



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 154

1st Session

35th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, November 7, 2023 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2023 Fall Sitting

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

CABINET MINISTERS

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

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

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

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Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
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Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, November 7, 2023 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me today in welcoming to the gallery family and friends of Al Falle, the former Member for Hootalinqua, for the tribute today. They are: Al's wife, Irma Falle; Ray Falle; Maddison Falle; Seth Falle; and Lesley Gardiner-Falle; friends Tom McCaw; Gordon Steele, a long-time Yukon Party caucus employee who worked with Al; Chris Young, former leader of the party; Mel Brais, Yukon Party president; and Paul Brais.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of Al Falle

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party caucus and the Yukon Legislative Assembly to pay tribute to long-time Yukoner and former MLA Al Falle.

Al Falle was a political trailblazer in the Yukon. He helped shape the Yukon Progressive Conservative Party, which later became known as the Yukon Party.

Al was born in Québec near Montréal on February 26, 1943. He passed away on November 25 last year at the age of 79. Al lived most of his young life in Gaspé and went to school there. There, he learned to be a mechanic and a welder, and his early work included working at a mine in Murdochville, Québec.

He worked his way across Canada, including working in Saskatchewan, Fort Nelson, and on the W.A.C. Bennett Dam project in British Columbia. His work included being a drill doctor, responsible for pneumatic drills.

In April 1967, he married Irma in Pouce Coupe. After hearing about a hydro dam being built in Whitehorse, Al and Irma moved to the Yukon in 1968 but found other opportunities instead.

Once in the Yukon, Al worked in construction as a mechanic and at Whitehorse Copper. Along with a partner, he began placer mining in the Atlin area. Al and Irma's sons, Ray and Leonard, were born in 1969 and 1970. The family moved to the land at Grizzly Valley where they made their home in about 1971. Through years of hard work, they turned it into a farm.

Sourdough Sodbusters, commonly known to neighbours and long-time Yukoners simply as "the sod farm", began operating in the early 1980s. In the decades since, their farm has been a well-known institution in the Yukon's agriculture sector.

Al was a well-respected member of the Yukon's farming community and volunteered in a number of roles, including as president of the Yukon Agricultural Association and a board member for many years.

Family came first for Al, and in addition to Irma and their sons, his family includes grandsons, Noah and Seth, granddaughters, YoHanna and Maddison, and his daughter-in-law, Lesley.

Stepping back to the 1970s, Al was one of the people who founded the first territorial Conservative Party, then known as the Progressive Conservative Party. Al was one of the first PC MLAs elected to the Legislative Assembly during the historic territorial election of 1978, which was the first election recognizing party politics.

The next year, the Epp letter established the basis for responsible government, so it was a time of big changes in the Yukon as MLAs for the first time took on the responsibility of government by Yukoners for Yukoners. Al won a second term for the riding of Hootalinqua in 1982 before retiring in 1985. Hootalinqua was a large riding that encompassed rural areas all around Whitehorse.

Even after retirement from elected office, Al remained interested and involved in politics. He was a respected member of the Yukon Party and served in a number of volunteer roles on both the party's central board and his local riding association of Lake Laberge. He remained involved on the board of the Yukon Party Lake Laberge association until his passing and helped out in every territorial election, including reliably volunteering as a scrutineer to help ensure the integrity of our democratic process. Al encouraged many people to get involved in politics and passed that interest on to some of his grandchildren.

On a personal note, Al was a good friend of mine for decades and provided helpful advice to me on many occasions. Al was one of the first people to encourage me to run for office and he stood beside me throughout the ups and downs of my time as MLA for Lake Laberge, helping out in every election campaign and always coming down to the party's election night headquarters.

My mom and sister Jeninne also worked with Al during multiple elections and asked me to share their condolences too. We all appreciated his help and enjoyed working with him.

Al loved his family, was passionate about the Yukon and Yukon politics, believed in the Yukon and tried to help make it better. He was a farmer back when many people thought you couldn't be a farmer in the Yukon and worked hard for the Yukon farming community. Al enjoyed farming, enjoyed prospecting, and worked hard to the end.

On behalf of the Yukon Party, my family, and me, our sincere condolences to all of Al's family and friends.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling a letter that I have written to the Minister of Education regarding mandatory Holocaust education curriculum in the Yukon.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

PETITIONS

Petition No. 22

MLA Tredger: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling a petition with 88 signatures that reads as follows:

The petition of the undersigned shows:

THAT housing is a human right;

THAT under the Yukon Residential Landlord and Tenant Act 27(1) The landlord must provide the residential property free of rodent, vermin, and insect infestations and must take appropriate measures to exterminate infestations, should they occur;

THAT Yukon Housing Corporation tenants continue to experience frequent bedbug infestations in their units;

THAT bedbug infestations are mentally, physically and financially distressing to Yukon Housing Corporation tenants; and

THAT the Yukon Housing Corporation has not taken adequate action to prevent bedbugs and treat infestations in its buildings:

THEREFORE, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to urge the Yukon government to:

(1) Offer use of a bedbug oven to incoming tenants to prevent bedbugs from travelling between buildings;

(2) Respond to all bedbug infestation complaints within 48 hours;

(3) Bear the full cost of treatment, cleaning, and furniture replacement for tenants whose units have been infested with bedbugs.

Speaker: Are there any other petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House recognizes International Inuit Day, which celebrates the unique culture and identity of Inuit people.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House issues an order for the return of the full report done by Ernst & Young Orenda Corporate Finance Inc. regarding the financial management of the Yukon Hospital

Corporation, including any and all analyses and opinions they provided to government.

Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Environment to table the 2022 *Our Clean Future* annual report prior to the end of the 2023 Fall Sitting of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to introduce legislation that would require the following for all Yukon schools and licensed childcare facilities:

- (1) mandatory CO₂ monitors in all classrooms;
- (2) public reporting of average CO₂ levels during class time; and
- (3) set safe standards for CO₂ levels in all classrooms.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, on May 5 last year, the Yukon government awarded a \$160million contract for the Nisutlin Bay bridge, which, according to the Yukon government's news release, was the largest capital project in Yukon history. The five-year capital plan earmarks between \$110 million and \$125 million for this project. Last fall, the Minister of Highways and Public Works insisted that the project was on schedule and on budget, but earlier this spring, he conceded that the project was now overbudget.

Can the minister now tell us how far overbudget this project is?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, this is a great opportunity to provide an update on this project. As of October 24, 2023, the following work has been completed by the contractor: site mobilization and permanent pilings for the north and south abutments; the south abutment, along with its seat, back wall, and wing walls; the south embankment has been built up to subgrade level; rip-rap has been placed on the north-facing slope of the south abutment; at pier 2, all eight permanent piles are complete with concrete infill; at pier 3, all eight permanent piles are complete with concrete infill and pile cap that has been cast; piles at the north abutment are complete with concrete infill; the north embankment has been constructed up to the bottom of the abutment seat; the installation of cofferdams for piers 2 and 3 are complete; the insulation of the cofferdam for pier 4 is ongoing; and clearing and grubbing for the new road on the south side is complete as well. As well, Mr. Speaker, granular pit development and rock production near Teslin and environmental measures, such as hydroacoustic monitoring, fish salvage, and water sampling, are ongoing. I look forward to further questions.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, as per normal, the minister is again evasive about the budget.

When we asked about this on March 9 of this year, the minister admitted that there were cost increases but suggested that the department was able to manage those increases within the department's overall capital budget, but that doesn't answer the question that I asked.

The contract that was awarded for this job was approximately \$160 million. We know that the project is going to come in higher than that, so, again, what is the total project cost for this project?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question from the member opposite. Yukon government and Graham Infrastructure LP have been negotiating a change order to reflect the impacts of the *Fisheries Act* authorization for the Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement project. Negotiations such as these are confidential, of course, because of their commercial nature and to maintain confidential positions.

The Yukon government has done its due diligence in handling this matter and in mitigating risk due to the original *Fisheries Act* authorization. When the Nisutlin Bay project was tendered, there was no reason to expect any significant deviation from similar previous *Fisheries Act* authorizations from the regulator, which, of course, is Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

However, the Yukon government did receive a *Fisheries Act* authorization that had a new restrictive limit to cumulative noise impacts on fish. Together, the Yukon government, the Teslin Tlingit Council, and Graham Infrastructure LP worked on an amendment to the authorization. This took some time and good work. The amendment was received in March 2023, at which point negotiations began between the Yukon government and Graham Infrastructure LP about a new schedule and work plan reflective of the authorization.

Mr. Hassard: But the fact of the matter is that if the government had actually done their due diligence, we wouldn't be in this situation today. So, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the sources of funding for this project. We know from the minister's briefing notes in the spring of this year that the government had secured \$41.25 million from Building Canada and \$52.5 million from the national trade corridors fund. When we asked about this in the spring, the Premier said that the Yukon would be able to access ICIP funding that was unspent from other jurisdictions in the country.

How much additional funding have we secured for this project from other jurisdictions' ICIP funding?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this file. Just to finish my answer with respect to the change orders, change orders, both large and small, are a regular part of contract management. Work on the bridge replacement continues to progress as planned, with creative adaptations designed by the contractor, the Yukon government, and Teslin Tlingit Council in order to ensure that the requirement of the *Fisheries Act* authorization and water licence are met.

The Yukon government, of course, remains committed to delivering the construction of a new Nisutlin Bay bridge.

Last year, in excess of \$500 million of infrastructure out the door for Yukoners — the last year of Yukon Party government, 2015-16, \$180 million.

We were left with an infrastructure deficit. We are in the process of meeting that infrastructure deficit, whether it is the Nisutlin Bay bridge, the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, all of the fantastic work that is being done in the national trade corridors funding on the north Klondike Highway, all of the retrofits, all of the green infrastructure — solar arrays at Klondike and Ogilvie, turbines in Burwash, or solar arrays in White River First Nation. This is an exciting time for infrastructure development.

Question re: Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, yes, it is a new question, so let's hope for some new answers.

Let's move on to timelines for this project. In the spring, the minister said — and I will quote: "We will continue to work with the contractor to complete this project by September 2026." However, his own briefing note indicates that they awarded the project without a water licence and they didn't receive a federal *Fisheries Act* authorization until October 2022 — almost six months after awarding of the project. Then, earlier this Sitting, on October 19, the minister said that the government had only received an amendment to the authorization in March 2023.

Can the minister confirm that he still believes that this project is on track to be finished completely by September 2026?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, yes, all indications are that this project will be completed by September 2026.

Mr. Hassard: Another thing with this is it's the largest capital project in the Yukon's history and many local contractors were hoping to participate on this project. When we last asked about the project, the minister promised that it would provide incredible opportunities to Yukoners in general. However, we have heard from many in the contracting community that, despite the minister's promises, it appears that there aren't many local contractors actually working on the project.

Other than the agreement with the Teslin Tlingit Council, can the minister indicate how many Yukon companies are currently subcontracted to work on the Nisutlin Bay bridge project?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I would like to take this opportunity to indicate the government-to-government relationship that we have with the Teslin Tlingit Council which we have with respect to the Nisutlin Bay bridge, with respect to the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport project, and with respect to the Carmacks bypass — in contrast to the former Yukon Party government.

With respect to the solar enumeration transfer pay agreement for the Teslin Tlingit Council, environmental protection in the Nisutlin Bay bridge area is a major component of the project, and under our *Fisheries Act* authorization, we are required to establish a sonar enumeration project to make sure that the construction work is not negatively impacting fish

populations or migrations. I am happy to report that we have signed a transfer payment agreement with the Teslin Tlingit Council that provides funding to support this sonar work.

The sonar enumeration project will last until the Nisutlin Bay bridge project is finished. This project helps researchers with Teslin Tlingit Council count chinook salmon passing through the Nisutlin River Delta National Wildlife Area. This important natural area is also the migration route for chinook salmon returning to the Nisutlin and Wolf rivers and tributaries. The sonar covers a relatively narrow and shallow section of the river.

We are certainly glad to have signed this transfer agreement recently with the Teslin Tlingit Council and we look forward to other opportunities.

Mr. Hassard: The largest capital project in Yukon history and we have a minister who doesn't even appear to have been briefed on this. It's very disturbing, Mr. Speaker.

Last spring when we asked the Minister of Highways and Public Works about the Nisutlin Bay bridge, he claimed that it would provide incredible opportunities to the Teslin Tlingit Council and to the Yukon in general. In fact, the minister said — and I quote: “Our Liberal government signed a project charter in 2019 with the Teslin Tlingit Council. This will ensure that we maximize economic benefits for local residents when it comes to this project.”

Again, my question is very simple: Can the minister tell us how many TTC citizens and Teslin residents are currently working on this project, the Nisutlin Bay bridge?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Highways and Public Works continues to work collaboratively with the Teslin Tlingit Council and engage with the Village of Teslin, the public, and specific stakeholders on this project as it moves forward. The Yukon government project team meets with the Teslin Tlingit Council on a biweekly basis in order to discuss the project and troubleshoot challenges ahead. As well, the Yukon government, Teslin Tlingit Council, and the primary contractor, Graham Construction, meet on a monthly basis to review the project and discuss potential community issues and solutions.

What I can say is that I have been to Teslin. I was in Teslin three times this summer, twice on this topic. I met with the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Village of Teslin, and we had a combined meeting. I certainly heard all of their issues with respect to opportunities and I am assured by my project team that, as I indicated, those meetings are occurring on a biweekly basis. I will, of course, be alerted if there are any concerns. The most recent briefing I have, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this matter, is that this project is proceeding.

The only question I would have perhaps for the member opposite is: In his opportunity to serve in Cabinet between 2011 and 2016, how many of these mega projects was he or his government responsible for: the Nisutlin Bay bridge, the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, national trade corridors funding? Zero.

Question re: Municipality funding and support

Ms. White: The comprehensive municipal grant is a funding formula used by the Yukon government to provide critical funding for municipalities. This funding is used by Yukon municipalities to provide many services that Yukoners rely on. The Association of Yukon Communities recently completed a review of the grant that shows that the funding is far from adequate for the needs of municipal governments. We have seen the impacts of this inadequate funding in Dawson City this spring when mayor and council had to make some hard choices. They had to increase the fees for recreation and water and sewer and make a big reduction in the seniors grant.

The report makes several recommendations for changes to the funding formula to ensure that important municipal services remain sustainable in the long term.

Will the minister provide a clear timeline for his review of municipal funding in response to the AYC report?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the question on the comprehensive municipal grant this afternoon. We've had many conversations about this in Committee of the Whole as we are discussing our budget this year as well. As I indicated at that time, the Yukon government is currently in negotiations with the Association of Yukon Communities. They have appointed a representative to sit on a committee to actually do the work of reviewing this important funding piece. It's the Yukon government's grant to municipalities to help them sort of bolster the municipal tax revenues that they collect on their own. It helps these municipalities. I have heard from municipalities how their funding is under constraint because of the inflation we are seeing in the territory, across the country, and across North America.

We are working with municipalities to make sure they have the funding they need to carry on the good work on behalf of their citizens. I can just say that recently we issued a news release that talks about how the comprehensive municipal grant formula has helped municipalities in funding their municipal operations more than 10 percent higher than it was last year. So, the current municipal grant that my colleague set in motion while he was minister has actually added more than 10 percent to municipal finances in the last year. I think that was a good step forward. We are going to do more work on this file.

Ms. White: Last week during debate, the minister said that he would have an answer in 2025, but municipalities have been clear that they can't wait that long. From water treatment to waste collection, from parks to maintenance, buildings, and bylaw enforcement, even the smallest municipalities have a big job to do. While the Yukon government received a six-percent budget increase from the federal government in 2022, Yukon municipalities received only a 1.5-percent increase — well less than the rate of inflation. There is a real worry in some municipalities that cuts to important services and substantial property tax increases will be necessary if the municipal grant is not increased, and I know that the minister would not want to be responsible for the loss of more services in rural Yukon.

Will the minister agree to implement the recommendations from the municipal grant review in time for the 2024-25 budget?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in Committee and on the floor of the House here during Question Period and even today, there is a committee that has been struck with the Association of Yukon Communities. They have put representatives forward and we are currently discussing the proposal that they brought forward. It's a proposal; it's a first mark. We are looking at that proposal, we are assessing it, we have questions, and we are going to find those questions through the work that we are doing with the Association of Yukon Communities.

But the important piece that I think really needs to be highlighted is the work that my predecessor did on the comprehensive municipal grant, which was static. So, he did work, he heard the same concerns from municipalities, he put in an escalator, and we changed the comprehensive municipal grant in about 2018, and now we are seeing a constant increase to the comprehensive municipal grant on a yearly basis. The member opposite talked about a six-percent increase to the Yukon territorial government — the municipalities got a 10-percent increase this year on the comprehensive municipal grant. That was a sizable increase. Even the AYC said that it was a great first step. We are going to continue to work with municipalities to make sure that they have the money to run their arenas and run their municipalities. That's important.

The grant is an augment to the municipal tax revenues that they collect, and it serves that purpose, and it goes up every year, Mr. Speaker — indexed to inflation.

Ms. White: Although we understand that a full review will take some time, it's why AYC included some short-term recommendations in their report as well, so I hope that the minister is open to that. The report notes that, since 2013, the municipal grant has only increased by 17.5 percent, while inflation for Whitehorse has increased by 20.8 percent. The amount has not kept pace with inflation, let alone allowed for any increases to services. The AYC report contained three simple short-term recommendations that the minister could make while the full review takes place. The three changes are to increase the amount of funding per resident and per property, to increase the amount of asset maintenance to keep up with inflation, and to not penalize municipalities for offering development incentives. These simple and immediate changes would ensure no disruption to services next year.

Will the minister act immediately on the AYC's three short-term recommendations to have them in place for the 2024-25 budget?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, the comprehensive municipal grant is important. The comprehensive municipal grant goes up every year — since my good colleague changed the formula.

The comprehensive municipal grant provides core support funding for municipalities based on the principles of adequacy, certainty, equity, transparency, and accountability. Those are the principles under which this agreement was struck with the Association of Yukon Communities. The grant formula

accounts for inflation; we are working on that to account for inflation. This year, we increased it by more than — it has gone up to almost \$24 million. I have indicated in letters to all of the municipal mayors that we received the resulting study and have assigned staff from the department to continue working closely with the representatives from the Association of Yukon Communities to understand the advice of the consultant and to recommend changes to the grant formula that could be considered for the 2025 budget cycle.

Question re: Municipality funding and support

Ms. McLeod: Municipalities have made it clear that financial and long-term sustainability are the most pressing issues currently facing Yukon communities. If these issues are not addressed, they will result in service reductions, a lack of infrastructure maintenance, and property tax increases throughout the Yukon. What they are seeking are immediate changes to the comprehensive municipal grant. Unfortunately, that is not what they have received from the Minister of Community Services. Rather than that, the minister recently issued a press release that simply outlined the increases that municipalities will receive under the current formula, which municipalities have said is inadequate.

My first question is: Does the minister think that announcing next year's CMG funding, which was already owed to the municipalities under their current formula, will satisfy municipalities' calls for increased funding?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to continue talking about the comprehensive municipal grant on the floor of the House this afternoon. It is an important subject. It is an important subject to us all — certainly to the municipal partners. I have heard about the constraints in my community tours and everything else. I was very happy to put out the news release to let mayors know. I have written to them all and I have phoned them, talked to them — I have certainly communicated with them — about the amount of money that they are going to see in increase this year. I have heard and seen media reports from the Association of Yukon Communities that they were happy with the increases here, but it probably doesn't go far enough. That is why we have a committee struck to look at this in the long term, to see what improvements we can make — in a negotiation between the Association of Yukon Communities, all the communities, and the Yukon government — and how to make this comprehensive municipal grant, which we improved to make sure that it went up every year, after years of stasis under former governments — to make sure that municipalities were made whole.

I have said that I am open to those conversations. We are actually working on this — and have been working on this since 2020, to be honest with you — and we are going to continue to work with municipalities to make sure that they are whole and that they receive the money to operate their municipalities but with the caveat that this is a grant from the Yukon government. The municipalities run their own shows and they raise their own money.

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, the Association of Yukon Communities has commissioned a report which looks at

changes that are needed to the formulas and structures of the comprehensive municipal grant. While everyone acknowledges that some of the longer term changes will take some time, the report offers some immediate short-term changes that could be made right away. According to the report, if those immediate changes were made, it would result in the amount of funding going to municipalities increasing by just over \$30 million.

Will the minister agree to implement these changes in advance of the next territorial budget so that these increases can flow to municipalities as soon as possible?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, I am committed to working with my municipal partners in a collaborative, courteous, and respectful way to come to an agreement about what a new formula looks like and how we can actually make sure that municipalities have the money that they need to deliver services to their citizens — the augmented funding, the grant that we provide, which is just a portion of the funding that municipalities get. This year, that grant went up 10 percent — more than 10 percent — and municipalities didn't know that prior to the release going out. They knew that — indexed to inflation. That was a big, big increase. It is roughly one-third of what they are asking for in this new comprehensive municipal grant, and that is in one year. So, yes, it went a long way to making up some of the distance. I had advised them that it was probably going to be the case because it is indexed to inflation and they get a bump, and they did get that bump.

We are still, though, carrying on the good work of negotiating with municipalities in a respectful manner, building on the good relationship that we have to improve things again. Like my predecessor — he made it escalate annually, in stark contrast to the Yukon Party, which kept it at the same rate for years and years and years.

Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation funding

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, in May, the Premier issued a sole-source contract for \$300,000 to the Ernst & Young Orenda corporation to review the financial management of the Yukon Hospital Corporation. The Procurement Support Centre recommended against issuing the contract, but the Premier personally overruled them. We know via ATIPP that the government had the final report from Ernst & Young on August 1. We requested it via ATIPP months ago, but the government has refused to give it to us.

Will the Liberal government agree to release this independent report on the financing of the Yukon Hospital Corporation?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, from time to time, when there is important work to be done, we do issue contracts in that form. In this particular case, it was working with the Executive Council Office and working with the deputy minister's office to ensure that we had the appropriate expertise — being able to look at spending with the Hospital Corporation. We wanted to ensure that the work was being done with the best value for Yukoners — again, supporting our health care system.

We have heard the calls and we continue to work with the Hospital Corporation, and I will confer with our public servants and also with the Minister of Health and Social Services. We

will be back to the House when we have made a decision on that request.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, this Liberal government has a history of chronically underfunding the Yukon Hospital Corporation. The Premier personally sole-sourced a \$300,000 contract to Ernst & Young to review the financial management of the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Now the Premier is refusing to commit to the release of this report, so I will ask again: Will the government agree to release this report that looked at the financing of the Yukon Hospital Corporation, and if not, what are they hiding?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I love getting questions from the Member for Lake Laberge — the drama, the buildup.

Look, we are not hiding anything and I certainly didn't say that we weren't going to release the document. I said that we undertook some work. We think it's important to ensure that the funds that are being spent — whether it's in Highways and Public Works or it's with Health and Social Services or with the Hospital Corporation — are spent with the needs of Yukoners in mind.

We have just come back from a meeting with leaders from across the country to talk about making sure that we get best value for money when it comes to investment in health care. I would hope, as a former health minister, that the member opposite would also want to make sure that the money is being used appropriately and in the best way.

Nobody over here is hiding anything. All we are doing is making sure that we ask the tough questions, that we get the expertise that we need, and that we get the best value for money. We have done that already and we will continue to do that.

Question re: Mineral exploration industry

Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, I have some questions regarding mineral exploration in the territory. At last year's Yukon Geoscience Forum, a government geologist with the Yukon Geological Survey warned that the number of companies and prospectors active in the territory could drop to a 57-year low and that new project numbers continue to decline. Since this warning was issued publicly by the government's own scientist, I am assuming that the Liberals took it quite seriously.

What policy changes has the government undertaken in the last year to reverse this troubling trend in our mineral exploration industry?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I do remember hearing the statement. There was a statement made — a warning — but then that individual, I think, left the government to actually become part of the private sector and work inside of that industry, because they have a commitment and they are looking optimistic about it. So, on one hand, it is saying there is a warning. On the other hand, it is: I'm actually going to work in that industry because I think there is great opportunity in it. It's a bit of a challenging one, so I will leave it there.

Mr. Kent: At the time that this individual geologist made these comments, he was working for the Yukon Geological Survey. As I mentioned, these words came directly

from a Yukon government scientist and were presented to delegates at a major mining conference here in the territory: Our mineral exploration industry is in trouble as the pipeline of new projects is drying up and reaching historical lows. We need a course correction by the Liberals to reverse this trend.

I am going to ask again: What policy changes has the government enacted in the past year since these statements were made publicly by a Yukon government geologist aimed at reducing this disturbing trend?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, the premise was that there was a statement made by this government geologist, and what I saw last week was that this government geologist was out promoting the industry that he has now joined with a company that I think is doing very well, so that is counterintuitive to the statement from last year. Now that individual is out there actually promoting investment in the Yukon.

I think that the question has kind of fallen on the table here, and it doesn't seem to be landing with any substance. Again, it is a situation where that individual has now gone into the industry and seems to be doing quite well in the industry. Maybe I am wrong, but I think that is what is happening with the part of the industry that they have just joined.

Again, when you hit the button with the individuals across the way, they all start to talk off-mic, so I guess we're hitting something because they're talking off-mic.

Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, last year, a Yukon government geologist at the Yukon Geoscience Forum said that the number of companies and prospectors active in the territory could drop to a 57--year low and that new project numbers continue to decline. On November 1, the Premier and I heard from one of the most prominent mining claim holders in the Yukon. In that e--mail, they stated that they would not be spending any more exploration dollars on properties in the Yukon until issues surrounding land use planning and compensation for expropriated claims were settled. This should raise a major red flag for the minister and his colleagues, I hope.

Has the Premier spoken with this company since they sent that e--mail last week, and what policies will the government change to assure this mining company and others that it is still worthwhile spending money here in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I think it was a letter that was sent to me and the Member for Copperbelt South. I have had the chance to do a little bit of due diligence. I have communicated with those within the organization — what I am aware of. I haven't spoken to the CEO directly, but what I am aware — it speaks to a legal decision — a court decision — and my understanding is that it is the court decision that has come down in British Columbia, not in the Yukon, where the BC government has 18 months to respond. It is a bit of a challenge for us to deal with court cases that are happening outside of our jurisdiction.

We know that the members opposite are used to dealing with court cases when it comes to mining, but I will dig into this a bit more and will be reaching out to get a better understanding of how the BC legal case has defined how the individuals will be investing here in the Yukon.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members' business

MLA Tredger: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. They are: Motion No. 821, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King; Motion No. 823, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin; and Motion No. 798, standing in the name of the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Official Opposition to be called on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. It is Motion No. 775, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake.

Speaker: We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Speaker: Motions respecting committee reports.

MOTIONS RESPECTING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Motion respecting Committee Reports No. 8

Clerk: Motion respecting Committee Reports No. 8, standing in the name of Kate White.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Leader of the Third Party:

THAT the Special Committee on the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform's final report, presented to the House on October 31, 2023, be concurred in.

Ms. White: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the ability today to speak on what I view as a very important motion. I want to say at the beginning that my whole lesson in electoral or democratic reform has happened actually since I became a member of this Assembly more than 12 years ago. I have such a belief that things can change and can be better and that people can feel more represented that, during the confidence and supply agreement that was first signed in 2021 by the Member for Klondike, there was a commitment to create the Special Committee on Electoral Reform.

I am also going to be very honest and say that this was an important learning process for me, and had you asked me at the beginning to process my feelings on citizens' assemblies, I would have told you a hard no; I'm not interested. I have to say that, over the span of, I believe, nearly 18 months of hearing from people across the territory and from professionals talking about the importance of, for example, the electoral system as it stands and looking Outside, the one thing that became clear for me is that when we make decisions, they probably shouldn't be decided by the people in this room — those who either stand to benefit or those who stand to have a loss from whatever that decision is. The only true way, in my mind, then — what I learned — is through a citizens' assembly. I think that the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes and I both came

away with very similar ideas that really, in order for changes to happen, they would have to be made from people outside of this Assembly. So then, with the motion that was adopted — Motion No. 711 — on April 25, 2023, the Assembly established the Special Committee on the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. That started the process that brought us here today.

During that span since April, the committee was represented by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, the Member for Copperbelt North, and me, and we met five times. Over the course of those meetings, a lot of different things were discussed and a lot of different paths forward were considered. In our deliberations, we talked about the information that we had collected or had been collected by the previous committee — the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. There were examples and we discussed the examples of citizens' assemblies on electoral reform that were held in other parts of Canada.

It's important to note here that the committee didn't reach a consensus. I think that the goal always is that we are going to try to reach consensus, but the recommendation that came forward was actually made by a majority of the committee. We did not reach consensus, and I will note that here.

One of the things that was required of the committee in the motion from this April was actually to come forward with terms of reference for what this committee would do. I'm pleased to say that the committee came up with terms of reference that were discussed with us and the committee, and we were able to get the report tabled in time. We had a deadline of October 31 in that motion and we were able to do that.

It's important to note that the terms of reference are taken across a spectrum. In part, there was a citizens' assembly in Ontario; there is one in British Columbia, and some of those recommendations from both of those committees were actually adapted and then used for our recommendations here.

We believe that the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform — or the YCA — should be a representative body of Yukoners that is established to recommend a model of electing members to the Yukon Legislative Assembly. That's the first part.

Their mandate — that they shall examine electoral systems and that, once they examine those systems, they are to issue a report recommending whether we stay with the current model that we use right now — the first-past-the-post model — or whether another model should be proposed. If that's the case, then they can only recommend one model and they have to tell us the reasons for it.

But it is really important — and it was important to the previous committee on electoral reform — that no matter what discussion we had or what happened — regardless of the voting system — it must reflect the importance of the balance for rural and urban representation. It's critically important for rural Yukon — anyone outside of Whitehorse — that all decisions made by this Assembly not be outweighed by the voices of Whitehorse. It's important that this be considered — the balance of rural and urban representation.

It's important to note that the YCA — the recommended model has to be consistent with both the Constitution of Canada and the Canadian parliamentary system, and that's our current set-up., the way things work where we have Cabinet — the way the system works right now. We can't reinvent that and start again. It has to follow both the Constitution of Canada and the Canadian parliamentary system, which is part of the background model, I would suggest.

If the YCA recommends adopting a model that is different from the current system, it can only recommend one such model and then it has to provide a detailed description and explanation of the proposed new electoral system in its final report. It has to be very clear. We learned from the example of British Columbia that if you give people too many examples or too many choices, it really muddies the water. What we asked for is clear — we go with the current model, we go with a different model, and tell us why and how it's going to work.

We decided that the YCA should be able to consult with Yukoners and provide them the opportunity to make submissions in writing or orally at public meetings. They can go back through all the records of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. They have the ability to hold public hearings, and they can choose to build on the experts in the field, and they can also build their learning. I think that's really important. We saw with the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly — it was very successful — the work and the learning that happened for the citizens' assembly, because they were able to direct their learning. They were able to understand the current system that they had in British Columbia and look to others. We believe that the same thing should be here.

We also came forward with the recommendation that the YCA should be established by a specific action of the Legislative Assembly — so there will be an additional motion, I hope, coming through here — and that — this is important — the YCA shall present its final report to the Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly by October 31 of next year. They can issue interim reports if they are finding different learnings, but we need that final report by next year if we're looking at making any changes prior to 2025.

When they table that final report during or before the 2024 Fall Sitting of the Assembly, it's to give sufficient time for this Assembly to pass referendum legislation, because right now, we don't have that ability. We don't have the ability here in the territory to hold a referendum of this nature. One of the things that we saw in the Special Committee on Electoral Reform was the belief that no change should happen without a referendum, but it should be a two-part referendum similar to what they did in New Zealand, where they had the referendum to ask the question first and then, after two elections, they had another referendum to ask if it worked or didn't work — should we keep it or should we not keep it?

So, the Special Committee on Electoral Reform made that recommendation. Therefore, this special committee on the citizens' assembly has said that we have to make sure that, if they come forward with the recommendation, there is enough time to pass referendum legislation.

We did get into further details and we talked about membership of the OICA. There was — if folks remember — a survey that went out from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics and it actually very specifically talked only about the citizens' assembly. It gave people the option to choose one, two, three, or other members of a riding or an electoral district to be included in the assembly. Based on the information that we got from that, the committee settled on two. So, two members from each current riding would be selected for this committee. It is important to say that they are going to be selected randomly and it is also important to say that 1,793 Yukoners declared their willingness to participate in a Yukon citizens' assembly in the survey that the Special Committee on Electoral Reform completed. The fact is that 1,793 people said that they would be willing to participate. The makeup — the two members from each of the 19 electoral districts of the Yukon citizens' assembly — will be from those folks, and the Yukon Bureau of Statistics is going to help with that process.

It is really important to say — and this has gone toward Ontario — that Ontario said that they wanted as many people as possible to participate, but they had a few caveats. I think that it is important that we talk about that. As an example, you need to be a Canadian citizen to be able to participate. If you are going to change our voting system, you have to be a Canadian citizen. You have to be a resident of the Yukon.

One of the questions that we have talked often about is: Should the voting age be lowered? That was one of the questions we had during the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. I will tell you my personal thought. I think that if you are 16, you should be able to vote. You are going to be affected by the changes that we make here. That was a bigger conversation, but within this, we said that anyone who is under 16 couldn't participate on the citizens' assembly, but if you are 16 and over, you absolutely can. We want to hear the voice of youth in this as well.

You cannot be a justice or a judge; you can't be a member or officer of the Parliament of Canada or the Privy Council of Canada; you cannot be a member or an officer of the Legislature or the Executive Council; you cannot be a candidate in the last two federal or territorial elections; you cannot be an official representative or agent of a person identified as a candidate in either of the last two territorial or federal elections; you cannot be an immediate family member of someone who is currently in this Assembly — so, although my dad may be very interested in electoral systems, he would not qualify for this — and you cannot be a current officer or official representative of a registered territorial political party. We think that is important. That still leaves an awful lot of people available in the Yukon.

We looked at that, making sure that there were some restrictions. Some people may have different opinions and I am happy to hear them, but this is what we recommended.

Then, out of all of the folks — the two people selected from the 19 electoral districts — two spokespersons will be selected by the group themselves to speak on behalf of the Yukon citizens' assembly. We also note that alternate members may

be required, so we are going to have them identified in case someone drops out, but they will just be identified.

It is also important to note that in some committees — and we see this here in the Assembly. But we want to make sure that every member who is on the citizens' assembly has the ability to vote, which means that we don't want one of those folks to be the chair. So, a chair shall be appointed to facilitate the establishment of the Yukon citizens' assembly. The chair will have the administrative responsibility but won't be a voting member. They will really be like the facilitator. That person will be there in support of the citizens' assembly and to walk them forward and through other things.

We also note that — what we are asking people to do is to take a pretty substantial amount of time out of their life to learn about electoral systems, both here in Canada and outside of Canada, to see whether or not we should go ahead with our current system or whether an alternate system should be brought forward.

It is important to note that we believe that, because of that, travel and accommodation expenses for people travelling outside of Whitehorse should be reimbursed and that members should receive an honorarium of \$200 per meeting day, and that is similar to category D for boards and committees with high impact on government or public decisions or where recommendations are made. So, within the classification of people who sit on boards and committees, category D is the highest, and it is those folks who make pretty critical decisions about what happens in the territory.

Ultimately, all this is to say that the committee met; we came forward with recommendations. It is not by consensus; it is by a majority. My real hope is that Yukon can blaze the trail, that we can say that we learned from examples that happened in Ontario and British Columbia and we can look outside of Canada, but that we can take the lessons learned from those jurisdictions and we can support our citizens' assembly — individual Yukoners, just ordinary folks who are going to learn about systems — and if they come forward with a recommendation that things should change, I think that is the way to do it. It has to be decided outside of this Chamber; it can't be politicians who stand to benefit from these decisions.

I am proud to stand here as the chair of this assembly. Of course, that report is available online for anyone who is interested in seeing it. I look forward to hearing from my colleagues — if they have thoughts either for or against — but more importantly, I look forward to a vote on this motion and I look forward to the next steps of this citizens' assembly.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, the first thing to note is that the report that we're debating today and trying to see if we have concurrence on was a majority report; it wasn't consensus. I am going to talk about consensus for a bit, but I will just begin by noting that we are supportive of the report that came from the special committee. You can run the math pretty quickly. If the NDP is supportive and the Liberals are supportive, it remains to be seen what the Yukon Party will say.

The main points about a citizens' assembly and why we are thinking about them — the number one point is that it's a way

to listen to Yukoners. It's a way to engage Yukoners. I don't know whether I would say that it is the only way that this can happen — whether it's part of this House or not — but it's a non-partisan way and it's a form of direct democracy. Here in this House, as we are representatives, we have representative democracy. We go, we talk to constituents, we talk to Yukoners, we listen to what their concerns are, and then we try to bring them into our debate in this House, whether it's developing legislation or developing policies.

But a citizens' assembly is not just about electoral reform. It's a way to bring together, in this case, Yukoners to talk about issues that Yukoners might care about and get them to come up with ideas. In this case, it's about electoral reform, but I am hopeful that this will be a successful exercise and that we see it as a tool that we can use in the future on other big topics for the Yukon.

What we're asking is that the citizens' assembly report back to the Legislative Assembly — to us, the members here who are elected to represent Yukoners. As the Member for Takhini-Kopper King has noted, the chair of the special committee, it would then come to us to establish — if the citizens' assembly came back and said that they think the Yukon's voting system could be improved and this is the system that they believe would be best for Yukoners, we would then go to a referendum — so, a referendum if needed. As I've said, we didn't reach consensus on that.

Let me back up for a second to talk about the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. The committee was established in, I think, May 2021, here in this Assembly. I note that, back then, the Yukon Party voted against establishing the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. I went back and re-read some of that debate to try to think about it. The Yukon Party highlighted three key points, in my mind: (1) we should listen to Yukoners — they said that is important; (2) however we deal with our electoral system, we need to have all parties involved — it can't be just one party that's doing something; and (3) any decision on a potential new voting system needs to go to a referendum for Yukoners. Let me quote for a moment. This is from the Member for Lake Laberge on May 26, 2021 — quote: "... the Yukon Party continues to believe that our democracy belongs to Yukoners and that any proposal that would significantly change the way by which members are elected to this Legislative Assembly should be presented to Yukoners in a referendum. It should be up to Yukoners to consider both the status quo and any proposed change and to cast their vote and choose whether they wish to accept the proposed changes."

The Yukon Party, at that point, was not supportive of creating a special committee, but one was created. I would like to acknowledge the work that the Member for Lake Laberge, the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, and I did on that Special Committee on Electoral Reform.

The time in between has been roughly two years. We listened to 14 expert witnesses on electoral systems. We travelled across the Yukon. We went to half a dozen communities. We had a couple of big meetings in Whitehorse as well.

As a special committee, we had over 30 meetings to look at electoral reform and try to come with our suggestions. We put out over a dozen press releases to the Yukon public about electoral reform during that period of time. At every stage, that was done with consensus among all parties. There was a point toward the end when we came back to this Assembly and asked for a little bit more time. Again, by consensus, we had agreed that we needed to go back and talk to Yukoners again.

We had done one big survey asking about the main points of electoral reform and Yukoners' opinions on that. We then had one question that was outstanding, and that was about whether or not we would establish a citizens' assembly, and the special committee agreed by consensus to go back and do another specific survey to Yukoners and ask them that specific question: Do you agree? Should we have a citizens' assembly — yes, no, or unsure? We got that back and it was a clear yes to that survey — 63 percent said yes, 8.4 percent said no, and roughly over a quarter said that they weren't sure. So, it was a clear yes, but at that point, that special committee no longer had consensus, and when we see the report that comes to this Assembly that just predates the creation of the special committee whose report we're debating today, it was a majority decision on that one point.

We heard in debate that day that the Yukon NDP was supportive of a citizens' assembly, the Yukon Liberals were supportive of a citizens' assembly, but the Yukon Party, in fact, put out a press release saying that they are not supportive of a citizens' assembly.

It was consensus all along, it was listening to Yukoners, it was all-party, and we had established that we all agreed that we would need a referendum if there was any suggestion of changing the voter system — that it should go to a referendum. As the Member for Takhini-Kopper King has noted, in fact, it was a referendum and then, after the system had been in place for a period of time, a referendum again to check in with Yukoners to make sure that they agreed that it is the correct system, and yet we did not agree on whether we should establish a citizens' assembly.

What the Yukon Party stood up and debated about this past spring — no, we don't want a citizens' assembly — and what they put out in their press release was that we had not heard from enough Yukoners. That was the basic message.

I just want to go over a few moments in time when we have had some of these ways in which we have engaged with Yukoners. The Premier sought to give a ministerial statement last week talking about engagement of Yukoners. The Engage Yukon site has just hit over 100 significant engagements of Yukoners, but I am only going to discuss a couple other than electoral reform.

The first one was when it came time to legalize cannabis. When we went to do that, we put out a survey to Yukoners and we got over 3,000 respondents to that survey. That was a record. We set a record for how many Yukoners came back and talked to us. Overwhelmingly, they said that, yes, they were in favour of legalization. I know the Yukon Party voted against that legalization, but their point at the time wasn't that we hadn't talked to enough Yukoners; it was that they disagreed

with the model. They said that we should use Saskatchewan's model. By the way, we still outperform Saskatchewan both in terms of private sector sales and in terms of black-market displacement. I think the last numbers I checked showed that we were 60 percent better than Saskatchewan, so that's great, but never did the Yukon Party say: You haven't talked to enough Yukoners; we haven't heard from enough Yukoners; we disagree with this.

In 2020, we ended seasonal time changes here in the Yukon and we had a survey when we talked to Yukoners about those time changes. This time, we heard from 4,800 Yukoners and that set a new record for engagement with Yukoners. Yukoners were clearly in favour of ending seasonal time changes. Ahead of that survey, I would just note that the Yukon Party here in this House brought forward a motion that we debated one day on ending seasonal time changes. I think it was brought forward by the Member for Kluane. We all agreed on that and we all agreed to do that. In that debate, I noted that one of the key points that the Yukon Party said was that we really need to hear from Yukoners, so we went out and did the survey and we really did hear from Yukoners — 4,800 Yukoners.

Then we get to electoral reform. With the first Special Committee on Electoral Reform, we did a survey in the spring of 2022. We set a new record for the number of Yukoners who responded to a survey. Over 6,000 Yukoners responded — just over 17 percent of Yukoners — and they shared their thoughts on our voting system. There was a whole range of questions. It's up on the Legislative Assembly website and anyone can check it out.

The one question that didn't land cleanly was about a citizens' assembly. Again, as I noted, we decided through consensus of that special committee to go back and ask Yukoners again. We did — in the spring of this year or early this year. We got those results and, in that second survey, we got 6,354 responses — again setting a record for the number of Yukoners who responded. What did we hear? So, 63 percent said yes, eight percent said no, and 28 percent were not sure, so it's a clear yes. The Yukon Party said, however, that it is not enough Yukoners — that we didn't hear from enough Yukoners. They suggested, for example, that we go to a referendum.

As part of preparing for today, I went back in time and tried to look up when the Yukon Party looked at electoral reform. This was under the 31st Assembly, under Premier Fentie. As part of the throne speech, there was commitment to consider electoral reform and to strike a commission on electoral reform.

That isn't how it happened; it was a past Commissioner and past MLA of this House who was assigned a task of investigating electoral reform. Mr. Ken McKinnon — I will just say to the Assembly that I miss Ken and I was sad when Ken passed away. He was a constituent. I am not sure whether he ever voted for me, but I will say that he always gave me great advice and I thought he was very level in his considerations.

The Yukon Party said that they would do a commission; they didn't. They assigned it to one person. I recently read through his report, which was tabled in the Assembly in 2005. I have only read it a couple of times and I am going to

paraphrase a bit here, but early on in the report — I am looking at page 2 — Ken talked about the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly and he said — quote: "... I was hooked." He said that when he looked at that notion, he thought it was a good idea. Throughout the report, he goes on to talk about a range of things. He didn't recommend a citizens' assembly at that time — and I am quoting again: "I felt only one important process should be followed in the Yukon before we also went to a Citizens' Assembly to involve the Yukon public in discussions about the future of Yukon's electoral system." What he was saying was that we weren't quite ready for it when he made his recommendation back in 2005. He talked about needing to do a little bit more work. He suggested that we watch to see how the citizens' assemblies play out in British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, et cetera, to see, to learn from those, and to think about how we could do it here.

He talked for a period of time about whether there should be a referendum to decide whether we host a citizens' assembly, which is exactly what the Yukon Party recommended in their press release when they said that we shouldn't have a citizens' assembly; they said that we should have a referendum to consider whether we have a citizens' assembly. Ken McKinnon said no, that he didn't think that a referendum was ultimately the right way to go. He just said that we just needed to talk to Yukoners; we needed to see more Yukoners who were telling us that we needed a citizens' assembly.

I will give my final quote from that report. It is just at the end of his summary, and it says — quote: "At some future point in Yukon history, the Yukon public will loudly and clearly let their leaders know that the time has come to examine 'electoral reform.'" That is when he said that it would be the right time to have a citizens' assembly, and lo and behold, here we have a survey of Yukoners where they have told us clearly that is what they think should happen.

I will just finish up on a couple of points here. I look forward to hearing from the Yukon Party on this. I will hope that they will agree that, having heard from Yukoners that it is important to give Yukoners a chance to come together and to listen to them — there was a phrase that I heard today during the tribute to Mr. Al Falle by the Member for Lake Laberge. He talked about the integrity of our democratic process. I think he was complimenting Al and his commitment to our democracy, and I think it is so important that we engage with Yukoners, that we talk with them.

Again, I know that, last week, we have this new rule in place about ministerial statements — that they are not always going to happen. Again, the opposition parties disagreed with allowing us to talk to Yukoners here in the Assembly through a ministerial statement about engagement with Yukoners. We see it as an incredibly important commitment to Yukoners; it is basically a promise to Yukoners to keep them involved and included in our decision-making and those things that affect them the most. That is pretty darn important, I would say.

My basic understanding of where the Yukon Party went with this in the spring was that they were saying that they have not heard from enough Yukoners about whether or not we

should set up a citizens' assembly to listen to Yukoners. Fundamentally, I just don't understand the logic in that.

It's incongruent, and I don't think it really gets to the heart of it. I think that the heart of it is that the Yukon Party is just not interested in the topic of electoral reform, but the real question should be: What do Yukoners think? That's why I encourage us to vote for concurrence on this report and thus to get to a citizens' assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the time today.

Mr. Dixon: I would like to thank my colleagues for their comments so far. I think it will probably come as a surprise to no one that the Yukon Party will not be voting in favour of this motion today. The final report of the Special Committee on the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, which is before us today, is one that we do not support. There is at least one general reason and several specific reasons why that is, and I will explain some of those today, but going back to the initial establishment of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform, the Yukon Party has been against the expenditure of time and resources on this endeavour right from the get-go. We voted against the initial motion creating this Special Committee on Electoral Reform. Despite that, we had representatives sit on that committee and participate in good faith and participate for the two years that the special committee was underway. As a result of its work, there were a number of conclusions that were drawn.

We voted against the creation of this special committee of the Legislature to look at the terms of reference for the citizens' assembly. We didn't believe — and still don't believe — that it's in the best interest of the territory to have a citizens' assembly and certainly not one with the structure being outlined in this report looking at conducting this work.

As a general comment, we remain somewhat skeptical of the overarching trend toward attempts at electoral reform that we've seen since the 2021 election. The general reason for our opposition is simply that we feel that Yukoners want their representatives to focus on issues that matter to them. We consistently hear from Yukoners that they are concerned about a number of things. They are concerned about the cost of living; they are concerned about our education system; they are concerned about housing; they are concerned about their lack of access to health care and family doctors; and they are concerned about a whole range of other issues that are facing the territory right now.

In the course of my time here since 2021, I have never once knocked on a door in my riding and had someone say that what we really needed was a citizens' assembly. I have never heard that before. I know there are some Yukoners out there who do feel strongly about electoral reform. There are some who feel very strongly about it, but my view is that, for the bulk of Yukoners, there are more pressing concerns than this today.

There are a number of specific concerns I have with the terms of reference that the committee has come up with. I acknowledge — as my colleagues have noted — that the NDP are in favour of this; the Liberals are in favour of this. We are not in favour of this. I think you can probably determine who

was the odd person out in the vote in the committee. We, of course, are the odd ones out on this, and that is for a number of reasons.

First of all, I think that there are a number of problems with the terms of reference, as they have been articulated by this report. First of all, I think that there is a problem right from the get-go. The first line in the terms of reference is — and I quote: “The Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform ... shall be a representative body of Yukoners established to recommend a model for electing Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.”

Mr. Speaker, the term is “a representative body of [all] Yukoners.” I don't think that this citizens' assembly will be that at all. In fact, it will be representative of 1,793 Yukoners. That is the number of eligible Yukoners who are able to sit on this committee, based on their self-selection in a public consultation that occurred between January and March of this year.

I don't believe it was ever communicated to Yukoners adequately that this was their one opportunity to say yes or no to participate in the citizens' assembly. I think the intent of that survey was to seek Yukoners' feedback on the creation of a citizens' assembly. The result of that was that we got a number of different viewpoints, and those have been discussed, but one of the outcomes as well was that 1,793 Yukoners said that they would be willing to participate on a citizens' assembly.

I don't believe it was ever properly communicated that was the only opportunity they would have to put their hand up and participate on a citizens' assembly. I think that, by limiting the pool to these 1,793 Yukoners, who have — without even realizing this was their only opportunity to put their hand up — will limit the pool available to this citizens' assembly.

I also have a problem with the number overall. I think that we are choosing two members per the 19 ridings that exist, so there will be a 38-member committee. In my time here, I have participated on a number of different committees of the Legislature, and in my private life, I have participated on a number of committees for other things. I can never imagine what a 38-person committee would look like when it comes to trying to engage with Yukoners. I participated in select committees with five or six members, and that has been very difficult. It has been costly, and it has been difficult. I can only imagine 38 individuals randomly chosen coming together and trying to sort out how to consult with Yukoners, how often to consult with them, and what those meetings might look like. I think that the 38-person committee will be unwieldy, and it would be difficult to function.

There is also a point, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to make about the selection process from those eligible Yukoners whom I cited earlier. On one hand, it says that these Yukoners should be selected randomly, and, in fact, we asked for the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to help with that random selection. However, on the other hand, there is an indication that there needs to be some sort of diversity reflected in this. I fail to understand how you can simultaneously have the selection process be random but then also ask that the diversity of the Yukon be considered and offered. To me, those are inconsistent at best, and I don't think that they will be achievable —

certainly not by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, which is being asked for their help on this.

Another piece that I have a concern with is that it's based on the current electoral boundaries. We have — just as recently as a few weeks ago — all acknowledged that the current electoral boundaries of the territory are flawed, that they are, in some cases, disproportionate, that some ridings are disproportionately small, that some ridings have far more constituents or citizens in them than others, and while there is an allowance for some rural-urban divide between those ridings, it's clear that the current allocation of ridings is inadequate. That's why we all have agreed to launch a boundaries commission and have these boundaries reconsidered. So, I think that to base something like this on a current electoral map that we all view to be inadequate and flawed is misguided and wrong.

Finally, this 38-person committee is going to be tasked with consulting Yukoners, and as I have said, I think that having a 38-person committee go off around the territory and conduct itself — having public meetings, hearing from Yukoners individually, giving them the opportunity — according to this, both in public meetings and providing oral testimony, as well as written testimony — I think will be unwieldy and difficult to manage.

I am also deeply concerned about the cost. I don't know what the ultimate cost will be, but I think that — based on the travel accommodations, honoraria, and consultation commitments that we see in this report — it is very likely that the cost of this endeavour will be well over a million dollars. That is the information that I think is relevant now, as well, because the cost ultimately is a reflection of our priority on this, and as I said before, I don't think that Yukoners would like to see us spend a million dollars-plus on an endeavour like this.

I have concerns specifically with the terms of reference, as laid out before us. I have concerns with the general lack of priority, I think, that Yukoners carry for this issue. The Yukon Party will be voting against this motion today, and if there is a future motion around the specifics of adopting these terms of reference and creating a citizens' assembly, we will be voting against that as well.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that we are the odd ones out on this and that there is a somewhat predetermined outcome here, given the fact that this commitment comes from the confidence and supply agreement, ultimately, and both the Liberals and the NDP will be supporting it. So, we look forward to seeing how it progresses, but the Yukon Party will not be voting in favour of this motion today.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Ms. White: There are some things to unpack, but I am not going to do a lot of that right now. I will say that the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly — 161 people, successfully run — came out with a final report and a recommendation; Ontario — 103 individuals sat on that —

and one could say that they also came forward with recommendations, and so that is substantially more than our 38. I have the utmost faith in the citizens of the Yukon to be able to work together toward a common goal.

It's also important to note that the Special Committee on Electoral Reform was part of the confidence and supply agreement, but this year, it's because I fundamentally believe in the importance of representation and I believe that for this place — this Assembly — how we elect politicians in the Yukon could reflect better what people think and how they feel.

I have been accused of voting in lots of different ways for lots of different reasons, but I can clearly say right now that the three of us in the Yukon NDP caucus will be voting in favour of this, because we believe that there is an opportunity to do things in a better way. It has nothing to do with previous agreements or commitments or any of these things. Similar to when I vote with the Yukon Party, I do it because I think that it's the right thing to do. So, I look forward to the members voting with their yeas or nays, and I look forward to the next steps.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Mr. Dixon: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Clarke: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Blake: Agree.

MLA Tredger: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 10 yeas, eight nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion respecting Committee Reports No. 8 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

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

Bill No. 211: *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Department of Community Services — *continued*

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Deputy Chair, I have a few minutes. I'm not going to take much time this afternoon. I want to get at it. We have already spoken about five hours on this department. I am really anxious to hear the questions from the members opposite this afternoon.

I want to thank my officials, Matt and John, for coming again. Let's get at it, shall we?

Mr. Dixon: Deputy Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to return to this topic. I would like to just confirm a few things based on our last discussion. Can the minister reconfirm for us — I have seen a few different numbers now, both from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and CS about the better building program. Can we just have the minister reiterate the total number of applications so far and the total number that have been approved?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I was going through Hansard just trying to find what was said last week, because I don't want to contradict myself. My good colleague the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is actually on the file, so during the Energy, Mines and Resources debate, I encourage the member to please ask this question of him, as he is actually the one handling the applications for this program and has the most up-to-date information.

I am getting this from my departmental officials. I believe that the last time I spoke on this was as of October 25; now it is

as of October 29. My colleague has just reminded me that we had an event on Sunday that gathered a whole bunch more information, so these things are changing on a consistent basis. But as of October 29, there were two completed applications, five in progress, and 49 approved but not yet started work. All applications received have been reviewed and approved by the PAT, which is the Property Assessment Taxation branch. Most approved applications are pending, waiting for the client to decide whether they are going to commit to the project or not. By community, we have: 35 in Whitehorse, three in Dawson, two in Faro, three in Haines Junction, six in rural Yukon — not in a municipality. There are three new clients to end the program between July 1 and September 30. That may have changed recently. That is the information that I have and is more up-to-date information than what I gave you last week, so it may not jive with the numbers given last week because this is changing. I encourage you to talk to my good colleague the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources when he is back in this House. He handles those applications and may have updated information as well.

Mr. Dixon: I will indeed follow up with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources at the appropriate time.

I would like to turn to an issue that is affecting a number of folks in relation to McConnell Lake. We know that residents in that area continue to be frustrated with the situation that they find themselves faced with regarding water that is affecting their properties. I know that the minister has engaged with them before and that he has heard from them. I know that, at various points, the Department of Community Services has engaged with these folks. I was wondering if the minister can give us an update. What work has been done to address the issues that are facing those folks? Are there any further mitigations or efforts that can be taken by the department to help to address the situation?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the member following up on this issue. It has to do with drainage and water in the McConnell Lake area. There have been some shifts in the terrain there. We had hired an engineering company to give us a report. After receiving that report, we needed more information. We have actually gone to a new engineering company. We're expecting the report fairly soon and I hope to be able to share that with homeowners and the local advisory council once we get it. It should be due fairly soon, but I haven't got any more on that. It's going to recommend some options for residents. I haven't even seen those recommendations yet, so once I get those recommendations, I will be able to assess it more, but we haven't got the report back yet — so, more to come on that file.

Mr. Dixon: Is the minister considering permanent mitigations in the area to prevent the water from impacting homes?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm not going to get ahead of this process on the floor of the House today. I've just said that we have an engineer hired to study this issue and come back with some recommendations for us. I haven't seen those recommendations. I haven't seen the report yet. Those engineers have been working closely with the residents. I heard

that from the local advisory council. They wanted to work more closely with the engineer. That work, I am told, is happening — that they are in touch with the residents and working with the community. The few residents whom we are talking about — I think there are two or three homes affected in this area.

I just met with the local advisory council in the last couple of weeks. This issue didn't come up, but they do know that we have hired an engineering firm; we are working with that. I am not going to get ahead of the recommendations coming out of that engineering firm. I haven't got the information to answer any questions from the member opposite until I see that report.

I will have more to say once that report is delivered. It is expected sometime in the early new year.

Mr. Dixon: Can I get the minister just to repeat that? He said that it was going to be due early in the new year; is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I am told, it is expected sometime early in 2024.

Mr. Dixon: I appreciate that information from the minister and simply note that the folks in that area who are affected by the flooding in the area are looking for some support and I think would be very appreciative of the minister's commitment to offer support. I know that he doesn't want to get ahead of the engineering studies, as he said, but I do think that the folks there would really appreciate a commitment from the government that they will help them out and that they will engage in whatever measures are necessary to help them protect their homes.

I will move on. I would like to move on to the renewal or replacement of ICIP. It is something that we talked about previously and I asked the minister a question about it, and we moved on fairly briefly after that, so I would like to return to it.

Can the minister tell us: Is there any unallocated money available currently from the current federal infrastructure programs — the small communities fund or ICIP? Are there any funds available in those that are currently unallocated, or am I correct in my assumption that they have entirely been allocated and that we have tapped out that federal infrastructure funding?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We did have a conversation about this just in the last couple of weeks. I appreciate the member's interest in our historic infrastructure investments that the federal government made in the territory over the last several years. We, on this side, wanted to embrace that investment and we have done that. Unlike many jurisdictions across the country, we actually used all of our ICIP money. We have deployed all of those infrastructure funds that came to the territory. We have allocated all of the money that we have received from Ottawa for infrastructure investment across the territory investing in our municipalities, investing in our unincorporated communities, making sure that Yukoners have the best infrastructure they possibly can with this historic investment that we have seen from the federal government.

Mr. Dixon: I appreciate the clarity of that answer from the minister. I would like to ask a follow-up question, though. Earlier this year, on April 5, the Premier said — and I quote: "First of all, there was language in the federal budget —

language that we were pleased to see — and it really talked about the reallocation of the ICIP funding across Canada. It talked about how regions — as our interpretation — that have fully used their ICIP funding have the opportunity to again have access to funds that haven't been used across the country."

What the Premier was talking about was the idea — and I have heard this reference from other ministers before — that unallocated ICIP funding would be available to jurisdictions like the Yukon that have fully allocated their ICIP funding. Can the minister confirm that this is the case, and if so, when can we expect to see additional ICIP funding from other jurisdictions that was unspent?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: So very exciting — this government embraced the infrastructure funding coming from Ottawa. We know the members opposite were reluctant to take that money on, but we took it on and we are doing it. Now I guess there has been a conversion that the members opposite are now interested in this historic investment that we have seen across the territory. I am glad to hear it. I am glad to hear that now there has been a change of heart from the members opposite. Their excitement and their interest in this subject is really heartening to me.

I will say that very little has changed in the last couple of weeks since we last had this conversation. It may even have been on Thursday. It's hard, because we have had these conversations — we have talked for almost five hours — over the last couple of weeks.

Yes, there has been very little change since the last time I stood to answer this very similar question. We are working with our federal counterparts all the time, seeking more information about the new tranche of infrastructure money coming and what the conditions of that money will be.

The Premier was just recently with his federal compatriots talking about funding for our confederation. I have been talking to infrastructure and municipal leaders across the country on this very subject. It's something on everyone's mind. We will have a fiscal update coming from the federal government in the next little while. Maybe that will shed some light on this whole thing. Until then, there is very little new to report.

I am glad to hear that the members opposite are now interested in the infrastructure funding that they were kind of tepid about earlier.

Mr. Dixon: While I appreciate some of that information, my question was specifically about the current ICIP funding, not the replacement or renegotiated — or whatever was coming down the line as a replacement for ICIP. My question is about the current ICIP. We have been led to believe that some jurisdictions have not fully allocated their ICIP funding. We know, from what the minister has just said, that the Yukon has indeed allocated all of our ICIP funding. Previously, the Premier and other ministers have indicated that jurisdictions that do not fully allocate their ICIP funding will have that money then go to jurisdictions like the Yukon which has. I just would like some explanation as to whether or not that is, in fact, federal policy, and if so, when can we expect that reallocation to occur?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Again, the enthusiasm and the interest in this is heartening. I have nothing more to add. We

have allocated all our money. We are not one of those jurisdictions that held back. We saw an opportunity to invest in our communities across the territory in a historic manner. We embraced that historic opportunity and we have spent all the money. I think that is tremendous for the territory. It sets us apart from many of the other jurisdictions in the country. So, we did that.

The federal government has at times said that they may look at unspent money in other jurisdictions and reallocate it. That is what we have been going on. We haven't heard any more about that — certainly not in the last couple of weeks — so, we are waiting for more information on the new tranches of infrastructure money. We haven't heard from the feds how that is going to be allocated — where the money is coming from. This may be an impossibility, but we are still waiting for the federal government to provide some guidance on this, some more specific guidance on the ICIP money — the next tranche of infrastructure money — that may be coming to the jurisdictions across the country. I know that there is interest in this across the country. There is a huge hunger for more infrastructure investment, climate resilient infrastructure — all sorts of really, really important work to come.

We're all anxious about this — certainly I am; my colleagues in this government are; apparently the opposition is. I know that this is echoed across the country in jurisdictions — in meetings I have been at all summer. We'll have to wait and see. I haven't heard details — specifics — about what's coming and how it's going to be funded, where it's coming from. It might be from reallocations of old money; I don't know. We've been told this; we've been working with the federal government; we will continue to do that to make sure that we get as much money for Yukoners as we possibly can from the federal government on the infrastructure file.

Mr. Dixon: The minister said that the federal government has talked about reallocating unspent ICIP money from other jurisdictions. Can he provide a little more clarity as to what they have said? He said that they have talked about it, but I would like to know what exactly the federal government has said about this. Have they indicated that they would reallocate unspent ICIP money from other jurisdictions to a jurisdiction like the Yukon, which has fully spent or allocated their ICIP money?

I ask this because a number of folks in the communities have asked this very same question as well. They have seen comments like the one made by the minister now and by the Premier earlier this year that have suggested that there is unspent ICIP money out there in other provinces and that the federal government is deciding whether or not to reallocate that money. What the Premier had led us to believe in April was that money would be reallocated to the Yukon, so I just want to get a better sense of what that process would look like. How much money can we expect to see coming from other provinces?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Let me very clear: We don't have specifics to share with the opposition today on the floor of the House. That hasn't changed in the couple of weeks since the question came up before. We don't know yet, but we're waiting, and we're working with our federal counterparts, and

when something becomes available, we'll certainly let this House know however it is — be it a news release to the public, or a ministerial statement, or however we do it, we'll let the members opposite know, because we understand that their constituents — like my constituents, like everybody's here — are interested in infrastructure spending.

We have committed to spend the money we receive from Ottawa. That is a differentiator — that is a difference between our two parties. We are going to spend the infrastructure money we get to improve lives for Yukoners in every community. We have done that for seven years, and we are going to continue down that road. When I have more information from the federal government to share with this House, I will certainly do so. That hasn't happened yet.

Mr. Dixon: On April 1, the Premier said that there was language in the federal budget — language that we were pleased to see — and it really talked about the reallocation of ICIP funding across Canada. Does the minister know what the Premier was talking about when he made that comment?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the member reiterating what he has said several times over the last couple of weeks. I hear him; I hear the member opposite. I have nothing further to add on this. That was information that we received from the federal government. We are waiting for more clarification, for more information. I haven't received that yet. There has been no federal announcement on new infrastructure funding or where that money is coming from. When that information comes to me or the Premier, I am sure that we will tell Yukoners, because there is a hunger for that infrastructure funding across municipalities, and we are happy to help to provide better infrastructure for Yukoners on this side of the House.

Mr. Dixon: I will let the annals of Hansard reflect the minister's answer. I think that what the Premier was referring to is something that caught the attention of a lot of people, and I think that the answer from the minister is telling. I will move on, because we are limited on time here today.

Can the minister provide an update on the Dawson recreation centre, please?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I did answer the last question. The answer is the same as it has been. There is no new information yet to share, but I will certainly share more information when it comes available. The member opposite said that I didn't answer the question, and he said that the answer I gave was telling.

As far as the Dawson City recreation centre goes, we have schematic options completed, and they are currently being discussed with the Dawson City council. We are refining options to fit the existing budget and to ensure that operating costs can be managed by the municipality now that they have a schematic before them. So, we are going to finish that schematic design with detail design following in the next few months. The schedule includes tendering to begin in 2024 and construction in 2025.

Mr. Dixon: So, if I heard the minister correctly, tendering was planned for 2024. Can he confirm that is correct?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The tendering for site preparation is expected to begin in 2024. That is the plan.

Mr. Dixon: Will that be tendered by the Yukon government, or will it be tendered by the City of Dawson?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As with most projects in municipalities, we serve as the project manager for such projects, so we will be putting out the tender and project-managing this project for the municipality of Dawson.

Mr. Dixon: What is the current budget for the project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The five--year capital plan is the source of information like this; I encourage the member opposite to use it. I believe that the current budget range in that five--year capital plan is \$65.5 million.

Mr. Dixon: My understanding is that the schematic that Dawson has developed so far would come with a capital cost higher than \$65 million. So, where can we look to make up the balance?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The capital budget is laid out in the five--year capital plan at \$65.5 million. I don't know — the rest of it is a hypothetical. We will work with the municipality of Dawson on the schematic plan, refine it to meet the municipality's needs and desires, and we will put it out to tender. At that time, we will know how much it will cost, but the estimate is in the five--year capital plan — \$65.5 million.

Mr. Dixon: Can the minister tell us the source of the \$65.5 million that is budgeted? Is it 100 percent from the Yukon, or is there federal infrastructure funding that is intended to be spent on this project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The Dawson City recreation centre is an Investing in Canada infrastructure program project. It has been submitted to the federal government, and that makes it eligible for a 75/25 split in costs.

Mr. Dixon: Will the City of Dawson be responsible for 100 percent of the O&M costs of this building?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The municipality of Dawson City is a municipality. The council is elected by members. It runs the municipality of Dawson. I have said many times that I don't get in the way of municipalities running their business. When it comes to infrastructure that is built in the community, we build the infrastructure and the municipality pays for the operation and maintenance costs. That is currently where we are at. We are working with the City of Dawson to make sure that they have a recreation centre that they can afford to operate. That is where we are at right now, which is working with that municipality to design a project that they are comfortable they can afford.

Mr. Dixon: So, just to be clear, then, is the City of Dawson responsible for 100 percent of the operation and maintenance costs?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I said just two moments ago, the City of Dawson is responsible for the costs of running and paying for the operation and maintenance of its infrastructure. It has been saddled with a really problematic ice surface for far too long. There have been too many fits, starts, and false starts on this project. The current ice rink in Dawson is costing the municipality an awful lot to maintain. We are looking to make sure that we build a new facility that actually serves the town and that the town can afford to run on its own.

Mr. Dixon: I will move on. It has been discussed significantly previously, but we know that the minister has sent a letter to the City of Whitehorse regarding a new water treatment plant for the City of Whitehorse.

Can the minister tell us how much funding the Yukon government intends to provide to the City of Whitehorse for a new water treatment plant?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: At the moment, we don't know how much a new water treatment plant for the City of Whitehorse is going to cost. I haven't received a firm estimate of the costs. I have said to the City of Whitehorse that I will help with efforts to secure federal funding for such a project. Right now, it's in the design stages. Once we have a design before us that shows the need within Whitehorse, we will have a much better idea how much such a facility will cost, and we will look at how it will be funded.

Mr. Dixon: The minister has indicated that the answer to these questions is often found in the five--year capital plan. Is there any money allocated in the five--year capital plan for a new water treatment plant for Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We are currently in the process of designing a budget for next spring. I encourage the members opposite to keep an eye on that for all sorts of projects and the next list of projects we will be funding in the territory, and it will certainly update the five--year capital plan.

As the member opposite knows, this request for a new water treatment plant in Whitehorse just came up in literally the last couple of months. We haven't even got a cost for that project. There is so much yet to determine with this project. Of course, it's not in our current five--year capital plan, but that plan will be updated in coming years, and it may or may not be on there, depending on where the project is with the City of Whitehorse when that budget lands next spring.

Mr. Dixon: The City of Whitehorse continues to contend with issues related to the slides on Robert Service Way. We have heard from the mayor that there is the possibility of a large capital project that may be needed to mitigate future slides. Has any work been provided by the Department of Community Services on this? If so, how much funding has been provided to the City of Whitehorse? If there is a need for a larger scale, permanent mitigation, the mayor has indicated that would be a costly endeavour. How much funding will the Yukon government provide to the City of Whitehorse for this?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Yes, we had a slide on Robert Service Way two years ago that closed the road and opened our eyes to the changing climate and how it is affecting infrastructure in municipalities across the territory. The slide in Whitehorse, of course, closed a major access route to the city for several months. We actually contributed \$2 million to that effort to open the road again and risk-managed the application to the federal government for disaster funds for the work that was done on the south access. The City of Whitehorse has, over the months since then, spent all of that \$2 million. That was where we stepped in.

Now they are looking at a much bigger infrastructure investment to make sure that this access route to the City of Whitehorse down the south access is open. They put in an

application to the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund with the federal government. Community Services was right there with the City of Whitehorse, hand in glove, helping them with that application. We contributed more than \$50,000 to that application to the federal government. We will see. It is a competitive process to get access to those funds. Whitehorse has applied to try to compete for and win some of those disaster mitigation and adaptation fund dollars.

We will see where Whitehorse gets with that application to fund their project from the federal government to help to improve the south access and make sure that access to Whitehorse on that route is open all year-round. We just don't know yet how successful the city will be with that application, but we have helped, at Community Services, with that application process.

Mr. Dixon: The minister mentioned the \$2 million that was provided by the Yukon government to the City of Whitehorse. That was done immediately after the first time the slide happened in 2022; however, a slide occurred in a subsequent year. Did the government provide \$2 million the second time a slide occurred?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: No, we did not.

Mr. Dixon: Can the minister explain why they provided \$2 million one year when the slide occurred but not the second year when the slide occurred again?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The very first year was a disaster, with potential recoveries from the federal government. The second time that happened, it was not eligible for disaster funding. It is up to the City of Whitehorse to deal with and adapt to the climate crisis that we are now facing. It was not something that we had funded.

Mr. Dixon: So, because the City of Whitehorse didn't take action to — in the words of the minister — respond to the climate crisis in the subsequent year, that is why they didn't receive any additional money?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: This has nothing to do with Whitehorse; this is just the way that the disaster mitigation funding works. We are approaching Ottawa. We don't know if the second year is going to actually have any effect for funding the second year.

Mr. Dixon: In the first year, the Yukon government provided \$2 million because they felt it was recoverable from Canada but didn't provide \$2 million the second year because that wasn't going to be eligible for federal funding; is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I said, in 2022-23, we committed \$2 million to the City of Whitehorse to deal with that initial slide. The City of Whitehorse has ultimately claimed \$1.25 million of the \$2 million that we provided to the city. To date, that is an eligible cost. There still remains \$750,000 available in this fiscal year — that is 2023-24 — to support the City of Whitehorse. We have not yet received any claims on that \$750,000 outstanding from the initial \$2-million tranche that we gave them. I have spoken to the mayor and they say that they have spent all that money, but they still haven't claimed any of the \$750,000 that was left from the initial \$2 million that we gave to the City of Whitehorse for the initial slide.

Mr. Dixon: So, just so I am clear, the government provided \$2 million to the City of Whitehorse, but they haven't submitted the right paperwork to receive the full \$2 million so far; is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: That is the information that I have before me today. We made \$2 million available to the City of Whitehorse in the aftermath of the initial slide. We believe that this money is recoverable from Ottawa. We have made that \$2 million available to Whitehorse. Whitehorse has so far remitted claims for \$1.25 million of the \$2 million that we gave in that initial year. They have not yet claimed the remaining \$750,000 from that initial \$2 million that we provided them for the first slide. I have been told by the city that all that money is spent. We have not yet received the remittances for the remaining \$750,000 from the initial \$2 million that we gave to the City of Whitehorse, but we expect them to submit those receipts and the justification for that spending, but we have not received that yet.

Mr. Dixon: I appreciate that answer from the minister.

I will move on to recycling. When my colleague the Member for Watson Lake asked the minister about recycling, he indicated that he has recently received — or his department has recently received — a letter from the City of Whitehorse. Can the minister tell us the nature of the current discussions around the creation of a curbside recycling pickup service in Whitehorse and how much money has been requested by the City of Whitehorse from the Yukon government for this program?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: This falls firmly into the improvements that we are making throughout the territory in our landfills, the investments that we are making in rural Yukon, and our efforts, which were begun by the member for beautiful Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, to improve the way we handle the trash — all of our garbage in the territory.

Recycling, of course, falls firmly in that, because the efforts that we make on recycling will help our landfills last longer, because we will be diverting recyclables out of the landfills and into the recycling stream. It's very important.

Earlier this spring, Raven ReCentre told us that they were no longer going to be keeping their 24-hour drop-off for residential recycling open. It was an effort on the part of Raven to boost the amount of recycling that is diverted out of our landfills in the City of Whitehorse and an effort to restart a curbside collection within Whitehorse. That was the goal of Raven's initiative. We immediately struck a committee with Raven, the City of Whitehorse, and Community Services involving, at various points, other recycling-adjacent or recycling businesses and activists in Whitehorse in that initiative. We have met several times over the last several months to come up with a solution for this. Those talks are going very, very well. In anticipation of that work, the City of Whitehorse has asked the Yukon government how much we are willing to pay toward a curbside recycling effort in the City of Whitehorse. They have asked for a response by November 30 — the end of this month. We are considering that and actually working through the committee and with the Department of Community Services on figuring out how much we are willing

to pay for recycling for the City of Whitehorse. We will have more to say to our partners on this endeavour in due course. I am not going to do it on the floor of the House today.

Mr. Dixon: I appreciate that the minister can't say more before the end of the month, but I will just simply ask: Is there any money in the current budget — either the main budget or the supplementary — that would accommodate this? If not, would we look to the next budget in the spring for this money to flow?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: There are a number of things in play here. We have diversion credits that we currently give to Raven ReCentre for handling residential waste. There are other recycling centres. P&M is another one that would take some of those diversion credits. That money is really what we are looking at diverting to the City of Whitehorse. Currently in the budget is roughly \$600,000 that we pay for diversion credits. That is a pool of money that could theoretically go to Whitehorse — it's in the neighbourhood of \$600,000 — were they to take up curbside collection and start handling the recycling themselves. These are the conversations that we are having with Raven, with the City of Whitehorse, and with our other partners in recycling.

As I said, that money is in the budget. It is what we spend on diversion credits every year, so that is what is currently available, but we are having these conversations with our partners.

Mr. Dixon: Would the \$600,000 dedicated to diversion credits not already be somewhat spent because Raven and other processors have received diversion credits throughout the year so far?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We pay for diversion credits to the people handling the waste. This is part of the discussion that we're having with the City of Whitehorse, Raven, P&M, and other recyclers inside of the Whitehorse municipal boundary. It is currently diverted — it is spent — to the people doing the recycling. That system is currently in flux because we are looking at new models. We will see where it lands. As I said, I'm not going to go into minute details here on the floor of the House. We are actually dealing with our partners on this file and we will continue to do that in good faith until we find a solution with the City of Whitehorse, with Raven ReCentre, and with the other recycling handlers in Whitehorse.

Mr. Dixon: I will move on to a different solid-waste issue. The minister has indicated previously that both Beaver Creek and Old Crow are slated to be phase 3 of their waste management initiative. We will see the installation of gates and tipping fees in both of those communities.

The minister said that there would be engagement prior to that. Can he tell us whether or not there is a timeline for the imposition of gates and tipping fees in Old Crow and Beaver Creek, and is there a timeline for engagement with those communities?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Again, we are currently in phase 2 of our improvements and investments in our landfills across the territory. We are still working on that. We have some communities that haven't signed on to this yet. I believe Haines Junction — I will be meeting with Haines Junction fairly soon.

Once we get phase 2 solidified, then we are going to start work on phase 3. I don't have a timeline for that at this time.

Mr. Dixon: I will move on. The minister has previously indicated that the Yukon government is in the process of developing a disaster financial assistance program. The minister previously said that the policy and program would be implemented in the spring of 2024. Can he provide an update on that?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Well, we have certainly seen — this is an important subject and I appreciate the question from members opposite. This is why we have carbon pricing in the territory — one of the reasons is that we see the effects of our changing climate all of the time. Part of *Our Clean Future* is to actually take action to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in the territory, of which carbon pricing is a central tenet, and we are committed to keeping that price signal in our use of fossil fuels.

On this, we differ from the members opposite, but we have seen the cost, both financial and personal, of climate change in the territory. This summer, of course, the Yukon saw flooding again up in the Klondike. We saw fires in the territory. A couple of communities had to be evacuated. We saw the dramatic footage from Yellowknife. We saw what was happening in the rest of Canada and in Alberta, BC, and the Maritimes. These are unprecedented natural disasters. Of course, our thoughts go out to everyone affected by wildfire and flood events. It has been a central topic of conversation at most of my federal-provincial-territorial meetings this summer where everybody was battered and bruised and struggling with this and trying to find a way to make our communities more resilient and help those who have been affected by our changing climate. At that time, there was consensus that we had to do more.

I really want to thank the residents, volunteers, contractors, and dedicated emergency responders for their efforts to protect people and properties throughout these events. We are currently, as the member opposite has asked, developing a territorial disaster financial assistance program to support recovering from natural disasters. We are not the only ones doing this, but we are certainly taking this seriously. We are working this winter to put on a program that will provide funds to help Yukoners who suffer extensive property damage and disruption to the delivery of essential goods and services as a result of a natural disaster.

I feel very strongly about this. We want to get a plan in place so people know what to expect when disaster strikes and we are not trying to find ways to compensate people in the midst of a disaster. I want as much laid out ahead of time so people know what to expect: what they can expect from their government, what they can expect from their municipalities, and what they can expect from themselves.

We are trying to make sure that this work dovetails with the federal disaster financial assistance program so we actually complement the federal system, so we actually work in tandem with the federal system.

We are coordinating with affected departments and the Climate Change Secretariat to develop a comprehensive disaster financial assistance program for Yukon and align it

with action item H11, which is in our mitigation funding for homes and buildings before a disaster. This program will be aligned to the federal disaster financial assistance arrangement with Yukon, and it will allow individuals, businesses, and communities to receive a refund for disaster-related costs from the Yukon government.

The Yukon government would in turn receive a refund from the federal government through its DFAA. So, we want to make sure that our program aligns with the federal program so that we are not compensating people for costs that would not be covered by the federal government and that we could not get back from the federal program.

Mr. Dixon: The minister has previously said that the policy and program would be implemented in the spring of 2024. Is that still accurate?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: That is the goal.

Mr. Dixon: Madam Chair, I think we will have to leave it there for now. Thank you very much to the officials for joining us, and I look forward to moving on.

Ms. White: I just have some follow-up questions about diversion credits. I was under the impression that diversion credits right now — for example, we know that P&M and Raven ReCentre are able to collect diversion credits, but back in the day, the Salvation Army store also collected diversion credits. Those credits are used — the money that is collected by both of the recyclers is used to help ship the non-refundables south.

Can the minister help me to understand how taking away the diversion credits from the processors and giving them to the City of Whitehorse would then help to get the recycling sent south to where it would need to go to be processed?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the question. The member is absolutely correct — the diversion credits do go to shipping, to diverting recyclables from the landfill. It does go to shipping.

We are currently in talks with partners — both Raven and the City of Whitehorse — on how the system is going to change to meet the needs of Whitehorse residents into the future. In this case, it would be — what we are discussing is whether or not the City of Whitehorse would take on the role of collecting — however it decides to do so — recycling to divert material from its landfill, which the city operates. So, we would pay the diversion credits to the City of Whitehorse, and the City of Whitehorse would then handle those diversion credits and decide where it allocates them — to which recyclable ally it uses. It would then flow — instead of YG funding the diversion credits, it would go to Whitehorse, which would then fund the diversion credits. It would take on the role of handling the recyclables within its boundaries. So, those diversion credits that we currently pay out would go to the City of Whitehorse to then pay out, however it deems appropriate.

Ms. White: I am just going to ask for a bit more clarification, then. Am I right in understanding that the minister has said that the diversion credits that Yukon government pays right now to anyone who is able to divert recyclables, for example, from the landfill — so, right now, two examples would be Raven ReCentre and P&M — that the minister is

saying that all of the money that is used right now as diversion credits would then be taken and transferred, possibly to the City of Whitehorse, and the City of Whitehorse will make the decision as to where those diversion credits go and, for example, to what processor the money would go, as far as sending recyclables south?

Can the minister please walk me through that process again?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: These are the discussions that we are having at the committee; we're getting into the weeds here of recycling. It's a very complicated industry in the territory. There are several players. Raven ReCentre wants to increase the amount of recycling that is diverted from our landfills within the City of Whitehorse — which is why it decided, several months ago, to end the public, free drop-off of recycling at its centre within Whitehorse. So, we are now looking at options to replace that public drop-off and getting the City of Whitehorse to start handling curbside collection, which is the goal. So, we're in talks with the City of Whitehorse — with Raven and P&M — to come up with solutions for the City of Whitehorse.

The diversion credits that we're talking about this afternoon are the diversion credits that would go toward residential recycling within the City of Whitehorse. That money would go to the City of Whitehorse, because they would be taking on — that's a potential — is that money would potentially go to the City of Whitehorse, because it would be taking on the recycling business, and it would then — however it decided to do it — would use those diversion credits to fund — whether it goes to a processor like Raven or P&M or whether they decide to take on the processing itself, but the money we're talking about is the money that is for the City of Whitehorse for residential recycling within the City of Whitehorse. The diversion credits for that specific item would go to the City of Whitehorse, because they would be taking on that responsibility.

We don't know how that would go, once the City of Whitehorse takes it on. The City of Whitehorse is working on that, and as I said before, this is a municipal responsibility. If it becomes a municipal responsibility, I will respect the decisions that they take as a government.

Ms. White: I think that was a lot of interesting things that the minister has just said. I guess the bigger conversation becomes — the part that I'm not sure I understand from the minister is that currently the recyclers use the diversion credits to pay for the transportation of things, for example, that are not purchased by a company. For example, aluminum cans — pop cans, as an example, are purchased when they get south, but there are many things that are not purchased, and the diversion credits help offset the cost of that.

In a report that the government released in 2021 called Part 2: Introductions and basics, Extended Producer Responsibility in the Yukon: exploration and implementation considerations, there is a section where it says: "Current challenges with waste management" in section 2. It says — and I'm reading from it: "An integral part of the waste management system is end-of-life management for products and materials

that are recyclable. A full assessment of recycling concerns for the Yukon can be found in the ‘Supporting a Sustainable Recycling System in the Yukon’ report prepared for the Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste (2020). Further economic, social and environmental benefits of recycling are laid out in the MH Report ‘Assessment of the Impacts of Yukon’s Recycling’ (2021). The current challenges with the collection and processing of the recyclable materials in the Yukon include: Fiscal vulnerability of the system to recycle non-refundable materials — Raven Recycling and P&M Recycling process these materials voluntarily and diversion credits funding model is not sufficient to ensure their long-term operation.”

I guess the concern that I have is that it sounds like the minister has just said that the City of Whitehorse may make the decision to then be the processor of recyclable items by, for example, running their own curbside collection. I guess the question that I have for the minister is: If the plan is to take away the diversion credits that the two recycling processors in Whitehorse are able to access, is he saying then that it will be the responsibility of the City of Whitehorse to ship the full spectrum of recyclables south? That is what it sounded like, so I am just looking for clarification.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: First of all, I commend the member opposite for all of her research on this matter. She is clearly deeply invested in recycling, as am I, and I appreciate this. She has an understanding of this system.

We plan to continue diversion credits to bridge to extended producer responsibility, which is estimated to be coming in 2025. The processors — Raven and P&M currently — will continue to get credits based on the volume of material that they ship south. If city recyclables don’t go through Raven or P&M, then there is less volume and less credit paid to the processors. They will continue to divert material. We have unincorporated Yukoners and Yukon municipalities. We are talking about the material, the recyclables, inside the boundaries of Whitehorse, and the City of Whitehorse is taking on that responsibility and will pay to ship materials south — whether they pay themselves or pay a recycler, I don’t know. I don’t know what the city is going to do. The city is currently examining this and coming up with a plan for recyclables and I trust the work that they are doing. We are working with Raven, we are working with the city, and we are working with P&M to come up with a system of the City of Whitehorse dealing with recyclables within its municipal boundaries. That portion of the residential recycling will be paid to Whitehorse, which will then deal with either the existing processors or some other system that it decides it is going to use to get those recyclables out of the landfill and to destinations down south. That is all that we are talking about. I don’t know what it looks like yet. That is what we are currently talking with the City of Whitehorse and with these recyclable processors about. So, that process is ongoing.

We have until the end of December to come up with a solution or at least to come up with a tangible solution that will satisfy Raven that this is moving in the right direction, and then we will figure out a way to bridge between the time when that

December 31 date happens and the time when the actual city recycling efforts kick in.

So, that is it, but we are looking at changing the way this is done and the city is looking at taking on that responsibility within its municipal boundaries for residential recycling, which is what Raven has announced it is no longer going to continue to do.

Chair (Ms. Blake): Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 211, *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Is there any further general debate?

Ms. White: Madam Chair, I just want to follow up on something the minister said earlier. I am just going to walk away from diversion credits right now. It has to do with between Beaver Creek and Old Crow. One of the reasons why I want to ask this question right now is the concerns around the realities of both of those communities. In one case, it is the western northernmost border of Yukon as far as accessing into Alaska. Of course, Old Crow is a fly-in community, keeping in mind, of course, that the gasifier that the Yukon government installed in Old Crow hasn’t worked for just about five years.

When the minister gets ready to have those conversations with the community of Old Crow, will the approaches in other municipalities and unincorporated communities be followed there, or is there the recognition that Old Crow is not like other jurisdictions in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Yes, we have two communities; Beaver Creek — as the member opposite said, is right on the border with Alaska — and Old Crow. They are both unique communities and that is why they are part of phase 3 of this plan. You can’t have a territory-wide waste management system without including all of these communities, like Old Crow and Beaver Creek. They are certainly unique, though, and have unique challenges to deal with. That’s one of the reasons why they are the last of the regional landfills that we are going to be dealing with. Of course, we will work with communities. Once we get through the second phase, we will start scoping out how to engage with and work with the two communities as part of phase 3.

As I said on the gasifier, it has been out of operation and we are hoping to have the damage to that unit fixed and have it back working in the spring of 2024.

Chair: Is there any further debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services?

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

Ms. White: 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

Chair: The Member for Takhini-Kopper King 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.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures
Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$21,347,000 agreed to
On Capital Expenditures
Total Capital Expenditures underexpenditure in the amount of \$6,239,000 agreed to
Total Expenditures in the amount of \$15,108,000 agreed to
Department of Community Services agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*.

Department of Highways and Public Works — continued

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

MLA Tredger: I will start by thanking the officials for being with us again today, as well as all those listening in on the radio.

I have a few questions left that are mostly to do with *Our Clean Future*. We had just started getting into that when we wound up the other day, so I want to start by asking about item T13 from *Our Clean Future*, which is “Develop Yukon-specific design guidance and a plan for active transportation facilities by 2024 to guide investments in active transportation infrastructure into corridors near communities.”

So, 2024 is coming up quickly and I wonder if we could have a progress update.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to be back in Committee of the Whole answering questions on the Highways and Public Works supplementary budget request.

I have some general comments here, and I will see whether my officials have any more late-breaking news with respect to active transportation. Promoting active transportation is a focus of our government, and we aim to incorporate active transportation elements wherever possible in major infrastructure projects. Active transportation not only helps to support healthy living but also supports a cleaner and more sustainable future for the Yukon.

Highways and Public Works strongly supports and is actively incorporating active transportation options into our highway infrastructure projects wherever possible. For example, the department recently completed construction of a paved multi-use trail between Lodestar Lane and the intersection of Robert Service Way and the Alaska Highway. I know that probably a number of Members of the Legislative Assembly over the course of the summer — in any event, I had the opportunity to do the whole bike circuit along the top of the Alaska Highway. I can report that it is in good shape and certainly promotes active transportation across the top of Whitehorse.

We are planning to extend this active transportation trail from the Robert Service Way intersection to Philmar RV Centre at the same time as the reconstruction of this section of the Alaska Highway occurs. As well, Highways and Public Works is in the process of developing options to enhance the safety of active transportation on the Takhini River bridge on the Klondike Highway, for which I know that the Member for Lake Laberge is a strong advocate over the course of the last number of years.

\$8.5 million is budgeted for upgrades to the existing bridge, of which the Government of Yukon will receive approximately \$6 million in federal funding through Canada’s active transportation fund. We are looking into what options would be available, including the estimated cost for the improvement upgrades. The options will include a sidewalk or active transportation route on one or both sides of the bridge and modifications that are necessary to improve the structure and increase its lifespan.

Another example is the Nisutlin Bay bridge project, which will include a pedestrian walkway across the bridge and a trail underneath the bridge that will provide all-season access.

Active transportation planning is also incorporated into how we design and construct new buildings. The new Whistle Bend school will have a widened sidewalk to accommodate children riding bikes in front of the school and the trails behind the school will be integrated into the Whistle Bend trail system to allow students to commute to school. Construction of a new staff parking area behind Selkirk Elementary School started during the summer break. This design has allowed for the addition of a trail alongside the parking lot to connect with the City of Whitehorse’s active transportation plan.

We are also working closely with the City of Whitehorse on these projects. We are committed to incorporating active transportation options as much as possible.

The Government of Yukon, along with the City of Whitehorse, is participating as a stakeholder in a community-led study that will assess the feasibility of two active transportation underpasses beneath the Alaska Highway within Whitehorse. This study is funded by the Government of Canada.

The Government of Yukon is also partnering with the City of Whitehorse on the Hamilton Boulevard-Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill intersection and the Range Road combined intersection upgrades, which I believe has the acronym of HART. This joint initiative, which is currently in the public engagement phase, will focus on developing designs to improve the Hamilton Boulevard-Alaska Highway-Two Mile Hill intersection and the Range Road-Two Mile Hill intersection with an emphasis on making travel more efficient for all transportation modes.

The last of my comments right now, but certainly not least, is about the community of Watson Lake. \$1.5 million is budgeted for Watson Lake pedestrian safety improvements, and of that, \$1.1 million is funded through Canada's active transportation fund. This project includes the installation of street lighting, pedestrian-activated beacons, and pathway connections to the crossings and will improve the safety for active transportation users and pedestrians within Watson Lake.

In August 2023, Highways and Public Works met with Watson Lake's chief administrative officer regarding a needs assessment for connecting pathways to the new crosswalks for construction in 2024.

Just briefly then, reducing emissions from the transportation sector is a critical element of *Our Clean Future*. The Government of Yukon is committed to making our roads more accessible for active transportation so that Yukoners have the option to walk, bike, or even kick-sled to their destination wherever possible. In general, it is best practice to build active transportation infrastructure at the same time as highway reconstruction — which I have set out in some of the examples. That way, the two assets can be designed to work together. Construction of both assets at the same time is cost effective, as materials from the highway reconstruction can be reused for active transportation trail and contractor costs are reduced, as they are already on-site.

That occurred, as well, two seasons ago at the Pine Lake-to-Haines Junction connector, and I understand that has been very well-received by the Village of Haines Junction and by the users of the Pine Lake campground, and it has received a great deal of use. Those are my comments for now on active transportation.

MLA Tredger: A couple of follow-up questions. The beginning of that item is to develop Yukon-specific design guidance. I would assume that means a manual or some sort of principles that are followed. Is that in the works of being developed yet, or is that going to start soon? And because the minister mentioned the connection on the Alaska Highway

between Robert Service — and I can't remember exactly where it goes to — who will be maintaining that in the winter? Is it the city, or is it the Yukon government? And if it's the city, is there any support being provided to expand their trail-clearing capacity so that they can maintain it?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The Member for Whitehorse Centre has two specific questions, and I will try to be brief on this.

With respect to additional trails that are created in the City of Whitehorse, in furtherance of the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon government's active transportation policy, yes, the member opposite is correct that the City of Whitehorse is responsible for snow clearing. I am advised that HPW meets regularly with the City of Whitehorse with respect to ongoing potentially overlapping maintenance issues and that this issue of additional responsibility has not been raised as yet, but certainly, we are open to those ongoing discussions. The lines of communication between the City of Whitehorse and HPW are frequent.

May I just have a moment with respect to the issue of —

I believe that, within the timeline as set out with respect of creating an active transportation strategy, I am advised that the transportation planning branch at the City of Whitehorse is creating an active transportation strategy and that there will then be design guidelines which can and will be followed. Yes, it's the highways Transportation Planning branch.

In my previous answer, I did indicate some of the best practices that the Department of Highways and Public Works, in conjunction with others but also on its own — there are principles by which Highways and Public Works is already guided and best practices with respect to the implementation and furtherance of active transportation projects that have been advanced over the course of the last two or three years, which I have outlined in my prior response.

MLA Tredger: The next question I want to ask is about item H1, which is the retrofitting of Government of Yukon buildings to reduce energy use and contribute to a 30-percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and I do hope that will be updated to 45 percent in line with the Climate Leadership Council's guidelines when that is released in, I believe, November or December.

So, I am wondering how we are doing on that item. What percent reduction has happened so far? I have seen lots of projects underway. I have to say that the Social Services building is looking quite beautiful with the new siding. So, I am not looking for a list of projects; I am looking specifically for: What percent reduction have we achieved so far compared to 2010 levels?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I do have some somewhat specific information with respect to projects that have been completed over the course of the last two or two and a half fiscal years. My notes indicated that a total of 23 energy retrofits had been completed during fiscal 2021-22 and fiscal 2022-23. Just for the record, I can indicate that they aren't full wraps of some of these structures, but they are retrofits, which have improved energy efficiency.

Madam Chair, they include Holy Family Elementary School, Hidden Valley Elementary School, the F.H. Collins

technical education wing, the airport terminal at Haines Junction, Robert Service School — which, among other things, has a brand new addition to the school — St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School, the supervised consumption site, the grader station at Dawson City, the fire hall and garage in Keno, the crew residence in Tuchtua, and the Yukon Arts Centre. Once again, I recognize that there may be follow-up questions as to what was actually done, and we can certainly get information on that, but these are structures that have received at least some sort of energy efficiency upgrades. They also include the crew residence at Blanchard window replacements, the crew residence at Blanchard grader station heating system, the workshop and offices at the Parks building, and a mechanical workshop in Marwell. As well, the Yukon Justice Centre has received HVAC upgrades. The Yukon Justice Centre, within the last year or so, had the atrium skylight replacement. It also includes work done at the Watson Lake Secondary School, the community school in Carcross, the grader station in Beaver Creek, Supply Services and Stores, the Tourism Business Centre, the VIC — unclear where it was, but the Tourism Business Centre, the visitor information centre, and the administration building in Mayo.

In addition, just walking around Whitehorse, I understand that the Lynn Building actually isn't a YG building, but I see it is being wrapped and retrofitted. As the Member for Whitehorse Centre has indicated, the Social Services building opposite Whitehorse Elementary is being wrapped as well.

I can provide more detail to the Member for Whitehorse Centre, but the total indicates — and once again, we will confirm the measurement indices here — but it looks like the estimate is 148 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. Once again, I can confirm the methodology and what that actual number is going forward, but the bottom line is that this government has — there are a lot of projects that have been completed in the last two fiscal years, and there are more being assessed this year as well.

That is a pretty significant investment too. For those 23 projects, the estimated total investment is just under \$20 million — so, significant.

MLA Tredger: I appreciate the number that I think the reduction so far has been 148 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. I assume that is annually. What is the total CO₂ emissions of the Government of Yukon building portfolio, and what was it in 2010? I am asking for those so that I can understand how close we are to achieving that 30-percent goal.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I thank the member opposite for their specific question. That is important, and it's a number that I am likely able to get, but I will have to undertake to provide a legislative return with respect to that specific question.

MLA Tredger: I look forward to receiving that. I assume it is being tracked, because otherwise, we don't know how close to that goal we are. We are about a third of the way into the timeline of this action, so progress doesn't have to be linear, but it would be good to know where we are on that scale of where we are trying to go.

I am going to skip now to section L of the plan. I am looking at L15, which is to develop and implement a framework to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions and

climate risk into government infrastructure investments in 2024. That's a new action as of 2021. The deadline is coming up quickly, so I was hoping to have a progress update.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Highways and Public Works has developed a prioritization framework based on several factors, including GHG reductions and climate impact cost-savings and operational impacts. We currently use these to prioritize and to select meaningful retrofit projects, and that is the list that I provided in my prior response. This prioritization process is part of our new ISO 50001 energy management system and was officially launched earlier this year.

Just to clarify because it wasn't entirely clear — and I will sit down — but was the Member for Whitehorse Centre referring to L4 or L14? I don't think that it was L15; I think it was either L4 or L14. I know that the member opposite has asked questions about incorporating greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency into the process of identifying and prioritizing Government of Yukon building retrofits and new construction projects by 2023. I know that this question has been asked before, but just on the off-chance that I misheard which letter and number were being referenced, I will sit down.

MLA Tredger: I am happy to clarify. I am asking about L15, which is — quote: "Develop and implement a framework to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions and climate risk into government infrastructure investments in 2024."

I was hoping for a little bit more information about what this item is, because we already have T28, which is — quote: "Continue to conduct climate risk assessments of all major transportation infrastructure projects above \$10 million..." It's a little bit longer than that, but that's the short version, and we also have C5, which is — quote: "Continue to conduct detailed climate change risk assessments of all major community infrastructure projects over \$10 million..." That seems like that would cover most of the infrastructure investments, so maybe there's a category I'm not thinking of right now. I'm wondering what L15 adds to those two that are already ongoing and what the work is that needs to happen before it can start in 2024.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Yes, I was a little confused. I can't say that I know every action item of *Our Clean Future* by rote, but in the original draft, there is not an L15, but there is an L15 now.

With respect to that, just to answer the question directly — develop and implement a framework to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions and climate risk into government infrastructure investments in 2024. The report card indicates that HPW is on track. HPW is reviewing capital planning processes to identify opportunities to quantify greenhouse gas emissions and to assess climate risk in upcoming government infrastructure investments. The impacts of climate change on the Yukon are being felt everywhere. Whether it be wildfires, flooding, landslides, increased precipitation, permafrost thaw, or avalanches, our territory is changing quickly and we need to be prepared for more changes to come. That is why it is so important that the infrastructure we are building today will withstand the climate impacts of tomorrow.

Of course, just this summer, we had the flooding on the north Klondike Highway and on the Dempster. I will give a

shout-out to the Klondike division of Highways and Public Works for their yeoman service in getting the north Klondike Highway open at Clear Creek far before what was anticipated and also getting the Dempster Highway open again. We have also had landslides around the Dempster Corner, both toward Dawson and away from Dawson. We know how challenging that road section is from Henderson into the Dempster Corner area. It's a road that's right on — well, sometimes it's a hillside but sometimes it's more of a cliffside — so recognizing that you have some sort of aggregation so that there is sluffing off the hillside or off the cliff. Of course, that area is very much prone to that.

We have seen that. We have also seen that on the road out to Haines Junction — the significant permafrost lens and the movement there that was going to impact on the Alaska Highway — and Highways and Public Works had to move quickly and provide a procurement on an almost \$4-million project, I believe, for the two-kilometre bypass just outside of Whitehorse toward Haines Junction.

This is absolutely real. These are real dollars, and Highways and Public Works is agile and responsive. I say that it's the “department of getting stuff done”, and they absolutely do get stuff done, but this was unexpected and it was significant.

To support our understanding of how climate change is impacting our infrastructure, the Yukon government recently released the first Yukon climate risk assessment, which can be found on yukon.ca. The report will help guide our actions so that we are more resilient to the impacts of climate change. As the member opposite correctly indicated, our government is conducting climate risk assessments of all major transportation and building infrastructure projects over \$10 million.

Climate risk assessments evaluate infrastructures' vulnerability to climate change and use that information to incorporate adaptation measures into the design to mitigate climate change impacts. The assessment considers the potential damage, how likely it is to occur, and what options exist to mitigate that threat.

Highways and Public Works completed climate risk assessments for five major construction projects in recent years. The Dempster fibre line, the Carmacks bypass, north Klondike Highway reconstruction, the Whitehorse airport airfield upgrades, and Kêts'ádañ Kù — the Burwash Landing school. The department is finalizing climate risk assessments for the Alaska Highway safety improvements through Whitehorse and the Alaska Highway realignment at the Takhini River thaw slump, which I just talked about. We will use that information from these assessments to help build safer and more resilient infrastructure for years to come.

I did have the opportunity to travel around the territory for a bit this summer. I was on the road to Dawson and back at least twice. I am impressed by the potential from Stewart Crossing to Dawson where the earthworks have really raised the roads and profiled those roads significantly. When they are completed, it will represent a significant upgrade and a significant asset for future generations of Yukoners. That is certainly where climate change has been considered by having

all that fill and raising the roads significantly by — and the House has heard me on this before — replacing significantly subpar culverts — culverts that did not have sufficient enough drainage to deal with current snow loads and precipitation — and replacing them with really skookum, big-diameter culverts in that area.

I know that I'm hopefully indirectly answering the question for the Member for Whitehorse Centre, but those are certainly the considerations that are taking place, as I indicated, on the Dempster fibre, the Carmacks bypass, north Klondike Highway reconstruction, and the Whitehorse airport airfield upgrades, which are just in progress now.

The parallel runway is substantially complete and will be the primary Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport runway in the spring, summer, and fall of next year — 2024. There is exciting work that will be done there, and I know that we are working on improving drainage on that plateau, which, of course, the City of Whitehorse is very interested in — that you will have improved drainage, as my colleague the Minister of Community Services answered a number of questions this afternoon with respect to, among other things, the slide that occurred on the south access.

Thank you, Madam Chair. There is a lot of work being done.

MLA Tredger: Just before I cede the floor to my colleague, I will thank the officials for being here and all the folks in the department working to make this happen — thank you very much.

Mr. Hassard: I, too, would like to thank the officials for being here today to assist the minister and getting us some answers to our queries. The first question that I have for the minister today is regarding the Takhini River Road. I know that the minister confirmed in a letter, replying to the Member for Lake Laberge, that design work has been done for the major upgrade to that particular road. So, we are curious: What is the cost estimate for that project, and can the minister give us a timeline on when he feels that project will be moving forward?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I thank the member opposite for the question. I do have some information with respect to Takhini River Road and Gully Road. I know that there are issues with respect to this road and advocacy from the Member for Lake Laberge with respect to this road. In any event, what I can say is that Highways and Public Works makes it a priority to keep all maintained roads safe and in good condition.

Twice a year, the department grades the Takhini River Road surface and more frequently as required. Highways and Public Works was scheduled to blade this road on or before October 25 — I'm confirming whether that happened — but in any event, so far during the 2023-24 fiscal year, the department spent over \$43,000 on maintenance and upgrades to the road. I am advised that this is a significant investment in comparison to other rural roads of a similar standard. In 2022, the department installed a wooden deck to allow traffic to cross a very soft spot at the far end of the road.

Highways and Public Works is working to improve drainage to address erosion issues on the Takhini River Road near its intersection with Gully Road. The department is

conducting preliminary design work and looking at reconstruction alternatives in order to improve safety and drainage for the Takhini River Road beyond the Gully Road intersection area. The reconstruction design will include strengthening of the road structures, widening the road where it is narrow, installing culvert markers and steam pipes, cleaning and correcting existing culverts, deepening ditches, and correcting soft spots in the road.

In the coming months, a design will be submitted to YESAB for this area. Before the submission to YESAB, the department will contact affected property owners to share the proposed design and any impacts to property owners. Construction on the road will be prioritized in relation to overall upgrade priorities. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor and provide maintenance to these roads, as required.

The member opposite will likely know, but I'm sure that the Member for Lake Laberge knows, that the Takhini River Road was built by local residents prior to the 1940s, and development has, of course, increased over the years. In the past decade, large spring runoffs have caused significant erosion to the Takhini River Road and the Gully Road.

The Yukon government uses a road classification system that considers traffic volumes and socio-economic factors when determining maintenance schedules and planning upgrades. So, the specific — I'm just checking my response to the Member for Lake Laberge in late August. I think it's consistent with what I have just relayed to the House. The final sentence is that, while the reconstruction and/or resurfacing of the Takhini River Road is not currently in the department's five-year capital plan, the department will review whether Takhini River Road has an increased priority based on a condition assessment, which will be concluded this fall. So, I look forward to receiving that assessment.

The other good news I have for the area — which, of course, doesn't entirely relate to the Takhini River Road, but it relates to the area — is that there is funding set aside to improve the access and active transportation elements of the Takhini River bridge, which, of course, is in the area, but I concede that it is not the Takhini River Road.

So, the specific question from the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin was what the likely budget is, and we don't have that estimate as of yet, but certainly, I can provide same once I am made aware of this assessment. So, yes to Yukoners who might be listening today. I'm certainly well aware of the challenges of the Takhini River Road, a road that was likely — quote — “punched into the wilderness” in the 1940s and very likely does need some additional work. I'm certainly cognisant of the fact that there are likely a lot more residents there than there were a number of decades ago. Thank you for that question.

Mr. Hassard: That was seven and a half minutes of: I don't know. So, I guess we will try another one and see if we get the same thing.

I asked earlier today in Question Period about the budget for the Nisutlin bridge, so I guess we will ask again. Can the minister provide us with an updated budget for the Nisutlin bridge?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I will give a basic outline here.

The contract with Graham Infrastructure LP is currently \$159,000,096. Infrastructure Canada's Building Canada fund committed \$41.25 million to the project. Transport Canada will also contribute \$52.5 million, through the national trade corridors fund, to the project. The capital plan indicates that the approximate spending in 2023 is \$40 million to \$45 million. For fiscal 2024-25, it is \$45 million to \$50 million, and for fiscal 2025-26, it is estimated to be \$25 million to \$30 million. These numbers are subject to change as the work progresses.

So, similar to what I said a number of hours ago, I would just indicate that the Yukon government and Graham Infrastructure LP have been negotiating a change order to reflect the impacts of the *Fisheries Act* authorization for the Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement project. Negotiations such as these are confidential because of their commercial nature and to maintain confidential positions. Yukon government has done its due diligence in handling this matter and in mitigating risks due to the original *Fisheries Act* authorization. When the Nisutlin Bay bridge project was tendered, there was no reason to expect any significant deviation from similar previous *Fisheries Act* authorizations from the regulator, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

However, Madam Chair, the Yukon government did receive a *Fisheries Act* authorization that had new restrictive limits to cumulative noise impacts on fish. Together, the Yukon government, the Teslin Tlingit Council, and Graham Infrastructure LP worked on an amendment to the authorization; this took time. The amendment was received in March 2023, at which point negotiations commenced between the Yukon government and Graham Infrastructure LP about a schedule and work plan reflective of the authorization.

As the member opposite will well know, change orders — both large and small — are a regular part of contract management. Work on the bridge replacement continues to progress as planned, with the completion date the same as it was — substantial completion in 2025 — with substantial completion at the end of 2025 and, of course, some work still to be done in 2026, with creative adaptations designed by the contractor, the Yukon government, and the Teslin Tlingit Council in order to ensure that the requirements of the *Fisheries Act* authorization and the water licence are met.

The Yukon government, of course, remains committed to delivering the construction of a new Nisutlin Bay bridge. When the discussions reach their conclusion, I will be in a position to advise both the member opposite and Yukoners generally on the updated status of the project and modifications, if any, to the budget.

One question that the member opposite had with respect to subcontractors and local businesses getting work or receiving work on the Nisutlin Bay bridge project — this is received from Graham Infrastructure LP. They indicate that the Nisutlin Bay bridge subcontractors are as follows. Once again, the caveat is just that they are listed by Graham Infrastructure, but it is quite a significant list: earthworks, Cobalt Construction Inc.; structural steel girders, Central Welding and Iron Works; rebar, Harris Rebar, a division of Harris Steel; precast concrete panels, MSE Precast; electrical work from Arcrite;

environmental consultant, EDI; demolition, Priestly Demolition; logistics planning and execution, 838427 Yukon Inc., carrying on business as EKY Solutions; Go Cobalt Mining; Kilrich Industries; 838427 Yukon Ltd., EKY Solutions, out of Teslin; Lone-Wolf Contracting, Teslin; Tle'Nax T'awei Industrial Limited Partnership, Whitehorse; 836436 Yukon Ltd.; United North Construction Group, Teslin; TKO Enterprises, Teslin; Son Rise General Contracting, Teslin; Chilkahit Holdings LP, Teslin; and Da Daghay Development Corporation, Whitehorse. I am advised as well that there are contracts with local businesses for accommodation which include the Nisutlin Trading Post and the Yukon Motel.

Once again, the caveat that I would provide is that these are names that have been provided by the contractor; they are not necessarily exhaustive. In any event, there is lots of work being done in Teslin. Of course, sometimes there are bumps in the road, but we're going to get this bridge built. All indicators are that it will be built on time.

Seeing the Time, Madam Chair, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Riverdale North that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. Blake: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 211, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2023-24*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

The following document was filed November 7, 2023:

35-1-164

Holocaust education, letter re (dated November 6, 2023) from Scott Kent, Member for Copperbelt South, to Hon. Jeanie McLean, Minister of Education (Kent)