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HANSARD

Thursday, March 12, 2020 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2020 Spring Sitting

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

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

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

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New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, March 12, 2020 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
 Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We have quite a few blue-coated lovely people in the audience today. I am hoping we can welcome them all.

I would like to begin by acknowledging that we have Councillor Steve Roddick, the co-host from the City of Whitehorse. We also have city manager, Linda Rapp. We also have Doris Landry, Moira Lassen, Carolyn Moore, Shelley Williamson, Lucy Coulthard, Laura Williamson, Desiree Cook, Tracey Bilsky, Sue Meikle, Jan Mann, Don Pumphrey, Sandy Legge, Meaghen Kimmitt, Marie Cairns, Lindsay Smith, Mia Val, Josh Jerome, Chris Tieman, Patti Flather, Courtney Nichol, Tamika Knutson, Echo Ross, Dan MacDonald, Jeane Lassen, Megan Cromarty, Paige Bonnett, Jaret Slipp, Andrea Buckley, and Trevor Twardochleb. If we could please welcome them all — thank you.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: It also gives me great joy to be able to introduce the Arctic Winter Games International Committee president from Dawson City, Mr. John Flynn. John, before we started today, gifted the minister with the pin from the president of the committee. Thank you for that gift to the minister and thank you for being here, John.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I would ask my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly to help me welcome some special guests here today for the tabling of legislation later in the Order Paper: Chris Boodram, president of Queer Yukon — thank you so much for being here — also Mia Val from Queer Yukon and Valerie Royle, Deputy Minister for the Women's Directorate. Thank you all for being here.

Applause

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

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Arctic Winter Games

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is cold out today. Mr. Speaker, I am rising to pay tribute to the Arctic Winter Games. This past weekend, when I heard from the chief medical officer of health that the situation had changed and that we couldn't be certain

of the safety of our athletes, our volunteers, and our guests from around the circumpolar world and that sadly, regrettably, the games had to be cancelled, I was gutted. I was heartbroken for our athletes, for our teams, for the visiting teams, for the volunteers, for the sponsors, for the City of Whitehorse, our co-hosts, and for the whole north. When I talked with athletes and volunteers, I could feel the heartache. Do you know what it felt like, Mr. Speaker? Grief.

We know that cancelling the games was the right thing to do, but that just doesn't make it any easier. Here is what has helped me to deal with my disappointment, Mr. Speaker: My heart is also bursting with pride for Team Yukon. Our athletes and cultural performers have done a tremendous job in preparing for these games. Even though they didn't get to compete, I know that their training and dedication has made them faster and stronger and will take them further.

I read on social media about a Team Yukon athlete who baked a cake for his teammates just after the announcement was made to recognize and celebrate what they had achieved together. To that athlete, who also happened to write to me earlier about the special ministerial pins, just let me say directly that I will certainly get you a bunch of pins to share with your team.

My heart is bursting with pride for the Arctic Winter Games Host Society. This remarkable team spent years working and planning the logistics for these 50th anniversary games. As part of their plan for inclusion, they created a pride house, gender-neutral spaces, and counselling services.

In partnership with Yukon First Nations, they developed a games reconciliation action plan — a first of its kind. Just today, they reached out to me and asked me to recognize the professionalism and thank our chief medical officer of health who was acting at the time — Dr. Elliott — for her professionalism. So, thank you for your generosity.

My heart is bursting with pride for the volunteers; nearly 2,000 Yukoners stepped up. That is about one volunteer for every athlete. It makes you proud to be a Yukoner, Mr. Speaker.

My heart is bursting with pride for the sponsors and Yukon businesses who were getting ready to welcome the games with open arms. They were instrumental in supporting the games big time and they deserve our support back.

My heart is bursting with pride for the City of Whitehorse, who was preparing to host the Arctic Winter Games for a record seventh time. I'm honoured to have spent the past few years working alongside the City of Whitehorse as co-host, and I bragged to every minister of sport across Canada that Whitehorse puts on the best games, and they will again.

The Arctic Winter Games are a beautiful testament to our capacity to celebrate human achievement and human diversity and performance. It is cold outside today, Mr. Speaker, but it is also sunny, and the weather is warming. I should let you know that Team Yukon is inviting all Arctic Winter Games 2020 athletes, performers, coaches, mission staff, officials, volunteers, and all games supporters — which I suspect is all Yukoners — to come out this Sunday starting at 1:00 p.m. at

the S.S. Klondike and ending up as a street party on Main Street. Please show your colours, Yukon.

To all the athletes: We know that your hearts are bursting; please know that ours are bursting with pride.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to our Arctic Winter Games Team Yukon.

2020 marks the 50-year milestone, an amazing passage of time that would honour past games and focus on our unique northern culture and all-around wonderfulness — sports, dignitaries, entertainers, crafts, exploring, and new friends. To say that we were disappointed that we will not be able to witness and cheer on the many sports that would have been held in beautiful Yukon is an understatement. It gives us great pleasure to pay tribute to coaches, organizers, parents, and volunteers who have worked so hard in the lead-up to these games.

But can a sports event happen without athletes? No way. So, a huge shout out in this special tribute is for our athletes. They have trained and honed their skills to have a chance to win an ulu or two. We know that each and every one of our hard-working athletes is proud of their achievements. We have seen their commitment, dedication, and passion for their various sports.

Becoming a part of Team Yukon is an aspiration that has been shared among young athletes for the last 50 years. Each of us personally knows someone who has participated and who probably has ulus in their home. Despite the cancellation of the games this year, know that we are still cheering for you and that you are still our Team Yukon.

We are in a situation that is at the present time a little scary because of the unknown factors that might come our way, so we are hyperaware of our world and the health of all people. Now, moving forward, we urge each and every one of you who has been practising and training so hard to view those extra training sessions as an incredible opportunity for growth and development in your sport.

The north rallied to make the 50th anniversary of the Arctic Winter Games incredible. As usual, Yukoners stepped up to be counted and we are so proud of all of you. Thank you to all who have been involved with the planning, organizing, practising, coaching, and volunteering for the games. We are so pleased to see everyone still get their volunteer gear and that the athletes get their team gear to keep as well — the games that didn't happen. So, maybe these 2020 pins will have much more value in the pin-trading world.

We hope that you have a restful spring break with your family and those whom you love.

Applause

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, today I stand on behalf of the Yukon NDP to offer my thanks and admiration to all of those Yukoners who have given time, hard work, energy, enthusiasm, sweat, and maybe a few tears to the 2020 Arctic Winter Games.

First, we want to thank all the hard-working staff at the Arctic Winter Games office who, for the last two years, have dedicated thousands of hours to planning an incredible event for the circumpolar north. You took the truth and reconciliation recommendations to be more than words on paper; you made a decision to breathe life into them. You focused on making indigenous culture, learning, and celebration the heart of the 2020 games.

I'm going to blame the feelings on the Minister of Community Services.

That decision and focus changed everything. It's a legacy that will follow this sporting event for the rest of time, and you should be proud. We're all so very proud. For the first time ever, you have created safe spaces for our rainbow youth and participants, making it an even more inclusive event. You did all of Yukon proud.

To those who have spent months deep in the logistics of the hows and the tos, the wheres and the whos, I'm sure there have been dreams about spreadsheets and sleepless nights as you mentally worked through a puzzle that most of us would never contemplate even trying. You know the ins and outs and the whats involved in scheduling 21 sports in a multitude of venues. You figured out where and how to house and feed thousands of athletes. I know that, if we ever need to set up hundreds of bunkbeds in a very short amount of time all over town, this community could do it.

To the Arctic Winter Games partners, with so many more jobs, tasks, and roles than we could ever imagine, we thank you for stepping up. To the nearly 2,000 volunteers who answered the call for help, where do we even start? Your love of community and willingness to share your time and energy is breathtaking, so we thank you.

To the athletes and the coaches, what can we even say? We're so sorry that the competitions that you've been training so hard for have had to be cancelled. That's not an easy thing to process, and we can understand if you're sad and disappointed or even angry. All of those feelings are valid, and we've had some of those ourselves.

We appreciate all the time that you put into getting better and testing yourselves. We know that you've trained hard and that your focus has been finely tuned. We love that you've built up communities within your sport, that you've made new friends and have deepened existing friendships — friendships that will last far after next week, so it's a win of a different kind.

Make sure that you thank your coaches and whoever got you to your practices. These special people recognized your love of sport and have worked hard to nurture it.

To all of those Arctic Winter Games coaches, we all owe you our thanks, because — let's be real — you aren't just coaches for the Arctic Winter Games one week every two years; you are the folks who are at practices all season long, and you have just added the games to your already full schedule. Thank you for investing in kids and their love of sport. Thank you for teaching them life lessons along the way. Thank you for building them up to be stronger and more resilient than when you first met. You may never know it, but I bet that more than

a few of you will have made positive lasting effects on your athletes.

Thank you to the City of Whitehorse for picking up the 2020 games, even when it wasn't your scheduled turn, and thank you for the leadership, support, and enthusiasm. It couldn't have happened without you.

Thank you to Yukon businesses for supporting us through sponsorships and donations — not just during the games but all throughout the year.

So, stand tall and proud, Yukon. We have a lot to celebrate — because, no matter what, we did it.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 9: *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I move that Bill No. 9, entitled *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate that Bill No. 9, entitled *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 9 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills for introduction?
Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House supports continuing efforts to build social equality and inclusion for members of the LGBTQ2S+ community within Yukon society.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to increase safety on the Alaska Highway at Hillcrest for pedestrians, cyclists, and other active modes of transport by implementing the changes recommended by community members as well as the Government of Yukon's own panel of experts with respect to the proposed highway corridor upgrades.

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: COVID-19 coronavirus preparedness

Mr. Hassard: Yesterday, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Today, the Prime Minister of our country went into self-isolation. Over the course of the last week, we have asked very reasonable questions of the government and the Health and Social Services minister, and instead of answering the questions, they gave us vague partisan talking points.

Yesterday, something very concerning happened: The Health and Social Services minister gave incorrect public health advice during her media scrum. That advice provided by the minister was quickly contradicted by the chief medical officer of health, and it's concerning that the Minister of Health and Social Services would share false information with Yukoners regarding what actions they should take.

Can the minister tell us why she gave Yukoners information that was contradicted by the chief medical officer?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would say, Mr. Speaker, that now is the time for us to unite as political parties here and not make this overly partisan. I believe, from what I've seen from a reaction in the last week from not only the minister but our whole team here and the whole of government, that this government has made an extraordinary effort to keep people involved and also up to date.

The members opposite have received a briefing from the chief medical officer of health. Their chief of staff was at a briefing from the chief medical officer of health today. They have received information; we have given them information. What I have seen is timely updates from the chief medical officer of health.

We are working every minute, as the details unfold. I go home after work. I get home pretty late and I look on the TV and it looks like the whole world has changed overnight and I'm amazed at how comprehensive the response has been from this team with a moving target of preparedness.

Mr. Hassard: Just for the Premier's information, the question was about the Minister of Health and Social Services providing inaccurate information.

Across the country, ministers of health are giving regular and sometimes daily press conferences updating the public on the growing pandemic and our Health minister has been largely nowhere to be seen. She's not giving regular joint briefings like her colleagues across the country and the first time she did a press conference was this morning. It is a start, but it's a couple of weeks late. We're not getting answers in Question Period and yesterday she shared false information with the media. It is the Health minister's job to be briefed and understand her file. It's also her job to provide accurate information about what Yukoners should do and it's also her job to share this accurate information with Yukoners publicly on a regular basis.

So, Mr. Speaker, when will the minister actually start doing her job?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm just appalled at what I'm hearing here today.

We have been keeping up with all of the information as it has been moving. Just a few hours ago, we had a press

conference with the Minister of Health and Social Services. On this side of the House, we are taking the lead and we are taking that lead seriously. We are working hand in glove with the chief medical officer of health. Their website has updated information for any Yukoner who is looking for more information on this.

What we see from the opposition is they want to see somebody to pin something on. My goodness gracious, now more than ever is the time for us to unite as political parties and work together on this. But what we do hear from the opposition? They don't want to talk about the budget. They want to find somebody to pin something on. This government has been working extremely hard. My ministers have been working day and night and we are getting the best information out at a timely basis.

I want to thank the Minister of Health and Social Services. I want to thank the team of health care providers with Health and Social Services who have been working around the clock. People who go into the emergency room are amazed to see the extreme professionalism of our nurses and our doctors and all the opposition can do is try to find someone to pin things on.

Mr. Hassard: It's unfortunate that the Premier doesn't actually listen to the question rather than just run off the way he is doing. But you know it is time for the government and this Health minister to take this seriously. As I said, the minister provided incorrect information to the public. This is irresponsible and it's dangerous. The minister needs to do her job, get briefed, get a handle on the file, and start providing Yukoners with accurate details on the Yukon's plan.

We have asked the minister several times what plan is in place at the hospital. Are there enough beds in case COVID-19 appears here in the territory? Every time, she has refused to answer that question. As you know, the hospital is often at or near capacity, so even just a few cases could overwhelm us, and we need to be prepared.

So, will the minister do her job and answer this simple question? What plan is in place at the hospital to ensure that we have enough beds in case COVID-19 ends up in the Yukon?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm not quite sure of the opposition's line of questioning because clearly we have done an efficient and effective job with our partners. We have worked very closely with the Hospital Corporation and with both chief medical officers. We are working diligently with Community Services in ensuring that we have the necessary resources. We have answered the questions and we will continue to brief Yukoners — much like we did this morning, Mr. Speaker.

I certainly don't want Yukoners to be misled. I am briefed on a daily basis, as is everyone. The opposition were briefed yesterday. If there are specific questions, then I would suggest that they mitigate the fears of Yukoners and participate effectively in a process to plan for the unfortunate event that we should have a situation in Yukon.

Dr. Hanley and Dr. Elliott did a very excellent job this morning in addressing Yukoners and assuring Yukoners that we are prepared and I look forward to having that further discussion with our Yukon First Nations community chiefs and health directors tomorrow. We will continue to do that as things

evolve. Things are changing, as Dr. Hanley noted, on a daily and hourly basis, and we will keep abreast and keep Yukoners informed.

I request Yukoners to please just stick to the website and the notices that go out. That is the direction that we have heard from our leaders.

Question re: COVID-19 coronavirus preparedness

Ms. McLeod: Yesterday, we asked the Minister of Health and Social Services some simple questions about the \$1 billion in assistance that the federal government announced to support the provinces and territories in their response to coronavirus. In Question Period, the government provided no details on how much money the Yukon requested. In fact, all they responded with was partisan talking points. Mr. Speaker, it is time to rise above partisanship — we agree with that — we have said it all week. It is time to show leadership, it's a time for the government to take this seriously, and it is a time for the government to answer questions.

With respect to the \$1-billion aid package that Canada announced to help support provinces and territories, the Health and Social Services minister told media that Yukon will be requesting no money. Can she confirm if what she told media yesterday is accurate? If so, why is Yukon not requesting any of that emergency funding?

Hon. Mr. Silver: This line of questioning is a new low from the opposition. Our government develops its budgets with the best information available at the time, and so does the federal government as well. We tabled our budget on March 5, and the federal government is tabling theirs on March 30. COVID-19 is rapidly evolving and is changing daily. This week, between the budgets and the federal government's budgets, we have seen major changes not only in Canada but internationally as well.

If the opposition truly wants to make this about money and about talking about the supports for Yukoners, the best course of action would be to pass the budget and let the government begin to spend the \$1.62 billion that we have identified.

Ms. McLeod: That was amazing.

So, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Official Opposition and the Third Party met with the chief medical officer of health, and we appreciate the work that they are doing. It was indicated to us that we rely on BC for all testing that is done for coronavirus. Further, it takes three to five days to get a test completed. The problem is that, if BC's health system gets overwhelmed, then we would have to go find another jurisdiction. The good news is that the federal government has announced a \$1-billion aid package to help provinces and territories to respond to the coronavirus.

Will the minister agree to request money from this emergency fund so that Yukon can set up its own lab testing here in the territory so we do not need to rely on Outside jurisdictions to test for COVID-19?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, we tabled our budget, and the opposition said that it was too lavish spending. Now they want to see us do more spending. We produced an outlook

in the spring and update it every year in the fall, and we are asked about doing that.

One of the best ways to stimulate the economy and to work with the medical communities — we are injecting cash into the budget. We have money in our budgets currently to deal with the issues as they stand right now. Our budgets also include stimulus spending for our businesses, as well as protecting our community through Health and Social Services spending that we currently have for the current situation.

It includes \$369.7 million of capital spending. It includes tax cuts to small businesses and tax reductions to individuals. The Minister of Health and Social Services can elaborate on their preparedness — as she has already done this morning — but again, Mr. Speaker, the information has been coming out rapidly, and we have been adjusting to the current conditions in Yukon but also preparing for what we need to prepare for in the future.

Ms. McLeod: I think maybe the Premier got his briefing notes mixed up there.

Now, with respect to our airports, although we currently are not receiving international flights, we do receive international passengers on a daily basis. Yesterday, we were told by the chief medical officer of health that anyone returning from China, Iran, and Italy are asked to self-isolate for 14 days.

So, when those individuals get off the plane in Whitehorse, who is telling them to do this? Are there public health officials there to tell them to do this? Are there kiosks handing out information? How are we ensuring that these individuals know that they should self-isolate?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm really happy to talk to Yukoners today about this issue — about the airport and our preparedness in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Highways and Public Works, Health and Social Services, and the Yukon's chief medical officer of health are working with the Public Health Agency of Canada, Canada Border Services Agency, and Transport Canada to ensure the safety and wellness of Yukoners.

There are currently no changes to screening practices at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport; however, we are preparing to implement any necessary screening procedures as a result of changing conditions and reopening international flights this summer. As the Premier has mentioned today on several occasions, the situation is changing on a daily and sometimes hourly basis, and we're monitoring that with our federal and provincial counterparts.

Highways and Public Works is updating the business continuity plan for pandemics as a precautionary measure to ensure essential services at airports can be maintained. Airport staff have increased cleaning of equipment that comes into direct contact with airport users. Yukoners are encouraged to wash their hands more frequently or to use hand sanitizer, to avoid touching their faces with unwashed hands, and to stay home if they are sick.

There is currently no confirmed case of coronavirus in the Yukon, Mr. Speaker, and Yukoners are encouraged to check yukon.ca for the latest information.

Question re: COVID-19 coronavirus — employee sick leave

Ms. White: With recent developments around the world and in Canada — as we heard this morning — it's becoming clear that COVID-19 will reach the Yukon at some point. The good news is that, by working together, we can greatly minimize the impact the virus will have on our community and our health care system.

Strong preventive measures can drastically decrease the rate of infection. Health professionals have repeatedly said that staying home when sick is a key preventive measure, but in Yukon, many people can't afford to just skip a paycheque. Bus drivers, retail workers, and daycare employees are just a few who can't work from home and don't have paid sick leave.

Mr. Speaker, will the government show national leadership by granting paid sick leave to all workers so they can make the responsible choice of staying home when they are sick and still afford to pay the rent, their bills, and feed their families?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for this question. Again, I will say, from the first time she rose in this House last week and posed the question, I met the next day with the Department of Community Services to begin the conversation about their request to — because I believe this is a change of legislation. So, I asked for analysis from across the country. I'm working to set up meetings with members of the community to discuss this issue.

I appreciate the suggestion that's being made, and we will do our best to work with both employers and employees to investigate this suggestion. Again, thank you to the member opposite.

Ms. White: We're really lucky, because the *Employment Standards Act* is open right this second.

So, the federal government just announced minor changes to the employment insurance program, but it doesn't replace paid sick leave. Many workers won't qualify for it, and it only applies to people who are ordered to self-quarantine by health officials or their employers. No matter how you spin it, it will not be as effective as paid sick leave in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

This issue is relevant beyond just the current situation. It's never a good idea to go to work when you're sick, and most people understand this, so I hope that the minister agrees — yet, our labour laws don't reflect this. They force many employees to go to work sick because unfortunately rent is due on the first of the month, whether you're sick or not.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me put the question differently: If the minister was in the shoes of a worker who is feeling sick but needs their next paycheque to pay rent, what would he do? Would he go to work, or would he stay home and face eviction?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, I thank the member opposite for the question. I'm not looking to amend the act on the fly. I actually will do the work that I have already stood up and said that I would do, by working with the department to look at this as an issue. I'm happy to work diligently, because I understand it's a pressing issue, but I think it does take us actually doing that work.

I know that Canada's investments include the employment insurance sickness benefits, which is waiving the mandatory one-week waiting period for employment insurance sickness benefits so that workers in quarantine or who have been directed to self-quarantine, can be paid for the first week of their claim.

The federal government is also exploring additional measures to support other affected Canadians who are not eligible for EI sick benefits. I know that — one, two, three, four — four of us as ministers yesterday were on national calls with our counterparts across the country to discuss many issues with respect to COVID-19 and we are happy to continue to work across all jurisdictions to make sure that we are supporting our businesses and our employees through these challenges.

I also would like — well, I will note this later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. White: COVID-19 requires that governments react quickly with smart, preventive measures. Paid sick leave for all workers would allow those who can't afford to skip a paycheque to make the sensible choice to stay home when they are sick. Some employees who do have sick leave are required to get a doctor's note. This goes against the advice of Yukon's chief medical officer, who just reminded Yukoners who are experiencing symptoms to call 811 rather than show up at a doctor's office or the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, even Jason Kenney, the Premier of Alberta — not exactly a progressive type — is looking at an order-in-council that would remove the requirement for people to get a doctor's note to get time off. Mr. Speaker, will this government issue an order-in-council to remove the requirement for people to get a doctor's note to access their sick leave?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I will do is act quickly on the suggestions, whether they come from our side of the House or the other side of the House. I would like to thank the member opposite for her suggestions.

I said earlier in my response, and I will say it again: As soon as I heard her questions, I called for a meeting with the Department of Community Services to broach this subject. I am happy to be working on it. I thank her for her suggestions. I won't make policy on the fly in the middle of Question Period, but I will take these questions in the spirit in which they are provided, which are as ideas for improving the situation that is here and will certainly work on them.

Yukon's medical system has been and remains well prepared to manage suspected cases of COVID-19 that may arise here in the Yukon. Right now, the risk of COVID-19 remains low in the Yukon and there are currently no cases of COVID-19 in the territory. At the same time, we are all working hard to prepare and we will do our best to take these suggestions and work with them.

Question re: *Child Care Act* review

Ms. Hanson: The Yukon *Child Care Act* is currently under review. An individual outside the territory was contracted by the department to look at the act, consult with Yukoners, and provide recommendations. A report was due in June 2019, but the contract was extended to December.

Unfortunately, many groups and individuals were left out of the consultation process, including communities. No Engage Yukon exercise was utilized to listen to the concerns from parents, grandparents, child care workers, or owners of daycares and day homes as part of this review.

Yesterday, we heard the Minister of Justice speak of the success of Engage Yukon and how her government is dedicated to listening to Yukoners.

So, Mr. Speaker, why was there no consultation with parents, daycare operators, daycare workers, and communities on the daycare review through Engage Yukon, and most importantly, where is the report?

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the various acts that we have gone through, what I do want to say is that we have gone through an extensive review of various acts that govern us through Family and Children's Services. In the course of the last two years, we have reviewed all of our acts. We have gone through extensive consultation and engagement with the *Child and Family Services Act*. We have a committee that had gone out to Yukoners. We are very proud of that work. We now are looking at the review of that.

We worked with the Child and Youth Advocate to look at implementation and a potential governance review of all of the concerns that have been brought to their attention, so we will continue to do that good work and we will continue to work with our partners. We will continue to do the necessary engagement, and I am very happy with where we are right now. We will continue to certainly review, as issues come forward. If the member opposite has a specific concern, or specific comment that was received that was missed through that process, then I would advise that she provide that specific information to us and we would certainly take that under advisement.

Ms. Hanson: That was precisely what the question was about. Where is the report on the *Child Care Act* review? Every community and nearly every family of young children in the Yukon uses some form of daycare. It might be a licensed daycare or day home or an unlicensed one. Some families rely on other extended family members like grandparents. We know that daycare costs in Yukon are easily over \$800 a month. More than one child — double that. Daycare subsidies are available, but require extensive paperwork every month for parents who are part of the gig economy — working irregular hours or self-employed.

Mr. Speaker, what is being done to reduce the red tape required to qualify for a daycare subsidy?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm pleased to rise today to speak to the issue around childcare and the subsidies and the support that we've provided for Yukoners. We actually in fact just got off the telephone this morning with the federal minister responsible for Family and Children's Services and we had that very subject discussion around appropriate and effective resources for Yukoners. So, we have engaged with our private daycares in Dawson City and Watson Lake as well as working with our First Nations.

We're advised that additional supports had flowed out to the communities from the federal direct bilateral to the

communities — under the ISET agreement and the direct negotiated process — so we are ensuring that we have consistency throughout. We just now renewed our extended funding agreement for another year, so we're very pleased with that. We will continue to look at the recommendations that have been brought to our attention. I'm certainly pleased to note that we also have the extended family care agreements that have been enacted to ensure that children remain in their communities. We just are reviewing C-92. There are various legislative approaches that we have to consider as we implement our Yukon strategies and our Yukon — the act and the reviews that are happening before us.

Ms. Hanson: I think there's a confusion here. We're talking about making sure that parents can afford to have their children in daycare.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives just released a report this month, entitled *In progress — Child care fees in Canada 2019*. For the first time, the territories were included. The final and most important conclusion of the report states — and I quote: "It has become evident that child care fees in Canada are lowest when services receive substantial public operational funding and the fees are set as a matter of public policy."

So, we're happy that the federal-provincial-territorial *Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework* has been renewed. But will the minister commit that any new agreement with the federal government will provide affordable daycare by increasing the operational grants to daycares and ensuring an affordable flat rate for all parents?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Let me provide some clarity because I think there is a bit of confusion. We are not reviewing the *Child Care Act*. What we just completed was the Family and Children's Services review. In fact, we actually had five people, with a number of Yukoners — so a diverse sector of Yukon participated in that process, an extensive engagement.

Now, what we are looking at right now is this — this discussion does not make sense. We want to clarify for Yukoners and for our child care providers that we are providing them the essential resources. In fact, we gave them a bump last year on capacity development, offsetting their expenditures in the Yukon. Subsidies have been increased; we will continue to do that this year, and we just this morning secured the resources, going forward, for another year, and we will continue to have that dialogue with our communities.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the department for doing such an excellent job working with our partners in the communities. We will ensure that Yukoners are supported. Every child matters, Mr. Speaker — every child matters.

Question re: COVID-19 coronavirus preparedness

Mr. Cathers: Due to the significant downturn in the world's economy resulting from COVID-19, we asked the government to update their fiscal and economic outlook before the end of the Spring Sitting. In response, the Premier and his colleagues were dismissive and voted against the motion.

The Premier actually claimed again yesterday that the Yukon's GDP is expected to grow by 6.2 percent in 2020. This is based off of old information, and we know it isn't going to happen. In the face of major worldwide events — including falling stock markets, medical officers of health recommending against travelling on a cruise, one major cruise company announcing that they're postponing their season by at least two months, and the World Health Organization declaring a pandemic — the Premier seems a bit out of touch with reality.

The Tourism Industry Association of Yukon issued a statement predicting at least a 20-percent drop in tourism this summer. Will the Premier now agree to revise his fiscal and economic outlook before the end of the Spring Sitting?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is very ironic to hear from the member opposite about the fiscal and economic outlook. When his government was in office, sometimes we saw one; sometimes we didn't see one. Now what we see from the member opposite is that he wants us to put all of our resources — it would mean increasing our budgets to put more money toward the fiscal reviews and put out another fiscal and economic outlook now, where we have no cases of COVID, where we are working with the business community, where we are doing the analysis internally with the international community.

We have a budget right now that includes almost \$370 million of capital spending that he doesn't want to talk about. We have a budget that has tax cuts to small business that he does not want to talk about. We have a \$3-million reduction of taxes, income taxes for Yukon individuals, that he doesn't want to talk about. What he wants, instead, is for everybody to take a look at a fiscal and economic outlook re-do, when his government refused to do them on a timely basis. It's pretty rich, Mr. Speaker, to hear that from the opposition.

We will continue to maintain the course. We are providing the information that we need to provide for Yukoners today with the current situation, and we are preparing for the inevitability of tomorrow. The members opposite would ask us again, at that time, to do another outlook, and another outlook. We are producing two a year, and we put them out on time at the same time every year, unlike the previous government.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I have to remind the Premier that there was not one word in his budget speech about COVID-19. This is a serious situation, and it's important for government to keep calm, but they also need to plan, prepare, communicate, and take the right actions in response.

The economic impacts of COVID-19 can be mitigated. It is the responsibility of the Yukon government to show leadership. Earlier today, the federal government announced that they would be revising their economic and fiscal outlook in response to world events.

The Premier needs to recognize the seriousness of the issue instead of repeating partisan talking points and pretending that the GDP is going to grow by 6.2 percent this year, which he did again yesterday. We offered to help the government by working together on an all-party committee to deal with the response to COVID-19, but they turned down that offer.

As I noted, the federal government announced today that they will issue a revised economic outlook for Canada. Will the Premier agree to do the same for the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take fiscal advice from the member opposite. I won't.

When we were in the Yukon Party's last few years, we were in a recession. Mr. Speaker, our economy is booming currently, and I see the member opposite hoping to see a doomsday in the future, and that is really sad.

The 2020-21 fiscal and economic outlook explores current expectations for Yukon finances and the economy, and it is a lot of work to put one together — a lot of resources for the whole of government.

The Yukon's finances remain on track to return to a surplus this year, 2020-21 — which is great news if we do come to a situation of crisis — followed by another surplus in the following years — again, sound fiscal management to make sure that this jurisdiction is ready for a crisis.

The budget of 2020-21 — which the members opposite do not want anybody to know about — has extensively leveraged federal funding for capital investments. We have a strong economy. We have one of the strongest labour markets in Canada, growing incomes, and a prolonged period of population expansion, but the members opposite don't want anybody to know about these things.

The positive mid-term economic outlook for the Yukon is highlighted by further population growth and stronger labour markets — absolutely. The mining sector — activity there — is a key driver in our economic outlook, spurred on by new projects out there by two different companies, and I will continue the good news as I get to answer further questions.

Mr. Cathers: Well, Mr. Speaker, despite how long this has been going on, on the world stage, this seems to have caught the Premier unaware, and the budget and fiscal and economic outlook don't say a word about COVID-19.

The Premier is refusing to update the economic and fiscal forecast, but major world events have aligned to set the Yukon's economy up for some difficult times.

The chief medical officers of health are advising against cruise ship travel. The US state department is advising against cruise ship travel and a major cruise ship company announced that they are postponing the start of their season. The Tourism Industry Association of Yukon said that they are expecting a \$60-million hit to tourism this summer. The current economic forecast was severely out of date before the Premier tabled it last week. It indicates that the tourism season will be strong, contrary to what all the experts are saying. Despite what the Liberals claim, this is anything but business as usual.

Will the Premier now agree to update the economic and fiscal forecast before the end of the Spring Sitting?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, what you see on the floor of the Legislative Assembly here is the difference between a government that is prepared and an opposition that is paranoid. We have a great relationship right now with TIA. There was an announcement about TIA's response on the radio the other day. The department wants to thank the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon for their work on behalf of their

members. We really appreciate not only their leadership but how we have been working hand in glove to identify the issues.

The member opposite wants us to slow things down and start again with the fiscal outlook. We think that the more important thing to do is to work with the information we have right now with an amazing budget, an amazing economy, and an amazing group of Yukoners who want to work and also work with our partners in the private sector to make sure that we continue to look at what we need to do to prepare for something that hasn't happened yet.

The members opposite want us to run around and say that the sky has fallen. The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that it hasn't. The good news is that in the Yukon we are prepared. We are not only prepared today; we are also prepared for the inevitabilities that will happen — whether those are floods, forest fires, influenza, or other things like COVID-19. Mr. Speaker, now is not the time to be partisan; now is the time to be prepared.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

Chair's ruling

Deputy Chair: I request members' attention for a ruling.

On March 10, 2020, during general debate in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*, Mr. Cathers said — and I quote: "I would ask the Premier: Is he deliberately bringing incorrect information, or has he not read that court decision?"

Ms. McPhee then rose on a point of order to allege that Mr. Cathers had violated Standing Order 19(h), the standing order that prohibits a member from charging another member with uttering a deliberate falsehood.

At the time, I indicated that I would reserve my ruling. Later that afternoon, Mr. Silver, in the course of raising a point of order that was not sustained, said of remarks delivered by Mr. Cathers — and I quote: "I don't know if the member opposite is intentionally misleading with that statement..."

I would like to remind members that all members are considered to be honourable and that it is a violation of Standing Order 19(h) for a member to suggest that another

member is intentionally providing misleading information. Therefore, I rule that Ms. McPhee did have a point of order.

Going forward, I would like to remind members to please not make remarks that contravene Standing Order 19(h).

I would also like to take this opportunity to ask members who seek to stand on a point of order to take care to avoid themselves contravening a standing order in the course of raising their point of order.

Thank you for your attention.

Bill No. 201, *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 201: *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 55, Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Highways and Public Works

Deputy Chair: Is there any general debate on Vote 55?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm happy to stand on the floor of the Legislative Assembly this afternoon to discuss this budget matter. We have about \$100,000 in the supplementary request. I have with me this afternoon Deputy Minister Jaime Pitfield and our high financier, Jody Woodland. He's here for the very first time in this House, and I hope you take a second to welcome them both here.

Thanks very much. I'll open up the floor for any questions the opposition might have.

Mr. Kent: I join the minister in welcoming the officials — especially Jody, for his first time. I didn't realize it was his first time here; that's interesting.

As the Official Opposition, we certainly appreciated the briefings and the briefing packages that we got from each department with respect to the supplementary budget. We do have some specific questions that we will address to the various ministers in our critic roles through letters, as far as some of the line items in there. We will also have some policy-specific questions that have budget implications, but we're going to wait until the mains.

So, with that, we won't have any questions for Highways and Public Works with respect to the supplementary estimates. We'll save those for the mains. We won't have any questions

for any of the departments that are identified as far as the supplementary estimates go.

I understand that the Member for Whitehorse Centre does have some questions specific to some departments.

Again, we thank the officials, and perhaps you can bring Jody back for the mains, and we'll give him a run when he gets back here for that.

Ms. Hanson: I welcome the officials as well. I would ask the minister, if he could — looking at the supplementary budget, if we could look at the amount that's an increase of \$3,011,000 for transportation planning and engineering.

I am interested in the amount of the \$1,139,000 that's an increase due to moving forward more quickly with the land and — the second part of that — sorry; it was the \$1,440,000 with respect to climate change on the Yukon highway network, so this is part of a transportation agreement between funding from Transport Canada — and this is part of this northern adaptation initiative. I was told that parts of the project funding are recoverable, but my question really has to do with: Are we building on research, and to what extent are we building on research that is already being done in the territory?

I ask that question because, when I asked it the other day in the briefing — and as much as the officials were being helpful, I wasn't clear on whether or not I was making myself clear, perhaps, and so I was trying to refer to the work that was done by the Yukon Research Centre eight years ago. There was research done by Dr. Guy Doré, who is a leading Canadian permafrost researcher and who was working at the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre. I recall this because there was a significant amount of interest in the work and the piloting that was being done — in particular, as I recall, on the Shakwak area and the north Alaska Highway. That was to develop strategies that prevent and manage highway permafrost damage in the Yukon.

So, I guess what I'm trying to get at is clarity as to what extent the work that is being done here is building on research done previously so that we are not, in fact, reinventing the wheel and that we are actually building on the solid foundation of research and whether or not the Department of Highways and Public Works has incorporated that into this initiative.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: In response to the Member for Whitehorse Centre, I will say right off the hop that climate change is undoubtedly one of the greatest threats facing the Yukon, Canada, and the world. I have said this before, and I will continue to say it at every opportunity I have.

Climate change isn't just some complex scientific theory. It is real, it's happening now, and nowhere is its impact greater than here in the north.

Over the years, our department — the Department of Highways and Public Works — has worked closely with permafrost scientists, with Yukon College's Northern Climate Exchange, as the member opposite has said, and we are currently collaborating with the college on a number of projects. We are researching sinkhole activity along the Dempster Highway, with the aim of determining what causes sinkholes and trying to predict where they might appear. We are mapping and monitoring a large permafrost thaw slump

located within the Alaska Highway along the Takhini River. We are researching ground subsistence as a result of permafrost thaw at Chapman Lake on the Dempster Highway. We are also evaluating the effectiveness of permafrost mitigation techniques to improve highway performance along the Dry Creek section of the Alaska Highway. This work involves drilling beneath the highway to install thermosiphons to passively cool the underlying permafrost and ground ice in order to stabilize the highway.

These projects build on previous work that we have done collaboratively with the college, including: electrical resistivity tomography and temperature monitoring to assess the effectiveness of insulating culverts; developing a climate-resistant function plan for the Dempster Highway; assessing permafrost conditions under Front Street in Dawson City; and conducting risk assessment of infrastructure impacted by permafrost degradation in Ross River.

Outside of our work with Yukon College, our department has also partnered with other stakeholders, such as Dr. Christopher Burn from Carleton University. Dr. Burn has studied the impacts of climate change on permafrost in the western Canadian Arctic — and particularly Mayo, Yukon — since the 1980s. Currently, we are working on a number of research initiatives through the northern transportation adaptation initiative — NTAI, which is a terrible acronym. I don't like acronyms and I will avoid it. Through the northern transportation adaptation initiative, our department and research partners — Carleton University and the Northern Climate Exchange at Yukon College — have worked to understand the following: climate-related operation and maintenance costs for northern linear infrastructure — like roads, bridges and that type of thing; adaptations to maintenance practices to mitigate against climate-related hazards, such as washouts, sinkholes, and glaciation — we heard earlier about a specific sinkhole we are looking at; and engineering new solutions for constructing highways built on permafrost.

Highways and Public Works also actively participates on a number of Canada-wide permafrost committees chaired by Transport Canada. I certainly hope that answers the member's question.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that answer, because it does.

Now, my second part to that question was: The projects are partly recoverable, so I'm interested in knowing — so this \$1.4 million increase is due to this contribution agreement. What's the cumulative total? Or what's the total to be spent on this initiative? Is it multi-year? If so, how many multiples of years?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The money indicated in this supplementary is a recoverable amount that we're going to get back from Ottawa to a certain percent. I will check with the — we'll check back with our officials and find out what the recovery is. It's often 50 or 75 percent. I'll get that number and get back to the member opposite.

Ms. Hanson: That was the part about the amount that's recoverable.

My other part of the question was: Is this a multi-year project? What's the cumulative total that's being spent in the Yukon on this northern transportation adaptation initiative for permafrost and climate change for the Yukon highway network?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm told that this project is one project. The project will be complete this construction season and we don't have a final budget value for this project over the next season yet. This is for last year.

Ms. Hanson: I did not understand that, understanding that this is the amount for the supplementary for this fiscal year. Is the minister indicating that it will continue into the next fiscal year? What I'm trying to do is get a cumulative total for the expenditures on this project for Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: This is money we asked for in the supplementary budget for last year. We're now in the process of completing the work that we said we would with this money for this project for this last fiscal year we're now concluding. Next year, we will finish the project. There will be more money for the project next year. I will get that information for the member opposite in the coming moments. We are waiting for that information — I will have it in a few minutes and I will get it to you — but we are continuing that next year and there will be more money in the next budget for this project.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. So, I will presume that it's a two-year funding contribution agreement between Canada and the Yukon for this project. If that is incorrect, the minister can clarify.

I would like to then move to the highway construction on the Alaska Highway — the amount of \$1,367,000. There is a note here that, partly, the increase is resulting from moving forward more quickly, again, on restoration and permafrost remediation, which is \$900,000 — and tendered higher than estimated for safety improvements through the Whitehorse project — \$800,000.

Could the minister clarify what the initial forecast was for the estimated safety improvements through the Whitehorse project? I am presuming that — and the minister can clarify if this is the — because I don't want to presume — if he can clarify if this is the Range Road safety improvements, or if it is the Hillcrest intersection improvements.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The original pre-tender estimate for that project was \$3 million.

Ms. Hanson: The second part of the question, Mr. Deputy Chair?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Would the member opposite please repeat the second part of the question?

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Deputy Chair, I had asked the minister if this was for the Range Road safety improvements — the highway where it intersects there, goes down there, those lights there — or, if we're talking about the so-called safety improvements around the Hillcrest intersection.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The \$3-million estimate was for the Range Road work that we did, not the tangible safety improvements we are making to the Alaska Highway in front of Hillcrest.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 55?

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

Mr. Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Mr. Kent has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$104,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of nil agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$104,000 agreed to Department of Highways and Public Works agreed to

Deputy Chair: We will now proceed to Vote 51.

Do members wish to take a five-minute break?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Deputy 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. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Community Services

Deputy Chair: Is there any general debate on Vote 51?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to welcome today the Deputy Minister of Community Services, Matt King, and our Director of Finance, Mr. Phil MacDonald.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and thank you to the members of the Legislature for the opportunity to present the Department of Community Services *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* for 2019-20.

The operation and maintenance supplementary budget for Community Services includes additional support for the Arctic Winter Games 2020 Host Society. This was identified in my mandate letter, and as we see now, unfortunately, through the tribute we had today, we have had to cancel the games, yet there are still costs associated with that. I have spoken with the host society from the games, and they have let me know that they

will keep me informed about how finances are progressing over the coming week and weeks.

I am happy that we had taken the approach to direct some more funds there. Specifically, an additional \$750,000 is identified for the Arctic Winter Games, bringing the Yukon's total financial support for the games to \$2.5 million.

The other major issue under operation and maintenance that I'm going to note here in my opening remarks is addressing the final cost of the 2019 fire season. This past fall when we were sitting in the Legislature, we already knew — and we spoke of — the late-season fire in September around Ethel Lake. It was an extraordinary fire, one that even had pyroclastic clouds. I had never heard of them before here in the territory, and we know first-hand from the MLA for Mayo-Tatchun, who had been there working on that fire. I got reports about what that was like. Especially because of his history with the fire service, it was first-hand and well-informed.

We understood the fire was there, but we still hadn't tallied up all of the numbers. There are always some late-season charges that come in, and so those are coming through in this final supplementary budget. There's an additional \$4.48 million to address the costs related to late-season wildfire activity.

One last thing that I will note under the operation and maintenance supplementary budget is that it also includes \$410,000 for legal and financial due diligence work in examining the Yukon pension plan options for public sector employees. The total, or the additional for the operation and maintenance budget, is \$5.95 million — an increase of \$5.95 million.

On the capital side, we have also tabled some reductions in capital. Largely this is due to timing of tenders and timing changes and some land development delays due to early-season cold weather. I think all of us can remember the big November snows that hit, and some of our work had to stop. In total, the supplementary budget proposed a capital decrease of \$3.142 million. Specifically, this includes \$434,000 to defer the purchase of a fire truck, \$500,000 to reflect additional functional planning work required for the air tanker base replacement and a \$2.2-million reduction in land planning and development due to late-season weather and scheduling of feasibility work that is ongoing.

I'm happy to answer further questions about land development. Overall, we continue apace with land development in the territory, both here in Whitehorse and across our communities. We're investing significant dollars. Even with this reduction, it was an overall significant budget in land development.

With that, I'm happy to answer questions from the members opposite and look forward to the debate.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate the minister's opening remarks and I welcome the officials. As I mentioned during debate on Highways and Public Works, we will not have any questions in line by line for Community Services or any of the other departments.

We will review the ministers' opening statements. Critics will, either through letter or written questions submitted to the

Table, ask questions that we have with respect to this and with respect to the briefing packages that we received.

Again, I thank the minister for his opening remarks and thank the officials for coming today. I will cede the floor to my colleague, the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Ms. Hanson: Actually, my daughter is a minister, but I am not a minister.

Thank you. I do have a couple of questions for the minister. We will look forward, as he indicated, to getting a sense from him as soon as he is able to provide it to the House of the anticipated requirements to cover the unanticipated costs of the cancellation of the Arctic Winter Games, in addition to the \$2.5 million, and how much of that will be covered by Canada.

Under that same area in Community Development — I asked some of these questions of the minister's officials in the briefing, but I think they are important. The reason I am raising the next couple that I am going to raise is because they are important for the public record in terms of the direction that the department is taking here.

Under Community Operations, there is additional funding required to maintain the recycling fund. This, in brackets, says that it includes a time-limited recycling fund manager position, so the total amount is \$250,000. The question is: Then how is it funded? The issue we often see is that we do a one time only, and then — too bad, so sad — another entity has to deal with it and find the money. This can cause problems — so, for the record, if the minister could just clarify for the Legislature what the intention is with respect to the ongoing work of a recycling fund manager position.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First, just if I may, I would like to say thank you to the Official Opposition. I will say that we're always happy to take questions in a written form and answer them, but I will also say that the departments can answer questions better and faster here — it's always better for them. I know how much work they do when we do written questions. I'm not declining the ability to — this is all good. I'm saying yes to all, but I am just acknowledging their work. I'm happy either way — just letting you know. Thank you.

The second thing is that I will know that, through accommodation of federal bodies — CanNor, culture, immigration, Sport Canada, even translation — we got \$1.6 million from the federal government on the Arctic Winter Games. I'm waiting for the dust to settle, but what I will say is that, at this point, I don't believe I'm going back to the federal government. I think we have a lot of things to talk to the federal government about around sport, around many issues, so I'm not closing that door. At this point, I'm not necessarily anticipating that need, and the first step is really to support the Arctic Winter Games and just acknowledge the really great tributes that were given today by all folks in this Legislature for the host society.

With respect to the recycling manager and the dollars that are going there, as members know, or I have spoken often about, the solid waste ministerial advisory committee — after we started work on garbage and our waste transfer stations, the second task that I asked the committee to look at largely was recycling. We have known that recycling currently is not in a sustainable place at all. The commodity markets are changing

all the time. On the downside, we saw, through our recyclers, that they asked us to stop dealing with glass, because it was just ending up — at least non-refundable glass, I should be careful to say — it was ending up in the landfills, regardless. So, we had to take that step. I have been working with Highways and Public Works to see if we can come up with an alternative solution. The ministerial committee is working on that.

On the upside, we just saw a system put in place over the last year or so to recycle textiles. It is actually a much bigger portion of our waste stream and a more challenging stream in our waste stream, because textiles take up a lot of volume in our landfills and they become a problem in our landfills. They are like mattresses or Styrofoam — a lot of air space — and they cause our landfills to fill up quickly, even though they don't have a lot of mass. So, it was really great to get the baler and get that stream working through our recyclers here in the territory.

The idea — I think it is two years' worth of funding for a recycling manager — is to work really hard on our number one goal, which is extended producer responsibility. That goal is to work with a neighbouring province — likely British Columbia, or possibly Alberta — and to work with them to bring extended producer responsibility here into the territory. We hope that with that work, we will then be able to deal with some of our more challenging waste streams — for example, hazardous waste streams. If we are successful, our hope is then to get the recycling fund to a sustainable level, and so it really is meant to be a time-limited position, to do that work. I am not certain that we will be successful over time. There is a lot of work in front of us, but that was the whole intention of the time-limited funding. It was a very specific project that we thought would take a couple of years and would help out the really great team — well, there are two teams actually. There is the team at Environment that does great work and also the operations group at Community Services working on recycling and waste.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. Just to clarify, then — certainly, there has been a lot of discussion over the last three years, a number of years, on this EPR, and certainly at various conferences there have been representatives from BC and Alberta talking about their scale, which we don't have, and the ability to work under the aegis of those. Is that what the minister is talking about — a transition of being under the aegis of either BC or Alberta's EPR regime?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Indeed, the acronym that we tend to use for this extended producer responsibility is EPR. I will just explain that it is sort of our gold standard of the stewardship model where we ask industry to work up front to design a system where they are going to collect a product at the end of its life cycle and bring it back — even hopefully make it into a more circular economy.

One of the things that tends to happen with all of the stewardship models — but especially the extended producer responsibility — is that it motivates our producers to design their systems so that there is less waste, more reduction so that reuse is possible and, if not, so that recycling is predesigned from the get-go.

When I started in this position, I thought that extended producer responsibility was a bridge too far for us. I was very happy to hear that it was possibly within our reach. I was excited to see how quickly it had been moving across the provinces. It is in the proximity of British Columbia and/or Alberta, which will allow us to hopefully work with them to become sort of a partner with them on it. It would be tough to imagine our economy of scale being able to get a full extended producer responsibility.

The other thing that I will say is that all of these solutions that we've been working toward as a territory, as municipalities, and as this Solid-Waste Advisory Committee has been to try to address the fact that waste costs so much money. The more we can move from waste to recycling, the better; the more from recycling to reusing, the better; the more from reusing to reducing, the better. The Ecofiscal Commission, I believe, just did some analysis on a range of countries. Canada, among the other OECD — in a range of countries similar to Canada, Canada produces the most waste per person. It is about one tonne per person.

We really do need to find a way to reduce, and extended producer responsibility is a great solution that we really want to work toward.

Ms. Hanson: That's encouraging to hear — very encouraging, actually.

In the Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs section, as the minister mentioned, there is \$410,000 and I'm particularly interested in this. We know, over the last couple years, there have been discussions with respect to the northern employee benefits services. I've heard it expressed by municipal leaders the fact that municipal employees are not covered by the same kind of pension plan that the Yukon government — the kind of pension plans that Yukon and federal employees in the territory enjoy and that there are different systems — so they don't have any. They had a different RRSP kind of model. Then we have the college and the Hospital Corporation with, again, different models.

So, we've been aware that these discussions have been going on, so I was encouraged to see that there was funding to evaluate how to introduce and implement pension plan legislation in order to give those public sector employees working outside of the Yukon and federal government an option to join a multi-employer pension plan. This NEBS is in place in Nunavut and Northwest Territories.

So, my question is: Who conducted the evaluation report? Can a copy be made available? I'm not asking for a copy of a legal opinion or client-solicitor opinion, but I think this is a public policy issue because of the fact that we know that municipal governments particularly have expressed an interest in this and being able to attract and retain and not lose their employees through the allure of better pensions — or actually, a pension — with either the territorial or federal government. So, whether it's some sort of summary document or issued statement that would help facilitate all Members of the Legislative Assembly having a better understanding of what considerations and what issues may be at play here.

Then secondly, I would be interested in hearing from the minister — since the money was spent to do this work — whether or not it's anticipated that in fact there will be movement forward on northern employee benefits services.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Just to back up for a second, the acronym I was trying to remember for Hansard was the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development — so, those countries under that — the OECD was what I was referring to earlier.

Just to make sure we're all clear on language here, NEBS, as it's sometimes called, is the northern employee benefits services plan, which exists in Nunavut and Northwest Territories at the moment.

I'm going to share some information, and I suspect it won't be as much as we wish right now because it's still pretty preliminary, and I'm not sure — the work is ongoing, is what I'm trying to say, and I'm happy to get — I agree with the member opposite that we should share this information at a high level — general, not legal advice — but once I have it — but even that, I'll share some of the things that we're working on and give a sense of direction today, and as soon as the team has done some of its diligence work and I have something that I can share with the Legislature, I absolutely will.

We are evaluating the possibility of introducing legislation, or whatever policy tool is required, that would enable pension plan options for territorial public sector organizations other than the territorial or federal governments. This might include employers such as Yukon College, Yukon Hospital Corporation, and also municipalities and First Nation governments — and, as it turns out, other non-profit employers.

In conducting our due diligence, we are looking at options for how such a plan would be regulated in the Yukon, legal considerations, scope of legislation, how the plan would be governed, and how we would ensure that the plan is financially sound, affordable, and well-managed.

As I mentioned, we know that the northern employee benefit services plan is in place in Northwest Territories and Nunavut, and as we consider whether to enact pension legislation here in the Yukon, due diligence is important to evaluate their plan to see how it might be an option for some Yukon employees and employers. I would also say that we are not married to any directions at this point; we are open in looking at solutions.

I will also share, just at a high level, our sort of main two motivations. The first one is that we recognize that the benefits that pension legislation bring, for example, for municipal and First Nation governments and other public sector employees are important benefits. If there is a healthy and well-managed pension plan, it can improve recruitment and retention and provide greater security and peace of mind for employees, so it is a good thing.

We also know that there has been an ongoing solvency question with both the college and the Hospital Corporation, and that has motivated us to seek a solution. Those are our main two drivers that we are working on, and I apologize that I am not able to share a more detailed report at this point. The work

is ongoing. I would be happy to share it once it has been made available to me.

Ms. Hanson: The minister could probably anticipate that my next question would be: When we have a project ongoing, what is our target completion date?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It has been a question that challenged the government before us, and it has been an ongoing issue. I think that one of the reasons for that is that it is a difficult issue. What I will say is that the Premier has put it in my mandate, so that means that I am working diligently on it to try to achieve it, as per the direction given to me.

I am a little reluctant to give a timeline because it still feels uncertain to me. When I sit down and get briefed by officials, I can hear that there are often still questions that are being posed, and so it is difficult for me today to give a timeline — just to say that I know that the department is working diligently on it, and I am tasked with getting an answer for us as a government and happy to share it once I get it. I am sorry that I don't have a specific timeline in front of me.

Ms. Hanson: It is convenient — the sun is on the minister, and so he has the spotlight on him right now.

I will just keep it on this one for a second. I presume that, with municipalities, it is not as much of an issue, although there are some unionized staff, but where there are collective agreements like with Yukon Hospital Corporation and the college, are those impediments with respect to making a change from one form of coverage to another coverage?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would not use the term “impediment” to talk about these unions. What I would say is that we recognize that the college, as the employer, has a relationship with the college employees — as through their employer-to-union relationship — and we support them to have that dialogue and to carry that out. Similarly, the hospital is the employer and has the relationship with its union, and we ask that they take the lead in dialoguing with their unions to find out which issues are resolvable, which issues are a challenge, and where solutions might lie — including, as I had mentioned earlier, that we're not sold on a particular direction. For example, there is the northern employee benefits plan. That is an example, but it's not the only example. We are happy to explore a range of options.

We also, I would say, as an employer ourselves, have dialogue with our union — the Yukon Employees' Union. They are aware of this ongoing dialogue. We have been in discussion with them as well for their perspectives. I think that there are existing pension committees across both organizations — the hospital and the college. I should say “the university”. The Premier got after me the other day. It is the hospital and the university. They are doing their due diligence right now. It is part of the work that is ongoing as we speak.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Deputy Chair, not to quibble, but I think we had a conversation yesterday. I am not sure that the *Yukon University Act* has been enacted. It is just another piece of legislation that we have passed, but we are not there yet. I believe it will be in May, but who knows?

We have conversations that are going on, and that's great. They have been going on for awhile.

Can the minister tell us what analysis has been done of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut? How is NEBS working — the northern employee benefits services — in those two territories? Does that analysis show that there would be any concerns about applying it in the Yukon and whether or not there could be one pan-territorial plan that deals with the unique circumstances of northern — it looks to me that, if you have a pension plan, you would want to amalgamate. That is why the federal superannuation plan is so robust. It allows the kind of growth in that plan that federal employees enjoy, so I am just curious about any hesitancy. I don't know what the glitches or qualms are, because I haven't had that shared with me, so that's what I am trying to understand. That is the challenge that I think most citizens would face as they try to figure out, well, why not? I don't know. That is why I am asking.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the reminder, so I will refer to it as the soon-to-be university.

So, I'm just going to speak at a high level about some of the issues that exist as we review the northern employees benefits plan. I will start by saying that the member opposite is completely correct that there is an interest in growing plans because it just gives you that much more stability and volume, and so both sides would be motivated to consider the northern employee benefits plan because adding the Hospital Corporation and the college — Yukon College/university — if that were to happen, would be great news. So, people are interested in looking at it.

What are the challenges? So, just again, at a high level, the challenges that exist — first of all, when you take an existing plan and try to merge it with existing pensions, it gets complex very quickly.

If you had an existing plan and you were adding a new pension to it, it's a lot simpler, and the issues mostly come around governance, and then you are looking to probably — possibly — amend legislation not only here in the Yukon but probably — possibly — in the other territories, so you have to coordinate. There are challenges, because our legislative framework is not exactly the same as the legislative framework in those territories whereas, when Nunavut was created, it largely grew from the legislative framework of the Northwest Territories, and so they were more aligned originally.

There are challenges around even evaluating those pensions and how that evaluation is done. Ultimately, it also is true that we might have an opinion, the Hospital Corporation might have another opinion, their union might have another opinion — everybody would have a different perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of joining that potential existing pension system. So, those are some of the questions that need to be tackled.

One of the things, when you are trying to evaluate them, is that you are trying to ensure comparable benefits for plan members. You need appropriate representation on decision bodies managing a plan. You need to allow for all those who have a stake as part of that pension to have a voice at that table. So, as I was mentioning, mergers, because of the complex nature of those mergers, they are not always supported.

Those are just some of the high-level conversations that I've heard in my briefings around the northern employee benefits system.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. One final question, I hope, on this is: Is it anticipated that there would be any requirement for any federal legislative changes to facilitate this? I'm just thinking of, in terms of our pension plans and their administration, some of the challenges there, and you do have unions that are not YEU, so I'm just curious.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Deputy Chair, the answer is sort of yes and no. The "no" part of it is that we don't necessarily have to work with them, but we do work with them because — I believe the group is called the office of the superintendent of securities. We're really working with them on the diligence piece, on the solvency question. That is really the question. If we get to a solution and then the superintendent of securities says, "Yes, you still haven't solved the solvency question..." — well, we didn't really arrive. That is why we are working closely with them, but it's not necessary. At present, I haven't heard of legislation that would need to be changed or amended for the solutions. Again, the diligence work is still being done.

Ms. Hanson: I misspoke — that was the last question, but I do have one more.

So, the minister said that this was part of his mandate letter. So, presumably, going by convention, the minister's mandate is up in November. So, will this be done by November? Elections in Canada are on a four-year cycle.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: All I will say is that I'm working diligently. I have not thought about my mandate as four years; I have just thought about it as the time until the next election, because I don't know when that is. I will not speculate. It is in my mandate. I am working hard to achieve it.

Ms. Hanson: From pensions to fire trucks, can the minister confirm that there's a fire truck replacement — as he mentioned, that was due to delays in the tendering process, so that was cancelled this fiscal year. The replacement is going to be required. My question is: Where is the replacement going to be put? Who is getting the fire truck?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think the process typically is that the Fire Marshal's Office does a prioritization based on where need is highest, and they rotate around. I believe the next one is slated for West Dawson. I will just confirm that. There is often a cascading of equipment, so when the oldest piece of equipment is retired, then, wherever the newest one goes, sometimes there's juggling. It's not always just a one-off move. It's sometimes a domino effect, but I believe the next one in the queue is West Dawson.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. I do not recall — I'm just curious as to the next — the Whitehorse air tanker base "deferred to future years" — is that fiscal 2020-21 or some other year in the future?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am going to give an answer to the best of my knowledge right now, and then I am going to confirm that. If I need to adjust my response for the member opposite, I will.

The air tanker base is needed, but we are trying to coordinate it with this overall development that is happening up at the Whitehorse airport. It has had us pause to rethink, because we believe that we can get a better solution by coordinating with other work that is happening with Highways and Public Works. So, we still have a small amount in our budgets for doing that analysis and feasibility work. My recollection is that, in order to align everything, we are going to be starting two fiscal years from now — in other words, in 2022-23 — for that replacement. I now have that confirmation. It is 2022-23.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for clarifying that.

I just want to confirm that the \$2,208,000 decrease with respect to Community Development, Land Development — is it correct to understand that this is due to an inability to complete the land development of lots in Whistle Bend? I would also like to know whether or not there are any reductions in rural municipal land development included in that amount.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, in Whitehorse, it was Whistle Bend, and it was really about curbs, concrete, and things that we couldn't pour at that temperature and at that time. It's all happening as soon as our snow melts, so it's a lapse in funding on last year's budget; however, the work will still happen.

Similarly, we had some outdoor construction activity in our communities that was of a similar nature. The split is just over \$1 million in our rural development, and \$1.1 million in Whitehorse. It's about 50-50. As I understand it, the total for land development for the current fiscal year, 2019-20, including these reductions, will be \$26.5 million in land development. It's still a very significant budget, and I want to just emphasize that this is basically a timing issue for weather, and we'll be picking that up. As the Premier has noted, I think our budget for this year is \$27 million in land development, both in Whitehorse and in the communities.

Ms. Hanson: I know that the minister is really good at math, but he just told me that, for 2019-20, it would be \$26.5 million, but the revised vote for 2019-20 is \$27.126 million. Can he clarify the difference there?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Deputy Chair, I will thank the member opposite for that compliment.

The reason is that I am talking about the dollars that are going purely to the land development. That is \$26.5 million. There is always some overhead with the department and some of the administrative work. That is the difference that we are talking about here, as I understand it.

There may be another question. I will get up and answer it if I haven't explained that properly.

Ms. Hanson: I don't want to quibble, but this is the capital budget. I would have thought that administration was O&M.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The answer to that is that, in our departments, including Community Services, when we are talking about capital dollars, the overhead of those capital dollars — the administrative fees — are seen as capital budget items, so they actually are there.

When we were looking at how we described, for example, the budget highlights for this upcoming year's budget, we just

pulled back and said, “Here are the dollars that are going straight to the development work.” We didn’t announce the administrative costs, but there is always a small percentage that goes to those administrative costs, and that would be a full part of the assessment.

It also includes dollars for assessments. When we pay the assessors to come and value the properties, it is in that overhead. It also includes the planning costs. Sometimes we are doing the planning when we are talking about our communities. It is typically us as the planners. Sometimes we are working with the City of Whitehorse planners and they are doing the planning. It is different, depending on which community we are talking about.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 51, Community Services?

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

Ms. Hanson: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. Hanson has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$5,952,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$3,142,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,810,000 agreed to

Department of Community Services agreed to

Deputy Chair: The matter now before the Committee is Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Five minutes — and the bells will ring.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Justice

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would like to welcome to the floor of the Legislative Assembly today, to assist with any questions that may come up regarding the Justice supplementary budget, Deputy Minister John Phelps and Director of Finance Luda Ayzenberg, who have been to the House before, but I would like to welcome them today. I note that this is the opportunity for us to answer any questions that may come as a result of the supplementary budget involving the Department of Justice, and I look forward to questions.

Mr. Cathers: As the Official Opposition House Leader alluded to earlier in debate, we will not be asking questions during the *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20* debate. We will save policy questions for debate on the budget mains. This is due to the fact that this budget bill includes \$4.6 million for the Hospital Corporation, and we want to expedite debate on this bill so that funding can be approved and provided.

Ms. Hanson: I do have a few questions with respect to the Department of Justice, *Supplementary Estimates No. 2*. I have a couple of questions because I see in a number of areas — I don’t have an organization chart and I don’t have a sense of what these services are. My question to the minister is — it says a \$601,000 change — an increase for ongoing internal transfers to Management Services from other program areas. My question is: Is this for future years? Is this a rebasing of salary dollars? Is this what is intended? Will we see Management Services — revised vote — the base would be \$4,856? I guess, if it is an ongoing internal transfer — why do it annually?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. Management services is a portion of the department or a part of the Department of Justice. I have confirmed with officials that we will provide you with an organization chart, so that will be of some assistance. I’m sorry that it hasn’t been provided before. I think that often we try to do that at the briefing, where we will make a note to continue to try to do that at the briefing, if it has altered.

The total of the internal transfer to Management Services incorporates a couple of different moves. They are all related to personnel. For instance, in one of them, \$107,000 of that total transfer involves the transfer of a policy development officer who used to exist in Court Services, but who now reports through Management Services. So, it is the moving of that position.

It is the only one of the other six that involves funding for what was previously an unfunded position. Unfortunately, government has, in the past, had a number of positions that were not properly funded. In the interest of aligning the FTEs or the persons in positions within the department for better transparency and accountability, we have determined that these funds are necessary to align with the positions that have already existed. There is \$35,000 as a transfer to fund the previously unfunded records indexer position that is a 0.5 FTE. There is \$89,000 involved in this transfer to fund the unfunded network administrator. That is a 1.0 FTE. There is \$89,000 in that transfer to fund the unfunded human resource consultant. That is a 1.0 FTE that may have been previously elsewhere in the

department. There is \$85,000 transferred to fund the ATIPP coordinator, which is a 1.0 FTE, and \$103,000 in this transfer to fund an unfunded policy development officer — 1.0 FTE.

These are not new positions. These are positions that have been previously in the department where people have been working, but no absolute funds have been attached to the payment for those positions. For greater transparency, that is clearly necessary.

Sorry, the last one is \$93,000 in this transfer to fund the unfunded communications officer — 1.0 FTE. I have already noted the Court Services transfer to Management Services.

I think that in the question as well, Mr. Deputy Chair, there was a question regarding why we do this every year. This is an exercise that took place this year only. Of course, budgets have been aligned so that these positions will no longer be unfunded and will be properly accounted for, but this is not something we would do every year.

If there is something similar that the member opposite is thinking of from last year, she can point that out, and we can probably get an answer. But this is a one-time opportunity to make the department more accountable and to actually have money attached to positions and people when they're working.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister. I have no problem with the notion of regularizing positions and making sure that the appropriate dollars are there for the appropriate FTEs. My question was — now that this is done in 2021, that we won't see that again, because this has been done. So, it's a rebasing of the amount for Management Services so that whatever that is and whatever COLA or whatever attracts would be what we would see going forward as opposed to something else that talks about it and other complicated transfers.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I hope I'm getting this right. This is a one-time transfer into Management Services. I think I'm understanding the question in that it won't be shown again as it is here in the supplementary budget because it will exist in the mains for 2020-21 in the line item under Management Services as part of the general salaries for individuals who work at the department.

Ms. Hanson: Back in the day, I think we would have called it just the A-base and that was — this is the new A-base for this.

So, I get the gist of what's happening here in terms of trying to regularize this. It would be helpful to have — if the minister wants to, she can read into the record where these changes have occurred because the next one is another decrease of \$603,000 to regularize from Court Services to other programs. The next one is \$73,000, and then there is another one of these ongoing transfers of almost \$400,000 to regulatory from other program areas.

So, it would be helpful to get a sense just to sort of see how that organization chart — when we get the organization chart — what came from where. So, if they could just do that flow chart and then she wouldn't have to get into the details of trying to follow it on a mental map.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am happy to do that. I think I understand. I want to make sure that I am not taking too much

time, but I am also happy to note the changes through the O&M and then the capital for Justice.

I will just deal with the O&M right now. There is \$601,000 in the supplementary budget, which is a transfer to Management Services. There is a lapse of \$603,000 attached to Court Services, and I can explain each of them, if that is helpful. There is \$73,000, which is supplementary expense through Legal Services. The \$420,000 is attached to a supplementary request from Legal and Regulatory Services, and there is a \$125,000 lapse attached to Community Justice and Public Safety. If it is of use, I am happy to note what each of those are for. Those are for a total of \$366,000, which is the total O&M vote being requested.

As I noted, on the \$601,000, there were a number of positions changed. I have read into the record the amount for each of those. I can repeat that, if necessary, but I can move on to the \$603,000 lapse from Court Services and indicate that is \$196,000 of that, which is a transfer from court operations. There is a \$284,000 transfer from Assistant Deputy Minister of Court Services and senior administrative assistant positions over to Court and Regulatory Services — so that was a restructure in the department. There is a \$108,000 of that transfer of a policy development officer from Court Services to Management Services — again, to align the work — and \$15,000 of that \$603,000 is a transfer to Court and Regulatory Services to fund the Investigation and Standards Office, which is also known as ISO. That's the \$603,000 lapse from Court Services.

The increase of \$73,000 with respect to Legal Services involves an ongoing increase of \$73,000 for the access-to-justice agreement with the Yukon Public Legal Education Association. These funds are 100-percent recoverable from the Government of Canada.

The increase of \$22,000 — I don't know if I added those up properly — as part of the \$420,000 increase, \$22,000 of it was an increase given to the coroner's office in a one-time funding for the community coroners workshop, and the funding is 100-percent recoverable from the Government of Canada. The other remaining items in the \$420,000 is a \$284,000 transfer to the director's office from Court Services for the director of Court and Regulatory Services and administrative assistant positions — other expenses: \$99,000 transfer to move the Investigations and Standards Office from Community Justice and Public Safety to Regulatory Services, and \$15,000 of it was a transfer to cover other expenses of the ISO, or the Investigations and Standards Office, from Court Services.

I think that's the total. I'm not sure if I have addressed the \$125,000.

There was an increase for the family information liaison unit, a one-time increase of \$285,000 for the 2019-20 fiscal year to Victim Services for the family information liaison unit, and that funding is 100-percent recoverable from the Government of Canada. The family information liaison unit provides centralized coordinated supports for families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls to access information related to their loved one's case. I think the

member opposite is familiar with that, and we were very pleased to see that funding continue.

The Government of Canada provided the Government of Yukon with \$285,000 per year for both 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years. Originally, the funding for the family information liaison unit — sometimes called FILU — programs was limited to a two-year period at that time, in order to provide service during the mandate of the time frame of the national inquiry.

In June of 2018, the Government of Canada announced a one-year extension of funding for the FILU unit programs across Canada. This extension was to coincide with the release of the final report. Now the additional funding has come as well. In December of 2019, the Government of Canada announced a three-year extension of the family information liaison units from April 2020 to March 31, 2023. Officials in the Department of Justice are now working with the government to determine the level of funding and the extension for the future years — so that accounts for that.

A decrease exists in the amount of \$14,000, which is a decrease of the 2019-20 time-limited funding for the independent legal advice pilot project, funded by Canada. These funds are 100-percent recoverable from the Government of Canada. The pilot was funded by the Government of Canada for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal years. The funding decision was made in August 2019. An agreement was signed between the Government of Yukon and Government of Canada in September of last year — 2019. The Government of Canada will provide the Government of Yukon with \$226,000 in funding for the 2019-20 fiscal year, which is a slight decrease from the originally anticipated budget of \$240,000, so that is the decrease that is noted.

In 2020-21, the Government of Canada will provide \$250,000 to the Government of Yukon. The individual legal advice pilot project will provide independent legal advice to victims of intimate partner violence and sexualized violence. Victims will be able to access specially trained lawyers to discuss their case at any point in the process, including during pre-charge and trial. Advice will assist victims in making informed legal choices as they proceed through that process.

The project will also support training for service providers focused on the unique dynamics inherent to sexualized violence and intimate partner violence. The independent legal advice pilot project will assist justice professionals in understanding the complex legal framework surrounding sexualized violence and assault and developing case law in relation to consent. We are very pleased to be able to support this program and pleased that the Government of Canada is assisting us in doing so.

Lastly, with respect to the notes I have made, there has been an internal transfer of \$396,000 broken down, from Community Justice and Public Safety, as follows: a \$99,000 transfer to move the Investigation and Standards Office from Community Justice and Public Safety into the Regulatory Services branch of the Department of Justice; and \$297,000 to transfer from Community Justice and Public Safety to Management Services, as I've noted earlier, to fund the unfunded positions. I hope that is the detail that has been asked for.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that detail. I will look forward to reviewing it. One final question on this O&M section is — she mentioned these other programs that are recoverable from Canada, and several of them have had extensions, but in the \$73,000 for the access-to-justice agreement, is that time-limited? If so, what is the term?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The Yukon Public Legal Education Association is funded by the Yukon government, but that funding is 100-percent recoverable from Canada. Their total budget is about \$163,000, and the \$73,000 that I noted is an increase for the access-to-justice agreement with the funding increase from the federal government, and it will be ongoing. We expect that to be continued into the future. There is no term on it, and it is an increase, understanding that the Yukon Public Legal Education Association required an increase.

The funding for the Yukon Public Legal Education Association — and information is provided to the Government of Yukon from the federal government, as I have said, and there is an agreement under their access-to-justice services. In 2019, the Government of Canada increased its funding to all provinces and territories for this important initiative and service.

The Government of Yukon was pleased to direct this funding to the Yukon Public Legal Education Association so that it may better serve Yukoners through increased access to the Law Line, and as you may know, they operate the Law Line and other educational activities and legal services in the territory. The funding from the Government of Canada for Yukon public legal education and information has been limited for many years to about \$70,000, and this is recognition that it is not sufficient. New funding now brings the total to just over \$163,000 — so, expect that to continue on into the future.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. It is good to know that it is an ongoing increase for the Yukon Public Legal Education Association.

Then I look at the adult and young offenders corrections management reduction of \$900,000 from said corrections case management system project. I don't know what the system project is and if there are any details. First of all, what was the budget? It was reduced by \$900,000. What was the total budget? Does that \$900,000 reduction represent — just because it was completed, or it was deferred? Where is it at?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The \$900,000 that existed in the Department of Justice budget was a request from the adult and youth correctional services and the facilities management system for a project that would be electronic case management and services that are not currently existing in the department with respect to how those case-managed files can be managed. It represents a joint project between the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Services, which the members may well know is responsible for a number of youth justice initiatives.

The Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Services will continue to work closely with the Information and Communications Technology branch of the Department of Highways and Public Works and the external contractors to complete this project in the allotted time.

What is happening here is that the project is being rethought, if I can say it that way — thought that the initial budget was quite extensive. The three departments are regrouping in order to determine options going forward on how we might achieve the necessity of an appropriate and well-planned file management system, but that work has not been completed to date.

It is the view of our department — and, I assume, the others — that we should be rethinking this particular project and how we might achieve what is needed. This is a project that has been on the books for quite awhile. Frankly, the concern regarding the cost of it was part of the opportunity to rethink how to spend taxpayers' money and still achieve the necessary issues and file management systems for the department. It's a critical initiative and will require new scoping, and it will therefore not be in production this fiscal year. The Department of Justice is identifying \$900,000 of the earmarked funds as a lapse in funding for the 2019-20 fiscal year. It's recommended that these funds can be offset from the current approved budget going forward. It was anticipated, following the project development in 2018 and request for proposals, that the Department of Justice would be in a position to begin the development and implementation of an electronic file management and correctional case management system, but that has not, in fact, occurred. The estimated cost for the project, following the request for proposals, was significantly higher than originally estimated. As a result, the decision from the Department of Justice was to not proceed with the product that was identified and to regroup and determine how we can meet the necessities of this case management system.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that response. Could the minister tell us, then, the original estimate versus the forecast that she received? What is the target now, given the fact that this has been deemed too costly, and the target for completion?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I want to make sure that I get this right. It was a bit of a surprise to all of us, but the original \$900,000 — as you can see — was earmarked for us to proceed with this. Some of the budget that came back to us was about \$6.5 million for what was being proposed by the individual attendees. We did not proceed with that, clearly, because in addition to that, there was a concept of about \$300,000 a year for maintenance to deal with that system. I think that, all in all, it's probably larger and more in-depth than what is contemplated or needed. It was in and around the \$9 million mark over a period of time, and so reset and regrouping were determined to be the case.

There is still about \$100,000 in 2019-20 for the exploration and the work on the project to continue. We expect that this will be the case, but it was obvious to us that a reset was necessary. I don't think that we were maybe speaking the same language for what was needed for that project and what was being proposed.

Ms. Hanson: I understand that there was \$100,000 in 2019-20 to continue or pull together the exploration work on this project. Is that with a view then to a new target date for retendering this year or sometime in the future?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Yes. The work will be redone by the departments that I mentioned in partnership with and led by the Department of Justice. Then a budget request will have to come forward with respect to that. We had approximately \$1 million in the 2019-20 budget; \$900,000 of it is appropriately lapsing. The \$100,000 will remain. There is nothing in the future of — in the 2021 budget for instance, directly related to this project because that legwork needs to be done and a request will have to come forward separately.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. Can she confirm that the \$55,000 increase for the coroner's cooler is the finalization of the work for the upgrades that had been identified several years ago as being necessary for the morgue?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The existing two-person cooler at the coroner's morgue is in need of replacement. Refurbishing on the existing cooler was completed in 2017 to keep it running until a replacement was acquired.

So, initially there was some work — refurbishing — done, but due to an increase in the Yukon population and a resulting increase in deaths per year, not only does the existing cooler — which is approximately 20 years old — need to be replaced due to failing parts, but a cooler with increased capacity is required.

The equipment was ordered in the fiscal year of 2018-19. However, installation did not begin until June of 2019. Due to the time constraints and a long delivery time for the specialized equipment, the project was substantially completed in September 2019, with an increase to the cost of \$55,000.

Ms. Hanson: Just finally, that completes the work that's necessary to modernize the morgue that has been discussed in previous budgets?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: It does in this phase. We certainly are continuing to work with the coroner's office with respect to appropriate office space and ultimately some concepts of an appropriate or modernized morgue, office space, and service area for the coroner in which to work. The one we currently have is somewhat older, but is working due to the refurbishment, and the updated equipment is working well at this time — but always keen to make sure that all of the necessary equipment needed by the coroner is as modern as possible.

There is nothing in the budget upcoming for next year or in this one. This has been substantially completed, but it is an ongoing conversation that we have with the chief coroner.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice?

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

Ms. Hanson: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. Hanson has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$366,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,064,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$698,000 agreed to

Department of Justice agreed to

Deputy Chair: The matter now before the Committee is Vote 10, Public Service Commission, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: We will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 10, Public Service Commission, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Public Service Commission

Deputy Chair: Is there any general debate?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have with me this afternoon my deputy, Pam, and my finance person, Kim. I hope you welcome them. They are here to provide me with support, and I appreciate them being here this afternoon. I also appreciate the opportunity to speak about the Public Service Commission's 2019-20 supplementary estimates. 2019-20 has been a year of positive change for the Public Service Commission and its supplementary budget reflects that.

Mr. Deputy Chair, as it continues to implement its vision of strategic government-wide leadership, the Public Service Commission has led the development of a four-year plan for the public service known as the *People Plan*. This plan is a whole-of-government approach to the way we work together. It is intended to guide the way we recruit, retain, and sustain the public service.

A modernized Public Service Commission is needed to deliver on the *People Plan*. We began implementing a more modern structure earlier this year with the establishment of the Human Resource Service Centre division.

The Public Service Commission has reorganized the remaining nine of its branches into groupings that make more sense for the way we work today, in 2020. These new groupings include a corporate services program and two new divisions in addition to the service centre division. These are the people and culture and the employee relations areas.

So, Mr. Deputy Chair, why was it necessary for the Public Service Commission to reorganize? Well, the old structure had

not been comprehensively reviewed in more than 25 years. Modern human resource management as a discipline has transformed and requires human resource leadership that is integrated, adaptive, solution-focused, and supported by evidence-based decisions to address the complex human resource challenges facing all employers — including the government.

The structure of the Public Service Commission was no longer effective for how we need to work and to serve employees and departments today. It created silos and, in some cases, may actually have inhibited employees in the human resource community receiving the coordinated, integrated services and support that they need.

The structure also did not promote a focus on employee relations in a culture of learning and development, well-being, and support. As a result, at the same time as developing the *People Plan*, the Public Service Commission undertook a year-long review of its structure and collaboration with employees and other departments to determine what the best approach would be to reflect a modern central agency for human resources.

The new, modernized Public Service Commission can deliver the *People Plan*. More importantly, the modernized structure of this Public Service Commission provides more logical groupings so that teams can more effectively collaborate and use their expertise to help people. In real terms, a modern Public Service Commission is able to do a better job of supporting the needs of the human resource community and employees. Through collaboration and improved program service groupings, the Public Service Commission's new structure takes an integrated case management and solutions-focused approach to solving problems, both corporate and individual, and to delivering services.

This approach and this structure will improve the employee experience and set the stage for a healthier, well-supported public service that is better able to deliver programs and services to the public.

The department is now organized into three divisions and a corporate services area. The divisions are: the Human Resource Service Centre, an existing division which leads the development of holistic, integrated human resource systems and processes; Employee Relations, a new division that better aligns the existing branches of Labour Relations, Health, Safety and Well-Being, and Respectful Workplace Office to foster an integrated approach to supporting psychologically and physically safe, healthy, and respectful workplaces; and a new People and Culture division that is responsible for implementing the *People Plan*. In this division, we also created a new Diversity and Inclusion branch, which leads implementation of the *Breaking Trail Together* plan to support reconciliation and a representative public service.

We have also created a People Metrics, Analytics and Projects branch, which supports a foundational piece of the *People Plan*, which is to support human resource systems development, data analytics, human resource analytics, and reporting.

The Corporate Services program provides strategic, senior-level advice and recommendations on departments and government-wide issues related to human resource management, policy and planning, and financial and administrative matters.

A fifth area of funding was also established — the corporate funds program. It is a consolidation of two previously existing service areas: employee future benefits and the workers' compensation payments. It provides funds for these non-discretionary government-wide programs provided by Yukon government as employer and distinguishes them from funds related to the Public Service Commission's operational activities.

In making these changes, the Public Service Commission has been fiscally responsible. The Public Service Commission is using a portion of savings from recent measures implemented to control employee future benefits liabilities and service costs to fund the organizational changes of other forced-growth budget pressures.

Just as the changes that the PSC is implementing are anticipated to support reconciliation and result in improved effectiveness in delivering human resource services across government, they have also resulted in a net \$1.5-million decrease in total operation and maintenance and capital funding required to March 31.

I look forward to speaking in more detail about the positive changes being implemented to the Public Service Commission during debate on the 2020-21 operation and maintenance and capital main estimates.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, for this opportunity to share the details of the *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* for the Public Service Commission. I will now open the floor up for questions.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for his opening remarks and for his comments with respect to the organization by reporting structure.

If the minister could provide us with total FTEs for each of the three divisions, for Corporate Services, and for the corporate funds grouping, that would be helpful. If he could identify for us where — now that we have a people plan — we see the performance metrics for that people plan.

We have a broad statement about change, and I'm sure that we welcome that, but as the minister will know, we all have a clear desire to have clear and accountable performance metrics for all of the aforementioned directorates that he has identified under each of the divisions.

For example, we would look at the kinds of performance metrics with respect to respectful workplaces, trends over time, labour relations, grievances, and that kind of thing. I say this because there are no statistics provided anywhere and certainly not with the main estimates that we receive for the Public Service Commission. We have nothing to make any assessment about anything, and that's difficult for Members of the Legislative Assembly. I know that the minister would want us to have that kind of information to raise informed questions without having to guess.

When we see a \$2,415,000 decrease in employee future benefits — annual service cost requirements reflected in the

most recent actuarial evaluation — is that as a result of a change in the demographic trend for public servants? How was he able to ascertain that those future benefits will not be required and that they could then be deployed or redeployed into salary dollars?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair. FTEs — Corporate Services will be 12; People and Culture will be 33.4; HR Service Centre will be 53; and in Employee Relations, there will be 27.

The second question had to do with performance metrics and I am very glad the Member for Whitehorse Centre brought up performance metrics. Part of the problem with the aged 25-year-old Public Service Commission — and I've talked about it an awful lot — is our inability to access statistics to actually be able to figure out what is happening across the board. With the changes that we have made to the Public Service Commission in this reorganization, we are going to set up a metrics division or metrics branch that will actually be able to analyze some of the human resource stats data that we have across government. Currently, accessing them is very, very laborious and difficult to tease out of all of the information that we have squirreled away throughout government.

The analytics branch is going to simplify that as part of our investments in new information technology and to be able to pull the information and the data that government holds and has held for a long time — and has really neglected — into the forefront. Through that effort, we are going to start to implement some performance metrics for the department. So, more to come on that request.

As far as statistics — the statistics on the department that the Member for Whitehorse Centre refers to are contained in the mains. They are for the Public Service Commission. We have those pullout statistics. We will have them for the member opposite. There was a problem loading them on to the Finance website, I have been told. So, we will get that information to the member opposite.

Now, the actuarial trend was the last piece that we had on employee future base benefits, and that is based on the good work of actuaries — those actuarial calculations consist of a leave liability decrease, based on severance costs related to the Yukon Teachers' Association collective agreement. We negotiated a recent collective agreement with the YTA last year. It dealt with several long-standing problems with teachers. We wanted a progressive settlement with the teachers and I was happy that we were able to reach that agreement, which included a change to the way in which severance was calculated. We actually made sure that we wanted to pay our civil servants — in this case, teachers — to stay with the government, not pay them to leave. So, we actually reached a settlement with them that was, I think, really fair and decent, and I am really happy that we reached that agreement. We also had extended health care for retirees and a pension buyback due to trends.

That is where those employee future benefits savings came from.

Ms. Hanson: There will no doubt be more questions in those areas as well.

Can the minister please provide some details as to the number of labour relations adjudications in total for the fiscal year 2019-20, the number of adjudications the \$90,000-increase represents, and the total expenditure for Labour Relations adjudications?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have an answer, but just before I begin, did the Member for Whitehorse Centre say “labour relations coms”? No?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Adjudications. Thank you. I was having a hard time hearing that, so I just wanted to make sure. Adjudications — absolutely right — is what I was discussing with my officials here.

What that sum covers are three years’ worth of adjudication services provided by the federal government that they did not bill us for. We have now worked out the billing and we have now paid the bills that were owed for adjudication services that the feds provided over the last three years. That is what that sum amounts to.

Ms. Hanson: The total then for adjudications is \$90,000 over the last three years. Can I ask for the number of adjudications that this covered?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I do not have the number of adjudications at this moment, but I will endeavour to get that number for the member opposite.

Ms. Hanson: There is a \$474,000 increase for collective agreement general increases and section M market adjustments. Can the minister tell us the split between the collective agreement general increases and the section M market adjustment?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair. It is a seemingly easy question that is very difficult to break down. But having spoken to my officials, they do not have that information to hand, but they will endeavour to get you an answer for that, but it will be difficult to tease out, but we will work very hard to get you an answer to that question.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that and I appreciate the officials providing that information.

I also have a question with respect to a section in market adjustments. I would be interested if the minister could outline the criteria for these market adjustments for section M — which I’m assuming is “management”. What portion of these market adjustments are due to increments in cost of living adjustments? What portion of it is related — what percentage is performance-based?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The number that we’re referring to today in this supplementary budget for 2019-20 does not include performance pay. That’s not part of that figure. That is just the market adjustment figure, and that was — we’re looking to confirm it. We believe it was 1.85 percent, which was the market adjustment for managers last year.

Ms. Hanson: So, no doubt, when we have an opportunity in the mains, we’ll come back and ask the questions with respect to the determination at risk or performance bonuses for management.

My last question for now — when I see a human resources, public service, people organization — whatever you want to

call it — having lapsed funds in accommodation equipment — this is workplace accommodation, I am presuming — I am concerned. I would be interested in knowing what the total budget for workplace accommodation is within the Public Service Commission and how widely — because I have had casework over the last number of years with respect to workplace accommodation issues and denials of those. So, I’m curious as to how workers who require workplace accommodation are made aware of and how to avail themselves of workplace accommodation measures that entail costs to the employer.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: All right, so disability management accommodation — getting people back to work — something that is very important to me. I know how important it is when you have been injured or you have some sort of calamity. You find yourself unable to perform the duties of the job that you once performed and you’re trying to get back into the workforce and trying to accommodate. That is important. That’s one of the reasons why we have reorganized and put disability management, workplace safety labour relations, and respectful workplace into one agency now so they can all sort of work together, because they’re all doing very similar work and we’re hoping to have more success on all those three fronts through this new integration that we’ve just put into place.

As far as the budget itself — the budget for the accommodation equipment, really, is what we’re talking about. This would be sit-stand desks and other pieces of equipment. It was \$20,000; we’ve decreased it by \$16,000 to \$4,000. We’ve done that because, frankly, those pieces of what was once specialized equipment are now becoming routinely used throughout government, and there wasn’t much uptake for that equipment, because departments are actually using that equipment in their normal business. So, there wasn’t a need for this budget anymore, so we reduced it to \$4,000. That’s what we’ve done.

Deputy Chair: Is there any more general debate on Vote 10, Public Service Commission?

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

Ms. Hanson: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 10, Public Service Commission, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 10, Public Service Commission, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. Hanson has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 10, Public Service Commission, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures
Total Operation and Maintenance underexpenditure of \$1,595,000 agreed to
On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$75,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,520,000 agreed to

Public Service Commission agreed to

Deputy Chair: The matter now before the Committee is Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Tourism and Culture

Deputy Chair: Is there any general debate?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. It is my pleasure to welcome the Director of Corporate Services, Philippe Mollet. Thank you so much for all you do for our department and thank you for being here today. It is my pleasure to introduce the *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* for the Department of Tourism and Culture for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

This budget reflects the value of the department's work for all Yukoners. Our priority is to protect and promote Yukon's rich cultural heritage, its history, and the diverse forms of artistic expression, and to market and grow Yukon's tourism industry.

The 2019-20 supplementary estimates for the Department of Tourism and Culture include an increase of \$71,000 in operation and maintenance expenditures and a decrease of \$689,000 in capital expenditures resulting in an overall decrease of \$618,000. Operation and maintenance figures include a \$104,000 reduction in personnel costs due to the transfer of the department's systems administrator position to Highways and Public Works, Information and Communications Technology unit, and a \$175,000 increase to support the current class 1 notification regime.

Capital adjustments are due to a \$300,000 surplus in funding related to the development of an administration and resource centre — the collections facility; a \$200,000 surplus due to delays and improvements to storage capacity at the Yukon Arts Centre for the Yukon permanent art collection; a \$175,000 surplus due to delays in restoration work on the historic train crew's house; a \$100,000 surplus due to delays with the tendering process for the Yukon Archives elevator replacement project; and an \$86,000 increase to support the Yukon signage modernization project.

I look forward to sharing the Department of Tourism and Culture's 2020-21 budget, which will speak to more detail

about some of these projects and provide an in-depth review of the important work that the department is doing. I am honoured to represent Tourism and Culture as minister. I look forward to the exciting work this next fiscal year. I look forward to questions.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. We, too, look forward to the more in-depth conversation that we shall have on the mains when we get there.

My first question, Mr. Deputy Chair, has to do with cultural services — this increase of \$175,000. There is an increase of \$105,000 for personnel due to the current class 1 notification regime program. I am interested in, first of all, Tourism and Culture's role within the class 1 notification program and whether this is a permanent increase to FTEs. As well, there is an increase of \$70,000 for "other" due to the current class 1 notification regime program, so if she could just elaborate on what the "other" is and whether this is a permanent increase to Tourism and Culture's budget related to the class 1 notification regime program.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question. Our role under class 1 is the review of the heritage aspects of class 1. We have employed new personnel under the Heritage branch for an archaeologist to work with those reviews. The \$70,000 is due to program supports, materials, and some of the travel requirements like helicopter contracts and those types of supports to the archaeologist to do their work.

I think the other part of the question is whether this is permanent. We do have an allocation going into the next fiscal year to do Yukon-wide class 1 work, and we're working in collaboration with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to continue this work on behalf of the Government of Yukon.

Ms. Hanson: So, if the minister could just confirm if this is a two-year term, a one-year term that has been extended — and I'll ask the next question, which may be the last one.

There's a decrease — so we're going to capital — of \$175,000 on the train crew's house due to the project being delayed as contractors were not available to complete the work. First of all, could the minister explain what the train crew's houses are? Is it deferred? If it is deferred, until when?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: The work on the train house was delayed this year, as project managers were unable to secure contractors before the end of the construction season. A decision has been made to defer over to the 2021-22 fiscal year to complete this work.

Ms. Hanson: Can the minister inform the House: What is it? What are the train crew's houses? Where are they?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: These are properties on the waterfront. They are heritage buildings on the waterfront that were there to support the train, and the work that is being done is to restore and do various improvements to protect the heritage site.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for clarifying that. So, this is not a new project. There has been ongoing work put into the so-called "roundhouse" over the years. Can the minister tell us the cumulative total that has been expended on the roundhouse? Is it imagined, or is it intended? I can tell you that

the facility was brought to a certain standard. There have been productions and other things carried on in there. I'm wondering if it's the intention, then, to bring it up to a certain standard and then mothball it.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I think there is some confusion. It's not the roundhouse property. These are the crew house properties that we're talking about — the train crew's houses that are just down from the roundhouse. I'm not sure that I have the total cost on any work that may have gone into those houses to date, but I can certainly return with that information. I'm happy to do that.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister's commitment to providing that information.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture?

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

Ms. Hanson: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. Hanson has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$71,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures underexpenditure of \$689,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures underexpenditure of \$618,000 agreed to

Department of Tourism and Culture agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Deputy Chair, I move that you report progress.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 201, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, seeing the time, 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 5:27 p.m.