



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

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Number 73

2nd Session

34th Legislature

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## HANSARD

Thursday, March 22, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

# YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## 2018 Spring Sitting

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

### CABINET MINISTERS

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

### GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

#### Yukon Liberal Party

<b>Ted Adel</b>	Copperbelt North
<b>Paolo Gallina</b>	Porter Creek Centre
<b>Don Hutton</b>	Mayo-Tatchun

### OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

#### Yukon Party

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

### THIRD PARTY

#### New Democratic Party

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

### LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
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Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
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Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly**  
**Whitehorse, Yukon**  
**Thursday, March 22, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.**

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order.  
 At this time, we will proceed with prayers.

*Prayers*

## DAILY ROUTINE

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

## TRIBUTES

### In recognition of Canada Water Week

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I rise today to pay tribute to Canada Water Week, an annual celebration that coincides with World Water Day on March 22. I would like to thank the Government of Yukon employees who have worked so diligently on this initiative and who have joined us here today: Tyler Williams, Holly Goulding, Brendan Mulligan and Heather Jirousek. This year's theme is "Nature for Water" and explores how we can use nature to overcome the water challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We all know that water is one of our most precious natural resources. It is vital for life. This very morning, 13-year-old Autumn Peltier, an indigenous youth from Manitoulin Island, gave a very moving presentation to the United Nations. As part of the Water Week celebration, the Water Resources branch and other departments are working to educate youth about natural water systems and their importance.

For the past several years, scientists and researchers from the Government of Yukon have travelled to schools around the territory, giving interactive water presentations to students. Canada Water Week is the catalyst for this initiative, but the presentations span March through May. This year's educators have already delivered five water presentations in Pelly Crossing and Mayo to a variety of grades. Later this month, this visit will reach out to Carcross to teach children about water and I am looking forward to future presentations in other Yukon communities and other Yukon schools. Teaching youth about the importance of water for all living things helps us instill the principles of environmental stewardship and conservation that they will carry forward into adulthood.

I want to conclude by saying that yesterday we had a really good debate in the Legislature around climate change — the impacts and effects it is having — and water is a significant part of that conversation that we should always be aware of.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize World Water Day. In 1993, the United Nations declared March 22 as a day to recognize access to safe water as a universal right. This year, the theme of the World Water Day, as the minister has said is, "Nature

for Water" — exploring nature-based solutions to the water challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As suggested by this year's theme, nature-based solutions are all around us. We have the potential to solve many of the world's water challenges — restoring and protecting wetlands, replanting forests and reconnecting rivers to flood plains are excellent examples of rebalancing the water cycle in a natural way. We are incredibly fortunate here in the Yukon to have access to freshwater throughout our beautiful territory.

It is precious to our ecosystem, to our traditions, to our recreation and to our well-being.

As fortunate as we are to be surrounded by pristine lakes and rivers, we are not immune to water pressures. We have faced boil water advisories and water level changes and challenges here at home. Acknowledging that we have a duty to act as a steward to our environment is important. We must remember that in order to maintain the balance of our ecosystem and ensure our resources remain plentiful, we must continue to respect our northern environment. We can all make a difference to ensure that our waters remain pristine and that our natural surroundings continue to thrive.

I do want to thank all those staff who work in the Water Resources branch. I had the opportunity as the previous minister to work and do some stuff with them. They are very dedicated.

Let's be active, conscious and vigilant.

**Ms. White:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to acknowledge today as World Water Day. Water is everything. Plants, animals and people all require water to survive and to thrive.

2018 marks the year that a major city with a population nearing four million people may not be able to turn on their tap for water. I would suggest that many people in Canada take water for granted. We turn on the tap and out pours clean, drinkable water. We don't think twice about using this clean water to flush toilets, water grass or wash cars — that is, unless, of course, you live on one of the 90 or so Canadian reserves that are under drinking water advisories. In some of these cases, these communities haven't had access to safe drinking water for decades.

Cape Town, South Africa, a sophisticated city that, in 2015, won international kudos for its water management strategy is on the verge of Day Zero — the day they run out of water. Although the term "Day Zero" has been scrapped in what appears to be a political decision to limit the negative impact on tourism and investment in Cape Town, the fact remains that they are on the verge of having the taps run dry. It is a brutal example of the extreme changes brought about by climate change. The decision to avoid the language of Day Zero has left many people confused. The situation hasn't changed on the ground. The dam levels are still dropping. There has been almost no rain, and the City of Cape Town says that they are still in the midst of the worst drought they have experienced.

Canadians use an average of 329 litres of water a day, second only to the United States and twice as much as

Europeans. If you live in Cape Town, there is now a legal amount of water each individual is allowed to use each day. It's for everything from showers to laundry, drinking water, cooking, pets, and flushing toilets. Imagine eight flats of bottled water — and not big bottles, but the standard 500-millilitre variety. Together, they're just under 50 litres, and that is the daily water allowance for a person in Cape Town. The Canadian equivalent is 27 flats of water.

Why does this matter, other than the obvious reason? It matters because, according to the green think-tank, the Centre for Science and Environment, at least 200 cities globally are facing a serious water crisis. Currently, some 400 million people live in cities with a perpetual water shortage, and that number is expected to go up to one billion by 2050. Ten other major cities on the planet are facing their own Day Zero: Kabul, Afghanistan; Karachi, Pakistan; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Beijing, China; Mexico City, Mexico; Sana'a, Yemen; Nairobi, Kenya; Istanbul, Turkey; and São Paulo, Brazil.

If you thought oil, gold and diamonds were the most valuable resources we had in Canada, I would urge you to add water to that list. In North America, water conservation needs to be something that we not only talk about frequently, but we need to take bold action to protect this vital resource. Across Canada, communities are standing up to corporate water-bottling giants that want to tap and own and sell our most precious commons, that of water.

The architects of Yukon's *Umbrella Final Agreement* anticipated the challenges of sustaining our water now and into the future, and, together, you and I will be held to the principles of respect for our most precious natural resource — that is, of course, water.

**Speaker:** Introduction of visitors.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Hanson:** I would ask the members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in welcoming Paul Johnston, first vice-president of the Yukon Employees Union, to the gallery.

*Applause*

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I would like to, at this moment, introduce the staff from the Department of Environment. I had already mentioned their names in my presentation so I won't go through that again, but I just want to thank you today and acknowledge you for all your great work throughout the year. Today, I just want to honour you for being here and for the great work.

*Applause*

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

## TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I have for tabling the 2017 annual report from the Workers' Advocate Office.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Today, I have for tabling a legislative return in response to questions posed by the Member for Watson Lake on March 15, 2018, regarding emergency medical services in Watson Lake.

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I have for tabling today a response to the Member for Watson Lake to a question that was posed on Monday, March 19.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to immediately inform Yukon employees regarding the change in the delivery of the employee assistance program to:

(1) provide clear information regarding transition planning between the current service providers and the new employee assistance program providers; and

(2) ensure an uninterrupted and smooth transition from current service providers to the new employee assistance program providers.

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

THAT this House urges the Liberal government to amend Bill No. 15, *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act*, to:

(1) remove provisions that would grow the size of government by seeing government expand into the retail and distribution of cannabis; and

(2) replace those sections of Bill No. 15 with wording that allows Yukon businesses to become licensed to sell and distribute cannabis in accordance with federal and territorial laws.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use the protection area provisions provided in the *Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* to protect and manage sensitive areas identified over the last six years from off-road vehicle use, before the spring of 2019.

**Speaker:** Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

**QUESTION PERIOD****Question re: Children in care**

**Ms. McLeod:** Here is what we know: The Minister of Health and Social Services became aware of serious allegations of abuse happening in group homes at least six weeks ago. On Monday evening, the minister found out that the CBC was going to publish a story detailing these allegations, so she rushed out a press release to try to protect the government politically. So far, the minister has refused to tell us what happened in between those two periods of time.

Will the minister tell us what she has done to address these serious allegations over the last six weeks?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** What I would like to say right now — and I'll repeat what I said yesterday — is really to acknowledge the young people who had come forward to issue some concerns. We have a process that is evolving. We took immediate action. We are looking into the issues and really, at this point, I think that anything that comes to our attention with such serious allegations and concerns we take very, very seriously, and we will take immediate action. That is exactly what we have done. With respect to confidentiality, we did not make anything public at that time, as we were doing our due process.

The media release had nothing to do with our action as a government. We have an obligation, and we will follow through on our obligation.

**Ms. McLeod:** This morning, we learned from the CBC that, after their story aired yesterday morning, the RCMP are now looking into these allegations. Why did the minister not notify the RCMP about these serious allegations when she became aware of them six weeks ago?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** The health, safety and wellness of our youth in our care is clearly our top priority. The concerns that we have heard are serious and troubling. We have triggered a process. What happens with the RCMP is their process. They will go through their process as they have established it. We will go through our process to ensure that we protect the children in our care. We have done that and we will look into every serious allegation that comes to our attention. The results of that are to ensure that we take a broad view and a broad look at all of the concerns that are brought to our attention.

I am very pleased right now to say that it takes a lot of bravery for folks to come forward. I know that youth perhaps have not been heard in the past. I want them to know — and I want Yukoners to know — that we are listening. I am hearing, as a minister, all of the concerns that are being brought forward, and we are taking this very seriously and we are acting on it.

**Ms. McLeod:** The Minister of Health and Social Services has known about these serious allegations of abuse within group homes for six weeks and has done nothing. It wasn't until the Liberals found out that the CBC was doing a news story that they decided to launch a review to try to protect their political hides. Instead of taking immediate action to protect the youth who came forward, the minister appears to have done nothing.

Mr. Speaker, what has the minister done to address these cases of alleged abuse that she heard about? To be clear, I am talking about these cases of abuse that she learned about six weeks ago. What has she done to address these specific cases to ensure that the children in these group homes are safe?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I want to say this afternoon that the health, safety and wellness of our youth in care is our top priority. This afternoon, it seems to me that there is a shedding of crocodile tears. In the last two weeks, we have heard our colleagues on the opposition benches questioning the creation of a new group home for our youth. We have heard the media reports undermining the creation of such a home. We have seen motions tabled in this House that appear designed to delay the project. We have heard about petitions seeking to block the project. Today, they are worried about safety — a concern that seemed absent just a week ago.

Fortunately, the steadfast leadership of my good colleague in Health and Social Services and of our city politicians have paved the way for a better home for our children. That leadership of my colleague from Vuntut Gwitchin extends to the safety of our children in care. It is an issue that I know she is personally passionate about. She talks about it all the time, and I am proud of the good work and advocacy of my colleague in Health and Social Services.

**Question re: Children in care**

**Mr. Cathers:** Yesterday when questioned about reports by the CBC of serious allegations of abuse allegedly happening in government-run group homes, the Minister of Justice made a comment. The minister said — and I quote: that reports in the media "... are not necessarily the truth."

Can the Minister of Justice please tell us which elements of the CBC story she believes are untrue?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I believe that in my answer to the question yesterday, I was indicating that the opportunity in the media to speak about a small element of a particular story doesn't necessarily encompass the entire story or all of the facts with respect to that, and that while the media plays a very important role of making sure these issues are brought to the attention of Yukoners, on occasion, it may not be the whole story.

**Mr. Cathers:** That's very different from what the minister actually said yesterday. The minister yesterday said — and I quote: "Reports in the media are not necessarily the truth." Can the Minister of Justice please tell us which elements of the CBC story she believes are untrue?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Speaker, I think that's the same question I just answered, but I'm happy to have the opportunity to say that our one-government approach means that the health, safety and wellness of our youth in care are our top priority; that there are backgrounds to these stories; and that there is information that needs to be brought to the attention of not only this government, but to the attention of the independent review that has been encouraged by this government. The approach of the Child and Youth Advocate, who will conduct a systemic, independent review of the transitional support services, is critical because, as she noted

this morning in the media, these matters have come to her attention as well.

At no time was I criticizing the media. I have spent more than 25 — closer to 30 — years in a career in which I have always taken a cautious view of the fact that all the facts in a particular story need time to come to the surface and must be properly investigated or reviewed in order for the full story to be known.

**Mr. Cathers:** The minister began this Question Period with non-answers, and again she has not answered the question. The minister said — and I quote: “Reports in the media are not necessarily the truth.” I will ask again, for a third time: Can the Minister of Justice please tell us which elements of the CBC story she believes are untrue? Secondly, can the Minister of Justice tell us when she first became aware of these serious allegations?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** The opportunity to speak to this issue is important to us. Again, the health and wellness of our youth is absolutely our top priority. It gives us an opportunity to talk about what we are doing. We’re very concerned about these actions and it’s very troubling to hear it. We implore these youth to make sure their voices are heard and that any obligation, whether it be through whistle-blowing or through anybody in the social services system or the media — wherever that voice comes out.

We approached our Child and Youth Advocate to conduct a systematic independent review of transitional support services. The advocate has agreed to the review and we are cooperating fully to ensure its effectiveness. The result of this review will help to determine the pathway forward to make sure the youth are getting the support they need to thrive.

#### Question re: Children in care

**Ms. White:** Yesterday, Yukoners heard shocking accounts of abuse and mistreatment in youth group homes through a whistle-blower in the media. A day before the story broke in the news, the minister called for the Child and Youth Advocate to do a review of group homes. Given that she has known about those specific incidents for over a month, the timing of the announcement is troubling, but yesterday’s Question Period revealed even more troubling facts about this government’s inaction. The Premier said — and I quote: “As an opposition member in this House for years, I have been aware of this issue.”

Will the Premier stand in this House and explain to Yukoners why his government took no action until the media was about to report on these abuses, even if — by his own admission — he has known about this issue for years?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** The way that the question is framed is very interesting, but again, we will report on what this government is doing right now. Like we said, we have approached the Child and Youth Advocate to conduct a systematic and independent review of the transitional support services. The advocate has agreed to that review. We have talked in the Legislative Assembly about a Health and Social Services review as well through the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel’s report. That work is ongoing as well.

Lots of work has been happening in the last 15 months when it comes to Health and Social Services, when it comes to the care of our youth and when it comes to all of these things, so we are moving forward on that. Knee-jerking because of a media story is one thing — we are going to make sure that we do this right — and so we are. I commend the minister and the department for the due diligence that they have put behind an announcement. This type of work cannot happen overnight. There has to be a lot of work behind it and the advocate, like I said, has agreed to the review and we are cooperating fully to ensure its effectiveness. The results of this review will help to determine the pathway forward and I urge the members opposite, if they want to feed into how this works, we should have that debate on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

**Ms. White:** We’re talking about abuse and discrimination toward youth in government care. The Premier’s admission that he has known about this issue for years makes his government’s inaction even worse. They have been responsible for children and youth in their care since November 2016. Our youth deserve better.

The government has now called on the Child and Youth Advocate to investigate and report in 2019, but the abuse and mistreatment that has been reported needs to stop today. It can’t wait for a report a year from now.

Will the Minister of Health and Social Services tell Yukoners what specific action she has taken to ensure that youth in the care of the government no longer face the kinds of abuse that were reported in the media?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I would be happy to respond to the question. What I can say is that in the past 15 months, we have taken some pretty significant actions with respect to Health and Social Services in ensuring that we have an approach that addresses all of the Yukon and all of the concerns that have come to our attention. We have triggered a five-year review on our *Child and Family Services Act* and, as we all know — and the members opposite know — the Child and Youth Advocate office is derived from that legislation. We are taking steps. It didn’t happen yesterday; it happened a few months ago. We made that note as soon as we started.

We have also noted to members opposite that we are reviewing Health and Social Services’ programs and services that we are obligated to deliver, much like the review that the members opposite did in 2000, in 2013 and in 2016 on the inefficiencies in group homes and inefficiencies in the residential programming that we provide for children. All of those concerns were brought to my attention and we are taking action. This is a step in the process to deal with a significant concern, but with the very specific concern that was brought to our attention, we are taking action. I am pleased to say that the department acted very quickly to follow through on the concerns that were brought to our attention.

**Ms. White:** Mr. Speaker, when a child or youth is in care, the government is the youth’s parent. In our system, it is the minister who is accountable and responsible. I have no doubt that no one in this House who is a parent would ever refuse access to their home to their teen when it is minus 25 degrees. I have no doubt that if one of our own teens went

missing for days, they would not be left to their own devices, yet the government — the legal parent responsible for the care of these youths — does just that. Whatever is not acceptable for a parent to do to their child is no more acceptable for the government to do to children or youth in their care — it's that simple. We know that there will be an investigation by the Child and Youth Advocate, but the abuse and mistreatment must stop now, not a year from now.

I have to ask again: What will the minister do to ensure that the abuse and mistreatment of youth in care that has been reported stops immediately and does not continue?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I am going to say again that we take the incidents that come to our attention very seriously, whether it is in this context or any context. If an incident that arises like this creates harm — or an issue around safety for any patient, any client, any child who is in our care and custody — we will ensure that we provide the best service and support possible. We will always ensure that safety is at the forefront.

As I stated, we took immediate action when this came to my attention. I actually met with the young person in question — I took him for lunch. I wanted him to be heard. I wanted to let him know that we are taking this very seriously and we turned it over to the department to do the good work that they do as experts in the field.

As the member opposite is aware, in 2016, the members from the Yukon Party — back when they were in power — created the integrated supports for Yukon youth initiative program. Why? Because they saw issues of concern and we are continuing to work through that process. We have ensured that every child is given an opportunity to be heard, and we will continue to do that and ensure that the legislation and the structure we have in place allows for that to happen — that every person needs to be validated and heard.

#### **Question re: Children in care**

**Ms. Hanson:** My colleagues have asked important questions about the recent events at the government's group homes and about the protection of children and youth. These are vitally important. What is often overlooked is the group home staff and their attempts, along with their union, to bring their concerns forward to this government. As far back as the summer of 2016, the union was publicly raising concerns from group home staff. Concerns such as homes being single-staffed for some shifts, frequent moving of staff from one home to another and overall staff safety were identified. The department was quick to dismiss and even challenge the union's assertions. This left staff feeling vulnerable in their jobs, since their complaints were not being taken seriously by management.

What has the department done to address the concerns raised by group home staff nearly two years ago?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that this government takes these concerns — the safety and wellness of our youth in care is our top priority. It truly is. As well, our staff must have the confidence to come forward and raise concerns in an open way that will actually result in changes.

My good colleague from Health and Social Services has been in the process of addressing the concerns that have been brought to our attention. She has been working very diligently on this and she will continue to do so based on all the information we're getting from the youth we're talking to and from the staff we're talking to — and we will continue to do that.

As for adequate staffing within these facilities, I know this has been a long-standing issue and we are taking steps to address that.

**Ms. Hanson:** Unfortunately, the words of the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission do nothing to foster the confidence of these workers. We have current and past staff speaking out in the media about what is going on in these group homes. They are reporting on what they know is the poor treatment of the children and youth in care. It's not easy for staff to come forward about the department after the department has told staff not to talk to anyone about the group home issues.

The one current staff member speaking out fears for their job, but is speaking out because of the lack of response by government. Let me quote this employee: "I have to sleep at night. I feel this is the only alternative. If there's wrongdoing, let's acknowledge and correct it. If there are people in the system that are supposed to be caring for kids and are assaulting them, then they need to go."

What is this minister doing to protect those workers who want to see positive change but are fearful of speaking out?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** We take occupational health and safety responsibilities seriously and carry them out through meaningful participation with workers, supervisors and joint committees. We provide regular health and safety training to our employees and make a point of ensuring new workers are aware of their safety rights and responsibilities and we also employ internal health and safety specialists who foster and guide occupational safety throughout the government.

I also want to say that we have what is termed the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* and that act actually enables our employees to come forward and bring forward issues without fear of reprisal that they feel need to be addressed. The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* illustrates our commitment to addressing serious wrongdoings that may be committed within a public entity covered by the act. I know the members opposite supported this piece of legislation when it came into being. The act sets out the obligations of all public entities covered by the act. I want to make clear that the Public Service Commission does not have a unique role or any legislative authority to require other public entities to do anything under the act.

The act requires that we begin a review of the act within five years after coming into force and, as the minister responsible for the act, I will consider the terms and conditions of that review as we get close to the five-year timeline.

**Ms. Hanson:** Again, the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission's speaking points ring hollow.

It is well-established by now that the issues of protection of children in care and youth in care at this department have been going on for a long while. There have been safety audits completed by the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. There was an evaluation of group homes in 2000. The union has attempted to engage the department around safe staffing levels. Finally a staff person is bring forward their concerns, but with a fear of reprisal. Workers do not feel they have whistle-blower protection when it comes to shining a light on these ongoing concerns.

The recently announced review could take up to a year, so what is the minister doing today to ensure that staff can speak of their concerns about the care of children and youth without fear of reprisal?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I truly thank the member opposite for the question. For a quarter century — close enough — I was in a role that had me talking to civil servants and people throughout the community, and I know first-hand some of the concerns people in this very small territory of ours have coming forward to express their concerns in a way that they feel safe, where they can feel actively comfortable in bringing these concerns forward. It's a very small place. We all know one another. We're dealing with each other all the time, so that really makes it difficult, but the public service has to know that they have every right to bring forward these concerns and they will be heard.

I want to thank the staff member — any staff member — for coming forward, like the youth we have been hearing from, and bringing their concerns forward. We will listen to those concerns and take action where action is necessary, once we ascertain the facts. If there's wrongdoing, let's acknowledge it and address it and get on with it. It's important, and we will take action when it's necessary.

#### **Question re: Children in care**

**Ms. McLeod:** Why did the Minister of Health and Social Services not notify the RCMP of the serious allegations of abuse within group homes when she learned of them six weeks ago?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I'm just going back to what I said earlier on the same question with respect to what we did. We took action; we took the concerns that were brought to our attention and provided an opportunity and venue for the young person to be heard. We engaged with colleagues from the Public Service Commission to look at the internal allegations around staff wrongdoing with respect to the confidentiality around an independent review or any legalities or legal situation. That's to be left with the RCMP. That's not for me to respond to. They will do their good work, as they do, and we will deal with our policy work that we are obligated to do to ensure that every child who comes into our care, from here on and into the future, is given an opportunity (1) to be heard; (2) to be provided a safe home; and (3) to ensure that every night they have a place to sleep.

I think the question was asked quite recently: Is housing a human right? Is safety a human right? What are we doing in Yukon, historically? As a member from an isolated

community, having gone through this residential environment, I have had an opportunity to experience first-hand the challenges and I want to bring in that experience, as we all do. Expression is important, and being heard and validated is very important.

**Ms. McLeod:** Well, Mr. Speaker — wow. After the minister found out about these allegations six weeks ago, what direction did she give her department and when did she give that direction?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** Health and safety for our youth is our top priority, so the concerns that were brought to my attention are clearly very serious with respect to the safety of the child in question. That's an individual process. We went back into the department immediately upon hearing that and allowed the department staff — the experts in their field — to take the necessary steps to ensure that we took immediate action.

The immediate action involved going back and speaking to the young person and looking at the environment that was in question. We have looked at the allegations and take them very seriously. Obviously, we're going to cooperate fully and, in that process, we engaged with and used the advocates there to do just that — the youth and child advocate process. We have the option to use section 12(1), and that is an independent process, so we are allowing the process to evolve and we will cooperate fully with the process and let it evolve, as it's intended, and find out what's happening, look at the recommendations and make significant improvements. That's our goal: to ensure we provide safe environments for our children.

**Ms. McLeod:** Will the review of the group homes include an examination of the actions of the minister, once she found out about these serious allegations six weeks ago, in order to determine if she acted appropriately?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** That's what we are doing in providing an independent process. It's not to predetermine. I think the member opposite is trying to guide a process — that's not correct and not right. We want to ensure independence. We have triggered a process allowing independence and good feedback. I'm sure the members heckling on the opposite side of the House are just as concerned as we are to ensure the safety of our children and ensure they have a voice where the voice is — and we need to be the voices of reason looking at working together to find solutions.

I know this has been happening for a long time. The members opposite had an opportunity to correct it. Have they corrected it? No. As my colleague, the Minister of Highways and Public Works, raised recently, we had this debate two weeks ago about efficient and effective group homes and what we can do to ensure we provide services to all our children that society won't accept, but that we accept responsibility for.

I will ensure that this happens, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.



## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BILLS

#### Bill No. 18: *Order of Yukon Act* — Third Reading

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

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I move that Bill No. 18, entitled *Order of Yukon Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 18, entitled *Order of Yukon Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I do appreciate members from both sides of this House for their support of this act. We have spent some time on the bill this week, and I think we are all looking forward to seeing the Order of Yukon becoming operational and celebrating those Yukoners who are deserving of being named the first members. It will be very exciting to see who the council picks.

As we have discussed, the order will honour Yukoners who make our territory so unique. It will recognize those who have contributed something significant in any number of fields, whether it is sports, First Nation governance, environmental stewardship, the arts, business and volunteerism, or the support of seniors and youth — just to name a few. We absolutely would not be debating this bill here today if it were not for the encouragement of Yukon's previous Commissioner, Mr. Doug Phillips.

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I see that Doug Phillips is in the gallery here today enjoying his brand new role as a member of the public. I would ask members of the Legislative Assembly to help me welcome Mr. Phillips here today.

*Applause*

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I was expecting to see him dressed down, but he still looks very formal, which I guess is his calling card.

Mr. Speaker, Doug recognized the need for us as a society to honour those individuals among us who have made those great accomplishments and have helped to advance our society, as well as our economic development, for that matter. I extend my thanks to Mr. Phillips for his work on this initiative, and for his guidance and mentorship over the years of my political experience. Thank you, Mr. Phillips, for all of your work.

As we have seen in the act, the Commissioner in office will be the chancellor of the order and will automatically become a member for life. It is poignant that the Yukon's new Commissioner, Ms. Angélique Bernard, will, in one of her very first official acts, be asked to grant assent to the *Order of Yukon Act*, making her the chancellor and the very first member of the order. Under her watch as chancellor, the order will grow over the coming years to a membership of people who have enriched the lives of others and have made a huge

difference in the Yukon. Their contributions will be varied and, together, they will form an honoured group of leaders who stand out among us.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank all of my colleagues on all sides of the Legislative Assembly for their comments about this legislation. I want to thank the drafters and the government workers — and, of course, Pavlina Sudrich and the folks over at the Commissioner's Office — for the work that they have done. We have tried to get this right. We tried to make this so that the council is non-partisan and decisions aren't of a political nature but are made based on the valuable contributions of these individual citizens.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank everybody for their support of this initiative, and I am very pleased to hear any other further debate here at third reading.

**Mr. Hassard:** It is a pleasure to rise today to speak to the third reading of Bill No. 18, the *Order of Yukon Act*. I too would like to thank everyone for all of the work that they have done in bringing Bill No. 18 forward.

Of course, Rodney D'Abramo, who worked so hard on this, is back here in the gallery today. It is good to see him here. As the Premier mentioned, it is great to see former Commissioner Phillips here today, and we certainly wish him well in his beekeeping, gardening and travelling endeavours now that he is formally retired.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the previous Premier, Darrell Pasloski, for the work that he did on this file.

With that, I just want to thank everyone again, and we look forward to seeing assent to Bill No. 18 later today.

**Ms. Hanson:** I think we have all said a fair amount over the last while about how there is unanimity in this House. It's good to see — on a rare occasion — genuine unanimity with respect to the support for the *Order of Yukon Act*. I think the fact that we do so reflects a lot on the work that the previous Commissioner, Mr. Phillips, did during his tenure as Commissioner.

We all know how hard Doug worked over those years to celebrate Yukoners in every facet of life. I think about the number of times and the number of events that I went to, celebrating youth and the potential for our youth in the future — the future leaders, the musicians — and every aspect of the potential for our youth and seeing that moving forward.

He has had many tools at hand, as a Commissioner, to celebrate and to recognize the various contributions of Yukoners, but never that peak, the preeminent recognition of excellence, I think, under his persistent but kind of civil pressure on the government leaders to ensure that this Order of Yukon would eventually occur. I am pleased that he is able to be with us here today, as we do finally agree — all of us, together — on recognizing and giving effect to this Order of Yukon. I think we owe him a debt of thanks.

*Applause*

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

Does any other member wish to be heard on third reading of Bill No. 18?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I don't have very much more to say than what has already been said. Again, thank you to outgoing Commissioner Doug Phillips. Thank you for all the work by the officials from the department who have done such great work here in such a short time. I am looking forward to seeing our new Commissioner earning that paycheque and coming in here and putting assent to things.

*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare that Bill No. 18 has passed this House.

As advertised, we are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, in her capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to grant assent to bills which have passed this House.

*Commissioner Bernard enters the Chamber announced by her Aide-de-Camp*

## ASSENT TO BILLS

**Commissioner:** Please be seated.

**Speaker:** Madam Commissioner, welcome. The Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain bills to which, in the name and behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

**Clerk:** *Third Appropriation Act 2017-18; Interim Supply Appropriation Act 2018-19; Order of Yukon Act.*

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

I would just like to take this opportunity to personally thank Mr. Phillips, who has joined us in the gallery today. His effort and perseverance were instrumental in creating the Order of Yukon, and it is a great honour to follow in the footsteps of such an individual. Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Phillips.

*Applause*

*Commissioner leaves the Chamber*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order. Please be seated.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** 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 House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chair (Mr. Hutton):** Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

### Bill No. 206: *First Appropriation Act 2018-19* — continued

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Is there any general debate?

Mr. Streicker, you have 17 minutes and 39 seconds precisely.

### Department of Community Services — continued

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** We briefly touched on Community Services several days ago, so I will provide a few introductory remarks to frame the budget. I would like to welcome into the Legislature today to Committee of the Whole, Deputy Minister Paul Moore and Assistant Deputy Minister Shehnaz Ali. I thank them for coming today, to assist with answering questions.

This budget details how the Department of Community Services is working with municipal governments, First Nations, local advisory councils, recreation associations and a whole slew of groups to build thriving communities, to protect people and property and to advance community well-being.

The department's main estimates include more than \$63 million in capital expenditures and more than \$92 million in operation and maintenance expenditures. I want to highlight how the 2018-19 budget works for Yukoners across the vast array of programs and services provided by Community Services.

Beginning with Protective Services, which is the division that provides first response services and strengthens the territory's ability to mitigate, prevent and recover from emergencies, Protective Services houses emergency management coordination, first response and public safety agencies. Investments in personal equipment, training and infrastructure improve Yukon's ability to prevent and prepare for emergencies, to respond when they occur and to reduce the loss of life and property. Accordingly, \$32 million of the department's operation and maintenance budget and \$2.2 million of the capital budget is allocated to Protective Services.

Every year, we work with 13 Yukon First Nations to provide fire crew services for the coming fire season. This helps to support local employment and economic development. First responders with the Yukon Emergency Medical Services will benefit from \$225,000 to upgrade and replace vital communications equipment this year.

This government is investing in the protection of people and property and the advancement of community well-being. Community well-being in the development of sustainable communities is at the core of the Community Development division. This division supports local governments and collaborative relationships with communities. Community Development's branches provide access to safe drinking water in unincorporated communities, maintain waste-water and solid-waste facilities, and manage the construction of community-based infrastructure projects. It supports sport, recreation and active living initiatives and oversees 15 community libraries.

In this budget, Community Development would receive more than \$46 million of the department's O&M budget and \$59 million of the capital budget — the lion's share. The Community Affairs branch supports local governments, helping to build their capacity and effective operation. This budget provides municipalities with close to \$19 million in core funding through the comprehensive municipal grant, helping them to deliver vital services to Yukoners. We have just renegotiated that grant, Mr. Chair.

Yukon communities receive \$73,000 for the administration of local advisory councils, which provide voices for their communities and act in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Community Services. The Association of Yukon Communities receives \$100,000 for daily operational costs to assist municipal and local advisory council members to collaborate with Yukon government and First Nations on areas of mutual interest.

A core mandate of the Community Services branch is to work with unincorporated Yukon communities to ensure all Yukoners have access to clean drinking water and reliable waste-water and solid-waste management. The Community Operations branch is working toward improving solid-waste and recycling programs in the territory. We have heard from our municipal partners, the Association of Yukon Communities and stakeholders about the need for more sustainable programs that encourage waste diversion without placing undue burden on our communities and businesses. The goal is a financially sustainable and environmentally sound approach to waste management territory-wide.

The Infrastructure Development branch is responsible for community infrastructure. Infrastructure investments must be responsive to community needs and be fiscally responsible, not only when they are built, but when operating over their life cycle. They address ongoing needs, create jobs and improve well-being for Yukoners.

The Yukon government collaborates with municipal governments, First Nations and unincorporated communities throughout the territory to ensure that infrastructure funding

supports local solutions and local priorities. I know the team has gone around and has been meeting with all communities.

The small communities fund will provide approximately \$342 million to support Yukon infrastructure over the next six years. Just yesterday, Mr. Chair, I tabled a list for the members opposite about this year's projects under the small communities fund and the clean water and waste-water fund. Additionally, the clean water and waste-water fund is providing \$68.5 million for water and waste-water projects for 2016-17 and next year, in 2019-20.

Projects include a new drinking water reservoir and distribution lines in Mayo, construction of a new pumphouse and replacement of water and waste-water lines in Dawson City, and upgrades to the drinking water system in Faro, among many more. This fund and our ongoing partnerships with Canada, municipalities, First Nations and unincorporated Yukon are helping us to build vibrant, healthy, sustainable communities while we address core infrastructure priorities at the territorial and local levels.

The Land Development branch will receive, in this budget, \$15 million for land assessment, planning and administration in order to deliver more Whistle Bend subdivision lots to the market. An adequate supply and range of land options is an important factor in overcoming challenges related to affordable housing in Whitehorse. We are committed to working closely with the City of Whitehorse, other Yukon departments and stakeholders to ensure that we are responding to the demands and markets. That includes working with Energy, Mines and Resources and their development branch in our municipalities.

The Sport and Recreation branch contributes to a better quality of life for Yukoners through its investments in sport, recreation and active living initiatives. Our support for Team Yukon at major games provides substantial value, tremendous benefits and inspiration to the participants and organizations involved in these life-changing opportunities. We all know that the Arctic Winter Games are underway right now and a big shout-out to our team and all the families and fans who are supporting them.

Team Yukon will also compete in the Canada 55+ Games — although those will be different athletes — to be held in St. John, New Brunswick in August this year. In February next year, Team Yukon will travel to Red Deer, Alberta for the Canada Winter Games. This year's budget allocates \$1.2 million to support Yukon athletes in attending these major events.

We have also allotted \$1 million to plan the 2020 Arctic Winter Games in partnership with the City of Whitehorse. Of course, this will be 50 years since the first Arctic Winter Games.

Active living is supported through investments in maintenance and improvements to community recreation centres and pools. For example, \$1.2 million will support the construction of the multiplex in Old Crow.

This year, I'm very proud to say that we are providing an additional \$50,000 for our 14 community library boards that do a great job in our communities. Thank you for that.

Now we move to the third division in Community Services — Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs. Professional Licensing and Regulatory Affairs protects the public by regulating 22 professions. These include health professions such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists and dentists, as well as real estate, insurance and collection agents. Last year, the branch issued nearly 5,000 licences. It also regulates charitable gaming, such as raffles and bingos by Yukon's non-profits.

The Corporate Affairs branch promotes sound business practices, strengthens investor protection and encourages trade and investment in the territory. The branch's operating budget of \$1.2 million aims to reduce red tape for businesses. Already this year, the first phase of the Yukon corporate online registry was launched. The public can search Yukon's public corporate registries and access documents, and work is underway on the next phase to allow online, annual filings and reports.

The Employment Standards and Residential Tenancies office provides education and enforcement of employment standards and residential tenancy laws to ensure that employees and employers and landlords and tenants understand their rights and obligations. The employment standards office is also responsible for statutory holidays, and I think all of us here in the Legislature are proud to say that we all recognized the contribution of First Nations to Yukon by establishing National Aboriginal Day as a statutory holiday.

Property Assessment and Taxation branch — the most loved of all branches in the Yukon government — provides all Yukon taxing authorities with current, accurate and equitable property assessments — a shout-out to their professionalism. The government has budgeted \$3.9 million in 2018-19 to support the Yukon homeowners grant program, which is an increase of \$150,000 from last year. The branch also administers programs that ensure all property owners in Yukon have similar access to services.

The budget highlights that I have shared today represent the very essential work of the Department of Community Services, the department I affectionately call the "kitchen sink department". These investments develop sustainable communities, protect people and property, and advance community well-being. I look forward to answering questions from the members opposite and to discussing the Community Services budget.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Welcome to the officials. It is good to see you here today. We are going to start with Sport and Recreation today. I too would give a shout-out to Team Yukon at the Arctic Winter Games and wish them all the best.

The first question I have is around the physical literacy project, which has been very successful in its delivery. The curriculum has been used in our rural communities. I have heard first-hand of the success of this program, and I have also heard that those involved with its delivery are very excited to see if it can be adapted within the Whitehorse schools in their curriculum.

Can the minister please confirm what, if any, discussions have happened to ensure that school principals are on board with the implementation of these programs in Whitehorse elementary schools?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I won't be able to answer the very specific question about principals because I am not sure about that in particular. I do know that the department is working with Education and schools, and I can try to get the very specific answer about principals.

In the spirit of the question, it is rolling out this year for students from grades 3 to 7, which, of course, includes our primary schools — and not just in Whitehorse, but I believe across the territory. Because of my background working as a recreation programmer, I have worked with several of the people who are developing the physical literacy training for our communities. I went to some of their training sessions, and I think they are wonderful sessions. My understanding is that this project is the first of its kind in Canada, and so I think this is great work. I am very happy to see it going out to all of our schools, and I can try to confirm — or maybe the member when she gets up for her next question can let me know whether she wants me to follow up with respect to whether we have talked directly to principals or whether it is just with the schools themselves.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** From what I have understood, it is the school principals who have the say about whether this program is brought into their schools. Maybe that is something that we can check into.

In 2013-14, the first-ever Yukon Sport School began through a partnership with the Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Sport Yukon and F.H. Collins Secondary School. Here, aspects of a physical literacy project are taught to students — including body awareness and body movements — to promote strength and to prevent injury. This program has continued to flourish over the years. Will the minister commit to this government continuing support for this program of the Yukon Sport School?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for her question. Yes, we do continue to support it. If you're asking me personally, certainly I am supportive of it. My understanding is that it has been doing well over the last four years and I have had no indication of any intention to change that. We support the program.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Mount Sima has been a wonderful destination for early season training for national teams as well as for our local teams. In addition to drawing national attention to our local ski and snowboard facility and generating extra revenue for Mount Sima, it also injects money into our local economy and opens up businesses' seasonal jobs early. Will the minister continue to provide funding for early season training at Mount Sima?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I have been up and met with the folks at Sima and it is a great program. I believe that funding for it happens through Economic Development and I just confirmed that with the minister. I will leave that question for him to respond to when they come forward in the mains.

In meeting with the folks at Mount Sima, we have talked about how we can support them as a branch with their work with their sport governing bodies and about how they're becoming more fiscally sustainable there on the hill. It's amazing to watch what they have done. Tyler Nichol — I will just give a shout out to him. He's there in NWT right now grooming and doing their snowboard parks for the Arctic Winter Games. We're lucky to have him here in the Yukon.

I have talked to Mount Sima about supporting other sport bodies; for example, I know that they worked well with Cross Country Yukon — I think, at one point, loaning snow-making equipment — and that led to Cross Country Yukon buying more specific — sorry to get so technical, Mr. Speaker, but the type of snow-making equipment that Sima has is this wide spray so they get it on the hill and at the same time what Cross Country Yukon is looking for is a narrow spray to get it on their trails. But they worked with each other and that was a great move.

I also asked Mount Sima to please work with our communities, to reach out to our communities and try to find ways to encourage kids to use our facilities across our territory, or to work, for example, in Watson Lake with the ski hill there or in Dawson with that ski hill and to exchange their knowledge and support in those areas.

When it comes to the delivery of sports, we're very supportive of Sima. By the way, I think they just managed to get their giant jump built up with rock or earthworks underneath it, which means that saves them money on the snow-making, so it's great.

I'm very happy with the early training program and I think that they also can get late training because they are going to be the ones with snow earlier and later in the year, so sport tourism is an important thing for us. I will leave the fuller answer about the money to my colleague, the Minister of Economic Development.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Throughout the years, there have been a number of ongoing complaints from user groups with respect to the state of soccer fields around the territory. Will the minister commit to implementing the previous government's plan to work with Sport Yukon to improve the maintenance of soccer fields across Yukon communities?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I want to be careful here. I have started conversations about how to work with the Department of Education on making sure that we rehabilitate their fields. We just announced recently that we will be investing to build the first artificial field here in the territory, and we took advantage of work that needed to happen around F.H. Collins to leverage some additional funds federally, and then to get an artificial turf and track around that field.

One of the key parts of that plan was to get other soccer fields remediated, because one of the challenges that we have with our fields is that we get on them early in the spring and we kill them. It's really hard on our fields. If we could give them a break, or a rotational break, what would happen is that we could really remediate those fields well.

I thank the member opposite for her suggestion. I'm happy to work with Sport Yukon. So far, the conversations I

have had were with the Department of Education, but I had had preliminary discussions with Sport Yukon. I will take the suggestion from the member opposite and make sure to broaden that discussion out to all the fields around the territory and begin a conversation, including Sport Yukon on that.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** There were two great things in the community development section that I want to highlight. One was the funding for the games participation and the upcoming hosting of the Arctic Winter Games — in the next cycle for Whitehorse — as well as the increase in the annual library funding.

This is definitely added value for our smaller communities. We hope to see smaller rural communities included in the funding for their athletes and to offset costs for their travel, growth and challenges. Can the minister assure that this will happen in this funding section?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I want to say that we are very supportive of trying to make sure that the investment we make in sport, team sports and the games is for Yukoners, which means that it gets out to the communities.

When we held the rally for the athletes last week, just before they left — I know I encouraged it, but the athletes from Whitehorse gave a round of applause for all of the athletes from our communities, because it always takes — if you're going to fly through Whitehorse, you have to come here first, so there's that challenge.

As I understand it, for the sport governing bodies and how they're funded, there is a requirement that they are working to ensure that they're inclusive of our communities. I know that when we fund our athletes, we include travel costs of our athletes to come to Whitehorse — or to acknowledge that additional cost that is in there — and make sure that there is support for our athletes who come from the communities outside of Whitehorse.

Lastly, I will say that whenever I have talked — and I just mentioned it earlier with Mount Sima — to any of the sport governing bodies or the sports, which in some ways may be centred in Whitehorse, I am always talking to them about the importance of reaching out to our communities and being inclusive of them. There are various ways that can happen. I mentioned two of them. You can find ways to subsidize or support those young people who come from the municipalities, or you can reach out. I have been encouraging both of those. I think it is a great point that the member opposite raises. We are working to achieve the same goal that she has noted.

Finally, with respect to our community libraries, in going around to our communities and talking with community groups, one of the things that I hear often about our community libraries is that they have not received a change in their funding over many years. I was happy to be able to secure a little bit more money in this budget. I think it is a nice start, and I know that the department is working to find ways to be supportive of our community branches.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I too was at the rally and saw you give a cheer to the rural kids — so good on you.

Can the minister please provide the House with an update on the plans for the Dawson City recreation centre? It was voted by the Dawson City council to move forward with planning on a new facility. Would the minister provide an estimate on this new facility, which supposedly would come from both federal and territorial coffers, and an update on the progress? If this council vote moves forward, are there any options still being considered? I know that they would still be preliminary talks.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** First of all, I want to say that, no, I don't have estimates because I think that there is some important work that has to happen first.

I think that every visit where I have had to sit down with the Dawson council has included conversations about the Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre and its ongoing challenges. Those conversations are very technical at times, and there are a lot of issues at play.

I fully acknowledge that the municipal council just passed a resolution and, when we sat down, we talked about two ways of working together moving forward. The first one is to start to look at the sport and recreation needs of the community to try to come at it from a needs assessment and to look at what type of facility might be needed. There was a number that was thrown around; however, that is not my starting point. I have indicated to Dawson that the number that they have put out there in the media is a very large number.

I just want them to have eyes wide open around what the possibilities are, so we're working with them, first of all, on a needs assessment about what they should have for the community. The other side of it is to continue to work on the technical side of it with engineers and to make sure. Somewhere there, the council, based on evidence that came to them, took the decision that it was better to move from a repair of the existing facility to building a new facility.

Even when I sit down with them, they recognize that this type of option is in years to come — it's not next year, it's not right away. There is work to be done on an ongoing basis about what should happen there right now, and some of that is very technical work. We are respectful of the direction that they have given.

One of the things we do when we go around to our municipalities, First Nations and all of our communities is that we ask them: What are your infrastructure priorities? We just flat out ask that question. They give us a list and we try to put those priorities on various pieces. For example, if it's water infrastructure, I'm sure the past government put that on the clean water and waste-water fund list; if it's regulatory, we put it on the small communities fund list; if it's recreational, we will tend to try to put it on the upcoming lists that are coming from the announcement that we made overall of the Infrastructure Canada Investing in Canada plan. We try to put it in the right place, and we continue to ask the community what their priorities are so that when we get down to decisions, and when we start to get at the funding dollars, we're sure to get at the ones that are highest on their list.

What I want to say is that there is no notion from our side of what this might cost, and there is a total willingness to

work with the municipality on identifying a path forward, which would include both a technical approach and a sports approach.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The Watson Lake library board had a meeting with the minister last summer, and the board followed that up with a letter dated September 25, 2017. They were requesting an update of the *Public Libraries Act* and an increase to their funding allowance in order to pay their librarian an appropriate level of pay. They were also prepared to dissolve the board of directors in order for the employees of the society to switch over to YG employee status, if that was the direction that the government preferred.

Has the minister followed up with the society, and what was the result? With the \$50,000 increase to the annual library funding, how is this divvied among all of the communities? He had said 15 libraries. Also, is there a review of the *Public Libraries Act* upcoming?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I have met twice with the Watson Lake library board and staff. I should say as well that they have given me a lovely tour.

They have a great facility there. I have responded to their letter. Maybe I should ask them, but I would happily share broadly what I said to them, both in person and via the letter. I can ask them if they would be willing for me to share the letter and table it here.

The issue of how the money should be divvied up in our community libraries is the choice of our local library boards. It's not the choice of us as a government. We have no interest in growing government or in adding the community libraries on to our existing staff roster. What I have said to them is that it is always the choice of the local library to apportion out the money that is given to them, and it is at their discretion. If, for example, they wish to pay a wage that is comparable to the wages that are paid for government employees, that is their discretion.

I can say this from my own experience, because I happened to start the Marsh Lake community library. It's called the Marsh Lake Little Library. What we chose, in all instances, was to try to extend the hours of the library and the service that the library provided through volunteerism and through stretching those dollars as far they could go. It's a tension that exists in our communities.

For example, they have asked me what we pay. I have offered that information to them so they understand what is paid to comparable staff here. We have talked about that for — I'll just check, but I'm pretty sure it's over a decade since there has been a funding increase to our community libraries. There is some ground to catch up — there is no doubt about that.

The other question the member asked was about how the money would be divvied up — I think that was the way she phrased it. My understanding is that it would be commensurate with the size of the library or the size of the community the library is serving. For example, I know that Watson Lake and Dawson are the two largest community libraries, so they would take a larger portion of the money

that's identified in this budget, and it would be apportioned out.

For the record, I'll just put on the record that the Marsh Lake Little Library isn't one of those libraries, because we chose not to be part of the territorial library system. We decided, instead, just to work on a volunteer basis. But all the community libraries are a part of the public libraries system.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I had also asked about the update and review of the *Public Libraries Act*.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Just a blanket statement here: If I do forget questions, please just remind me.

I have had that conversation and I am working toward that goal. I can't make a commitment here today, but I have heard an interest and I think that there are things that need to be looked at within the act. I will work to try to bring that forward.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** You brought up the legislative return that you gave to me on my question.

My question was: "Mr. Speaker, on page 4 of this year's budget highlights, it says that there is \$42 million allocated for municipal and First Nation infrastructure this year..." and then "... would the minister be able to provide us with a legislative return detailing the breakdown of the \$42 million referenced in the budget highlights?" The response was that he received a list that is the same as what is in the budget highlights' coloured pages. The attached list includes projects that they have identified to provide an indication of which projects they are likely to undertake under each fund. It is not an all-inclusive list and it will change as projects receive the necessary approvals or as they are tendered and timelines are confirmed. He goes on to say that they are committed to ongoing discussions with First Nations and municipalities to ensure infrastructure priorities are identified.

Again, there are no dollar amounts attached to any of these projects that are listed under the \$42 million in the clean water and waste-water fund or the small communities fund. Can the minister tell us when there will be dollar amounts allotted to all of these projects?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for her question.

There are a couple ways that I want to try to provide as much information as I can. One of them is: I think the majority of these projects are on the tender forecast system currently. For all of those, I can absolutely get dollar figures against them and give what the tender forecast is for them. I'm always trying to be careful about those ones when they're in the design phase — to not talk about dollars associated with them until we're at that moment when we would be forecasting what the rough dollar amounts are, so I'm trying to be respectful of that existing process.

The other thing that I have tried to say in debate here in this Legislature and what those caveats at the bottom of the list talk about is around this notion of using an envelope approach. We identified that lapses in capital spending are a real issue that need to be addressed and they have been raised by the members opposite, pointing out critically that there was a \$30-million lapse. We on our side have pointed out that this

is better than it has been over the last five or six years. We pointed out how lapses are a challenge. One of the ways in which we are actively trying to reduce the amount of money lapsed is by using an envelope approach. I'm not trying to be in any way pedantic here. I will explain our thinking about this. The notion is that we will have additional projects that are approved and ready to go, so that if something happens within an existing project that was part of the envelope at the time we started — for example, under land development, we entered into a contract with a local contractor to do some land development work, but they had the possibility of splitting that money over two years. When they came and told us they were going to push some of their development work to a future year, we then could respond by introducing more work this year that would allow us to build out to the envelope. In order to do that, what we have to have is a list of projects that are in the hopper, ready to go next.

That has been the approach. What it means is that some of these might not yet be at the stage where they have the dollar amounts associated with them. I will work to get clarity on which ones of these are already in the tender forecast system and I am happy to put the dollars against those and return it again as a legislative return.

The final point I wanted to make was that, last year at this time, I was asked for a similar list by the Member for Copperbelt South who, at that point, was the critic of the infrastructure side of Community Services. I was asked for a list, which I provided. That list also didn't have dollars attached, so I apologize that I missed it this time around. I just used the same general format that I used last year in that submission.

I will provide the amount of information that is ready to be public, but will withhold the information that is still in development.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** On top of this return you gave me, it mentions the projects approved to date and the projects that have been approved by all funding sources as of March 14, 2018. It also states that we are at different stages of the planning, design and construction process. As you mentioned, it's subject to this funding envelope that you can pull money from it or move it around.

I guess the question we brought up in Question Period is: When you get a list of these projects — and I see six major ones in Dawson City — which of those would go, which won't and how do people bid on them? If the envelope isn't firm, who knows if the money is even there?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** First of all, referring to the Dawson major projects, I right away want to just check — several of those are in the clean water and waste-water fund. Any projects that sit under the clean water and waste-water fund — I'll just remind us all here that those projects were identified by the previous government. We took the decision and I declared a year or more ago in this Legislature that we would stick with the choices that were made by the previous government on those projects.

On that fund, we have two years left to spend out, so all of those ones — and I'll check to make sure — are a go,

because that money has to be spent out over the next two fiscal years.

The projects that are approved here — we anticipate all of them to go. The question is when they go — not if, but when. When you're at this phase where you're in the design work and you're ready to go, it's a question of when. Some of them will come forward as we put out the seasonally dependent contracts, but the place where they all appear is on the tender management system. They will arrive on the tender management system and they will have a date associated with them — when there is a closing date — and they will have a target date for completion. That is the way in which we will continue to use the existing system that will show contractors exactly where the contracts are expected to be performed.

I'll try that, but I am sure there will be some supplementary questions.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The budgeting system is a little confusing because we can't seem to find those immediate dollars.

I am going to move on to another subject. This one has concerns raised around the civic addressing. We have heard concerns from homeowners whose properties are situated on two roads, and homeowners feel they are addressed improperly. There are also questions raised about lots with multiple homes. We have also heard of at least one situation where the numbering of lots is non-sequential and may need a review.

Is there an avenue for these very valid concerns to be addressed by the department, and is there room for change if the homeowner's concern is deemed valid and that change is necessary?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Just to follow up — before the member moved to this line of questioning, she asked about trying to get immediate information on the dollars. I have committed — and I commit again as I stand up now — that I will ask the department to go through and pull off, from the tender forecast system, all of those projects on the list that I gave and get the range of dollars so that there is a sense of the dollars that are out there. I will provide whatever information I can about the dollars now.

With respect to civic addressing, we are working across the whole of the territory to get to civic addresses. The Member for Lake Laberge and I were at a meeting together in his riding. I have been at meetings in my own riding — several of them. This started with our local advisory council areas, four of which exist within the riding of Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes.

Generally speaking, addressing should be sequential. It should be — and I'll get it wrong, so I'll just have to say it this way — even on one side, odd on the other. I don't know which side is which, but I'll give it a shot. I think it's odd on the right, even on the left, as you travel. It should incrementally go up.

There are always strange situations. I know that within my own riding, for example, everybody had an address on a little side street — or that is physically how their lots exist. Everyone had cut driveways out to another road. How do you

deal with that? There are complicated situations across the whole of the territory.

I have seen my own team — and I hope the Member for Lake Laberge will reinforce this notion — from Community Affairs branch being very responsive to the public. They are happy to work and talk through the situation with individuals. What I encourage us to do, as legislators here — and these words are reaching all Yukoners — is to try not to think of it just for ourselves but to think of it for the whole of the territory. What happens is that people will sometimes say, "Well, my lot is different and it is special" — and I am sure it is, but when you think about trying to design a system that will work for our EMS, RCMP and firefighters, they need a system that is also uniform across the territory. It is important.

I have seen the team work with individual homeowners and try to address their concerns about where access comes out to roads, but I also know that they are trying to deliver on a system that is uniform for the whole of the territory.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I will continue to the homeowners grant, which reduces the amount of property tax that one pays on their principal residence. The regular amount has remained unchanged at \$450, and the seniors amount is a whopping \$500 per principal residence, despite residents continuing to see property taxes rise and increase almost annually. Is there any appetite to look at the rates for this amazing help — perhaps a rate increase that will assist homeowners to offset the rising cost of property taxes?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The first thing I want to say is that we as a government have not raised the tax rate — and neither did the past government. While I can appreciate that taxes have increased because the value of the properties has increased, it is not through additional taxation.

I also note that the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel made a similar suggestion to review the homeowners grants, but with the other idea in mind, which is to look to see if it is still valid across the territory — in other words, to review whether or not it is the right thing to do.

I will thank the member opposite for her suggestion and will take it as a suggestion in part of the mix. I can see that it is very important for our seniors, and I acknowledge that, for those who have less means, the homeowners grant is very important. I thank her for suggesting that we consider reviewing it.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Yes, and as you know, those costs rise every year, along with upkeep of your home and whatever other costs, and this stays stagnant. The amount should at least take into account some relief for those in need, and there may be a level for low-income families, seniors and individuals with disabilities. I would appreciate it if the minister would look into the program.

I see that there is an increase of \$150,000 on that line item for homeowners grants. Could the minister explain that?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** There are just more homes, and so when there are more homes, there are more homeowners grants. That's the reason the line item goes up.



**Ms. Van Bibber:** I think, if the minister looks, other jurisdictions have homeowners grants, so maybe that is something they can have a look at.

The new lot prices in Mary Lake have been proposed and they are a little over \$200,000. Will this new price have an effect on the next property assessment for that area?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for her suggestions around the homeowners grants. At some point, if we're directed from the work of the Financial Advisory Panel — I know that I have been directed, for example, to work with municipalities and communities on suggestions that come there to look for synergies, so if the homeowners grant comes up, then absolutely we would always do a cross-jurisdictional look. I think that's a healthy thing to be doing at all times, just to see how we compare. I have to say that when I look at our tax rates and compare them across the country, they're quite favourable.

I would have to check on property tax against other forms of taxation, but I think the Leader of the Third Party has mentioned here in this Legislature that, when we look at the overall bundle of tax collected here in the Yukon, we are one of the best jurisdictions. I'm careful with superlatives because I would need to go and look myself —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Lowest — thank you.

With respect to Mary Lake, it is true that what is happening in the market — the market assessment is one of the inputs that the Property Assessment and Taxation branch uses to determine our property assessments, but there is a suite of things that go into it — for example, improvements on the land.

The other thing that you need to know is that, when I look at how those properties are assessed in terms of the land value and in terms of the improvements, generally, they are very conservative. This means that if you look at what those values are and if you look at your tax assessment — whether you live in Whitehorse or in one of the communities — what you will see is that it's lower than you would anticipate getting in the marketplace. Yes, the market value comes into it, but it's one of several factors. Overall, the assessments tend to be conservative.

The other thing we should note is that there are many properties in Mary Lake, and they all go into it. It all goes into a big hopper. I think the city is considering two new lots in Mary Lake. Those two lots would be balanced against all of the other lots there in Mary Lake.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Can the minister let us know when the next territory-wide property assessment is due or going to happen?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** It's a two-year cycle. We go one year in the City of Whitehorse and one year in rural Yukon. 2017 was a rural tax year, which then led to the 2018 reassessed values for rural Yukon. That will happen again in 2020. The way it happens is that they don't reassess every single property with a visit. They randomly rotate various areas or, if there has been development in an area, they tend to

go to that area. They do a sampling and, over time, touch all properties. It's every other year for rural and Whitehorse.

Pardon me, Mr. Chair, if I could just correct what I said there. In one year, it is Whitehorse and all incorporated municipalities, then in the other years, it's rural and unincorporated.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Can the minister please provide us with the current status of work on the Ross River bridge and provide a timeline for its completion?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I recognize that the Ross River bridge is a very important bridge for that community. Ross River was the first community visit that I made with the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation. The Member for Pelly-Nisutlin was there alongside us for part of that visit to Ross River. We heard very clearly from the community that they wanted us to invest in rehabilitating and restoring that bridge. The last word I have is that the work is anticipated to be done sometime in the summer of this year. If I hear anything different, I will be sure to get a note back for the member opposite.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** There has been \$1.23 million transferred from ECO this year to Community Services for year 1 of the Old Crow multi-use complex project. Can the minister please confirm how this \$1.23 million will be spent?

How much has been spent to date on the design and scope of the project and how much is expected to be spent in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I know just a few things. I want to say that we're at the beginning of our conversation with Old Crow on this file. I'm slated to go up in a month or so to have a meeting with the chief and council and this is one of the topics that we will be discussing. I know that the multiplex is intended to include a space for elder and youth activities, community gatherings, childcare, weight training and a yoga studio.

The dollars were originally slotted under the Executive Council Office and when we landed here we saw that. I suggested to the Premier that this was not the right place to have infrastructure funding, especially community recreational infrastructure funding. I just advocated that this money get moved over. That's just happened under this budget.

I will say from conversations with the MLA that I wanted to talk with the community and with our infrastructure team to see whether there were possibilities of using the infrastructure funds from Canada because that would allow us to get the 75/25 dollars. I don't think originally how it came forward was that this was there. Of course, we have to be very careful because the projects need to be greenfield projects. I have to be careful because there are rules around the infrastructure fund. We're just exploring those opportunities right now, so I don't have timelines or anything more that I can give for the member opposite here today, but I am happy to report back after I have gone and had those initial meetings or as the department has those discussions with the community.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** During our department briefing, we see there is \$125,000 for repairs and upgrades for rec facilities

on an application-based funding. Does this mean first come, first served? Does it mean that someone is looking at the merits of the request? Has this fund already been applied for and allocated?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** What is typical is that our Sport and Recreation branch goes around and has conversations with all of the communities. You can sort of think of it like an intake where we go and we ask the question directly. Our Infrastructure Development branch — as they go around and have conversations, if recreation infrastructure is ever identified within a community then we alert the Sport and Recreation branch. That is a good conversation. We want to keep that expertise — the infrastructure expertise and the sport and recreation expertise — in dialogue with each other.

As far as I understand it, there has been no money spent for the upcoming year. We haven't started that fund yet, so I'm not sure whether the member opposite was talking about the 2017-18 dollars or the 2018-19. There has been no money spent in the 2018-19 budget, as of yet. We will be talking with the communities.

This is one of the things that I believe the team does very well. They reach out to the communities and are in conversation at all times with folks. That doesn't mean we don't miss things, but I do want to say, from my experience, that the team is very active in reaching out to communities and talking with them.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I have a few more specific questions around the upcoming capital projects within the communities. Looking through the government's five-year capital plan, I see no mention of some projects that we think should have been considered for construction or replacement in the upcoming years. Does the government have plans for the construction of a new fire hall in Mayo? Are there any plans to prioritize money for a new community hall in Beaver Creek?

The other community that has had a request for quite a few years was a new fire hall and EMS building in Carmacks.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I will apologize if I miss something here and I will do my best. The five-year capital plan — as I have tried to state several times, especially as we get further out in the years — needs to allow for the conversations to happen with our communities to have them issue priorities or let us know what their priorities are.

For example, the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan, which has \$600 million overall which, over 10 years, is a massive amount of money — we are just beginning the dialogue with our municipalities, with our First Nations and with our unincorporated communities to ask them about their priorities under those funding streams. And there are our own priorities as well. There will be some territorial projects under that funding stream.

This is why I say that the approach in the five-year capital plan has been to say, "Here is a list of select projects." Not every project will happen, and it has to allow us to adjust, as our partners ask us, as priorities change for them or they are identified. The way it works is to say that we have a dollar spend-out that we are targeting under those various categories,

and then we will populate it, based on the priorities as set by our communities.

I can talk about some of the specific projects that were listed. When we spoke with Beaver Creek and the folks there, and the First Nation, they did identify their community centre as a priority. They asked us to put it on the list of a range of priorities. Also, under recreation, we heard about the need to replace the swimming pool. That is what was identified to us.

In Mayo, we are in active conversation with them regarding replacing the fire hall. That one has progressed quite well, so I think we will see that — it is not in this year's budget, but it is coming up.

The Carmacks fire hall — they have identified it, but they also note that it may just be an upgrade that is required — so it is not necessarily a replacement. Again, you get down into the technical questions — I'm not the right person to answer them — but I hear these conversations: Is it better to add on to the fire hall to allow for new-sized fire trucks and new standards around those trucks or is it better to replace? If you're replacing, is it better to combine it with other facilities? Those are all conversations that are ongoing.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I see in the projects under the small communities fund that there are plans for construction of a water treatment facility in Burwash Landing.

Could the minister ensure that this project is completed in 2018-19 and that it has the funds in that envelope?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I can confirm that we have funds in the envelope for the Burwash water treatment plant. I can confirm that we are targeting March 2019. Let me rephrase that: We're hopeful for completion in early 2019; however, we have had ongoing dialogue with the Kluane First Nation around the tender process and the RFP. The timing, of course, is dependent on our resolving those in a timely fashion. As is always the case, the projects are subject to that dialogue and conversation. I have personally met to speak with chief and council three times on this issue. We have had very good dialogue about it and I'm hopeful that it will be moving ahead shortly.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Can the minister tell us what the status and plan going forward with respect to the comprehensive municipal grants are? Can the minister please provide his thoughts on the structure of funding provided to the communities currently?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The comprehensive municipal grant, as I stated in my opening remarks, is going up. In this budget, it is going up by — I think it's \$700,000, maybe more. Over the next years, I anticipate it will increase further.

The comprehensive municipal grant is so essential for our municipalities. It is the lifeline for many of our municipalities, and getting it right is very important. The member asked me about — and I thank her for the question — whether I was satisfied or supportive. What I want to say is that, when we discussed the comprehensive municipal grant with the Association of Yukon Communities and municipalities, I said to them, "You tell us how you want this formula derived."

We took the lead from our municipal partners to come up with a way to capture a range of issues: population within the

municipality, population that is just outside the municipality that relies on the municipality for their services, the tax base for buildings and a range of things that would go into the inputs to that formula.

I asked the Association of Yukon Communities whether they were generally satisfied with the formula. They said yes. They wanted to make some adjustments to it. We took their suggestions and we recently amended — it is not the structure of the formula, but the inputs or the variables of the formula, based on those recommendations that came from a table we created with the Association of Yukon Communities and the Community Affairs branch.

It will provide predictable funding over the next five years. By the way, a shout-out to the members opposite — they had added \$50,000 per community for structural fire. We have now taken that piece and built it into the base of the comprehensive municipal grant to ensure that it will go forward. When I look at the comprehensive municipal grant for our communities over the last years, other than that \$50,000, the growth of the comprehensive municipal grant has basically stagnated in the last several years. This is a good news story in that we will be getting more money to our municipalities. We know that they have to address a range of pressures, whether that is safe drinking water, or the treatment of water or their solid-waste facilities — we know that there are challenges in our communities, and we are happy that we were able to increase the grant.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I know the minister has said that he worked closely with the various communities, and I was wondering about the feedback that he got from the associations. You had mentioned that they were pleased with the allocations, but I was wondering if there was any more feedback, generally, with the new process.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for her great question. Let me put it this way: I recently had a meeting with the Association of Yukon Communities and I heard some concerns. They expressed concerns about how we communicate with them.

There was some misunderstanding. I think they were worried that, when the recommendations that came from the table went into our internal processes and went through how we amend regulations, and they just didn't hear back for a time, I think they got concerned that there were changes we were making to those regulations. That created some uncertainty for them.

Also, because of the way in which the formulas were being amended or the variables into those formulas were being amended, it meant that, for the first time in many years, the CMG was going to be rising. So when we took early projections about what we were looking at for this coming year, those had to be revised once we got actual numbers in the spring.

In the past, what would happen is that our municipalities would have the formula themselves and be able to run those projections, so there were concerns that were raised about those uncertainties and how the numbers moved about. Just this week, I have been in dialogue with the president of the

Association of Yukon Communities. In the fall, as our municipalities develop their budgets, and they have projections and if they're not always coming forward the way they were because the new comprehensive municipal grant is more variable than it has been in the past, then I have said to them, "Let's look at ways to create more certainty for you".

It's about ensuring that they can have an accurate projection for their budget process. For example, you need to know what's going on with your population and you need to know what's going on with assessments, but you can't have the actual numbers until you get to the spring.

One of the things we're trying to create is certainty for them, so they understand what's coming up. We want growth and predictability. If that becomes an issue — it may or may not, and we don't know yet — I'm happy to have more conversations with them about solutions to create more predictability. That's an ongoing dialogue. What I want to say is that I have heard various things from our communities and our municipalities. I have heard from them that they are happy that the comprehensive municipal grant is going up. I have heard from them that they are happy that the \$50,000 went into the base. I have heard from them that they were concerned when they didn't hear back from me for a period of time, and I have now made a commitment to reach out monthly to keep in contact with them. I have heard from them that they want to ensure that there's enough certainty going forward and the ability to review if there are other issues that arise. I'm happy to accommodate them on that.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The minister said he is visiting and speaking with the AYC. I was wondering if the AYC was informed of the formula changes before the government announced the community comprehensive grant amounts this year. If not, why not? Why were they not notified that the formula was going to change?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I will do my best to answer this question. Just a moment ago, I candidly stood up and talked about criticism that I have received, so I will do my best.

The Association of Yukon Communities was invited to a table where we had an equal number of members from the association and an equal number of members from the Community Affairs branch. That table sat to discuss how the variables of the formula could or should change. We took the recommendations from the table, which came from the Association of Yukon Communities partners. That's where we got the changes to the formula — from them.

There were two pieces that were adjusted once the actual numbers came forward. One was on a variable that affected only the City of Whitehorse. I have had a direct conversation with all of mayor and council about that. As I understand it, they are — well, I can let them speak. I will turn to mayor and council and ask them their views, and I will bring them back to this Legislature.

Finally, the other thing that we did was to — and I'm sorry if I'm getting too technical here, Mr. Chair, smooth out the changes so that they would be less volatile. So rather than using a one- or a two-year averaging, it was a five-year averaging that was used over some of the inputs. Was that

communicated to the Association of Yukon Communities before we announced the changes? Yes. I went to Teslin for the last Association of Yukon Communities meeting and I presented — well, staff presented those. I was there. That's where I heard that criticism, which I just shared with the House here. I have announced that CMG will be changing, but we will put out a formal announcement on it on Monday. So did it predate the announcement of the change of the regulations? Yes, it did.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The government said they sat at the table with the communities and everybody was putting recommendations forward from the Association of Yukon Communities and from government officials, et cetera. It said "some" of the input was accepted. Were the recommendations accepted or changed? Or were most of them accepted for the table and for the communities' well-being?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I hope from our perspective that this is all for the communities' well-being. I began by stating how important the comprehensive municipal grant is for our municipalities.

There was one thing that we didn't accept. I wasn't at the table. I have had conversations with people who were at the table, so I want to be careful — this is not first-hand information that I'm giving you. I'm reporting back what was reported to me.

I can even talk beyond the table because, even as I went to Teslin, we were asked. For example, there was a request to double the comprehensive municipal grant. That was a request and no, I wasn't able to support that request. We are seeing a significant increase in the comprehensive municipal grant, but the only thing that I asked our team to do was — I believe that there is a certain amount of increase that would be acceptable, and I asked us to keep it within that amount of increase. In terms of the variables on the formula, the direction that I gave the team, as far as I understand it — was to listen to the directions that came from the Association of Yukon Communities members.

In fact, it was also through early conversations with the Association of Yukon Communities — it was their suggestion that we maintain the formula in its general form, to which I also said that we would support that. What I'm trying to say here in the Legislature, for members opposite, is that the changes that we have in the comprehensive municipal grant are a direct result of the suggestions that came from our partners in our municipalities and also, in order to try to increase the comprehensive municipal grant.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Can the minister tell me when the next comprehensive municipal grant review begins? Is this an annual event?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The grant that has just been agreed to is a five-year agreement, but I have said directly to the president that I'm happy to start a review of it right away. So for example, we have a new funding agreement in place and if we need to review it now to make sure that it is working well, I'm happy to do that.

I have said, as well, that if we are going to start a more formal process around reviewing the grant, we could start a

couple of years ahead, but I also noted for the members, our municipal colleagues, that the timing of that grant, if it is a five-year agreement, would fall one year after the next territorial election, or one year after the next two municipal elections. Given that it's one year after — whatever dialogue and negotiation we have now, we need to respect that there will be future governments that may also want to have a dialogue and a conversation at that time.

I'm not going to pre-judge where the Yukon government and/or those municipal governments are at that point, but I'm happy to engage with them early.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Recently, Mayo raised concerns over the cost of the landfills and other communities or residents in the area using the local landfill. How many municipalities are looking for extra funds to manage landfills, including drilling and testing of wells?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** If the question is how many municipalities are looking for additional funds for landfills, I think my answer is all of them. I will try to give a more fulsome answer, but I think that is a fair answer. That is true and real.

If you are on a municipal government, it is real that our landfills are challenging — for all of us as a territory. We have moved from burning to sort of stockpiling to trying to separate, and we have to move further. One of the challenges around that is that, while most Yukoners are totally willing to do that work, some are not. The problem is, when you dump a barrel of oil in your landfill, it changes everything. We then need to be gate-keepers more to make sure that those types of infractions or incorrect practices are not taking place. Now we get into challenges, because to gate and person our landfills takes effort in our small communities.

I will also note the groundwater monitoring issue, and I can answer more about it. Let me just start by saying that is one of the reasons — and why I stood up and said it — that our comprehensive municipal grant is so important, because our communities really are struggling with these issues.

I have a whole raft of areas that can go — by the way, we also have another table which is created on solid waste. It is an advisory committee made up of members from our municipalities, both Whitehorse and the smaller communities. It is made up of folks from our Community Operations branch and also someone — I think — from the Department of Environment. They are working on an overall plan for the territory. I am anticipating that this work will be coming forward over the next month — or months — but pretty soon. They have been doing a lot of great work, and I would just give a shout-out to them.

Let me talk for a moment about Mayo. I will just talk about a few specific things and then see where more questions go and try to fill them in for the member opposite.

Mayo is, effectively, like a regional landfill. Just recently, Mayor Bolton said that he would like Mayo to be a regional landfill, and I said to my team, "Well, great. Let's have that conversation." I think that this conversation has gone around a couple of times. I was recently in Mayo, and I had a very good conversation with mayor and council about the landfill and

about the issues that they have there. One of the issues that he described to me is the pressures that have been mounting with, for example, mining activity — or industrial activity, generally, but mines. I turned around and had a conversation with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and said, “Hey, let’s go and talk with some of these mining companies right now before they get up and running and start using this landfill.”

I just bumped into Mayor Bolton on the street here in Whitehorse yesterday, and we had a quick conversation about this very issue. The notion is that, rather than a mine opening up and then having to close down the landfill because it fills up quickly, and it’s becoming a massive cost to our municipalities, let’s have the conversation up front with all of our industrial folks, our mines from placer up to quartz, to say, “This is the landfill here that you say you’re going to be using; we need to talk about what pressures are going to come to bear as a result of your mine and make sure that we’re investing in those landfills to accommodate that kind of activity.” We have even discussed how to make sure that this works across the board. It’s an important conversation. It’s an active conversation.

There’s one more that I’ll add — and I apologize to the member opposite for speaking at length. It’s about the designated material regulations. We need to get moving. We have two that are in the works in front of us right now. There’s good conversation happening with industries about those two, but that’s really just the start of a list that needs to grow. The one that I would like to see next — and I’ll state it here in the Legislature — is waste oil and oil containers. We need to find a way to get those out of our landfill and to deal with those costs up front.

When I look at those costs, the cost of dealing with oil in the way we deal with it sometimes now is more than the cost of the oil. It’s quite something to imagine the cost of dealing with diverting it — and if it gets into our landfills, the cost goes way up. The problem is that the cost just gets pushed off. Municipalities and all of our communities now understand that this is just not sustainable.

We need to find ways to address that stuff up front, and the best way to do that is when we, as consumers, are out there purchasing the stuff so there is the ability to make sure we are going to divert those materials from our landfills and save us costs in the long run.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** You answered my Mayo regional landfill question.

Where is Community Services on accepting liability for municipality-operated landfills? Have they entered into any discussions with any municipality on landfill liability?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** Liabilities of our landfills — this is definitely a conversation held at the table with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. I don’t know of any situation where we said that we are taking on those liabilities. I do know that the way I will try to frame it is that we are aware of the concerns and are trying to work with municipalities. We have a responsibility, for example, in all of the unincorporated areas and the landfills.

By the way, just a shout-out to the Marsh Lake solid waste transfer station — I can’t remember if it was at the electronics meeting, but someone said that it’s a really great facility and I said, “Yes, I completely agree.”

We have similar issues in our unincorporated transfer stations. We understand the problem. What I want to say is that we’re trying to work in partnership with our municipalities. We’re not abandoning them to their fate — “It’s your problem, deal with it.” No, we’re trying to see it as a whole-of-territory approach and to look for solutions that are smart and thinking for the long-term.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Could the minister please give us an update on where Community Services is in regard to tire and recycling fees?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** My teeth ache on this one. I want to be able to give you an answer today. I don’t have an answer yet. I know that our team — both the Department of Environment and the Department of Community Services — is working very closely with the industry.

I will say again some things that I have said here in the Legislature. We heard some great suggestions from the tire, trucking and busing industries about how the tires are categorized and how they are recycled — and being smart about this. There are some really great wins that I hope we can get.

Just a bit of a story, Mr. Chair — one thing that happens right now is that, when tires are done, often they will show up at our tire retailers; from there, they end up in our landfills; and from there, they sort of have to get moved around to be careful about fire risk. So they get shoved around in the dirt, they get snow and ice on them, and they get heavy and dirty. Then we go pick them up with BobCats and stick them into a truck, and you’re shipping gravel and ice. It just boggles the mind. In fact, some people are worried about taking them to the landfill so they drive them out of town to some of our landfills, like Marsh Lake and Mount Lorne, and then we turn around and pay to drive them back. There are some real inefficiencies in that system — some massive inefficiencies.

The tire companies — rightly so — talked about them. We talk about them. Everybody points at them and says: “Why is this happening?” I think: “Exactly, why is this happening?” So we need a system that is going to be — I just said the word earlier — smart. Maybe we could, given the fact that the tires are collected at the tire retailers, take them from there and take them Outside. Our point of contact is Edmonton, Alberta, I think, where they are recycled. We’re working hard to get those solutions. I hope to come back shortly with the designated material regulations on that. I will try to share that information here with the folks in the Legislature.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** There’s a \$450,000 increase for handling and shipping of recycled tires and e-waste. Does this include tires and e-waste transport from the communities? Are they included in these shipments?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** To answer the Member for Porter Creek North’s question, it absolutely does include the communities. It’s really about the backlog. As we get toward

introducing our designated material regulations, which are going to switch so that we pay a bit of money up front to deal with the recycling of the tire at the end of its life — but we have all of these tires in our landfills across the Yukon. That money is to try to help us get that backlog so we catch up to day one on the new system.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** There were two meetings that occurred earlier this year on the proposed tire and e-waste tax. However, only select people in businesses were invited. Can the minister tell us if there are any further meetings scheduled that would be open to the public for comment?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I'll have to check for some clarification for the member opposite on meetings. I just want to be careful. We held two public meetings — one on tires and one on e-waste. Over the two nights, I think that 100 to 150 people came out. I would like to acknowledge the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. She was there both nights. We heard a lot from the folks at those two big public meetings.

At those meetings, the industry asked for some sit-downs and some direct engagement, and an opportunity to provide some information across, which we accepted and followed through with. I'm not sure if the member is asking about those meetings — at the public meetings, we were asked to do specific meetings to engage with the industry — or if she's referring to the first two meetings, which we did advertise and tried our darnedest to get a lot of folks from all across the territory to come to.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I attended one of the meetings as well.

The Premier previously stated that he would like to see a more equitable system, one that is in line with other jurisdictions. Can the minister confirm whether this government has decided on whether to adopt a system that is in line with other jurisdictions?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The work is underway. We're not quite there yet, but I will say that there were great suggestions from the industry about how the systems could utilize the types of systems — for example, I think with tires, it's mostly Alberta, and with e-waste, it's mostly British Columbia — and acknowledge the strength of utilizing those systems.

So, definitely, I can say that, having attended the same meetings, having those conversations and having one-on-one meetings with almost all the tire retailers in town — we went to their shops, sat down with them, had a conversation with them — I think they made some good suggestions.

My colleague, the Minister of Environment, and I have had conversations with our staff who are working on this issue to direct them to consider those systems. We have to wait to get the proposals back, but I am anticipating that there will be improvements to the system, based on the suggestions that have come from industry.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The city recently included lots in Cowley Creek as part of their rezoning exercise. We were wondering if this land is owned by Government of Yukon. If so, when will the lots be available for purchase?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I think some of these questions may have come up last year as well. What I want to say is that

this doesn't really pertain to Community Services. I will have to get those questions directed to Energy, Mines and Resources because I believe those are the folks who would deal with this. I am just letting the member opposite know that Energy, Mines and Resources would be the right place for those types of questions, I believe.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** We were just saying that it was in the region of Whitehorse, so we assumed it was Community Development.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I'm just passing across how it is described to me by officials. We do lot development — in particular, within Whitehorse — but the disposition of the land is done by Energy, Mines and Resources. It is not done by us as a department.

I'm not trying to push off the question. I'm just trying to make sure it gets directed to the right folks.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Something completely different — what is happening with EMS and policies related to deployment by helicopter?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I'm wondering if I could ask the member opposite to just clarify. There are two possibilities about where I might provide some information. One is sort of with our SOMET team — that is an acronym, Mr. Chair, and in a moment I'll get the right phrase for it. I know it ends as "medical extraction team". That might be where the question is going or it might be, for example, when we have to go into the north with EMS. I would ask the member opposite if she can help me to know how to provide information.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The question was handed to me, so you and I will flub through it. The concerns were around restrictions around preventing volunteers and staff when there is an EMS deployment by helicopter. I am wondering if there was maybe training that needs to be provided to EMS paramedics and EMS volunteers for helicopter use.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I will do my best to try to provide an answer, and then I will try to have some more conversations with the department to make sure I get the details right here.

We have a group called the special operations medical extraction team. They are a very specialized group of volunteers. We give them specialized training. They are trained to do backcountry-type stuff and to go in with helicopters from time to time. We also have other folks trained in the department who are trained on helicopters — for example, wildland fire — but not all of our Emergency Medical Services folks are trained to do helicopter rescues.

The issue is that we need to make sure that we are safe as we go to try to provide rescue operations or services for citizens, or even visitors. It is sometimes challenging because Yukoners love the backcountry. We love to get out there, and we often are in situations where there is risk. I know our SOMET team has done some great work lately. That is not to say that there isn't room for improvement, but I am always amazed by what they are able to do. We are very lucky to have them. They are volunteers and some of that training has definitely saved lives out there — my thanks to them.

All I am going to say at this point is that if we are doing helicopter-type work, we have to make sure that there is appropriate training. We can't provide it for everybody. You need to ensure that it is of a certain standard so that we can ensure their safety, because if we don't ensure the safety of our own team, then we put more people at risk, and we don't want to do that.

**Chair:** Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** Disagreed.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Apparently, this was for high risk with EMS paramedics and also low-risk for near community rescues in rural Yukon. Thank you for your answer, minister.

Does the EMS still have a feet-dry policy? If so, what steps are being taken to change this to allow the use of boats, if needed?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member for her question. If I had received this last week when we started, I would have had the Assistant Deputy Minister of Protective Services and I might have been able to give you a direct answer. I will just take the question and try to provide it as a legislative return or some other way to get information back to the members opposite.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the officials for coming in and helping us get through this section, and thank you, minister.

**Chair:** Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

**Ms. White:** I thank my colleague from Porter Creek North for her line of questioning. I welcome the officials here and, of course, the minister. I'll just get right into it.

Some of the concerns I had when we were talking about the Auditor General's report had a lot to do with four departments: Environment, Community Services, Highways and Public Works, and EMR. One of the highlights that was put out was that the hazard mapping team was a really important thing that happened in conjunction with the Yukon College a number of years ago. Hazard mapping meant that, for example, in the community of Mayo, where you're next to a river, it was able to highlight areas that might be at risk of flooding. It mapped in communities where there were areas of permafrost that you wouldn't want to build on because of however deep it was — or all those things. Hazard mapping was really important for community development, because

you were able to look at what the risks were before you made the plans to go forward.

The one thing it did say in the Auditor General's report is that only eight communities had the mapping done and that it was on a by-request basis. One of the questions I asked when we had the ability to have the conversation with the officials was: How do we proceed forward from there? It was really important. So one of the things I want to know from the minister is if he recognizes the value in hazard mapping, if there's a way to incorporate what we've done before in the other eight communities, and if there are conversations with other communities, whether they would like it — or how he views that hazard mapping.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** With the indulgence of the member opposite, I'm going to try to just give a couple of quick answers to previous questions to get them on the record, and then I'll move on. I meant to try to catch her before the member opposite popped up.

First of all, with the wet-feet policy, I will just read out from a response that was passed on to me from the officials. So, yes, for safety reasons, EMS attendants may not swim to retrieve a person from deep or moving water. However, EMS responders may go into water that is up to their knees or in a boat or on a dock to retrieve a patient, provided they are wearing one of the personal flotation devices that are provided in all ambulances. A personal flotation device must be worn by any EMS practitioner who works within three metres of the high waterline of any body of water. I hope that answers that question regarding the wet-feet policy.

There was one other thing I wanted to try to add for clarity around the list that I passed on through the legislative return about the projects.

I talked about the envelope approach, so what I want to say is that this is the list of projects that we are initiating this year and that we are going forward with. If any of these projects is delayed for some reason and we are at risk of lapsing money, that is when we will pull into play those projects that are next in the queue. I'm trying to clarify that everything that is on this list are projects that the department will be working to realize this year.

Turning to the question from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King about hazard mapping — I suspect the member knows that I used to be the science advisor for the climate change research group at the college. I was there over the years when we initiated the hazard mapping program through most of those eight communities — and yes, I wasn't actively involved on the projects myself, but I was working closely with the team that was there. Yes, I will also say that I believe hazard mapping is a great thing. I want to be careful to suggest, though, that — it is one tool of many tools that we have to be looking at. For example, hazard mapping talks about sort of the geology of the place, but you also need to be careful about things like fire. Fire can be hard to predict — where it will come in — so there is always a suite of issues that go into planning a community.

I have had a couple of conversations — the funding that came for that hazard mapping, I would have to look back at it,

but I'm pretty sure it originated through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, or whatever the incarnation of that department was at the time. I have had two conversations with Minister Goodale, talking about risks in our communities and how we can do preventive work around those. I know in talking with the department that they agreed to look for funding sources to try to identify an opportunity to do more hazard mapping. Again, I don't expect it would be us who would undertake those types of projects. I think we would turn to our academic partners who do that type of work. I support the notion that this is helping our communities to know where risks lie and how to plan.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for that answer. I would suggest that in the territory that we live in, one of the biggest risks that we face is wildfire. Also easily probably the biggest effect or cause that we would have for climate change is if we went up in flames. The amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that we would release is a big deal.

When we talk about hazard mapping — so we can talk about floods, risk mitigation and management — the other question becomes for wildfire. Obviously, we do things like firesmarting around homes and around communities — probably not half as much as the department would like to try to do because of financial restraints. When we talk about wildfire, it is a big risk. I just wanted to know if the department — so preventive measures obviously are things like FireSmart, but is there mapping? Are there predictions? Do we recognize high-risk areas near communities? Do we recognize high-risk areas along transport corridors? How does the department mitigate the risks of wildfire?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The department folks do have a very good understanding of the fundamental behaviours of wildfire and how the interface with our communities exists, but I need to always temper that with this knowledge or words that wildfire is very unpredictable. You can have a lot of foreknowledge and you still can't understand all of the risks ahead of time, nor the fire behaviours.

Each spring, I'm given a briefing by the department of Wildland Fire Management about what the risk level is and where those risks lie. We have mapping which shows high-risk areas. Some of it isn't just where fire is more likely to happen. There are all sorts of dynamics just around valleys and we tend to live along the valleys and so that's one of the challenges, and predominant winds, et cetera. It's also about where the relationship with people and roads is, because if the wildfire happens in a wilderness zone we just — great, that's part of the whole process of wildland fire.

I want to just for the record note one thing: In the process of our natural systems, fires, which are part of that natural system overall — we don't think of them as causing climate change because the trees also grow and also absorb the carbon, so we think of that as a cycle. In that natural cycle, we don't view it as contributing to climate change, but there are real questions about the risks increasing due to incidence of lightning, due to increases in winds and due to periods when we have dry spells. Some winters, we don't have a lot of snowfall. Some summers, we don't have a lot of rain and then

the risk goes up. Also, the shoulder seasons of our fire seasons are extending a little earlier and a little later.

So what are we doing? We recognize that — first of all, just a shout-out to all of our wildland fire crews both within YG and the First Nation teams that are out there. They do a lot to keep us safe over the year, and there is risk. Wildfire is one of the most significant risks that we face as a territory, and FireSmart is definitely a portion of that. There is other work, as well, and I alluded to it yesterday when we were in debate here in the Legislature. The phrase that we would use is "landscape management", and I think it might have been the Member for Lake Laberge who pointed out that before we ever get to those things, we need to be in a lot of conversation with First Nations because they are landowners; it is their traditional territory. We need to be in conversation with our communities and we need to be in conversation with the environmental organizations, et cetera. There is a whole suite of work that would have to happen to get to what would be landscape management — not just the funds to do it.

I just mentioned in my last response that I have had conversations with Minister Goodale. I have identified this to him because some of the work that has been happening nationally is around flooding. I have said to him, "Hey, in the west and the north, it is wildfire. That is our big issue." Flooding, of course, is an issue as well. It is not that this isn't a problem, but we need to be finding ways to invest in prevention. I have had some of those conversations. I will wait for further questions to try to talk about this more, and I am sure that the member opposite will have more. I will just leave it there for now and follow up as she asks.

**Ms. White:** One of my concerns is when we talk about hazards — when we talk about flooding or fire — and the minister talks about federal funds and accessing federal funds to look at doing programs or look at moving toward solutions or problem-solving possible catastrophes, to be honest, that raises some concerns. If it is all dependent upon federal funding, then my question is: What happens when something happens and there hasn't been the federal funding put into place? Could he elaborate on that?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** It is not that we won't act without federal funding. On the other hand, there is also this overall pressure to be careful with our spending as a government. While we are dealing with the notion of trying not to grow government, at the same time I am looking at ways to get at it within our existing resources. The thing that I will say is that when I talk about the federal government, it is because in emergencies we often look to our larger governments to help us get over those sorts of hills. I completely agree with the member opposite that the responsibility to work to mitigate those risks is ours, and we are working toward that. I tried to point out that it is not as simple as trying to just go do it, because we also need to have that conversation with Yukoners to make sure that we are ready.

For example, if we're talking about here, in this part of the territory, I would look to the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes forest resources management plan, which is in development, about where we might identify places to reduce



risk. In that conversation, I have approached the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to get a briefing on that plan and to see how it is looking with a notion of risk abatement. That is not whether we get additional funds or not; it's about working with what we have to try to reduce the risk.

**Ms. White:** I appreciate what the minister has just said, but when it comes down to it, what is in place for now? What's in place for next season? What's in place for the season after? There has been a lot of talk. So with the presentation about wildfire that both you and my colleague for Whitehorse Centre went to — and then there has been the conversation from community fire chiefs asking what the plan is, it is not being shared with us from government. That has been raised. It is being raised as a concern. Show us the plan.

Maybe the minister can talk about what the plan is for a catastrophic wildfire and how the community fire departments would be involved — so the interface between the two — and then maybe he can let us know when those conversations are going to happen with the regional fire chiefs.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for the question. It is a really important conversation. I appreciate it.

I said then, and I will try to say here again, that we could do a briefing and get, for example, the head of our emergency measures operations to come in and give a briefing. I offered, as well, to the media that they get a briefing.

I want to be careful here. It was one of our fire chiefs who came forward and said this. I have had several long and good conversations with that chief. He is concerned and he would like to see more action. He knows that there is an overall plan, but he would like to see more of the details — he would refer to it as a “tactical plan” — like how it would work with his crew in the interface. We did sit down with him and other fire chiefs in January and we did a desktop exercise with them.

I am going to try to give the answer as best I can here. I hope you will understand that we have technical experts who can give better answers than I can.

It depends on the emergency. That is not in any way trying to hide from the challenges. If it is — I'll just use a wildfire, which builds up and comes toward Golden Horn, because that is where the fire chief who has raised these concerns is. If it was a wildfire that was coming up either the Carcross valley or the Alaska Highway valley, where I live, and coming toward Whitehorse — in other words, a south wind was pushing it toward the north — and threatening Whitehorse, then the Emergency Measures Organization would be in the lead. Underneath them, one of the main sub-branches would be Wildland Fire Management, which is out to respond. Underneath that level would be the Fire Marshal's Office, and underneath that level would be our folks who run the community fire halls at the interface. So there is a structure. We also have elements on the side that would be dealing with how to inform the public — if there was to be an evacuation, how to evacuate the public. So all folks spin up.

I believe it was two weeks ago that there was a desktop exercise done with the City of Whitehorse around this particular drill and doing a tabletop exercise. We have asked

Joint Task Force North, when they come here for Operation Nanook in 2019 — and a shout-out to them. In my very first meeting with them, I asked that they please do a wildland fire exercise and evacuation.

There is work that is ongoing. We seek to make continuous improvements to the strategy. So there is an overarching strategy, and then there are scenarios that play out underneath it. Each one of them describes how the various agencies would be informed — including, for that matter, the political branch. Our job is to declare an emergency and then get out of the way. Those scenarios are there and they exist.

When I responded to the Leader of the Third Party, I had just asked the department to be very clear that we do have such a plan. The answer was yes. I gave that answer. It does exist. Does it need to be updated? My answer for that will be always — it is like the answer about municipalities wanting more money for their landfills. Yes, it needs work to be updated. We have just had some new changes in staff, and I know that I met our new director of EMO for the first time on the same night that the Leader of the Third Party and I were there to listen to that talk on wildland fire.

I know that there is some effort being put toward this, including how to make sure that our volunteer fire departments, including the chief of the Golden Horn fire department, are engaged — part of that dialogue and discussion — and how we can take his suggestions and work them into the mix.

**Ms. White:** Again, thank you for that answer.

It comes down to those things. If the information exists within the department and it doesn't get shared, then it is as if the information doesn't exist at all, because people don't understand what steps have been put in place. For example, this would be a lovely one to get an organizational chart about. If there was a disaster, what entity would take over? How would that look and how would that flow out?

In that same breath — I think I forgot to ask in the briefing — an organizational chart for the entire department would be delightful. I will just add that.

When the department has the information internally, or even a rough plan, I would suggest that, for people who work within their individual communities, even having an idea of what the rough plan would be is more of a comfort than not knowing what the plan would look like at all.

In the last number of years, there have been lots of conversations about emergency preparedness. For me, one of the biggest parts that came to the front is that, as soon as I represented a seniors complex with people with mobility challenges, it became a lot more real for me. I can go online and I can look at the yellow document that went to everybody's mailbox and it talks about having 72 hours of stuff.

The one thing — and this is not just for this minister — there were lots of conversations with the previous Minister of Community Services about what would happen in an emergency.

When you go on the website for emergency preparedness, it doesn't actually give you an idea. It says that you should have your own plan. Great; you should have a plan.

I worked downtown on September 11, 2001. I remember when downtown was evacuated. Jim Tredger was a principal, and he talked about needing a school evacuated and the sheer panic that existed downtown. There was a radio announcement and someone came through — I was at the Qwanlin Mall at the time — and said to close up and go home. I was like, "I live closer to the airport than I do here. Okay, so I'm going to go home." But that was an example of an evacuation of downtown.

My colleague for Whitehorse Centre — her daughters went to school. They were in school downtown.

When we talk about emergency preparedness, part of it is: Where are people supposed to go?

For example, when you talk about seniors living in government-run facilities — whether they're independently living through Yukon Housing Corporation or whether they're in Copper Ridge or the soon-to-be Whistle Bend facility — I can't even imagine what evacuating 150 people with high mobility issues would look like. I can't imagine what would happen to the three floors of seniors at 600 College Drive if they had to be evacuated, or, for example, if the elevator didn't run. These are the questions when we talk about emergency preparedness. What do those plans look like?

I understand that we're surrounded on all sides by different obstacles — whether it was fire or flooding — no matter what it is. But it's one of those things that — in the City of Whitehorse, if there's an emergency and you are able, you should go here. It does actually say in the pamphlet that, if phones aren't working and you have an emergency, you should go to the fire station, which is downtown. I'm not sure that's where you would want to —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Ms. White:** Well, except for it talks about the City of Whitehorse.

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Ms. White:** I appreciate that. The minister has just said that one fire station is downtown, which I appreciate, but it doesn't specify. There isn't a plan that someone can read and say, "I'm a new parent, I have children, and I want to know what I need to do. I have my 72-hour kit; it lives in the car. If something happens, where am I supposed to go?"

I don't know what the answer is. I understand that the plans could be all over the place. I understand that there could be 7,000 different plans. But in that same breath, in an emergency, if someone is trying to figure out what the first point is, you can go online and look, and it tells you what your responsibilities are for 72 hours. That is fine, but it doesn't say that this is the larger plan.

This is the territory's plan in case of emergency. It doesn't talk about that, so maybe if the minister could expand on how he believes his department can kind of tackle those questions or what he feels is their responsibility or is not their responsibility. I would appreciate that.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I'm going to try to deal with some of the specifics and then I am going to also try to deal with the generalities of the question. Again, I will emphasize that I think all Yukoners, including all members of this House, want to make sure that we are doing our best to ensure safety and preparedness.

By the way, I did ask the department to make sure to get an organization chart for the members opposite, including the list of FTEs. I have heard the Leader of the Third Party and we discussed it. I am sorry I don't have it for the member opposite here today yet, but we will have it shortly.

There is a business continuity plan for each and every department. Under Education, there will be a business continuity plan and each school will have an emergency response plan. Under the Department of Health and Social Services, for example, there will be a chunk of the plan and somewhere underneath that will be this seniors facility. I don't know — I can't answer about every one because I have not done that and checked for myself, but that's part of the plan.

The challenge is going to become — because I know what people want. I know they want me to say to them: "Please go here", wherever "here" is. But when I ask officials this very direct question, they say: "Don't say that." We're not going to tell you to go to "A" or "B" — to a certain place — because even when you do it as a practice, you have to be careful because people think, "Yes, that's where I go." But if it isn't and if that's where the emergency is, or that's where the danger is or the risk, I am advised by officials: "Please don't say that".

I have said it and I will say again: I'm very, very happy to ask officials to come in and to talk very directly with you as leaders about what this looks like, so that they can give as much understanding as they give to me.

I will also say that when I talk to officials, while I don't believe we have prepared for every eventuality — man, 9/11 was so out of the ordinary from the types of things we would try to imagine to plan for; it's hard. Whereas a wildfire is something that is in our rubric and we understand that this is a real risk, as well as flooding. Each one of those emergencies — when we think about them, we talk about the pace at which that emergency can overtake a community and how you need to be prepared for those realities.

I want to talk just for a second and to give some examples of the ways in which we would try to get information out. It isn't just, "Sorry, we gave you your little yellow brochure; you're done." No, that's not it at all. There is a part of the plan that talks about using our broadcasters to put it over the airwaves and to talk about that emergency. We have the authority to take over those broadcasters — not as in a coup or anything like that, but to assume the broadcast and put the message out there.

Yesterday, I got a text message. Here it reads: "As of April 6, compatible devices will receive emergency alerts from the government alert-ready service. Alerts will notify you of possible life-threatening situations that need immediate attention."

Now, I don't think that my mother-in-law — who doesn't live in one of those homes — but she is not going to get a text. She wouldn't know what to do with it. So that technology won't reach everybody, but it will reach a lot of people. So we will use every avenue, right down to knocking on doors and going door to door, if that is what we need to do. So I can't tell the member opposite that people should go to a specific place. I am being told — and I trust the people who are telling me this — that you don't say that.

I want to provide assurances to Yukoners that this is a real issue. We are working to make sure those plans are as up to date as possible. I have flagged it with almost every group that I have worked with to say that this is something that we need to be preparing for. I'm trying to impress that we take it seriously, but I'm not able to deliver the answer about where you should go, because I'm told that we can't answer it until we understand what the nature of that emergency is.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for the most comprehensive answer yet to date in my six-plus years of being in the Legislative Assembly. That is a plan — to say these are the ways that you are going to communicate with people is a plan, but I don't know if that plan has been communicated outwards — and that is my point.

In my emergency brochure that I was looking at, it doesn't talk about: "We will contact you in these different ways." So I appreciate there is a plan. That sounded like a plan, but that's not communicated. On the emergency preparedness website, it doesn't say that. I will stand corrected, if that's the case — I am on that website right now — but that is a plan. That is the most comprehensive answer I have had yet about a plan.

Then my question becomes: In Yukon Housing buildings, for example, why would we not have a little poster up that says, "In case of emergency, these are the different things that will happen for people to contact you." There are ways to let people know how they will be reached. There are ways for people to know that this is how information will be communicated.

The one thing that I would say is that, when CBC lost the tower capability to transmit on AM radio — one way that people communicated from across the entire territory was through news on CBC AM. Not everyone has the capacity to get FM radio, so that is something to consider.

The point I'm trying to make is that the minister has just said there is a plan, but that has not been communicated outside, so I thank him for that. In all of the previous Community Services ministers, no one said that and that was all it would take was to say: "There are plans in place. We don't want to give you locations because situations can change." I appreciate that.

The text message — I got one as well. I was quite fascinated by that — that is fantastic — but that is a plan and that's great. It's not on the website for emergency preparedness. My point is that the plan does exist, because the minister has just said it. The officials are here nodding that the plan exists but, if it's not communicated to the public, there

might as well not be a plan, because people don't understand what it is.

That is my point. I thank the minister for the most comprehensive answer ever to my emergency preparedness question — that there are plans and that they will be communicated with people, as required. I do thank him for that.

Just as an aside, it does say in the pamphlet that if your phone doesn't work, in Whitehorse, you should go to a City of Whitehorse fire hall. It does actually say that.

Mr. Chair, I'm going to change paths here a bit. I'm going to go to contaminated sites and landfills, specifically. In the performance plan for March 2018, which the Premier tabled, on page 3, it says that Yukoners' communities are healthy and vibrant. One of the things on the bottom of that yellow table says: remediate contaminated sites in communities across the Yukon. I understand that Community Services is not Environment or EMR, but Community Services is responsible for landfills. In the Public Accounts from 2016-17, on page 88, it says on the top: landfill sites. It has changed a bit, because now there are 29 active, decommissioned or abandoned landfill sites that are outside of incorporated communities, and therefore, are the responsibility of government. The government is the sole operator of these landfills. Twenty-three of these sites are subject to the *Environment Act* solid-waste regulations, which include requirements for closure and abandonment of a dump. The remaining five sites are old abandoned dumps that are not subject to the solid-waste regulations.

The thing that I think is really important is that it talks about the liability. In 2016, the liability was at \$10,204,000; now in the Public Accounts from 2016-17, it's almost up to \$12 million. It's increasing. This was from March of last year. So what is the liability for the landfill sites in Yukon now?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for her questions. I'm just going to back up and go to the first ones, and I'll try to move forward through them.

Public education around emergency response and how we work as folks in our territory is critical — I totally agree. I thank her for her suggestions about how to help inform Yukoners. Risks come and go at different times of the year. For earthquakes, it's any time of the year; for flooding, it's spring and fall; and for wildfire, it's spring. A lot of our risks grow in the spring. We have been planning for some time now to do a big public information campaign. I think it's going to be early in May. That's in the works. I totally support that we need to get the information out there.

I will also acknowledge that I recently learned that we were trying to get push notifications out on cellphones and now it happens — even when we do it, we have to always do it. In other words, the public education piece is an ongoing and necessary thing to be doing throughout time because the challenge is that as folks we forget. We just sort of lose track of some of those things, so you need to keep it fresh and you need to be talking to Yukoners all the time.

It was an interesting suggestion about information within the buildings, because I know that in our buildings we require

that there are notices put up to say how to get out of the building if there is an immediate risk like a fire or something going on. Maybe it's good to say, "Here is where to go for more information" if it's a bigger risk that we're seeing. I'm all about trying to empower our citizens with knowledge. I think that's very important.

Moving on to liabilities, Mr. Chair — I don't know the specific answer about why they've gone up. I'm not surprised, let me say that. Even though we have stopped and we have been trying to pull hazardous materials out of our landfills, there are still hazardous materials getting into our landfills, so it's not a happy situation that we're in. For specific answers around the amounts that are there, I would need to turn to my colleague, the Minister of Environment. I know that they have a system where they book all of the liabilities over time and a requirement about how they address them on a priority basis and some sort of matrix that they use to identify whatever is next on the list. I will just have to defer to her. I can try to see when Environment is getting up. That would be a time that we could get more information. I don't know the specific answer about landfills but I am happy to try to get back to the member opposite.

**Ms. White:** Conveniently enough, I am also prepared for Environment, so I can ask my own questions in that department. Who is responsible for landfills outside of incorporated communities?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The Department of Community Services is responsible for the landfills in our unincorporated areas, but there is a contaminated sites branch or group within the Department of Environment that deals with those pieces. I will just check. If there are more questions, I will try to clarify as best I can.

**Ms. White:** I guess one of the questions then becomes: If under the management of Community Services, these landfills in unincorporated communities are increasing their liabilities, what's happening? Why is that cost going up? What has been done differently? Can the minister give that one a try?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I'm unaware of any sort of specific thing that has happened. The only thing that the department has let me know is that we're trying to consolidate how solid waste is managed within the territory. That has led to some closures of some of our smaller sites. That may then require a booking of liability that was not there before. Again, I will have to try to dive a little deeper to get a specific answer about what's happening.

We don't know of any practice that has changed. We have been doing the groundwater monitoring for several years. You have to continue the groundwater monitoring even after you have closed the site. I can't answer the specific question about what has happened that has led to that additional liability. I will just have to dive a little deeper in the department to try to get an understanding of that.

**Ms. White:** When the minister comes up for air from that exploration, I would be interested in the answer.

One of the issues, just to put it on the record, so that within the department the question has been asked: Why is the

liability higher and why is it getting higher? It's not necessarily that there may not be an easy-to-report answer right now, but maybe it's something about looking into the systems and how they're working.

One of my favourite topics of conversation is waste management, waste diversion, recycling and all those things. It turns out that it's something I really enjoy — a plug out that, if anyone in the City of Whitehorse gets the opportunity to do a tour of the waste management facility in Whitehorse, it's well worth it. It's important to know that, when the government changed and created transfer stations throughout the territory, the transfer then came to the City of Whitehorse, which has been on the receiving end of that. Then, of course, when things are ready for recycling, they move south.

I just want to acknowledge that both the Minister of Community Services and the Minister of Environment were at the two recent meetings — not recent anymore; probably in January — about the extended producer responsibility, so talking about the recycling of both tires on one night and electronics on the next night. I would also say that I appreciated seeing both of them there because, in all my time in this Legislative Assembly, it was the first time I had seen ministers at public meetings that they were directly responsible for. They were referred to as "keynote listeners".

One thing — when we talk about waste, we can use the example of the Robinson facility. The example is that someone showed up there with four coin-operated washing machines to dump off. The question could be asked, "Do you live in the area? Do you live in Mount Lorne?" The answer was, "No, but you can't do anything about it." So then four coin-operated laundry machines — which are obviously not something you have in your house; obviously for a business — were dropped off.

It is the same thing when a truck shows up with many mattresses. They're getting dropped off because it's a free facility, as opposed to where you would have to pay a fee at the Carcross facility or in the Whitehorse facility.

Some of the things that we're seeing, I think — and this is where I fundamentally believe that education is important. People have to understand the cost of our garbage, because it does cost. It is not free. It is not free to get rid of a bed; it is not free to get rid of a washer — and all the reasons why are important.

One of the things I heard at the tire meeting, when there was a discussion about what avenue you should take, was that we should look toward either BC or Alberta to start. That would be a good starting point before we incorporate our own cost.

I wanted to know where that process was, because it has been ongoing. I think I went to my first meeting in 2015, so it has been going on for awhile. If the minister can just talk a bit about that — both the tires and the electronics — and where we are in that process, and when we might actually see how the designated materials list grows.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** My teeth are still aching. This was a similar question to one I had earlier today. You could sell

me the whole seat, but I will only need the edge. I really want to see this moved forward.

First of all, let me thank the member opposite for her comments. Waste costs money — it costs, and you pay for it now or you pay for it later. In fact, I think the way we pay for it most is through those environmental liabilities that we were discussing earlier. Even inadvertently, when we put kitchen food waste into our garbage and it ends up creating leachates and pulls out heavy metals, it just costs money. The more we can sort and divert and find beautiful reuses for materials locally — the more we can find those reuses locally — then the better we are.

I would like to give a shout-out to some of our — for example, the Mount Lorne dump — I still call it the “Mount Lorne dump,” but I probably shouldn’t do that — the Mount Lorne transfer station, because they have done a great job at educating the public and getting everyone on board to divert more.

Yes, I am frustrated — like all Yukoners are frustrated — when we see the wastefulness of stuff getting shipped out to our small community facilities, to have to then pay taxpayer dollars to bring those things back. It is completely frustrating. We do have to get this sorted out, for sure.

The public meetings were on January 9 and 10. The member opposite was right that they were for tires one night, and I will say electronics and electrical the next night. There were some great suggestions. Let me acknowledge again that, around tires, the model that we’re looking at is Alberta for the categorization of the systems. It is especially good for dealing with the medium tires, the tractor trailer tires and the bus tires — that size of tire — because, generally speaking — and the industry said straight up that those tires get reused all the time. They get shipped out to Alberta. They get recapped and they come back. They come off and they get sent out to Alberta, and they get recapped and they come back. Those tires are in the system for a long time and, often when they get retired or recycled, it is because they have gone down to Alberta, they have had an X-ray done, and now it’s time — we can’t recap that tire anymore.

We need to get a category for those tires that works well, because then you can treat them fairly against the other categories of tires. Getting the categories right is really important. Reducing the wastefulness in the system is really important. I talked about it earlier when I talked about the Whitehorse landfill and the tires.

With electronics, it is more about the BC system that we will start with, and then you need to plug the holes so that, if someone is shopping online, whatever the designated material regulation surcharge is, you pay for it up front — and if you are going to shop online to try to get around the system, that we can catch that and you get charged the same thing anyway. It is not that there aren’t holes in the system. We recognize that. That is where we get into these conversations with the industry and try to find the best design that we can.

It is my fervent hope that we get those regulations back and a solution back to us shortly. Not only do I want to deal with that, but as I have said, I want us to move forward with

designated material regulations and move on to other things that are a problem within our landfills and our transfer stations. We really need to get to a place where we are trying to pay for things up front. It’s just a better system.

What I will say is that on the night of the tire recycling discussion, there were a lot of people there — maybe 80 or 90 folks. I remember the facilitator asked this question: What is one word to describe how you are feeling? There were a lot of concerns and frustrations. I counted up every word and I put them into camps, and so 50/50 — it’s good and bad. There was a real range, but when I talked with industry and citizens — or when the Minister of Environment and I did — almost everyone I talked with agrees in principle that we need to do the user-pay-upfront system. The question is to try to get it right so that it’s not impacting our industry or is fair to our industry at the same time. That is the tension that is out there.

I don’t have a specific answer. I ardently wish I could tell you it will be here on this day. What I can tell you is that I know the folks who are working on this within our departments, and they are very good folks. That is both on the Environment side and the Community Services side. They know their stuff. They are working hard, and I hope to see something shortly.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for that answer. Ultimately, it comes down to the fact that we just can’t wait. We can’t afford to wait. By that, I mean that it started in 2013, I think, or in 2009. It has just been a long time, and it can get put off and put off and put off. I appreciate that the work is being done within the department. I appreciate that there has been the consultation now with industry. Even just having the minister say that we are looking toward Alberta for tires and BC for electronics, that already appeases the concerns of a lot of people from industry. That answer right there — I appreciate that.

One of the things that I have talked about a lot is the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, because it is something near and dear to my heart — specifically because of what I and people who live in mobile home parks feel is unfair. Some of the issues that have come up have come up multiple times. The act has protections, but people with mobile homes are viewed as renters. They own the home but they rent the piece of property. That is how it works.

One of the questions that I have but haven’t asked before is — in some of the older parks when they were first put together, the park itself buried underground fuel tanks. The park buried tanks and mobile homes moved in. They would have attached to the tanks initially, but now there are people within the mobile home park who rent the land and are being told that it’s up to them to have the old tanks removed.

What I want to know is how that works under the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, because, according to the act, the property owner — which is the mobile park owner — should be responsible for that. That’s my understanding.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I thank the member opposite for her questions and comments. I will again go back and touch on the designated materials regulations. They have been around since 2013. It is too long; it’s time to get them done.

The Minister of Environment and I will take responsibility. Since we have been here, we did try to reach out to the industry and we weren't successful. I'll take responsibility for that not going properly or well. Then, when it got close to coming in, the industry stepped forward and I started to hear a more cohesive voice.

The information that I got back at first was not really giving me a sense of direction, so we didn't recommend changes at first. Our bad; I think we should have gotten that right. I'm glad we're on track now, but I am also concerned that, over the three years while the regulations were proposed, the previous government didn't get there either. I think there is enough pointing to go around; it's time to get them done.

With respect to the Residential Tenancies Office, the way the act is described and presented to me is that the office is arm's length from me and my role. That's how it's set up. It is a dispute-resolution type of situation.

What I would like to put on the record today — and I'm not going to give a specific answer about this situation because I don't feel equipped to do it. Also, I'm not supposed to tell the office what to decide. That's the arm's-length notion that I have about it. What we need is for the mobile-homeowners, as the renters of the land, to raise an issue or a concern and to bring it in.

I can try to get some more explicit things for the member opposite — and for all of those members here who have mobile homes within their ridings — so the information is clear. I'm informed that the system is set up, and the way to get at it is to get it as a dispute resolution.

**Ms. White:** Just to be clear, there was no finger-pointing on my side. I'm glad that we're moving forward with designated materials, and I echo the minister's concerns, which I talked about the first time in 2013 and was expectant, it never happened. My hope is that, by 2021, I'm not having the same conversation. It was not finger-pointing. There were congratulations at that meeting on January 9. It was said by industry that if we look at Alberta or British Columbia, that would be a good start. The minister has just said that we're looking toward Alberta. Congratulations; I am hopeful for that.

I wasn't talking about the Residential Tenancies Office; I was talking about the act itself, because the act has clear responsibilities for the landlord, the landowner. The concern that I have about the buried fuel tanks is that it was done by the landowner and, quite often, predates the units that are currently there, but, in one case — and by "one case", I mean one park case — the owners of the mobile that is on that lot are being told that they are financially responsible for the removal of that tank. I will just put that on the record now because I don't know what the answer is. I can't imagine that someone who didn't put the tank in place should be responsible for it, especially when they don't own the land.

Another thing that might be of interest to people is to know that people in mobile home parks pay property tax. They get charged. That's one that I've tried to get my head around often because, if it's called "property tax" and they don't own the property, what is that part? In that same breath,

it has never been explained to the mobile homeowners themselves.

Maybe I'll just start with that: property tax and mobile homes. I get asked about these a lot, and I can't ever answer the question because it's called "property tax", and I can't figure that out.

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I never saw the member opposite pointing fingers, and I apologize. I meant myself. If I wasn't clear there, I just was referring to myself, and certainly not to her. I thank her for her comments and for her advocacy around waste generally and waste diversion.

I will have to try to check on what the act says. I don't know where the responsibility lies on buried fuel tanks. That's a technicality we will have to try to sort through. I do know that, if a park is saying that a group of mobile-homeowners needs to pay for it and if those mobile-homeowners feel that is not appropriate, I encourage them to reach out to the Residential Tenancies Office, because then they can be working on it. That is my suggestion.

With respect to property tax, our property tax is built up of two parts: one is the land and one is the improvements. I just now asked that we check with the branch to be sure. I will ask the branch to be sure, but I think it would be reasonable to understand that they have an improvement — that mobile home — and that, then, would form part of that tax. I don't know about the land side of it but we will get an answer for the members opposite.

**Ms. White:** Within the title of "building safety", I just wanted to know if the minister was responsible for the *Elevator and Fixed Conveyances Act*. There has just been an affirmative nod, which will then allow me to ask my next question.

Elevators are an issue right now. They are an issue because, in some of our buildings, they're getting older. The elevators just aren't reliable anymore, and that has caused a whole bunch of other problems. We did highlight this last year. We had concerns around the *Elevator and Fixed Conveyances Act*. For example, one of the requirements was that there would be a post in an elevator — and there wasn't one in this building — that said the last time it was inspected. I wanted to know if there was going to be a review of the *Elevator and Fixed Conveyances Act*, because a lot of things have changed since it became a law. If there was a review, when might we expect to see changes? Is the Department of Community Services responsible for all of the contracts with elevators, or are they just responsible for the act?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** The nods are that the Department of Community Services is responsible for that act, but that act is really like a code. In other words, when an elevator is constructed or significantly renovated, it has to be to a certain standard or code. That would then make sure that it is inspected and to that code. What it doesn't ensure is how it is maintained over time. I think that's where we're falling through. I can try to follow through to see where that responsibility lies.

The member asked about updates to the act itself. One of the things that we have done recently is to update the

regulations around the codes, because those codes change. As we did that, we also said that there would be, what I will call, “continuous updates”. In other words, if there is a national update to the code, within a certain amount of time — I would have to get the details — it would come into force unless we actively sought to make amendments so that it would not come into force.

It was a way to ensure that — not just with our elevators, but mechanical systems that we have under our authority, to make sure that they are built to a safety standard — we would stay up to date with the national codes as they come forward. The issue that is coming forward here is around maintenance. I’m sorry that I don’t have an answer for the member opposite about where the responsibility for that lies. It may be with the building owners, in which case, when the buildings are ours — and I think the Minister of Highways and Public Works stood to talk about this the other day when concerns were raised — that would be where it lies when they are government buildings.

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order.

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

### **Chair’s report**

**Mr. Hutton:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*, and directed me to direct progress.

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

Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I declare the report carried.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** 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. Monday.

*The House adjourned at 5:28 p.m.*

### **The following legislative returns were tabled March 22, 2018:**

34-2-112

Response to oral question from Ms. McLeod re: Watson Lake emergency medical services (Streicker)

34-2-113

Response to oral question from Ms. McLeod re: opening of Watson Lake mental wellness hub (Frost)

### **The following written questions were tabled March 22, 2018:**

Written Question No. 22

Re: greenhouse gas reductions for the years 2019 to 2022 (Istchenko)

Written Question No. 23

Re: land withdrawals and staking bans within Yukon (Kent)