne is a great first step. Her contributions have helped to advance the role of women in mining in the Yukon, to create new partnerships across the north, and so much more. Her work with the Yukon Mining Alliance helps to promote Yukon mining projects and companies to a national and international audience.

Anne is the second Yukoner to receive this award, only entering its 10th year. In 2017, geologist and Yukon women in mining champion Sue Craig garnered this recognition. So,

congratulations to Anne on this incredible achievement and this award, and best of luck to you going forward.

Applause

Ms. Tredger: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon NDP to congratulate Anne Lewis on winning the Women in Mining Canada's coveted Trailblazer Award. As we heard from my colleagues, Anne is a force when it comes to the promotion of inclusion and innovation in northern mining. With deep roots in the industry, she has taken what she knows and used it for the greater good.

From the inception of Yukon Women in Mining to the global stage with the creation of the Invest Yukon brand and the even broader Invest Canada North project, Anne isn't one to sit back and let others do the work. She has and continues to be at the forefront of responsible industry. Anne's work is rooted in the importance of inclusion, diversity, and culture within the Yukon's mining industry, which is all the better for it.

The Trailblazer Award comes just ahead of mining week, which starts the first week of May. As we continue to push for sustainable and ethical mining practices, it's people like Anne Lewis who are doing the work to get us there. We admire her tenacity, grace, and perseverance.

Congratulations on your well-deserved award, Anne.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Today, I have for tabling three documents. They are all legislative returns in answer to questions from the Member for Watson Lake.

Hon. Ms. McLean: I have for tabling a legislative return regarding the Education Appeal Tribunal and a question that arose during budget debate.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have for tabling the Yukon Law Foundation annual reports for the years ending October 31, 2020 and October 31, 2021, which are tabled pursuant to section 150(2) of the *Legal Profession Act, 2017*.

I also have for tabling the 2021 Workers' Advocate Office annual report, which is tabled pursuant to section 109(7) of the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

Ms. Tredger: I have for tabling, an article from October 11, 2021 by realtor Adrian Bell called "Why Don't Whitehorse REALTORS Represent Buyers?"

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Dixon: I have for tabling the second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Speaker: Are there any further reports of committees to be presented?
Petitions.

PETITIONS

Petition No. 12 — received

Clerk: Mr. Speaker and honourable members of the Assembly, I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 12 of the First Session of the 35th Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Member for Whitehorse Centre on April 25, 2022.

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

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare Petition No. 12 is deemed to be read and received.

Pursuant to Standing Order 67, the Executive Council shall provide a response to a petition which has been read and received within eight sitting days of its presentation. Therefore, the Executive Council response to Petition No. 12 shall be provided on or before the fifth sitting day of the 2022 Fall Sitting of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to address housing affordability by reviewing the *Real Estate Agents Act* and working with stakeholders, including the Yukon Real Estate Association, to allow for buyer's agency practices in Yukon.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Community fire halls and recreation infrastructure

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I rise before the House to highlight our investments in community fire halls and recreation. Our government continues to invest in the well-being of Yukoners, and we do so in partnership with Yukon First Nations and municipal governments to plan, design, and build projects across the territory.

I am pleased to highlight several projects that are already underway in the Yukon. We are currently project-managing fire halls in Faro, Teslin, and Carmacks. The new Faro public works building and fire hall was initially scheduled to be completed at the end of August of this year. The project is ahead of schedule, with a completion date now anticipated for mid-July.

The new fire hall and Emergency Medical Services facility in Teslin is on track for completion at the end of July this year. The project, announced in August of 2019, remains on budget and on schedule. The construction of the Carmacks public works building and fire hall is also underway, and we anticipate completion in November of this year.

In addition to investments in community fire halls, we are also proud to invest in recreational infrastructure in our communities. The Pelly Crossing pool is in the final stages of construction with interior finishing work ongoing at this time. The remaining sub-grade work, such as septic and solar water-heating system, will be completed once the ground is thawed.

The Carmacks arena replacement project is on track for completion this year, and we look forward to seeing it in full use by the community for our winter sport season.

Other recreation projects that we have supported, and are in progress, include: upgrades to various boat launches across the territory; a new gymnastics climbing facility in Whitehorse; the Dawson City recreation centre project; upgrades to electrical and snow-making at Mount Sima; Mayo arena upgrades; the Whitehorse biathlon facility; and a new irrigation system at the Mountain View Golf Course.

We also look forward to the many recreation infrastructure legacy opportunities to come, as we continue to advance our bid to co-host the 2027 Canada Winter Games with the City of Whitehorse and to find ways for the games to benefit the territory as a whole, as we continue to invest in our communities.

Recreation and emergency response infrastructure are vital investments to support Yukoners to live active, healthy, and safe lifestyles. We are committed to continuing our collaboration with the federal government, municipalities, and Yukon First Nation governments to make key investments toward our collective infrastructure priorities that will strengthen communities and continue to build the territory that we are all proud of.

Ms. McLeod: Considering the strained relationship between rural Yukon and this Liberal government, I am surprised that community infrastructure investment is the topic of today's ministerial statement. There have been many projects in the communities that have riled up residents because of Liberal mismanagement, and I don't have to go far to find examples. The closing of community transfer stations at Silver City, Destruction Bay, Keno, and Johnsons Crossing have flown in the face of area residents.

The minister had to back down from his marquee better building program legislation last fall because of pushback from Yukon communities. In both cases, the minister had failed to properly consult and failed to actually listen to Yukon communities. Even the Ombudsman agrees, as that office said just last month that residents affected by the landfill closures did not have — and I quote: "... an avenue available to present their views..." The Ombudsman added that it was an unfairness. Residents upset about the transfer station closures even signed a petition calling for the minister's resignation.

We've heard this Sitting how the minister has ignored the community of Carmacks' request to dismantle the old grader station. The minister highlighted a number of recreation projects, but we know the Liberals have delayed construction of the Carmacks arena and have unreliably budgeted for a new recreation centre in Dawson City.

The projects highlighted today are fire halls and EMS stations, and we do support those, but we are concerned that this minister continues to dismiss many of the concerns facing rural Yukon. Residents in communities have written several letters to this Liberal government; unfortunately, rural Yukoners have received delayed, little, or no response. We know the projects highlighted by the minister are welcome in the communities; however, this minister's track record on consultation shows the final product often doesn't provide communities with what they want or need, and this minister's track record on accurate information is possibly the worst this Assembly has seen.

This session, we've seen the minister actually just make up budgeting numbers out of the air. Mr. Speaker, Yukoners are excited by the 2027 Canada Winter Games, but the minister is doing a disservice to Yukoners when he quoted that the games will cost \$100 million and then, the next day, he admitted that he made the number up. So, it could be plus or minus \$50 million.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, under section 19(g), which talks about false or unavowed motives, in the extensive Standing Orders, it says that we should never suggest that the members of this Legislative Assembly are misleading or lying. Just twice now, I've heard the member opposite talk about the minister in that fashion.

Speaker: On the point of order, the Member for Lake Laberge.

Mr. Cathers: I think the minister has misunderstood. I don't believe my colleague did in fact contravene Standing Order 19(g).

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Order, please.

The temperature of the debate is rising, and members are using language that is likely to cause disorder. I caution all members to temper their remarks.

Ms. McLeod: Now, Mr. Speaker, guesstimating isn't a reliable, responsible way to budget, and the minister, we hope, will end this unreliable practice. Unfortunately, the information being provided by the minister has made communities frustrated with this combative approach. So, we'll be following these projects closely to ensure that they are on time and on budget. I want to thank the minister very much for his update today.

Ms. Tredger: The Yukon NDP thank the minister for highlighting in a ministerial statement what we and Yukoners believe any territorial government should do — that is, to work with other levels of government and invest in infrastructure to support the territory. We hope that this government will truly

listen and work with all incorporated and unincorporated communities in the Yukon to ensure that their needs are met.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the Third Party for their remarks this afternoon. I have to disagree with the Member for Watson Lake this afternoon and her remarks in response to my ministerial statement this afternoon. I had thought we had been having cordial relations on the floor of the House for the last several hours in response to the Community Services budget, and while I appreciate her thanks given at the end of her remarks, they didn't really mirror the tone of the initial response.

This government has spent an enormous amount of money on our rural Yukon communities. I believe, in conversations with my colleague, we're spending perhaps as much as twice or more what has been spent in rural Yukon before, and we have done so in consultation with our rural Yukon communities, and we're very happy to be doing that — and our First Nations as well.

It's important that we have that information, that feedback loop into our government, so we can actually deliver on the needs of the community, and that's very important to us and has been a sort of hallmark of our government since the very early days.

We know that when we invest in strong communities, we are in turn investing in and supporting Yukon families and a strong, growing local economy. This year, the Government of Yukon will be investing \$70 million to continue a range of infrastructure projects across the Yukon. The funding is cost-shared, for the most part, by Canada and the Yukon on a 75-25 split under the federal small communities fund and Investing in Canada infrastructure program, which we talked about yesterday in budget debate. I had a great conversation with the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Through the Investing in Canada infrastructure program, the Yukon will see \$600 million in funding over the lifespan of the program for public transit, green infrastructure, as well as recreational, social, and cultural infrastructure.

At the end of the day, we are moving forward with unprecedented investments in infrastructure projects across the Yukon. Shovels are getting in the ground and projects are being built, something that the Yukon Party failed to do in their more than decade of governance.

Through these investments, we are providing jobs for Yukoners, creating strong, sustainable communities, supporting local businesses, and laying the groundwork for continued economic growth. Through the 2022-23 budget, some of the projects that our government plans to invest in are: more than \$71 million for repairs and improvements to bridges and highways throughout the Yukon; more than \$51 million to modernize our airports and support airline access to the territory, which is something that I believe personally is very important; \$27 million for the Dempster fibre project to make sure that our Internet is more robust; more than \$25 million for the Dawson City recreation centre, which is a project that has been on the books for decades, and we are going to deliver on that project and actually make sure that Dawson has a good

recreation centre; close to \$11 million for Yukon Resource Gateway projects; close to \$4 million for the White River community centre; up to \$3.7 million for new boat launches and dock replacements across the territory, which is something that I know the Member for Kluane has spoken to me about for more than five years; and up to \$26 million for the new Teslin Tlingit Council community hub.

That is just a handful of the projects that we have outlined for our investments in 2022-23. I want to thank all Yukon communities and First Nations for their feedback and support.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Conflict of interest re Old Crow wellness centre

Mr. Dixon: Yesterday in response to my question about the representations that the former Minister of Health and Social Services has made to the Government of Yukon in relation to the Old Crow health centre, the Minister of Highways and Public Works admitted that the former minister has had several meetings with department officials. The minister also said that his Cabinet colleagues directed department officials to meet with the former minister.

Did the Minister of Highways and Public Works seek advice from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and, if so, what was that advice?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: As I said yesterday, conflicts of interest are handled by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Part of government's commitment to openness and transparency, the Yukon government passed the *Lobbyist Registration Act* that sets out clear rules for how these activities are governed. It is the responsibility of lobbyists to register under that act, to understand the rules, and to act in accordance with the law.

Our understanding is that the former minister is now working with the designer/builder in the role of director of strategic operations on the Old Crow projects — the tenplex and the wellness centre. The designer/builder was directed to the operational level.

It is my understanding that the former minister, along with the design/build team, met with the Highways and Public Works staff on a number of occasions. These types of meetings are part of routine project administration.

Mr. Dixon: The minister has simply read the same note that he read yesterday indicating that this is an issue that should be dealt with by the conflicts commissioner.

My question is very simple. When this came up to him, he was aware of the conflicts act. He was aware of the possibility of a contravention of the act, so why didn't he seek the advice of the conflicts commissioner?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I will keep this answer fairly brief.

When I heard about the ongoing contract administration which was occurring with respect to the two projects, at that point, I was advised by the department as to what was occurring. At that point, I was briefed that the contract administration was dealt with by the contract administration

people — the very skilled professionals at procurement and contract administration at Highways and Public Works. In that respect, I didn't really have any concern as to who was — I said, at that point, that I would not be dealing with anybody from Ketza Construction because there were issues — as there always are — with respect to the ongoing administration of contracts. These are large contracts.

Of course, I receive advice from my department that the minister ought not intervene in any way, shape, or form, so I took that approach. That's exactly what happened, and there was no communication with anybody from Ketza Construction.

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, the minister has admitted that there were interactions in meetings between the department, the Government of Yukon, and the former minister.

So, the minister is telling us that, even though he was aware of what the conflict of interest said, he not only chose not to seek advice from the conflicts commissioner, but he actually directed his department to have meetings with the former minister.

Here is exactly what he said yesterday: "... my ministerial colleagues and I did not meet with the designer/builder nor the former minister and instead directed them to work with the Department of Highways and Public Works." We have learned that he did this without ever checking if this was a conflict with the conflicts commissioner. So, why would the minister direct his department to meet with the former minister without checking with the conflicts commissioner when he knew that such a meeting had the potential to be a violation of the conflicts act? It seems like this is a very difficult position for the minister to put his department in, so why did he do that?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: If the member opposite has a complaint to be made to the conflicts commissioner, make that complaint.

Question re: Conflict of interest re Old Crow wellness centre

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister of what his mandate letter says. It says — and I quote: "You are to respect the letter and spirit of the conflict of interest rules for Ministers and to actively seek, and abide by, guidance from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner." This is a clear case where the minister should have known that there was the potential of a conflict of interest under the act, and the minister chose not to seek the advice, as he was directed by the Premier to do in his mandate letter.

So, why did the Minister of Highways and Public Works not seek the advice of the conflicts commissioner?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Firstly, I'll repeat my response from the first answer, which is that the conflict, if any, is with the former minister and the former MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin. In that respect, she represented herself as part of Ketza Construction, a respected Yukon contracting company that has the contract for the two Old Crow projects, the contract for the Whitehorse Whistle Bend school, and, of course, many contracts in prior decades. In that respect, I had no intention of speaking to anybody who was affiliated with Ketza Construction. There was no conflict that was engaging with me

personally, and I did not make inquiries as to who may or may not have discharged their duty with respect to our conflicts commissioner, but this was a contract administration issue.

Mr. Dixon: I am shocked to hear the minister admit this. He has just admitted that the conflict, if any, is with the former minister. So, he knew that there was the potential of a conflict, and despite that, he still chose not to seek the advice of the conflicts commissioner, and he still directed his officials to interact and have a meeting with the former minister, even though he was aware that there was a potential contravention of the act. So, he directed his officials to meet with the former minister, knowing that there was a potential conflict under the conflict of interest act.

So, why did the minister not discharge his duties as a minister to seek the advice of the conflicts commissioner before directing his officials to meet with the former minister in what very well could have been, under his own admission, a violation of the conflicts act?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Once again, this was a contract administration issue. What I was aware of was that the former hard-working Member for Vuntut Gwitchin and the former minister had gone past the six-month period, where a lot of the conflicts engage, but I had zero intention of contacting or speaking to anybody at Ketz Construction with respect to the ongoing contract administration and all of the ongoing construction dispute resolution or issue dispute resolution mechanisms that existed within that contract.

That was my thought process at the time. I did not have any opinion whatsoever, contrary to what the member opposite is indicating, as to whether there were any conflict issues at the time.

Mr. Dixon: I am simply responding to what the minister has just told us today. The minister has told us that the former minister reached out to Cabinet, that the former minister met, had multiple meetings, with the Government of Yukon with regard to this project. We know that the minister was aware that there was the potential of a conflict of interest. He has admitted as much today on the floor right now.

These are serious matters, Mr. Speaker. The conflict of interest act is a crucial piece of legislation for our democracy. It speaks about ensuring the integrity of our democracy and the expectation of ethical conduct for ministers. Now, the minister himself, in his own mandate letter, has been directed to seek out guidance from the conflicts commissioner when these types of issues arise. He has admitted that he was aware that there could have been a conflict, and yet he chose not to seek the advice from the conflicts commissioner.

So, since we know the minister didn't seek that advice from the conflicts commissioner, how can he be confident that he, his government, and the former minister did not and have not contravened the act?

Hon. Mr. Silver: This is the same question that has been asked of my minister repeatedly. We know the member opposite relishes in character assassination. They're trying to piece together some words here and putting words in the mouth of my minister, and quite frankly, I think that this is quite ridiculous.

If the members opposite think that there's a problem here, they know exactly what they could do outside the Legislative Assembly: Make that complaint.

Question re: Mining project oversight

Ms. Tredger: When this government talks about climate change, we hear a lot about quick technological fixes like charging stations, but we never hear about the elephant in the room: wetlands.

Northern wetlands contain the equivalent of hundreds of years of our greenhouse gas emissions. If we disturb these wetlands, that carbon will be released and undo all the work Yukoners are doing to reduce their emissions. When asked about that, the minister said his department is working on how to measure potential carbon release.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a climate crisis. We can't wait to get the perfect measurements. When will this government act like we're in an emergency and effectively protect wetlands?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, we are working on a wetlands policy right now, and we are engaging with the mineral industry, with the public, with environmental groups. That policy is underway at this very moment. I had a meeting, for example, with Ducks Unlimited, where we had a conversation. They had put out some media around as if all the wetlands suddenly went up into the atmosphere, which is not what is happening. When you disturb a wetland — what I have asked for from the departments of Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment is to look at what types of disturbances cause what types of potential emissions. I think the member opposite is making a leap here that, as soon as you touch a wetland, it all goes into the atmosphere. It does not.

Wetlands are very important; that's why we are developing a policy. We have been engaging with the public and Yukoners on this very topic, and I'm happy to talk about it further.

Ms. Tredger: When we're talking about climate change, youth — the very people who will experience the full impact of climate change in their lifetimes — want to be part of the solution. The problem is the government isn't listening. In the report from the Youth Panel on Climate Change, one young Yukoner said — quote: "The mining companies must be held to a very high standard to ensure that they are acting responsible and cleaning up behind themselves."

Knowing that the minister yesterday said to the media that he wasn't ready to consider human rights and environmental violations abroad, it seems fair to say that recommendation didn't land. The Yukon already has too many examples of just how bad things can get. Environmental disasters can't be the Yukon's business model.

What is this government doing to protect the Yukon from future environmental disasters?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am happy to start a response to this new question — effectively, in my mind. We have the Yukon *Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*. That was agreed upon through the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and was worked on with First Nations, the federal government, and the territorial government to create an assessment regime to protect our environment and our socio-economic — our

communities, effectively. I am very proud of that act. There is much work that needs to happen around that act. I would be happy to take the suggestion from the members opposite about potential work, but that work always should happen at the table with First Nations, with the federal government, and that's what we have been doing.

We also have a regulatory regime which works to protect Yukoners, so we have a robust regulatory and assessment regime here in the territory, and those are the tools that we use to make sure that our mining is done responsibly here.

By the way, alongside of comments that were heard earlier during tributes, I would like to thank the mining sector for their great work over the past couple of years to do mining responsibly in the territory.

Ms. Tredger: The Yukon NDP has asked about wetlands and about species at risk. We have asked about cyanide spills and contaminated sites. We have asked about the future of the territory and how we will leave it for future generations. This government's lack of action on these issues will be their legacy, because the Liberals are not ready to make the hard decisions this territory needs to see real climate action. Even an outright ban on fracking was more than they could stomach.

With the blatant lack of meaningful action we have seen in the last six years, why should Yukoners believe that the Liberal government will ever make responsible decisions about mining and the environment?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will begin by talking about successor legislation. We are doing that hard work right now with First Nations, meeting with them, with the industry table, with the environmental table, working on legislation that is more than a century old.

We built upon the mining memorandum of understanding with First Nations. We then went from there to the mineral development strategy. We are now on successor legislation. We are working with the Yukon Forum, Yukon First Nations, and also with the federal government on improving our YESAA legislation. We are, at all times, doing this work around land use planning. We saw with the Yukon Party and the Peel land use plan — that didn't work out very well at all. We got it to the finish line. We are now dealing with claims that were left over. We are working on the Dawson plan. I am in conversation with all of the First Nations on the remaining regional land use plans.

We are doing a lot of work on mining. Again, I would like to thank all Yukoners who have helped to make mining successful and safe here in the territory in recent years. It is much appreciated.

Question re: Opioid crisis

Mr. Cathers: In January, the Minister of Health and Social Services declared a substance use emergency in response to the dramatic increase in overdose-related deaths. Since then, government has focused the majority of its efforts on harm reduction. While we support effective harm reduction, there needs to be attention paid to prevention, treatment, and enforcement.

Here is what the Chief Superintendent of the RCMP said last week: "... enforcement is a key element. It's a key pillar of harm reduction. And if you remove that or if it's not as strong as the other pillars, none of it is going to be successful. You can't just treat people for addictions and permit people to continue to sell drugs at will..."

What steps has the government taken to enhance enforcement measures to combat rising levels of drug trafficking, and will the government provide the resources to the RCMP to establish a drug enforcement unit?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have the opportunity today — and I appreciate it — to speak about key elements of enforcement with respect to the substance use health emergency and the situation here in the territory with respect to community safety — that is, our aspect and focus on community safety opportunities with our First Nation governments across the territory. They are at varying stages of interest with respect to how they will design a community safety program, should they wish to do so.

We have put money in this year's budget for an eight-year program going forward that will support that process, so individual communities can access funds for the purposes of planning community safety. We know that the responses with respect to how we keep our communities safe must be grown at the grassroots of those communities, must be informed by the intelligence, the information, and the culture of those communities. That work will be done in concert with Yukon government with a program that funds the opportunities for communities to design their community safety programs and to build safe and healthy communities.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, another important aspect of the Yukon's response to the drug crisis is treatment. When the government declared the substance use health emergency in January, they committed to increasing on-the-land treatment options.

Can the minister tell us how many new on-the-land treatment spaces the Yukon government has actually created since they declared a substance use health emergency?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: On-the-land treatment options are one element of the substance use health emergency response. Unfortunately, the member opposite — and particularly the Yukon Party — probably would design on-the-land programs. We are not going to do that. We are working with our partners, our First Nation governments, our First Nation communities, and our communities across the territory to determine what they think on-the-land treatment options should look like. That work has begun in earnest. We will continue to work with our partners as we respond to the substance use health emergency here in the territory.

I can indicate that \$5.5 million in this year's budget will support the government's immediate response to the substance use health emergency. We will continue to support it, not only financially, but through leadership, through great partnerships that we have built over the last five to six years, and with the opportunity to have community input on how we must respond.

I hope that the on-the-land treatment options will focus on aftercare. It is a conversation that we have begun, and for

individuals who might need treatment and need to transition back into communities, on-the-land treatment is a great option for that aspect.

Mr. Cathers: It appears that since government declared a substance use health emergency in January, actions that they have taken have focused almost entirely on harm reduction. Effective harm reduction is important, but it is only one part of the needed response. There needs to be more attention paid to prevention, treatment, and enforcement.

This government has not adequately supported the RCMP with enforcement, and we have seen no commitment to the establishment of a drug enforcement unit. The government has said very little about prevention. They aren't doing enough to increase treatment options, and the minister was unable to tell us even if any new treatment spaces have been created.

When will this government start taking prevention, treatment, and enforcement seriously in response to the opioid crisis in the Yukon?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The indication that we're taking every aspect of the situation here in the territory was abundantly clear when we declared a substance use health emergency on January 20 of this year. Our government is working with harm reduction partners on a number of initiatives, including a new territory-wide public awareness and education campaign addressing the toxic drug supply present in the Yukon communities. We're expanding drug testing and safer supply in rural communities and increasing availability here in Whitehorse. We're enhancing the Yukon government's supervised consumption site to support those who use inhalants. We're increasing on-the-land treatment options, as I've noted. We're working with Blood Ties Four Directions to extend the hours of operation of the outreach van, which provides mobile fentanyl testing and enhanced supports to marginalized individuals. We're developing a new opioid action plan. We are bringing leaders together across the territory — more than \$5.5 million in this year's budget, as I've noted, for the substance use health emergency. The member opposite and the Yukon Party have asked this question several times. I'm happy to rise to my feet every time to be able to tell Yukoners about the work that's happening and to engage them in that.

We have included funding to enhance the supervised consumption site to support additional mental health and social supports and to support the RCMP.

I hope they support this budget.

Question re: RCMP funding

Ms. Van Bibber: It has been established that the Liberals are underfunding the RCMP and this is hampering their ability to tackle serious drug and gang crime. There is also a growing issue of property crime and vandalism in the City of Whitehorse. Since 2016, property crime in Whitehorse has skyrocketed by nearly 23 percent. It is clear that the RCMP need more resources to help reduce property crime.

When will the minister agree to give the RCMP the necessary resources to reduce property crime in the city?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: As I've said, I am happy to rise on every occasion that the opposition provides for me to do so — these same questions were asked yesterday. I'm happy to continue to discuss the important work of the Department of Justice and their support for the RCMP, our government's support for the RCMP, and our overall support for the substance use health emergency.

Just because the supposed facts are noted by the members of the opposition do not make them the case. Over the past five years, the Government of Yukon has increased the operational budget of the M Division by \$3.8 million — some 15 percent over that period of time, which included funding for eight new RCMP positions over that period.

I can indicate that there were four regular members as a result of that work — one disclosure clerk and two administration support clerks. There are a number of regular members as a result of that.

As I noted the other day when I had the opportunity to answer this question, our obligation under the *Territorial Police Service Agreement* is that we, as a government, are contractually obliged to pay for every position that the RCMP have, including their O&M. We reconcile every June, and the RCMP is funded in the work we do together.

Ms. Van Bibber: The Liberals have neglected the RCMP over the last several years and, as a result, they do not have the resources necessary to tackle growing crime in our community. Tourism will hopefully rebound in a big way this summer, and we need to make sure that our city feels safe and that our small businesses are not facing constant break-ins. Property crime in Whitehorse has surged by nearly 23 percent since the Liberals took office. This costs businesses money and makes citizens feel unsafe.

How many new RCMP positions have the Liberals created specifically to address property crime in the City of Whitehorse?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would think that the colleague of the member opposite who served a short period of time as the Minister of Justice would be able to describe to the Yukon Party how the *Territorial Police Service Agreement* does, in fact, work and the fact that the RCMP are in charge of operations.

Do we discuss priorities? Absolutely. The Yukon has a unique opportunity to do that with the Yukon Police Council, which travels across the territory for the purposes of speaking to Yukoners about what their priorities are. They provide those to the Minister of Justice, and as the Department of Justice also works on priorities — and then I provide a letter to the chief superintendent of the RCMP with respect to setting priorities every year, and the operationalization of those priorities is the responsibility of the RCMP.

They are doing an amazing job here in the territory responding to the needs of Yukoners. We have provided, over the last number of years, funding for additional positions for both the historic case unit and the crime reduction unit. The crime reduction unit is focused on drug issues, on property crime issues — on the opportunities to make Yukoners safe. Their work continues and we support it ultimately, and we will work with them to have appropriate resources.

Ms. Van Bibber: It's clear that the Liberals' neglect for the RCMP is having negative consequences for crime in the Yukon. Drug and property crimes are up. There are up to five gangs operating out of the territory. The RCMP have even flagged concerns with human trafficking. As indicated, property crime is up 23 percent under the Liberals.

Will the Liberals fund new positions for the RCMP detachment in the City of Whitehorse specifically to allow for increased patrols to address the growing issue of crime?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The budget for 2022-23, which is currently before this Legislative Assembly, focuses on priorities from Yukoners and will be delivered by this government. There is an additional \$297,000 to support four years of additional staffing within the crime reduction unit, specifically with respect to the RCMP, but there are many, many pieces of this Yukon budget that will create safer, happier, healthier lives for Yukon.

The increase for budget with respect to the RCMP — the members opposite are clearly not listening to my responses. We work with the RCMP to properly resource their services here in the territory.

I believe that it was the Yukon Party government, in fact, that signed the *Territorial Police Service Agreement* for 20 years. Presumably, they thought that it was responsible funding for the RCMP. It was not. We have increased it over 15 percent over the last five years. We will continue to do so. We work closely with the RCMP to respond to their needs so that they can respond to the needs of Yukoners.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Deputy Chair (Ms. Tredger): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Request for Acting Chair of Committee of the Whole

Deputy Chair: At this time, I will ask if any private member wishes to volunteer to be Acting Chair of Committee of the Whole to provide relief to the Chair this afternoon.

Member for Porter Creek Centre rises

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 55, Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 204, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2022-23*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 204: *First Appropriation Act 2022-23* — continued

Acting Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 55, Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 204, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2022-23*.

Is there any general debate?

Department of Highways and Public Works

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I would like to introduce my officials, Deputy Minister Paul McConnell to my right and his assistant, Meaghan Griffin. Thank you for the opportunity to present the budget for Highways and Public Works for 2022-23.

I am proud of the wide range of programs and services that are offered by the department. The work we do is far-reaching and impacts all Yukoners. At its core, the department's role is to improve the lives of Yukoners now while making decisions to ensure a sustainable future. We work so that Yukoners can move about their daily lives, whether that is getting to work safely, flying between communities, accessing our buildings, or staying connected digitally.

The department's work helps build our communities, grow our economy, and ensures a clean, green, and sustainable future.

While our work helps to ensure the territory's transportation links, roads, bridges, and airports are safe and efficient, we also do so much more than that. We procure goods and services in a fair, timely, and transparent manner, increasing economic opportunities for communities, as well as local and First Nation businesses, and ensuring value for Yukon taxpayers.

We develop and implement new technologies that make government services more efficient and accessible to Yukoners and give public servants the ability to work remotely when required.

Highways and Public Works makes public buildings more energy efficient so we can lower our greenhouse gas emissions and move closer to a cleaner future. We construct new buildings, such as schools and health centres, to support the needs of Yukoners. We simplify public access to government information while protecting the privacy of individuals through the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and assist the entire government with their leases, contracts, risk management, and insurance. Through it all, we work to advance reconciliation with Yukon First Nations.

This year, our budget will help us to deliver on key mandate items, such as realizing our commitments under *Our*

Clean Future, completing the Dempster fibre line, and furthering the Yukon Resource Gateway program.

Let's take some time to talk about these and other budget items in more depth. I'll start with the Information, Communications and Technology division, or ICT. ICT supports delivery of government services to the public and helps the government do its business in a smarter, more efficient way. Thanks to the efforts of the ICT division, if required, we can now support up to 2,500 employees working remotely and securely through tools like Microsoft's online suite of applications, virtual desktop infrastructure — also known as VDI — and other secure connectivity.

Our ability to provide flexible work arrangements will allow us to meet the expectations of the modern workforce and support our climate change goals by reducing the need to drive to work every day or to travel for meetings. Although ICT is housed within Highways and Public Works, the division collaborates with all areas of government to provide the business applications they need to serve citizens and the infrastructure and connectivity that allows them to do so. ICT's work may be behind the scenes, but the division supports a range of projects from family and case management to wildland fire tracking. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to name an area of government that ICT does not support in some way.

ICT also works so that the public can access key government services from the comfort of their homes or from wherever they may need them. These online services make it easier for all Yukoners to access government services, whether you need to renew your vehicle registration or buy a camping permit. This year, ICT is working on the legislative and service delivery requirements to introduce a one-government approach to online service delivery. We will create the ability to have and manage a one-government account that will eventually allow citizens to find and access government services securely and conveniently through one log-in.

Cybersecurity is a key concern, and we are taking leadership in the protection of government information, data, and networks through our cybersecurity unit, its operations, professionals, and privacy experts. Though this work often happens under the radar and with little fanfare, you can see that the ICT division does a lot to support Yukoners.

This year, we have \$14 million set aside for infrastructure and development. This includes projects like central issuance, where we will design and distribute new Yukon drivers' licences to address out-of-date processes and security threats. This also includes \$2.9 million for network infrastructure, which will make sure assets are upgraded, replaced, and repaired, as needed. This includes moving from SharePoint 2013 to SharePoint online and modernizing our telephone system using voice-over-Internet protocol. There is also \$2 million for project management and software support that helps to keep everything else going.

Of course, for these projects to work, we rely on the Internet. Currently, the territory depends on a single fibre optic line. When that line goes down, the Yukon is cut off from the digital world. In our increasingly interconnected world, reliable Internet is a necessity for a strong economy, quality health care,

and dependable air travel. Internet is also a necessity for our daily lives, whether that is staying connected at work or relaxing and streaming television.

This year, we have \$27 million going toward construction on the Dempster fibre line. Work on the line started last summer. This line will connect the Yukon to the existing Mackenzie Valley fibre link, creating a 4,000-kilometre continuous network that will ensure traffic can go in the other direction if there is an issue at any point along the network. The Dempster fibre line will enhance the participation of Yukoners and northerners more broadly in the digital economy and enhance access to government services. I know that we all look forward to the fibre line being completed in the next few years.

From the information highway to the literal highway, let's move on to our transportation team and our transportation system — the network of highways, bridges, airports, and ferries that keep Yukoners moving. Our road system is essential for connecting Yukoners to one another and supporting economic growth. We are making investments to keep these vital links safe and open for business, a responsibility that we take very seriously. After all, safety is the primary consideration when we upgrade our transportation links.

To that end, \$4.75 million will support the start of the next phase of Alaska Highway safety improvements. This summer, we will also upgrade the highway from just north of the Robert Service Way intersection to Lodestar Lane. This project will improve highway access to the Whitehorse weigh scales, enhance the roadway lighting, and upgrade the multi-use trails.

The north Klondike Highway will also benefit from a suite of upgrades. This long-term project will see an investment of \$42.8 million this year alone. Eventually, we will see reconstruction of 209 kilometres of the north Klondike Highway from Carmacks to the Dempster Highway intersection. This project covers replacement of the Crooked Creek bridge at \$15.5 million and an additional \$1.8 million to rehabilitate the McCabe River bridge. Along the north Klondike, we will also build better and more efficient drainage systems, such as culverts, to accommodate increased water flow — the result of climate change.

Other improvements will include a raised roadway and wider ditches in key areas to protect against flooding and slope erosion. These upgrades will allow us to remove seasonal weight restrictions for heavy trucks between Carmacks and Stewart Crossing, making it more efficient to transport goods.

It will also make travel from natural resource development areas in Canada's north more efficient and will support 800 jobs during the construction period. Likewise, progress on the Yukon Resource Gateway project will help to link mineral resources to market. In that vein, this year we have allocated \$10.8 million for the Yukon Resource Gateway project. As members may be aware, the gateway is one of the most significant construction programs ever undertaken in the territory.

The first gateway project that is awarded is the Carmacks bypass. The Carmacks bypass project includes the construction of a new road and bridge which will allow industrial vehicles to bypass the community. This will create an enhanced and

safer flow of traffic for residents. It will also improve access to key mining areas. Major construction on the Carmacks bypass will start this spring and is expected to be complete by 2024.

Moving from our roadways to our skies, I would be remiss to not mention our airports and the great amount of work going into our aviation sector. Yukon's aviation system is essential for connecting our communities, building our economy, and linking the Yukon with the rest of the world. Beginning this year, there is a significant suite of upgrades planned for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. This includes \$14.6 million to support work on the apron panels and \$27.4 million to upgrade the parallel runway. We are planning for airfield upgrades at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, including the reconstruction of the main runway. This work will ensure that the airport can support current and future increases in jet service levels. It will also build the airport's capacity to support forecasted increases in the tourism and resource development industries.

Moving outside of Whitehorse, we have also allocated \$400,000 each for projects at the Dawson and Old Crow airports, which will include runway and other improvements. Together, these investments will support our work to grow and develop the Yukon's aviation system.

Now I would like to turn to the Property Management division, which plans, constructs, operates, and maintains the government's facilities. This division operates and maintains 581 government-owned buildings worth over \$1 billion. This year, we have \$10 million allocated to complete capital maintenance work on our building stock. This covers a range of projects across the territory, including the replacement of fire alarms at the Mayo health centre and lighting upgrades at Yukon University.

We also have \$56.7 million allocated for building development. This will advance major projects like the Old Crow health and wellness centre and the tenplex housing unit. This project will replace the aging health centre in Old Crow, increase the number of affordable housing units, and create jobs for the community.

Meanwhile, we are continuing a series of important upgrades to the Old Territorial Administration Building, also known as the Dawson City Museum. These renovations will include structural enhancements and improvements to the building's energy performance. The Old Territorial Administration Building is a designated national historic site of Canada, so our building development program not only provides spaces for Yukoners to work and learn, it also preserves history.

On the flip side of things, we will demolish Macaulay Lodge, which will free up the land for potential future development. Macaulay Lodge was originally built in the late 1960s and has reached the end of its useful life. A contract for the demolition has been awarded to a Yukon First Nation business, with work expected to be completed by the end of this summer. We have begun work with the Yukon Housing Corporation to plan for future housing development on this site.

The last but certainly not the least item I would like to touch on, with respect to buildings, is the Whitehorse grader

station. We are in the planning phase for the replacement of this station. The current grader station is situated on prime riverfront property in the Marwell area. This year, we have allocated \$200,000 to continue planning for the project, with a focus on determining a new location. Notably, replacing the grader station gives us an opportunity to build a sustainable building and lower our greenhouse gas emissions.

On the topic of emissions, I would like to take a few moments to talk about how we are taking action against climate change. Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time.

Since 1948, temperatures in northern Canada have increased by 2.3 degrees Celsius, which is close to three times the rate at which global temperatures are rising generally. It is well past time that we take significant action to tackle this issue. Within Highways and Public Works, a lot — although not all — of our climate change action happens in our Sustainable Infrastructure branch and through the Yukon green infrastructure program. The Yukon green infrastructure program is a multi-year capital program dedicated to implementing building retrofits, renewable energy systems, and sustainability projects. This year, we are investing about \$20 million toward building energy retrofits and renewable energy. Before we begin the retrofit process, we conduct assessments on our existing infrastructure.

In 2021, we completed certified energy audits on 51 high-emission Government of Yukon buildings in Whitehorse. Based on these assessments, I am happy to report that we now have 38 energy retrofit projects underway in government-owned buildings across 11 communities. While all of these retrofits projects are important, there are two examples that I would like to highlight: the Yukon University roof project and the replacement of the Yukon Justice Centre skylight. These projects may sound straightforward, but they do a lot to improve the energy efficiency of both buildings.

The Yukon University roof project is planned to start this year. By improving the thermal efficiency of the roof, we estimate that the project will reduce the building's greenhouse gas emissions by approximately seven percent. As well, the project will also improve the life of the building and reduce maintenance costs. Similarly, the replacement of the skylight at the Yukon Justice Centre will improve insulation and will reduce the territory's greenhouse gas emissions by more than four percent each year. Both of these projects will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by about 130 tonnes per year. I look forward to the construction period starting on these projects this year.

We are also making our buildings more efficient by investing in heating systems that capture and recover heat. One great example of this is the secondary school in Watson Lake, which is now connected to a waste-heat recovery system. By switching to a waste-heat recovery system, we reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent at the school and saved over \$45,000 in heating costs last year. While waste-heat recovery systems and retrofits are definitely a major part of the solution, considering that more than 75 percent of heat

generation in our territory comes from fossil fuels, we do need to explore alternative heat sources.

This brings me to biomass. Biomass is an alternative way to heat buildings through the use of wood. Using wood will reduce our need for traditional non-renewable heating fuels like oil and propane that contribute to our emissions.

The Government of Yukon currently heats three buildings by using our biomass facility: the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the Dawson City water treatment plant, and the Dawson City waste-water treatment plant.

We are also working on expanding the Whitehorse Correctional Centre's biomass heating system to include the Young Offenders Facility and Takhini Haven. The expansion is expected to reduce the building's total greenhouse gas emissions by 320 tonnes.

Finally, we began work on the installation of a biomass heating system at the Elijah Smith Elementary School here in Whitehorse. The biomass system will offset the school's propane use and will reduce emissions by an estimated 130 tonnes each year. Biomass is one of the many ways that we are reducing emissions, and I look forward to more biomass projects being announced in the years to come.

These are just a few examples of the accelerated efforts we are taking to meet our goals and commitments under *Our Clean Future*. From exploring ways to stop permafrost damage to our roads and buildings to purchasing more zero-emission vehicles, the Government of Yukon believe that these actions in a very real way will help form the clean Yukon we will come to know.

Our government is well on its way to meeting our commitments to Yukoners, from accelerating our action on climate change to making sure that our vital transportation links are open, accessible, and safe. I am proud of the work that this department does every day to improve our territory and to prepare for the future. We are investing in the roads we drive on, making sure Yukoners get where they need to go safely. We are improving airports across the territory, ensuring that our aviation infrastructure can support the air travel industry and economy for years to come. We are upgrading current facilities to be more energy efficient among other needs and building new facilities to meet the growing needs of Yukoners.

We are keeping Yukoners connected in the digital world, ensuring redundancy so that businesses and life can continue as normal no matter what. These strategic investments are helping us to make the Yukon stronger and making sure that this territory works for all of us.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for his opening remarks. I also take the opportunity to welcome the officials here today to provide support to the minister.

I do have a number of questions for the minister. The first one is in relation to an issue that has come up in Question Period, and that is seasonally dependent contracts. When you look on page 14-4 of the department's budget, it says that the total capital vote — Vote 55-2 — is \$277,370,000. I'm curious if the minister can give us an idea of what the value of seasonally dependent contracts would be out of that total capital envelope.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you for the question from the member opposite on seasonal tendering and the timing and tendering and forecasting. There are some good news stories.

The Yukon government plans and issues tenders as early as possible to help vendors prepare for upcoming work. This includes forecasting and tendering projects earlier so that businesses can take full advantage of Yukon's short and intense building season. It also includes staggering closing dates to make it easier for contractors to bid on a number of tenders and to encourage price stability.

Public procurements are vital to local businesses, and the Yukon government remains committed to the continuous improvement of our procurement processes. When planning and tendering projects, we are giving contractors the best opportunities to perform the work at the right time. The right time to tender is well in advance of the time when physical work needs to start. This timing allows contractors to plan their season, place orders, and hire staff.

We have many examples of tenders that were posted early enough that contractors could prepare for the work. Some of the examples are: We tendered the Justice Centre atrium skylight project last October, knowing that work would begin this spring as it has; we also tendered the Macaulay Lodge demolition in December, and work is now underway; we tendered the work on the McCabe Creek bridge in early February, and a contract is already in place for this summer; we tendered road construction on the north Klondike Highway in December and have a contract in place so it can start as well; we have also tendered early for the landscaping on Casca Boulevard in Whistle Bend; there is the tender for the parallel runway work in December so that we would be ready for work to start this spring. As the member opposite well knows, that is a substantial contract to ensure the ongoing high performance of the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. We tendered a request for standing offers in February for aircraft charter services for the summer firefighting season, and we tendered in December of last year for supply and delivery of calcium chloride for the summer. There are other examples, but these are some highlights of the tendering that took place in advance of this spring and summer contracting and construction season.

Our government has taken up the challenge of tendering at times that make sense for contractors. We have made great improvements over the past years. Businesses have indicated to department staff that they are happy with the timing of our tendering.

With respect to numbers and the question from the member opposite, for the 2022 construction season, we have tendered 52 projects worth more than \$64 million by the end of March. Another \$10 million worth has been tendered since the beginning of April, and we expect another \$20 million worth of projects to be tendered by the end of April. We also expect approximately \$47 million worth to be tendered by the end of May. Importantly, some of these are multi-year projects, which take the pressure off the contractor to finish by the end of the construction season. We have also tendered this year for projects that are breaking ground in 2023, which is good planning, in my view.

I will follow up with my department as to my prior comments with respect to some of the contracts that were let in December, February, and earlier this spring — how they figure into the overall totals.

So, it is busy, and I have certainly heard the comments from the members opposite. I have heard the comments from the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin and others with respect to the importance of staggering contracts, giving time for contractors to be prepared to hit the ground running at the optimal time, which of course is usually now. But I have provided some solid examples of the Department of Highways and Public Works' planning for the spring, summer, and fall of the 2022 construction season on a number of projects that met deadlines far in advance of the March 31 deadline, which is important as well.

Mr. Kent: So, the transportation capital budget alone is almost \$155 million. The minister mentioned, I think, 52 projects valued at \$64 million. He gave a number of examples. Of those, I can see the McCabe bridge and parallel runway work and perhaps the road construction on the north Klondike. I will ask the minister to provide some details on what exactly was tendered. I believe that was a brushing or a clearing contract — but if he could clarify for us.

When it comes to transportation, I think that almost all of these projects would, no doubt, be seasonally dependent in order to get that \$155 million spent in this construction season. I am hoping that the minister can provide some clarity on how much is left in this transportation budget to be tendered and when we can expect that to go out the door. We have missed an incredibly important window of being able to get these tendered and awarded before the road bans come on so that anybody who does have to mobilize equipment can do so. I think that we are in the road ban — or the weight restriction — window right now, so, even if these were tendered now, there would be a delay in getting equipment moved to site.

Let's focus in on that transportation piece because, again, I would suggest that most of those are seasonally dependent. What is the value of the transportation projects that have been tendered so far, and when does the minister expect the balance of those transportation projects to hit the Bids and Tenders site and then be awarded and eventually for work to start on those projects?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I would just preface my comments from the question from the member opposite that I am certainly prepared to provide the member opposite with a more fulsome listing for the question. I will give a general answer and I also have some specifics, but I can certainly return to the member opposite with further details on contracting.

What we have so far is — the observations are that a number of projects shown in our capital budget have already been tendered. In addition, not all capital projects are seasonally dependent, as the member opposite well knows. Some can be completed during the fall, winter, or spring. Some of these are also multi-year projects, which may have already been awarded or may not require all work to be completed during one construction season.

So, some of the highlights so far — we have, with the national trade corridors fund, the \$15.5-million project at Crooked Creek bridge, which is, as the member opposite and the House will know, the bridge just south of Stewart Crossing that had a fairly steep entrance to a relatively narrow bridge at the time and then a steep exit — driving on that portion of the highway last September — there has certainly been a lot of reprofiling of the hillside to make that a much more even driving experience. That is \$15.5 million. That contract is in place.

There is also the Moose Creek bridge project, which is for \$1.5 million and that contract is in place.

The project at McCabe Creek is \$2.1 million, and that contract is also in place.

As I indicated in previous comments, the parallel runway project at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport has been awarded at approximately \$20 million.

The work between kilometre 613 and kilometre 646 on the north Klondike Highway has been tendered.

The member opposite will also know that the Nisutlin Bay bridge project has been tendered, and I will perhaps get into that in a future response, but obviously we hope that it will be a very significant infrastructure project for the Yukon, for geopolitical reasons — as, of course, the Alaska Highway has always been important and perhaps even more so now — and for the Village of Teslin and for the Teslin Tlingit Council. That has seen a great deal of work by many dedicated individuals, both the bidders and the dedicated subject matter specialists at Highways and Public Works. Those discussions continue with respect to the Nisutlin Bay bridge.

As well, there is the Lapie bridge, which has been tendered.

That likely does not add up exactly to the numbers indicated in the budget, but I would just preface for my preliminary comments that there are projects that are ongoing, but not all are seasonally dependent. I certainly take the member's comments that one doesn't get everything out the door necessarily optimally, but this is still shaping up to be an incredibly busy season across the Yukon on many projects, whether it's through Highways and Public Works or through Community Services or other departments.

We are certainly excited, and we know that there is a great deal of resilient infrastructure improvement which is occurring both this year and in multiple years to come.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to a more fulsome response in a legislative return or a letter from the minister when he gets that information from his officials.

I am going to take the minister to page 14-11 in the budget, which has a little bit more detail on the transportation capital side. Under Highway Construction, Alaska Highway, there is \$5,450,000 as the budget estimate for this current fiscal year. Can the minister give us a breakdown of the projects in that line item?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I'm excited to stand to speak about the ongoing Alaska Highway safety improvements in the Highways and Public Works Transportation division budget for 2022-23. I believe the member opposite was asking about an item that is showing at \$5.45 million of proposed spending.

It will be as follows or it's proposed — planned — to be as follows: \$4.75 million is the Robert Service Way/Hamilton Boulevard, so between kilometre 1418.7 to kilometre 1419.7 — part of the multi-year program to improve safety and capacity through key segments of the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse. This project is scheduled for 2022-23, which will include the segment between the weigh scales and Lodestar Lane. It will include adding additional lanes northbound and southbound along with improvements to the access to the weigh scales. Roadway improvements will reduce the potential for collisions and increase overall safety, reliability, and efficiency.

Approximately \$300,000 is budgeted for the project between Lodestar Lane and Burns Road. That is kilometre 1422 to kilometre 1424. Improvements will be made to Hillcrest Drive and Burns Road intersections, including signalization, consolidation and closing of adjacent accesses, and construction of a frontage road through the industrial area. Improvements will significantly reduce the potential for collisions and increase overall safety, reliability, and efficiency, and it will provide a safe Alaska Highway crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.

We also have \$250,000 budgeted for a stretch between Centennial Street and Azure Road, kilometre 1430 to kilometre 1432.5. This is part of a multi-year program to improve safety and capacity through key segments of the Alaska Highway corridor through Whitehorse. The scope of this project includes relocation and improvement of Centennial Street, including signalization of 15th Avenue, closing 17th Avenue, and full signalization of Wann Road. The improvements will significantly reduce the potential for collisions and increase overall — once again — safety, reliability, and efficiency. Funding in this budget year of 2022-23 will be used for final design work, environmental permitting, and internal staff time.

Finally, of this \$5.45 million, we also have \$150,000 budgeted for the design and pre-engineering for thaw slump, which is at kilometre 1456. It is a project to rectify sections of highway impacted by permafrost thaw. The project addresses major repairs outside the scope of typical highway maintenance requiring design, permitting, and contract management. Projects include base and sub-base repairs, culvert repairs and/or replacements, restoration of side slopes, ditches, drainage courses, and resurfacing.

With respect to the area around Lodestar Lane, I would just thank the member opposite and the Member for Copperbelt North, as we are all concerned about safety on the Alaska Highway. It was brought to my attention that there were issues with respect to the lights at the south access and the Alaska Highway. The configuration of the lights was perhaps a bit confusing. I thank the member opposite for providing his input and that of his constituents. I was receiving that information as well sort of on a minute-by-minute or hour-by-hour basis. I directed my department to work with the Highways and Public Works department and with Arcrite over the course of the weekend. Having gone up there on Sunday, I believe that the configuration of both the through lanes, the through markers, and the left-turn lanes is now much more intuitive than it was. I certainly thank the member opposite for his and his

colleagues' concern about the safety of both Yukon drivers, Yukon pedestrians, Yukon cyclists, and, of course, the tourists who we hope to be welcoming to the territory very soon.

Mr. Kent: I will take a — just off the top, thank the minister and his officials, as well as the contractor, Arcrite, for going up there on Sunday, I believe it was, and fixing the configuration of those lights. I think it is much improved and hopefully an awful lot safer than what was there before.

So, moving on in that same theme as we did before with the Alaska Highway, I'm looking for a breakdown of the next line item there, the Klondike Highway, at \$42.898 million here. I think the minister mentioned a few projects, like \$12.5 million for the Crooked Creek bridge, which I am assuming is in this budget; \$1.5 million for Moose Creek; and \$2.1 million for McCabe Creek. He said something about kilometre 614 to 636, but I don't think I got a budget number associated with that.

Again, I'm looking for the same sort of breakdown with respect to this almost \$43 million in capital for the Klondike Highway.

Then, just taking one step back to the Alaska Highway, I don't think there was anything that the minister mentioned with respect to the Shakwak portion of the highway, which is from Haines Junction north to Beaver Creek. I'm curious — I know there has been some movement in Washington with respect to funding that, if the minister has an update on that for my colleague, the Member for Kluane. Then, again, I'm just looking for a breakdown of that next line item — the Klondike Highway line item — in the budget.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: On November 15, 2021, the US government passed the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*. This act authorized funding for the reconstruction of segments of the Alaska Highway from the Alaska border at Beaver Creek to Haines Junction and the Haines Road from Haines Junction to Haines, Alaska — the stretch we know locally as “Shakwak”.

Importantly, the act is limited in process details and does not commit any specific dollar amount to the reconstruction project. However, we are now working closely with the federal government, the Alaska government, and our contacts in the US federal system to understand what steps need to be taken to secure the funding for this section of the highway. We worked with the Alaska Department of Transportation and submitted a joint application for a RAISE grant. The RAISE grant is a US merit-based discretionary funding program for infrastructure. The RAISE application proposes highway reconstruction at priority sections of the Alaska Highway impacted most significantly by permafrost between Beaver Creek and Destruction Bay.

We will continue working with the Alaska Department of Transportation to pursue other funding opportunities, including applications to other US discretionary grants for infrastructure projects.

The member opposite will likely know this, but these were discretionary grants. Applications have been made in previous years, but those applications have not yet been accepted — but the applications continue. The specific mention of the US *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* of the Alaska Highway

and Yukon is expected to strengthen the merit of the RAISE grant application compared to the BUILD applications.

As well, with respect to that portion of the Alaska Highway, we completed in 2021 the installation of thermosiphons at Dry Creek, kilometre 1841 of the Alaska Highway near Beaver Creek. The thermosiphons will help to cool the underlying permafrost foundation and stabilize the highway. The thermosiphons project is partially being funded by Transport Canada under the northern transportation adaptation initiative.

I suppose, for the benefit of the Assembly — when I attended the WESTAC conference in Vancouver in early December, I was able to do a presentation on behalf of the Yukon government and the Department of Highways and Public Works. We were able to talk to the congregated delegates about the thermosiphons. I can advise that there was interest outside of the territory with respect to that innovation.

I certainly have heard the Member for Kluane over the course of the last five and a half years in his strong advocacy on behalf of Yukoners — but certainly his constituents — with respect to that Shakwak portion. What I would say is that we are in a better position than we were, but it does seem that these are merit-based applications that have to be submitted on an annual basis.

We will certainly redouble our efforts and we are still more than cautiously optimistic that funding will be identified, but we are not forgetting the portion of the Alaska Highway between Haines Junction, Burwash Landing, Destruction Bay, and Beaver Creek, but we in this Assembly all know that this is one of the most challenging portions of road infrastructure in the territory, based on the fact that it was pushed through rather quickly in 1942 in what was, even at that time, non-permanent permafrost. It will always be a challenge, and I think that — in previous discussions on this topic — it is a big number that would be required for a full reconstruction. Like I said, I have certainly heard the Member for Kluane. I will certainly direct my department to continue making these applications. We hope to meet with success with the infrastructure program out of the United States sooner rather than later.

The Member for Copperbelt South has also asked about the highway construction budget for the Transportation division of the Department of Highways and Public Works budget for 2022-23. There is a budget line item of approximately \$43 million — \$42,898,000. I will just advise about matters that I had not spoken about previously.

The primary one is the north Klondike Highway reconstruction at various locations between kilometre 418 and kilometre 646. That is currently budgeted for \$23,728,000. This road portion of the national trade corridors fund north Klondike program includes, eventually, three bridges, one replacement with a 2.3-kilometre road realignment, and two rehabilitation projects. The replacement is at Crooked Creek, and the rehabilitation projects are at McCabe River and Moose Creek. There will also be reconstruction of seven highway segments totalling 96.5 kilometres from kilometre 416 to kilometre 646 on the north Klondike Highway to a TAC-RAU 90 standard and upgrade said portion.

The existing north Klondike Highway between kilometre 418 and kilometre 646 was originally constructed in the 1970s to accommodate demand loads at the time. That is not adequate for the current demand. The highway was nominally widened in the 1980s; however, the original base structure was not improved at that time. Road strengthening has been undertaken over the past 15 years in an attempt to alleviate accelerated deterioration. However, achieving an adequate structural capacity is beyond the scope of general maintenance activities. So, that's a significant amount of work budgeted at just under \$24 million.

As I made my observations with respect to Crooked Creek past Stewart Crossing and toward Dawson — once again, there has been significant reconfiguring of the highway by the contractors. These are exciting projects and they are improving the safety and resilience of our Yukon highway infrastructure, and these programs will continue for a number of years yet.

What else had I not mentioned?

We also have \$100,000 budgeted for the Hunker Creek culvert replacement. Hunker Creek is located on the north Klondike Highway near Dawson City. It is located in a low-lying area. The road is subject to flooding, particularly during the spring. The proposed improvements will require a grade raise at the highway, along with the construction of the larger multi-plate culvert. The funds identified for this fiscal year are for design.

I mentioned the Crooked Creek bridge replacement, the McCabe River bridge rehabilitation, and the Moose Creek bridge rehabilitation — so, busy times on the north Klondike Highway, which will continue. We're excited about these projects.

I just had some late-breaking information here. The forecasted expenditures for the Shakwak-Alaska Highway area for this year, for both O&M and capital, are estimated at \$4.2 million.

Mr. Kent: I was focused in on that line item for the Klondike Highway. The minister mentioned, I believe, that the number was \$23.7 million. He said that there were some bridges in there. I am just hoping he can explain for us a little bit more. Is that going to be just one large tender for reconstruction, or does it include the bridges?

I guess that the other question is, when you drop down a couple of lines in the capital vote to Bridges — Numbered Highways — so, the Crooked Creek bridge and the McCabe Creek bridge rehabilitation — is that included in the Klondike Highway line item? Or is it located in that Bridges — Numbered Highways/Secondary Roads line item that is down below just a little bit? I am just trying to get a sense for where these projects are budgeted here.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

Yes, those three bridges — the Crooked Creek bridge replacement, the McCabe River bridge rehabilitation, and the Moose Creek bridge rehabilitation — are all contained within the Klondike Highway budget.

Mr. Kent: I guess that the other question that I asked — and I think the minister mentioned \$23.7 million for a fairly

large stretch of highway — is that all going to be tendered this year? Will it be one tender or will there be a number of tenders for that specific amount? Again, I think that is the number that the minister gave us a couple of answers ago for one of the portions of the road that — the Klondike Highway, pardon me — that is contained in this year's budget.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you for the question from the member opposite.

So, I confirmed with my department that there are two road construction contracts of approximately \$10 million. One is from kilometre 546 to kilometre 576, and one is also for approximately \$10 million from kilometre 613 to kilometre 646. I can confirm with my officials, but it is going to be — a lot of the work that I set out in my prior response, I am advised, with respect to those — that those tenders are issued, but have not been confirmed — have not been contracted yet. Yes, that is the most up-to-date information that I have with respect to that portion of the Klondike Highway national trade corridors fund reconstruction project.

Mr. Kent: So, just to confirm, the minister said that those two tenders are now on the Bids and Tenders website. They are open but haven't closed or been awarded; I was hoping that he can confirm that.

Then, I wanted to move down to the Bridges — Numbered Highways/Secondary Roads line item at \$10.973 million. I have some specific questions about a couple of bridge projects. I'm curious about the Nisutlin Bay bridge. Our understanding — pardon me, my understanding — in conversations with the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin that May 4 is a potential date for whether or not to award that project. I'm curious if the minister can provide us with an update on that one.

Then further along the highway toward Watson Lake, there's the Big Creek bridge. The signage there indicates that it was to have been completed in the fall of 2021; however, in conversations with my colleague, the Member for Watson Lake, who travels that stretch of highway at least twice a week, she said that it obviously hasn't been completed yet. So, we're looking for an update on a revised completion date so that she can share that with her constituents who travel that highway. The new structure is in place, but the old bridge is still being used, and there's still, I believe, a significant amount of work that needs to be finished on the Big Creek bridge, which is between Rancheria and Watson Lake.

So, thank you very much, Deputy Chair. Again, I'm looking for an idea with respect to the Nisutlin Bay bridge and the timing of an award and the Big Creek bridge completion and if there's any money in this budget for completion of that project.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: In relation to the question about the Big Creek bridge replacement, which is at kilometre 1042, approximately 60 kilometres west of Watson Lake, the existing bridge will be replaced over a two-year span and will include — as I am sure the Member for Watson Lake is observing fairly regularly — road realignment on either side of the bridge, improving safety. I am advised that this work is scheduled to be completed by the end of September of this year.

With respect to the Nisutlin Bay bridge, the member opposite will be familiar with some of this material, but I will answer the question.

The tender was posted on October 13, 2021 for two pre-qualified contractors and closed on February 3, 2022. Proposal evaluation and additional steps are in progress. This is taking some extra time, given the complexity of the project. To allow the parties time, we have extended the irrevocability period for an additional number of days — 30 calendar days — until, as the member opposite correctly indicated, May 4 of this year.

As I have also indicated to the House previously during this spring session, bid prices have come in higher than anticipated due to current global circumstances and the high premium on steel and other materials. We are exploring options to nevertheless proceed with this project. Of course, this is a multi-year story, going back to the previous Yukon Liberal Party government and the previous Yukon Party government before that, so I am sure that there is a lot of will to try to get this done. The contract is a high priority. However, we must also do our due diligence to evaluate whether we are making the right decision on behalf of Yukon taxpayers before we proceed with this award. Discussions are ongoing. May 4 is soon, so we will know.

As I indicated in a prior answer, this is an incredibly important part of Yukon transportation infrastructure, and, as I also indicated previously, the Alaska Highway has become, perhaps, more important than in years gone by, based on geopolitical considerations. It will certainly be of interest to our Alaskan friends and neighbours that we maintain our infrastructure to a certain level. This is one of the largest — if not the largest — spans across water on the Alaska Highway in Yukon. I may not be correct on that, but it appears like it is a pretty big piece of infrastructure. So, we certainly hope that this project will proceed and provide a benefit to the Village of Teslin, to the Teslin Tlingit Council, and to Yukoners in general.

Mr. Kent: There was some additional information that I was seeking in my previous question and I don't think the minister answered. The first one was with respect to the north Klondike Highway and two tenders that he had mentioned. One of my colleagues did send me a note saying that those two tenders are not currently on the Bids and Tenders system. I am just curious if the minister can tell us when he expects them to potentially go on there. With respect to the Nisutlin Bay bridge, can the minister tell us how much of this \$10,973,000 for this year's budget estimate is earmarked for the Nisutlin Bay bridge?

Also, back to the Big Creek bridge for a second — I did ask if there was any money in this year's budget for completing that. Can the minister let us know if that project is behind a year, as the signs suggest and, if so, what the reason might be for that project being approximately a year late in completion?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: With respect to the Big Creek bridge replacement, the budgeted amount for fiscal year 2022-23 — out of this portion of the capital budget for the Transportation division of Highways and Public Works — is \$2,333,000. I

inquired as to the likely reason for the delay. The likely reason for the delay is supply chain issues, but, of course, that is a catch-all. I will return to the member opposite in a return as to how this Big Creek bridge replacement project has unfolded. I should hopefully have an answer in the spring or summer of this year. We will get back to the member opposite and, by extension, to the Member for Watson Lake.

With respect to the other two contracts, the information that I have now is that one of the \$10-million projects for kilometre 546 to kilometre 576 of the north Klondike Highway was awarded to Sidhu & Sons Trucking. That contract started on April 30, 2021, so we are actually in year 2 of that project. The second project, also in the range of \$10 million, was the project for the rehabilitation of kilometre 613 through kilometre 646. It was awarded to Cobalt Contracting in year 1, and that is also now a two-year project.

With respect to the searchability of these projects, I am advised that these projects are still listed in Bids and Tenders, but there is a drawdown tab that says “Awarded”. It is under a tab indicating “Awarded”. It is Sidhu for the first contract and Cobalt for the second contract, which is consistent with what I observed when I was travelling on the highway last fall.

Mr. Kent: I guess just the one final question that remains is: How much in this year’s budget is designated for the Nisutlin Bay bridge under that Bridges — Numbered Highways/Secondary Roads?

I think it would, perhaps just in the interest of time — it might be helpful if the minister would commit to providing us with a breakdown of those line items with respect to the Klondike Highway and the Alaska Highway — if he could just give us, in a legislative return or in writing, a breakdown of the projects and the estimates associated with them. That would be helpful.

I do have some questions with respect to the Major Projects line item in capital, which is \$10.8 million. Is that entire expenditure going to be done with respect to the Gateway project? Is that where I find the Gateway funding, in that line item?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The first question was with respect to the Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement/interim repair. The current budget is \$4.34 million. Briefly, for the record, the Nisutlin Bay bridge was constructed in 1953 by the Department of National Defence and is located in the Village of Teslin. The bridge is 584 metres long with a steel grid deck and seven steel through-truss spans. Interim repairs to the stringers were started in 2016. Work will continue until the bridge is replaced.

Work undertaken in 2022-23 will focus on design, permit, and geotechnical for the replacement of the bridge. Stay tuned for May 4 as to what might occur going forward.

The other question was with respect to Gateway — yes, the \$10.8 million is budgeted for the Carmacks bypass project for this year — and then, finally, my department will get back to you with respect to a list of projects, as requested.

Deputy Chair: Would members like 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.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 55, Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 204, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2022-23*. Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Kent: Just before the break, we were talking about the Major Projects line item, which the minister confirmed was for Gateway, and he specifically said it was for the Carmacks bypass, so I’m assuming that is the entire amount; however, I think that, last fall, there was a stretch of highway between Ross River and Faro on the Campbell Highway that went through the environmental assessment process and received, I believe, a favourable decision document. I am kind of curious why that project is not included in the Gateway funding that is in the 2022-23 budget.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: With respect to this project between Faro and Ross River — in April 2020, a project agreement for this component of the Robert Campbell Highway was signed with the Ross River Dena Council. Right-of-way clearing contracts have been awarded for this component of the Robert Campbell Highway. This was a direct-award contract to a Ross River Dena Council citizen-owned company.

The Yukon government will continue to work with the Ross River Dena Council to implement the project agreement, and as the member opposite has indicated, it has been assessed — the section of the project, which is kilometre 363.6 to 367.5, has been assessed by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, which will allow upgrades to proceed.

From YG’s perspective, we certainly want this project to proceed, but it is contingent upon reaching a satisfactory project agreement with the Ross River Dena Council. I am more than happy to engage with the Ross River Dena Council this late spring and summer to try to move this matter forward, but certainly recognizing that it is unlikely that substantive work would happen this summer.

Mr. Kent: So, in the session briefing notes from last fall, it does say that portion of the highway — start date and estimated timelines — construction on kilometre 363 to 367 would be done in the summer of 2022. The minister has now said that is not going to be the case. Does he have an idea of when he anticipates this work being done?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: From the department’s perspective, we view this as an important part of infrastructure improvement. We are prepared to move on this matter as soon as possible, but certainly being respectful of the government-to-government relationships and that there will have to be an acceptable project agreement in place. As I said in my previous response, I am open to and will engage with new Ross River Dena Council leadership this summer.

I know that, last summer, in anticipation — well, in the ultimate completion of the project agreement with the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, obviously out of Carmacks in furtherance of the Carmacks bypass project, it required — one had to roll up one's sleeves, and there were two or three negotiations that took place at that point. Ultimately, there was an agreement entered into that will bring demonstrable benefit to Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation citizens and was acceptable to the leadership there.

All to say that these agreements — I'm just finishing my first year in this position, but anecdotally, as I observe this process, it does require some work. You have to develop relationships and there has to be good will, but there certainly are funds available for valuable infrastructure projects, whether it's the small portion of the Robert Campbell Highway between Faro and Ross River or in Carmacks or some of the road infrastructure in the Liard River Basin — there are two projects there. I will also travel to Watson Lake and see if we can try to move those files forward, because I think there would be demonstrable benefit to the Town of Watson Lake and to the Liard First Nation, as well.

These agreements take some time and energy. I'm prepared to put the time in. I'm prepared to direct my officials to do so, because we were able to get this agreement in place for the Carmacks bypass.

Would I like some of these projects to move more quickly? Absolutely. In the approximately one year that I have been in this position, this does appear to require some work. I'm not afraid of the work, but we do want to move these projects forward if at all possible.

Mr. Kent: In April 2020, there was a project agreement for a Robert Campbell Highway component. This portion between Ross River and Faro was signed with the Ross River Dena Council, but further down in last fall's briefing note, it said that the Yukon government would continue to work with the Ross River Dena Council to implement the project agreement. Perhaps the minister could just explain to me and explain to Yukoners what that initial project agreement, signed in April 2020, was. It appears that it does not allow for the projects to proceed without further negotiations and agreements in place. I am just hoping the minister can provide some clarity around that.

While we are on that topic, as I said and as the minister confirmed, the kilometre 363 to kilometre 367 piece went through YESAA; however, that entire project is from kilometre 355 to kilometre 414. I am curious when the balance of that project will be put through the YESAA process, aside from those four kilometres that are currently approved.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: With respect to the original agreements, I will use my words carefully — with respect to both agreements, the Robert Campbell project agreement was signed and includes training, employment, and business opportunities. It includes a requirement to establish a committee and procurement opportunities. So, since then, we have been working collaboratively with the Ross River Dena Council to establish membership of the committee and to implement the agreement before construction can proceed.

The agreements in principle for the — they were agreements — six project agreements — and you have to, I suppose, put meat on the bones, so that is what happened in Carmacks last summer. There had to be a quantifiable number of training hours, whether it was for heavy machinery, mechanics, grader operators, or whatever the agreement ultimately was. So, you have six agreements that will always require further discussions to have an acceptable community development agreement going forward.

The member opposite then had a question as to why the additional portion of the Robert Campbell Highway hasn't proceeded or doesn't have an agreement. I am advised that YG worked with the Ross River Dena Council on the YESAB application with respect to the four-kilometre stretch, but has not done so with respect to the longer stretch, but once again, we are certainly prepared to do so.

The agreements that have been signed over the course of the last four or five years are framework agreements, but ultimately, it is cliché, of course, but the devil is in the details, and we saw that last summer. As I indicated also, we are prepared to roll up our sleeves and to reach acceptable community development agreements, or community-development-type agreements, with the impacted First Nations for their benefit, and that is exactly what happened with the Carmacks agreement.

So, that is my understanding — that to move the other five agreements forward, a similar process will have to occur as occurred in Carmacks last summer.

Mr. Kent: Just to finish one question with respect, I guess, to the Gateway projects, are those agreements available publicly, and if so, can the minister direct us to where we can find them?

Subsequent to that, I want to switch gears for a second and ask a question.

I'll take the minister to budget page 14-10, the O&M Vote 55-1, down to Transportation Maintenance. So, when you look across, in 2020-21, the actual amount for Transportation Maintenance was \$49.23 million. Then the forecasted amount for the 2021-22 fiscal year was \$48.8 million, and then the estimate for this current budget year drops off to \$46.578 million.

I'm wondering why that estimate is so much lower than the actual from a couple years ago and what was forecasted to be spent in the last fiscal year and if there has been any analysis done by the department on what the spike in fuel costs will do to the Transportation Maintenance budget for this current fiscal year.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I think that we have three questions. The first question was with respect to the Transportation Maintenance branch. The 2021-22 budget was originally \$45.375 million. There was a supplementary budget request in that fiscal year, based on the washouts — and quite a number of avalanches occurred in the White Pass area, and there were some other unforeseen demands on the budget. As a consequence of that, the actual budget request for fiscal 2021-22 was \$48,814,000. Then, as I think the Member for Copperbelt South indicated, the budget request for 2022-23 is

now \$46.578 million. So, from the original knowable demands on this branch, this represents an increase of \$1.203 million, but, of course, if there are acts of God or other unforeseen circumstances that occur during the course of this spring — we haven't quite had that yet, but it might still be a little bit early for some of the possible washouts, but I will knock on wood and hope, of course, that this doesn't occur.

From core budget to core budget, it's \$45,375,000 to \$46,578,000, but I am conceding that was a supplementary budget request last fiscal year for the washouts, avalanches, and some other unforeseen needs.

What's next? With respect to the original project agreements, we are advised so far that they are bilateral, government-to-government agreements — which, of course, they are — that are presumptively protected and would require review from both parties prior to being released. That's where that is for now.

The final question was with respect to fuel costs. The spike in fuel costs is relatively recent, but nevertheless, we are actively monitoring those fuel costs, and we will adjust throughout the year accordingly.

As was the case with respect to the Transportation Maintenance branch budget, once again, if there were persistent higher fuel costs and there was a request where it was required to meet the demands of all elements of the service delivery of Highways and Public Works, which is a department that uses a lot of fuel — in a given year, I would be kind of interested to know how much fuel we use — I would receive advice from my department. There may potentially have to be an additional request if some of these cost pressures are persistent.

Mr. Kent: Although I still have quite a number of questions, I do want to turn the floor over to the critic from the New Democratic Party. This will be my final question, and hopefully we will get a chance to get the minister back before the end of the Sitting here in a couple of days.

It's with respect to the airport projects. Flipping back over to the capital side, there is \$51.333 million estimated for capital projects on various airports. I think that the minister has identified \$20 million for the parallel runway. I'm curious if he can give us a breakdown on what the balance is for.

Then I'm just looking for an update from the minister on the restaurant facilities at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. There was a press release put out, I think, the year before the pandemic that there were some renovations being done to those and that there would be a new operator in place that fall. Obviously, that would have been the fall of 2019, I think. In 2020 when the pandemic hit, that would have certainly curtailed those operations. I'm just curious if the minister can give us an update on when we can expect a restaurant or licensed facility back in the Whitehorse airport and then a breakdown of that capital line item.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The first question was with respect to the Whitehorse airport food services, and I certainly agree with the member opposite that we would love to see food services at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport sooner than later, but just briefly, Yukon's aviation — negotiations to procure food services at the Whitehorse airport were put on

hold during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the removal of the state of emergency on March 18, 2022, the department has reached out to the highest ranked proponent for the negotiated request for proposals for food services to inquire if they are interested in resuming negotiations.

As the member opposite will likely know, some of the restaurant space was repurposed during the COVID global pandemic to satisfy requirements as a testing facility to satisfy Transport Canada regulatory requirements, so it certainly had an alternate use at the time, but a lot of great work has been done at the Whitehorse airport, and this certainly would be an important addition to an airport that has been modernized and revitalized on a lot of fronts. Of course, food services is a fairly important element of a mid-sized Canadian airport.

The other question was with respect to the various airport projects. So, the total budget, as indicated, is \$51.33 million. The lion's share of this funding is earmarked for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. That includes approximately \$46 million in this year for the Whitehorse airport runway improvements, the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport apron panels, the Whitehorse airport site improvements, and the Whitehorse airport taxiway improvements — so great news there — in order to ensure the redundancy of the airport for 737 service, which we hope to have established very soon.

I certainly thank the federal government for understanding the infrastructure needs and requirements of the Yukon and being very supportive of our proposals.

There is \$400,000 for various Dawson airport projects, there is \$400,000 for community airport and aerodrome improvement projects, and a total budget of \$4.441 million for Yukon-wide aerodromes. Work in 2022-23 could include: electrical upgrades; lighting and navigational aid purchases and installation; signage; grounds upkeep and upgrade; vegetation control; installation of wildlife control fencing; dust control product and application; runway, taxiway, and apron upgrades; and field service upgrades.

As we know, the certified airports in the Yukon are Whitehorse, Dawson City, Mayo, Watson Lake, and Old Crow.

Great news on the aviation front and the projects at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. It will be a busy place for the next few years in order to continue to improve our aviation infrastructure as the integral hub of air transportation for the Yukon.

Ms. Tredger: I'll start by thanking the officials for being here with us today and helping with the answers. I appreciated the briefing very much, so thank you.

I'm looking forward to a back-and-forth with the minister. I am hoping, since we have limited time, that we could have quite efficient back-and-forth, and if I need further background information, I can ask.

While we're talking about aviation in the Yukon, I'm wondering which communities currently have airstrips that accommodate the medevac plane — I think that requires a fixed-wing aircraft accommodation — and if any of the work the minister has just mentioned is going to change or, I guess,

add new communities to that list of communities that can be accessed by the medevac plane.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: In order to expedite the back-and-forth, as the Member for Whitehorse Centre has requested, which is fair — I would say with respect to this specific question — and the member opposite will know that the provision of medevac services is generally under the ambit of Community Services. We can get that information back to the member with respect to the current airstrips that are a service for medevacs. By way of quick background, Community Services is the program delivery department. If there is a request for an update to infrastructure or to consider a different airstrip or even an airport — I would believe that the certified airports are medevac-capable — that request would then come to Highways and Public Works. We would receive the request.

With respect to an update regarding either adding infrastructure or an update to infrastructure, there would be a budgeting exercise and some policy work that would be done. Community Services delivers the medevac services. We maintain and update the infrastructure.

Ms. Tredger: I guess that answer means that there hasn't been a request from Community Services for any upgrades to airports. Perhaps the minister can confirm that.

I would also like to follow up on what my colleague was asking about — signal lights on the Alaska Highway in the Whitehorse area. It was really great to hear that the minister was able to respond very quickly to the issues around the signal at the south access.

Earlier this year, the issue of accessibility of crosswalks and signals at the new Hillcrest Drive and Burns Road intersections on the Alaska Highway came up. I understand that there have been some changes, but in particular, it is still difficult or impossible for people in electric wheelchairs to use. I am wondering what measures have been taken to fix this, and were people with mobility issues consulted in those upgrades?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: With respect to the lights at Hillcrest near the airport, I certainly have heard this matter for a while and I am advised that, in the interim, the buttons have been moved. There is additional asphalt that was laid, but, certainly, I'm hearing the member opposite — that it might still represent a barrier to someone in an electric wheelchair. I'm certainly open to receiving the specific request from the member opposite. Let's get it right; let's make it accessible.

There was consultation with respect to that intersection. Was it expansive enough? Did it include specifically canvassing mobility-challenged persons? I don't know the answer to that question today, but I would urge the Member for Whitehorse Centre — and in fact, all MLAs are quite good about asking the Department of Highways and Public Works to improve our infrastructure and to improve safety.

I gave credit to the members for Copperbelt South and for Copperbelt North for alerting the department — as the Member for Whitehorse Centre also indicated — very quickly as to some intuitiveness issues with respect to the lights at the south access and Alaska Highway. I look forward to receiving the request from the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Although it seems like some attempts have been made with respect to the filling in of asphalt and the repositioning of a button, if it's still not working, please advise me, and I will advise the department, and we will try to make that right.

Certainly, mobility-challenged persons should be consulted. I'm sure it was a public consultation, but whether you were actually effectively identifying or reaching out, I'm sure we can always do better.

Ms. Tredger: Thank you to the minister for that. I support and encourage consulting the people who are most affected by our decisions and doing that very proactively. I hope that, going forward, as decisions are made that are going to affect people with mobility issues on accessing our infrastructure, that they are consulted.

I wanted to ask about water delivery in Old Crow. Has the minister been able to ensure adequate staffing?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I know that this has been an ongoing matter. Highways and Public Works and Community Services have attempted to be as absolutely responsive as possible, but perhaps, just for the record, I will indicate my most recent communications with the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin. In this correspondence, I have offered to meet with the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin after the session to determine whether the service provided has been adequate or whether the MLA can provide input as to her experiences.

Anyway, this was the information that was provided on March 16 to the MLA for Old Crow. Highways and Public Works is working to ensure water delivery and sewer services in Old Crow are carried out as required by the community. Currently, the two full-time staff are supported by a third HPW staff person who assists the water-truck driver in completing deliveries. In addition, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation government has made available a fourth person to assist when necessary.

This level of staffing support is in addition to the full-time remote monitoring operational adjustments and technical assistance available to the local operators and periodic repairs and maintenance visits to the Old Crow water treatment plant by Community Services staff.

The Yukon government has advertised twice for a water services position in Old Crow; however, no applications were received. HPW and Community Services continue to work with Vuntut Gwitchin on potential long-term solutions with regard to hiring and to ensuring water and septic services are provided in Old Crow. In the meantime, Highways and Public Works is providing support from other camps to assist staff in Old Crow and to prevent any service disruptions.

And then I also — it just twigged that there was even more up-to-date information that I had received with respect to this. So, there was a Dawson employee in Old Crow from February 27 to March 7 helping out. The VGFN, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, is providing citizens — one of whom has worked for us previously and we have been told is working out well at the present time. The superintendent asked if anyone additionally needed to be sent up and was told by the local employee that it was not necessary.

We have been working with VGFN to find someone to work in this job. Attempts have been made, but I'm not sure if the member opposite's information now, in the middle-to-late April, is different. It certainly — I think a combination of HPW and Community Services is certainly attempting — as recently as April 11, there was an open house in Old Crow for staffing. I assume that is for this position and potentially other positions. Efforts have certainly been made to provide consistent service, and we are liaising and communicating with staff on the ground in the community of Old Crow.

Ms. Tredger: I thank the minister for that answer.

I want to talk about the new Whistle Bend school. One of the commitments in *Our Clean Future* — I believe it is C5 — is that there will be detailed climate change risk assessments for all major community infrastructure projects over \$10 million that are built or funded by the Government of Yukon. So, I certainly think that this qualifies.

I am wondering if the minister can table for the House the climate risk assessment that was done for Whistle Bend school. I am also curious if any assessment was done on the greenhouse gas emissions that will be produced by the building and operation of the school and if any assessment was done of that.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Sorry, I missed your second question.

Ms. Tredger: I'm happy to repeat. So, the two questions were: I assume that a climate change risk assessment was done, and I am wondering if that can be tabled for us, and I am wondering if there was any assessment done of the greenhouse gas emissions produced by the building and operation of this facility and if that could be shared with us.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I believe that there are two questions. The first one is with respect to the climate risk assessment. I have just been sort of given a chronology as to the planning and the tender. The planning and the tender of this project predated this commitment. So, that's where that is. However, we are conducting climate risk assessments of all major transportation infrastructure and major building projects above \$10 million now. Climate change risk assessments are a key part of adaptation and planning to determine the infrastructure's vulnerability to climate change and use that information to incorporate adaptation measures into the design to mitigate climate change impacts.

The climate risk assessment is required when applying for funding from federal funding programs, such as the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund. A climate change vulnerability study of Yukon's road transportation network will inform the development of standards and specifications.

Going forward, some examples of climate risk assessments that are underway or planned are as follows: some of the Alaska Highway rehabilitation projects; the Carmacks bypass; Klondike Highway upgrades; the Whitehorse airport maintenance facility project; and the morgue and the coroner's office project.

The second question is regarding the GHG calculations with respect to the Whistle Bend school. I can advise as follows: The greenhouse gas emission calculations are not available yet, but we will receive them. The contractor will

submit energy models as the design progresses, and we can provide information as it becomes available.

We look forward to working with the contractor to receive that information. As the Member for Whitehorse Centre has accurately pointed out, there is a commitment in *Our Clean Future* for our government to conduct those climate risk assessments for the major transportation infrastructure projects and major building projects — about \$10 million going forward.

Ms. Tredger: So, I am trying to wrap my head around how this major building project — which is tens of millions of dollars — went forward without any assessment of how it will be impacted by climate change or what its effect on our emissions will be.

I would point the minister back to a petition that I tabled earlier this Sitting that requested that government do these assessments — both the climate change risk assessment, as well as the effect on our emissions assessments — and make those public. I cannot think of a more compelling example of why this is needed than right now.

How can we ask the public to hold the government to account when we don't know what's happening? As it turns out, it is not happening. In the last 18 months, give or take, since *Our Clean Future* was released, this still hasn't happened.

That said, I know that there is work going on in the department that I do want to ask about. I understand that there is a new position in the Department of Highways and Public Works to track Yukon government greenhouse gas emissions. When will that work start and when will it be reported on?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Just to be clear with respect to a lot of our projects but specifically to the Whistle Bend school project, the statement of requirement in the contract is that the *National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings*, also known as the "NECB", developed by the National Research Council Canada and Natural Resources Canada as part of a commitment to improving the energy efficiency of Canadian buildings and reducing greenhouse gas emissions — the statement of requirement, with respect to Whistle Bend school, is that the construction of that school exceeds those requirements by 35 percent. So, in that respect, we are alive to — we were alive to climate change and building efficiency and considerations of reducing greenhouse gases prior to the policy being enacted.

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

Acting Chair (Ms. Clarke): It has been moved by the Member for Riverdale North that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Acting Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes 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 Acting Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Ms. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 204, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2022-23*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Acting 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 the Government House Leader 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 5:28 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled April 26, 2022:

35-1-45

Yukon Law Foundation Annual Report — November 1, 2019 to October 31, 2020 (McPhee)

35-1-46

Yukon Law Foundation Annual Report — November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021 (McPhee)

35-1-47

Second Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (April 2022) (Dixon)

The following legislative returns were tabled April 26, 2022:

35-1-46

Response to Written Question No. 15 re: Investing in Canada infrastructure program (Mostyn)

35-1-47

Response to Written Question No. 16 re: Mayo reservoir project (Mostyn)

35-1-48

Response to Written Question No. 17 re: Carmacks arena (Mostyn)

35-1-49

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. White related to general debate on Vote 3, Education, in Bill No. 204, *First Appropriation Act 2022-23* — Education Appeal Tribunal (McLean)

The following document was filed April 26, 2022:

35-1-66

Workers' Advocate Office 2021 Annual Report (McPhee)

Written notice was given of the following motion April 26, 2022:

Motion No. 413

Re: appointment to the Yukon Human Rights Commission (McPhee)