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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1995

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MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Ballantyne, Hon. Nellie Cournoyea, Mr. Dent, Hon. Samuel Gargan, Ms. Mike, Hon. Richard Nerysoo, Hon. Kelvin Ng, Hon. John Pollard, Mr. Pudlat, Mr. Pudluk, Hon. John Todd, Mr. Whitford, Mr. Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

MR. SPEAKER:

Good afternoon. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Nerysoo.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 71-12(7): Brighter Futures Funding

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you. It's been a long time. Mr. Speaker, early childhood is the most critical stage in a person's development. It is during these years that the foundations of lifelong competencies and skills are established for children. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment's strategic plan points to the importance of community-based early childhood programs to help children learn and develop.

Some children not only benefit from early childhood programming, they require it. Early intervention is needed to help children with physical and mental conditions or who live in poverty develop to their full potential. Today, I am pleased to announce an initiative that will help communities develop and carry out early intervention projects. Health Canada has established the Brighter Futures program and the community action program for children, which fund projects that focus on issues such as mental health, child development, injury prevention, healthy babies and solvent abuse.

To assist community groups in developing early intervention strategies and to help them access these funds, the NWT Counselling Association has established a position for an early intervention coordinator for a one-year term, starting March 1,

1995. The coordinator is working out of the student support division of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, which is providing office space and administrative support. The funding for this position has been provided by Health Canada under the Brighter Futures initiative.

The early intervention coordinator is helping distribute information on Brighter Futures, the community action program for children and other funding sources. The coordinator is also helping communities in developing early intervention proposals and establishing programs that meet community needs. Since the activities are closely related to health and social services issues, the early intervention coordinator and the staff of the Department of Health and Social Services keep each other up to date on activities.

Mr. Speaker, early childhood programs and early intervention initiatives have a great potential for improving a child's success in schools, in post-secondary training and in the workplace. I am pleased that the NWT Counselling Association and the department are partners in establishing the early intervention coordinator position and helping NWT communities in establishing these important projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Nerysoo. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On National Volunteer Week

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to remind Members that this is National Volunteer Week. Every year it gives me a great deal of pleasure to acknowledge all of those volunteers who do so much to enhance other people's lives. The volunteer sector of Yellowknife publishes a newsletter called "Happenings" and I have borrowed some information from it. For instance, in Canada, 13 million Canadians volunteer their time, thus contributing over 1 billion hours to various organizations and community groups.

Those volunteer hours are equivalent to 617,000 full-time positions which, based on the average wage, would exceed some \$16 billion a year. If we were to compare the actual hours of work contributed by volunteers, it would top those hours worked in

Canada in leading industries such as mining, agriculture and forestry. Those are, indeed, some very staggering figures. It is almost impossible to imagine what our country would be like without volunteers, were they not such a big part of our everyday life. In Canada, we are proud to be known throughout the world as a caring society and it is certainly fitting for all of us to honour our volunteers who are largely responsible for giving Canada this fine reputation.

For most of us in the north, however, we usually just have to walk down the street in our community to spot many of our volunteers. They go about their lives quietly doing, without fanfare, and believing in what they are doing. I am told that this year, Helene Usherwood, a resident of Yellowknife, is the winner of the 1995 outstanding volunteer of the year service award. This is a prime example of volunteer spirit. Every year MACA presents some very deserving volunteers with this special award. I believe Ms. Usherwood is being honoured tomorrow at a volunteer reception. I offer my sincere congratulations to Ms. Usherwood and would like to recognize the many, many, many local volunteers who richly deserve our acknowledgement during this special week for the very real difference that they make to all our lives. Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Zoe.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of Heroic Rescue Efforts In Wha Ti

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to give recognition to four residents of the community of Wha Ti for the role they played in the rescue and resuscitation of a friend from the bottom of the Wha Ti, formerly known as Lac La Martre. Mr. Speaker, Frankie Nitsiza and Peter Moosenose were presented with the Commissioner's Award for Bravery and Alfred Nitsiza and Lloyd Bishop received letters of commendation for the part they played in the rescue. Mr. Speaker, the awards were presented by Commissioner Helen Maksagak yesterday at a special ceremony in the community of Wha Ti.

The rescue took place on August 12, 1993, when wind and wave conditions prevented Andrew Beaverho, 9, and Larry Flunkie, 11, from paddling a makeshift raft back to shore. Both boys abandoned the platform and attempted to swim approximately 150 feet to the community dock. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Beaverho reached the dock but Mr. Flunkie had to be pulled from the bottom by Peter Moosenose who had dived from a boat piloted by Alfred Nitsiza. Mr. Flunkie was reported to have been underwater for approximately five minutes. Mr. Flunkie was revived after two-man CPR was performed by Mr. Nitsiza and Mr. Lloyd Bishop. He was subsequently taken to the nursing clinic and transported to Stanton Yellowknife Hospital for treatment and observation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again commend these four individuals for the superhuman effort they displayed in saving the life of Mr. Flunkie. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Item 3, Members' statement. Mr. Pudluk.

Member's Statement On Dangers To Polar Bears From Tracking Collars

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be talking about polar bears today. When they started studying polar bears, they put collars on them. They have been using these collars for quite a while now. It was known to the Inuit that this was dangerous to the polar bears. We know that with either caribou or muskox, it doesn't matter too much if you put collars on them but it's very dangerous to put collars on polar bears because they are hunters; they rely on prey and that is how they survive. This disables the polar bear because the collar is very hard and it's heavy and it barely fits around the neck.

People have spotted polar bears that have died or have lost a lot of weight because they had collars on them. This is not very good to see especially when we try and manage our wildlife carefully. If the bears are dying away because of this, then we have to start looking at better ways of managing our polar bears, without putting collars on them. It's too dangerous to put collars on polar bears. I urge the government to look at alternative options that will not put our wildlife in danger. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Ballantyne.

Member's Statement On Bill C-68, An Act Respecting Firearms And Other Weapons

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to support our colleagues in Ottawa and make a statement about Bill C-68. I want to add a little different perspective than the eloquent statements that we've heard here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I have the deepest sympathy for victims of suicide, accidents and criminal attacks where guns are misused. Any thinking person with an ounce of compassion would agree that steps must be taken to lessen the awful cost to society of violence and of despair. This bill, in my opinion, will not achieve the noble objectives it sets out to accomplish. It seems to me to be a sincere effort by government to try to alleviate the real fears of many people, especially in big cities close to the United States deluged daily by media saturation of murders and violence.

Unfortunately, there is no magic in life or in politics. Violence is glorified in television and in the movies. The social fabric of the country is undergoing tremendous stress with all the casualties that go with it. Politicians are under tremendous pressure to do something about it. Guns are an easy and sometimes legitimate target on which to focus the anxiety of Canadians increasingly fearful for their safety and for the security of themselves and of their family.

I don't feel that Canada will be a safer place after this bill is passed. The millions of dollars that it will cost could be better spent on victims' programs which, ironically, the federal government is cutting back on as well as on firearms education and safety programs.

There are certainly positive aspects of the bill: criminal activity involving the use of weapons must be punished harshly. Making criminals of law-abiding people who aren't able to comply with the bill works against the philosophy of the bill which is to safeguard the public, not to punish it.

Education is the key to the safe use of firearms and legislation should support the transfer of knowledge and experience from one generation to the next without creating bureaucratic barriers which make that transfer more difficult. Responsible hunters, collectors, competition shooters and outfitters have

respect and understand the safe handling of firearms much better than any well-meaning civil servant in Ottawa and should be recognized and utilized fully in the design and implementation of any firearms legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife North is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Conclude your statement, Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Instead, Mr. Speaker, they are made to feel that they are somehow the enemy who are being punished because of the actions of

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criminals and a small minority of careless and thoughtless gun owners.

Firearms legislation should protect the public. It should not incriminate responsible Canadians for procedural errors or omissions. It should not threaten the economics of sport hunting. It should not threaten the livelihood of subsistence hunters. It should not make more difficult the use of firearms at shooting competitions. Members are aware that our shooters have done very well at international competitions. And fundamentally, it shouldn't threaten the traditional way of aboriginal people. This legislation, if passed, will force police officers or wildlife officers into conflict with our communities. Mr. Speaker, despite the best of intentions, Bill C-68 in the Northwest Territories, and in much of Canada, fails the test. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Item 3, Members' statements. Ms. Mike.

Member's Statement On 60th Anniversary Of Anglican Women's Auxiliary

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During our break this past week, I had the opportunity to welcome the Anglican

Women's Auxiliary's 60th anniversary in Pangnirtung. There are about 50 members attending this meeting from Baffin regional communities and from Nunavut communities. Their main topic for discussion was, of course, about fund-raising. AWA's role over the years in Anglican communities has been increasing, from producing crafts to providing charity to widows, widowers and elders and others who are in need. AWA will provide catering for conferences and public meetings as well.

Mr. Speaker, at their opening of the meeting, in remembering my grandmother, Mrs. Alookie Kilabuk, who was AWA leader for many years, I was very much delighted to welcome their meeting knowing how appreciative my grandmother would have been to see the AWA's progress and the charity service the members provide in their communities.

I would like to thank Hanna Tautuajuk and Meeka Angnakkaq of Pangnirtung for organizing this important conference and to say to their members that their work in their communities may not be mentioned often, but their work makes life a lot easier for many individuals who are in need in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, during their conference, the weather was excellent in Pangnirtung, with blue skies and melting snow. The women couldn't believe how warm it got in Pangnirtung. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Ms. Mike. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Pudlat.

Member's Statement On Need For Medical Services For Out-Of-Town Patients

MR. PUDLAT:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today with regard to patients who have to travel to other communities to be treated. Mr. Speaker, I usually don't pay much attention to the workers in the hospitals, but there is still need for more services available for patients who travel to see the doctor. When they go to the hospitals there are many people who are stranded. I know they are well taken care of, but there are more services needed for people who are transient. There is a need for more services available. Children and adults are usually waiting for flights and going to and from communities. We

should worry more about the services for these patients in the hospitals; not just interpreters, but an escort service should be provided for these patients in the hospitals. This is my concern, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Pudlat. Item 3, Members' statements. Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, may I go back to Ministers' statements, please?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Nunakput is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 2. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Ms. Cournoyea.

REVERT TO ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 72-12(7): Ministers Absent From The House

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Silas Arngna'naaq will be absent from the House for the remainder of the week. Mr. Arngna'naaq will be meeting with European parliamentarians in Brussels to discuss fur trapping issues, and with the Honourable Brian Tobin in Ottawa to discuss the seal industry and the turbot fishery.

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi will also be absent from the House today to make a presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs on Bill C-68, An Act Respecting Firearms and Other Weapons.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Don Morin will also be absent from the House indefinitely to attend to a family emergency in Edmonton. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Mr. Todd.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return To Question 445-12(7): Status Of Agricultural Policy

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two returns to oral questions, if I may. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell on April 10th regarding the status of the agriculture policy.

The department has received a proposal for an agriculture policy from the Territorial Farmers' Association. Officials in Economic Development and Tourism have contacted MACA, Health and Social Services and Renewable Resources in order to establish an interdepartmental committee which will review

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the proposal and identify stakeholders to participate in further discussions with the Farmers' Association.

Agriculture policy has to deal with a number of issues, the most important being land. The department is looking to the association to ensure that all affected parties are behind this effort and supportive.

Optimistically, it would seem reasonable that a draft policy could be completed and ready to circulate to stakeholders in the fall of 1995.

Further Return To Question 443-12(7): Status Of Tourism Zone Association Review

I have a second return, Mr. Speaker. This was asked by Mr. Antoine on April 10th with respect to the status of zone associations.

I tabled the executive summary of the NWT Tourist Association review on April 12, 1995. In order to complete the report, extensive consultations were held throughout the Northwest Territories. To obtain information on views, 187 letters and 238 facsimiles were sent to operators. Most zone managers also informed their membership of the process, while community liaison contacts hired by the consultant informed communities and interest groups through radio announcements, posters and personal telephone calls.

The consultant and association visited each of the zones and over 100 operators and interested group representatives attended one or more meetings. Individual operators were interviewed, as were government officials, zone managers, zone presidents

and some board members. Written and/or oral submissions were welcome. In total, over 200 people had input into the study results through the interview process or by written communication.

In the Deh Cho area specifically, communication was sent to all licensed operators, a widely-advertised public meeting was held at Fort Simpson Visitors' Centre on March 20th. The local zone manager was advised several weeks in advance of the meeting and arrangements were made to hold it in the evening to allow for maximum attendance. The meeting was open to all. Pardon me, the meeting was open to all community representatives from Fort Simpson, Fort Liard, Trout Lake, Jean Marie River. Community representatives from Wrigley could not attend because of weather and Nahanni Butte was not represented partly because no one wanted to attend. The Nahanni Ram Tourism Association was also represented at the meeting. The regional office in Fort Simpson offered financial assistance to representatives from outlying communities who wanted to attend.

In addition to the public meeting in Fort Simpson, the consultant met with departmental staff, interested operators, the zone manager and president. A breakfast meeting was also held with seven members of the town council of Fort Simpson. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Ms. Cournoyea.

HON. NELLIE COURNOYEA:

Mr. Speaker, they are both returns to written questions, so they will be filed with the Clerk. My apologies.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any further returns to oral questions? Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and

Employment. Mr. Speaker, on February 22nd, I asked the Minister about funding for students who are attending school in Yellowknife who live outside of the city. As the Minister knows, Yellowknife taxpayers significantly subsidize the cost of operating the school system in the city. The Minister had promised to look into the situation and get back to me. Does the Minister now have an answer to this problem?

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Nerysoo.

Return To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, we don't have a solution for the problem. There are two factors that have to be considered: one, the resources that are being allocated presently for the students; and, second, whether or not there's a need for us to increase the amount of money that is presently being allocated, based on the formulas that presently exist.

MR. SPEAKER:

Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When does the Minister expect that he will have the definitive answer to this problem?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Minister.

Further Return To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't be definite with the honourable Member. I can just advise the honourable Member that there are a number of complex questions that have to be answered. The other point is, we have not yet resolved the issue of overall service delivery to individuals along the Ingraham Trail. That seems to be one of the biggest issues.

We have not determined whether or not we have the responsibility of delivering those programs and services to those individuals. That is a complex issue. We are trying to address the issue of the formula in addition to the particular concern that the honourable Member has raised.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

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Supplementary To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that there may be some complexity in solving the problem but, in the meantime, the taxpayers are funding services to people who normally have the services paid for by this government. So, there is some urgency in that the people of Yellowknife need to know that the problem is going to be addressed. I would like to ask the Minister, will he commit to having the problem addressed by the time we sit again in June?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the concern the honourable Member has raised. This government is also concerned about the services the honourable Member is talking about. However, the issue of financing transportation and programming for education is a little more complex than one might consider. While we are trying to address some of the concerns, it has to be recognized that we have to deal with these issues in the context of the resources that my department has been assigned by this government.

Recognizing that, I don't want to create any additional expectations in the minds of people but I do want to indicate to the honourable Member that we will try to find a solution, in conjunction with the boards, to the concern the honourable Member has raised in this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One last time, I appreciate the fact the Minister says he will work on it. Will he attempt to deal with the problem by the first two weeks in June?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Nerysoo.

Further Return To Question 469-12(7): Funding For Non-Resident Students In Yellowknife

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can deal with it right now and say, no, I'm not going to finance it but that would not be the most appropriate solution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Ohh.

HON. RICHARD NERYSOO:

What I will advise the honourable Members is that we are trying to be as supportive of the concerns he has raised and will try to solve how to deal with this concern with the honourable Member and with the school boards. It is a little more complex, but we will try to find a solution. I hope I can report positively, if nothing else, that something has been done. However, whether we fund the program, is another issue. But I will report back to the honourable Member for certain in June.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Whitford.

Question 470-12(7): Firefighter Training For Airports

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister of Transportation who will soon be responsible for the Arctic A airports. Mr. Speaker, as long as I can remember, there have always been firefighters at airports whenever

passenger flights come in and take off. But, as of April of this year, the federal government has cut back and that program is going to be discontinued. In some cases, it already has been and the responsibility has been given to the communities nearest the airports.

The firefighters in the town, the volunteer fire departments, are claiming that they are taking on this responsibility without adequate training. They didn't want the job to begin with, but it has been put on their shoulders without proper training. I would like to ask the Minister if his department is aware of the amount of training that the local firefighters are going to be receiving from the federal government as part of this cutback program.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Transportation, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 470-12(7): Firefighter Training For Airports

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, as the honourable Member knows, we are still finalizing the details of the negotiations for the Arctic A airports. The general thrust has been settled and to my understanding, so has the baseline funding to some extent. We recognize the importance of firefighting and safety across the territories and at the Arctic A airports, and we are going to do whatever we can to ensure there is adequate firefighting services available. If that requires additional training, et cetera, then we will have to look to some creative thinking and some partnerships in developing the appropriate training programs that are necessary for those firefighters. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Whitford.

Supplementary To Question 470-12(7): Firefighter Training For Airports

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister consider reviewing the standards that are going to be required? Perhaps, as the federal government pointed out, they are too high. But, if you ask the travelling public whether or not they are high, the answer is somewhat different. I would like to ask the Minister if he would

review the standards that are currently being used to protect aircraft when they are landing, taking off and during refuelling, so that we can have the proper training for the firemen.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 470-12(7): Firefighter Training For Airports

HON. JOHN TODD:

I believe that's under way right now. As the honourable Member has stated, there is a review of

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standards as it relates to fire safety and firefighting at airports. That's under way at the present time. Once it's concluded early this year, I'd be only too happy to share the information with the honourable Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 19-12(7): Northern Preference Commitments With Nova Construction Limited

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, Return to Written Question 19-12(7), asked by Mr. Patterson and replied to by the Minister of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation concerning northern preference commitments with Nova Construction.

Mr. Patterson asked a written question that was separated into four parts, I would like today to answer all four parts in order:

1. Nova Construction was given northern preference for this contract in Clyde River, as they are a registered northern contractor under the business incentive policy.

2. In their bid, Nova Construction identified the use of \$41,000 worth of local labour. Further, Nova

committed to contribute \$55,000 locally for room and board.

3. Nova Construction contributed \$22,000 of the \$41,000 committed for use of local labour and \$50,3000 was spent on room and board.

4. No penalties or holdbacks have been taken against Nova Construction by the Housing Corporation, although a lower than projected amount was actually spent on local labour. Nova Construction reports that many of the local workers hired did not return after being paid and they had a difficult time replacing them. This has been confirmed in writing by a local contractor in the community. I have supplied a copy of this letter to Mr. Patterson directly. Therefore, the corporation believes that Nova Construction made a serious attempt to meet the local target.

Further, there were five other large projects being built in the community at the same time, making it more difficult to attain local labourers. The other projects that were being worked on were a two-bay maintenance garage, hamlet garage renovations, a tank farm addition, a school addition and a health centre, all costing around \$6 million in total.

Provisional Return To Written Question 20-12(7): Summary Of International Travel

I have a provisional Return To Written Question 20-12(7), asked by Mrs. Marie-Jewell and replied to by the Premier, concerning summary of international travel.

The information requested by Mrs. Marie-Jewell has taken some time to compile and a return to the question cannot be ready by the due date of April 25, 1995. A return will be filed on or before Wednesday, June 7, 1995.

Return To Written Question 22-12(7): Health Concerns Regarding Seal Meat

I have a return to Written Question 22-12(7), asked by Ms. Mike and replied to by the Minister of Health and Social Services, concerning health concerns regarding seal meat.

The Department of Health and Social Services will continue to promote the use of seal meat as a healthy food, considering what is known about its risks and benefits. The department is currently working on the development of "fact sheets" which will outline the benefits of traditional foods. These will be made

available to Inuit coastal communities and other Northwest Territories communities in 1995-96.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Report On Bill 28

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Legislation has reviewed Bill 28, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, and wish to report that Bill 28 is now ready for committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Dent.

Report On Bill 30

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Finance has reviewed Bill 30, Deficit Elimination Act, and wishes to report that Bill 30 is now ready for committee of the whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule 42(10), I wish to table Tabled Document 96-12(7), response to Petition 3-12(7) tabled by the Clerk and responded to by the Minister of Justice.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Whitford.

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ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Motion 19-12(7): Extended Adjournment

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, April 27th, I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Friday, April 28, 1995, it shall adjourn until Monday, June 5, 1995.

And further, that anytime prior to June 5, 1995, if the Speaker is satisfied after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Mr. Whitford.

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you. I seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Yellowknife South is seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Whitford, proceed with your motion.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 19-12(7): Extended Adjournment, Carried

MR. WHITFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when the House adjourns

on Friday, April 28, 1995, it shall be adjourned until Monday, June 5, 1995;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to June 5, 1995, if the Speaker is satisfied after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. That's my motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Whitford. Your motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96; Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Fair Practices Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act; Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95; Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95; Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act; Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Jury Act; Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Land Titles Act; Committee Report 2-12(7), Report on the Legislative Action Paper on the Office of Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories; Committee Report 3-12(7), Report on the Review of the Legislative Action Paper Proposing New Heritage Legislation for the Northwest Territories; Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the 1995-96 Main Estimates; Committee Report 5-12(7), Report on the Review of Rewriting the Liquor Laws of the Northwest Territories: A Legislative Action Paper; Committee Report 6-12(7), Report on the Review of the Legislative Discussion Paper on the Draft of the New Education Act; and, Committee Report 7-12(7), Report on the Second Annual Report, 1993-94, of the Languages Commissioner of the NWT, with Mr. Whitford in the chair.

By the authority given to the Speaker to address the sitting hours, I would like to place you in committee of the whole until such time as the committee is prepared to report.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Good afternoon. The committee will now come to order. What is the wish of the committee? The chair recognizes the Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend the committee resume consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Report 4-12(7), specifically to deal, first of all, with the budget for Municipal and Community Affairs, followed by the budget for the Legislative Assembly, and then perhaps we could go back and see if we could finish Economic Development and Tourism, then perhaps bills 22 and 23.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the committee agree that we proceed in that order?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 1: Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96

Committee Report 4-12(7): Report On The Review Of The 1995-96 Main Estimates

Department Of Municipal And Community Affairs

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. We can proceed with the main estimates budget book with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Is the Minister prepared to make his opening remarks? Mr. Ng.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. KELVIN NG:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr. Chairman, the department's mandate is to assist municipal

governments and community authorities to provide responsive

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government and municipal programs and services. In fulfilling this mandate, the department believes in forging strong partnerships with communities.

In the preparation of the 1995-96 main estimates, various envelope committees were established. The department was part of the Infrastructure Envelope Committee with the departments of Public Works and Services, Executive, Finance, Personnel, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, Financial Management Board Secretary and the Legislative Assembly.

Staff of these departments worked cooperatively and collaboratively to establish priorities and seek ways of sharing limited financial resources. Numerous alternatives were examined, relative priorities compared and joint approaches explored to make better use of the financial and human resources available.

The department's 1995-96 O and M estimates is the result of this process, Mr. Chairman. For the 1995-96 fiscal year, O and M estimates of \$67.933 million are proposed for the department, an increase of 5.3 per cent over the 1994-95 main estimates.

This past year the department's headquarters offices have been reorganized to streamline the organization and improve its responsiveness to community transfer initiatives, division preparation and other Cabinet priorities. The department's 1995-96 operation and maintenance main estimates reflects the revised accounting structure of this reorganization.

Reorganization has allowed the department to reduce its person year requirement, Mr. Chairman, and the department is advancing a six person year reduction in permanent person years to 141.8 person years and a .8 person year reduction in casual person years to 5.7 person years for 1995-96.

All person year reductions in the headquarters organization were made with every attempt to redeploy the staff affected to other positions in the department. To date, no one has been laid off.

The envelope committee process included three major phases, where reductions were proposed, new initiatives examined and funding for forced growth identified.

Mr. Chairman, the reductions proposed totalled \$2.128 million for 1995-96. Departmental reductions are planned in the following areas:

-As a result of departmental reorganization there is a planned reduction of \$820,000 in salaries.

-A reduction of \$545,000 will result from an expenditure management program aimed at reducing overhead. Special management action will be taken to ensure present levels of service continue to community governments.

-A reduction of \$600,000 in extraordinary funding to communities is proposed. This reduction will not limit or impact normal transfer payments to community governments, but will reduce the department's flexibility to address extraordinary funding needs.

Overall forced growth increases of \$2,395,000 are proposed for 1995-96 for the following areas:

-\$959,000 is proposed for the water and sewage services subsidy program resulting from the building of 171 privately-owned housing units in the Northwest Territories in 1993-94. The transfer of 23 units to government staff also increases the department's budget for this program by \$85,000. This \$85,000 increase is offset by an equivalent decrease in the Department of Public Works and Services budget.

Mr. Chairman, the department continues to work with communities to ensure safe water and sanitary sewage services. While most communities in the north now have a good water supply, some difficulties remain.

Coppermine, Fort McPherson and Nahanni Butte, for example, still have less than satisfactory service, and efforts are under way to improve the difficulties with their water supply.

-Forced growth funding of \$395,000 is proposed to meet increased O and M costs of new municipal infrastructure in hamlets, charter communities and settlements. Hamlet transfer payments are a major part of the department's O and M funding. This funding is transferred directly by contribution to hamlets and charter communities, and accounts for nearly 45 per cent of all departmental O and M grants and contributions.

Support provided by this government to these non-tax-based communities is essential for their continued effective operation.

-\$648,000 is proposed for the recreation salary subsidy program to meet costs of subsidizing the salary of recreation leaders in 19 additional communities. The subsidy applies to graduates of the Arctic College recreation leadership program and to facility maintainers.

Funding is included for those facility maintainers in 30 communities who have improved their qualifications through the department's recreation facility maintainer course. The recreation salary subsidy program supports an estimated 100 full-time positions in the Northwest Territories and the training received by facility maintainers helps protect over \$110 million invested in community recreation infrastructure.

-\$308,000 is proposed for the recreation facility operating subsidy program to operate newly constructed community gyms, halls, assembly buildings, above-ground pools and arenas.

In addition to these forced growth increases, Mr. Chairman, the department's 1995-96 budget has been increased as a result of two interdepartmental transfers.

-A budget transfer from the Department of Public Works and Services of \$1,704,000 is proposed to offset the department's costs of the government implementing user-pay for water and sewage services to occupants of GNWT staff housing.

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The Department of Public Works and Services formerly paid the full economic cost for water and sewage services for GNWT staff housing.

With the introduction of user-pay, the department now pays the difference in the subsidized rate and the economic rate. In effect, Mr. Chairman, the introduction of user-pay will reduce government expenditures for water and sewage services to GNWT staff housing.

-The department also proposes to receive a budget transfer of \$978,000 from the Department of Public Works and Services for the community dust control program. This program transfer has been made in response to the Standing Committee on Finance's recommendation to this House.

The community dust control program will provide contribution funding to 39 communities at levels equivalent to that spent in each community by the Department of Public Works and Services last year

for application of dust suppressant chemicals on community roads.

Mr. Chairman, I am also pleased to present new initiatives of \$1,469,000. These new initiatives are largely directed at providing advice, training and support to community governments in support of the ever-increasing responsibilities communities are assuming.

The focus of the department's training initiative is the elected leaders as well as senior administrators, firefighters and land administrators who work for community governments. Also, \$126,000 has been allocated to the development of an education program leading to certification of senior administrative officers.

These senior people in the community administration are key to the sound management of community governments. There is \$91,000 proposed for the completion and delivery of an elected officials orientation program.

Mr. Chairman, the loss of human life and property as a result of fires in the Northwest Territories is well above national averages. Recognizing this fact, the department is pleased to propose funding for a three-year firefighter training program with \$350,000 in the first year, 1995-96.

This program, to be developed in conjunction with the fire marshal's office, will provide training and support to firefighters to protect human life and property. The program will provide firefighter training, heightened general public awareness and education, and support for live firefighting exercises in regional centres.

There is \$200,000 proposed for land administration training for community staff. The demand for trained land administration staff will be highest initially in Nunavut, in preparation for the transfer of municipal lands under the Nunavut final agreement, but training needs for other communities in the western NWT are expected to grow.

As Members are well aware, a referendum was held April 10, 1995, in each community in Nunavut allowing residents to decide whether their municipal council will be able to sell or lease the municipal lands to be transferred under the Nunavut final agreement. As a result of the community referenda, all Nunavut municipalities will lease municipal land, and exercise a greater authority over management of community lands after July 1996.

In support of the orderly transfer of municipal land administration to Nunavut municipalities, a community land administration certificate program has been established at Nunavut Arctic College.

Mr. Chairman, the municipal lands situation in the western Northwest Territories is in evolution. The land lease only policy, brought into effect in 1985, was intended as a temporary measure to restrict the sale of community lands in the Dene/Metis comprehensive claims area until the completion of land claims negotiations.

Cabinet recently extended the policy until July 1995, however, an evaluation of the policy, conducted in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders during 1994, has led to the decision to replace the land lease only policy with a new municipal lands policy by July 1995.

This new policy, to be developed in consultation with community governments and aboriginal stakeholders, will provide for the Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs to provide a stable land administration in regions or communities where treaty or land claims negotiations are ongoing, while providing means by which communities will determine if and under what conditions, municipal lands might be sold or leased.

Mr. Chairman, a final major new initiative for which funding is proposed is the settlement operating assistance policy, which I announced several weeks ago in this House.

Mr. Chairman, in concluding these opening comments to the department's 1995-96 O and M estimates, I wish to confirm the importance of the department's partnerships with community governments.

The NWT Association of Municipalities, as the united voice of many of the community governments in the NWT, is an important partner and I look forward to a strong working relationship with the association.

At the association's annual general meeting resolutions are passed, often directed to the department. Of the 25 resolutions passed at the 1994 annual general meeting, eight were directed to the department. Four of the eight resolutions have been responded to by the department.

The remaining four resolutions, together with several outstanding resolutions from previous years, deal with changes

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to municipal legislation. The number of concerns raised about current legislation has convinced me, Mr. Chairman, of the wisdom of a comprehensive review of amendments to municipal legislation. I will soon be announcing a process to undertake such a review.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, the department's proposed budget strives to respond to the changing needs of community governments on a comprehensive and equitable basis. I now look forward to answering the committee's questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would like to ask now if the representative from the Standing Committee on Finance is prepared to give their report? The chair recognizes the Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

Training

MR. ZOE:

Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the Standing Committee on Finance, I will be presenting our comments pertaining to Municipal and Community Affairs. For the past two years, the committee has recommended an improvement in community development activities including training for municipal councils and staff. The department has followed through on this recommendation. In particular, Members found the proposed training program for senior administrative officers to be a strong step in the right direction.

Financial Statements

The committee was concerned with the large number of communities whose financial positions have qualified auditors' statements. Almost half of all Northwest Territories communities have qualified statements. This seems to reflect a need for additional training and support for councils and their staff. Judging from the number of communities which have experienced financial difficulties, it is important that communities have financial statements which are unqualified and provide a fully accurate picture of their financial status.

As evidence of the additional support provided by the department, the committee will be looking for a significant decrease in the number of qualified

statements during its review of the 1996-97 main estimates.

Sport And Recreation

In this budget, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is providing strong initiatives in recreation facilities and leadership development. Recreational facilities and programs provide a healthy alternative for youth and adults. Committee Members agree that investment in recreation is an investment in community residents.

The events surrounding the site selection process for the 1998 Arctic Winter Games was seen by many as an unmitigated disaster. First, it appeared that Inuvik was the only community bidding for the games. Then, when it became apparent that Yellowknife was also bidding, the government apparently gave mixed signals as to where its support lay. Finally, when Yellowknife was awarded the games, the events following that announcement cast aspersions on the department's credibility and integrity. The new Minister and the department must review the many mistakes made in handling this situation, and work with the International Arctic Winter Games Committee to restore the credibility of the games and the organizing body.

Committee Members would also like to see an increased focus on support for sporting competitions such as regional winter games, aboriginal games, and so on. While the Arctic Winter Games provide an opportunity for many of the Northwest Territories' best athletes to compete against other Arctic athletes, there are other territorial, national and international events, such as the North American Aboriginal Games, which should also receive support. These other events are also opportunities for territorial athletes to get together with other athletes, to learn from each other, and to enjoy the spirit of friendly competition.

Fire Prevention And Education

Mr. Chairman, committee Members continue to see the need for additional fire prevention and education. The committee has recommended that this department continue to work with the Department of Safety and Public Services to ensure communities are adequately prepared to deal with community firefighting and prevention.

Water Safety And Search And Rescue

The Northwest Territories continues to have a high level of drowning fatalities. In many cases, these deaths are the result of people not using basic safety equipment, such as life jackets in boats. The committee shares the concern of the Minister regarding the needless loss of life and supports the department's efforts to increase public awareness of the need for safe practices around water. Also, the committee noted that sport and recreation has an important role to play in the issue of water safety. Where possible, the department should ensure that swimming pools, swimming instruction, and water safety instruction are available in all northern communities.

There are also high costs, both in dollars and in human lives, as a result of difficulties with search and rescue in our vast territory. People need to be more aware of the benefits of carrying basic survival equipment when leaving our communities, either by land or by water. The committee also encourages the department to work with other departments to address the need for more northerners to travel with safety equipment, such as GPS receivers or emergency locator transmitters (ELTs). Specifically, committee Members encourage the department to work with hunters' and trappers' associations and the Department of Renewable Resources to allow traditional harvesters to borrow such equipment when necessary. These departments should also work with traditional harvesters to provide continuing education about the land; how to survive emergencies, and how to prepare for an extended trip on the land. These traditional skills are not always taught in extended families as they were in the past, and should be encouraged.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the government must cooperate with the federal government in the area of marine safety. The recent tragedy on Frobisher Bay is a reminder that marine safety is of critical importance to many northerners. The federal

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government has to live up to their responsibility to enforce boating safety regulations, including regular inspections of larger vessels, and the territorial government must do everything possible to persuade the federal government to live up to that responsibility.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes the comments of the Standing Committee on Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. I would like to ask the Minister if he is prepared to take the witness stand on behalf of his department. If you do, will you need assistance with your staff? Does the committee agree that the Minister can bring in witnesses to assist him?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. You look different there than you do at your regular seat. Mr. Minister, would you be so kind as to introduce your witnesses to the committee?

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Mr. Dave Ramsden, deputy minister. To my right is Mr. Jim France, director of finance and administration. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Good afternoon gentlemen, and thank you for being here. We are dealing with Municipal and Community Affairs, located in your blue books in section 11, page 7 to start off with. Do we have any general comments? Does the committee agree, then, that we go line by line? The chair recognizes the Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Ballantyne.

General Comments

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a great number of general comments. I just wanted to talk in a general way about a number of issues that have faced Yellowknife that I and other Yellowknife MLAs have dealt with, with the Minister and the deputy minister. I expressed a number of concerns earlier in this session, back in February, and I want to go on the record that I'm satisfied with the progress we're making on these issues. I have a firm commitment from the Minister that these issues have been resolved so, at this point, Mr. Chairman, I don't have any concerns with the department. I think the department is generally doing a good job in dealing with the concerns that I have, as an MLA. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. General comments. Mr. Pudluk.

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, don't have a lot to say but I was satisfied with and liked the Minister's opening remarks. Earlier this winter, I had some concerns about the hamlets that were going over their budgets and whether those were growing or if they were paying them off. I put forward this question earlier but he told me he would be able to answer my question at this time. Is he ready to give the answer to my question, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, at this time, if the Member wishes, we have copies available of the financial status of hamlets up until December 31, 1994, if he wants to wait until we get to the community development section of the budget. It is up to the Member, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Minister Ng. The Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk.

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Mr. Chairman, he keeps putting off my question. He is now saying we can deal with it when we get to that activity, but I would like to get the answer right now if it is possible. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

I believe he said you could have the information now or you could deal with it when we arrived at it in the budget. Minister Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will deal with the question now. There are 21 hamlets, Mr. Chairman, with an accumulated surplus in the general municipal fund. There were 18 hamlets that had an accumulated deficit as of March 31, 1994. That is in comparison to the previous year, where there were 20 hamlets with a surplus and 19 hamlets with a deficit. So one hamlet has gone into a deficit position.

I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I got that backwards. There is one more that has gone from a deficit to a surplus, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments? Does the committee agree that we proceed in detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Directorate

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Okay. Page 11-8, directorate, total O and M, \$5.032 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Community Development

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Community development, total O and M, \$50.943 million. The chair recognizes Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since we have done this reorganization at the headquarters level, could I ask the Minister if he has a long-term organization plan.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I ask for clarification? Is the Member referring to regional reorganization?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Mr. Zoe.

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MR. ZOE:

Do we have one? Do we have a long-term organization plan for MACA? Is there one in place now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there has been an internal committee of the department which has drafted some terms of reference about some possible changes to the functional make-up of the department. At this stage, that report has gone forward to the other senior management committee members of the department and it is the intent of the department, once it comes back to me, to develop a consultation paper which will go forward to municipalities, the NWT Association of Municipalities, MLAs and other concerned parties to get their feedback into what the department is proposing in restructuring the department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ng. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, would that also include the issue of a communication strategy for how to improve communication between municipalities and MACA?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Minister Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it was recognized in our headquarters reorganization that there is the lack of a communications strategy. In looking at the next phase of the reorganization of the department, we are developing a communications strategy and outlining a consultation process for concerned parties.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Community development, total O and M, \$50.943 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

Sport And Recreation

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Sport and recreation, total O and M, \$9.262 million. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with regard to this section, how many applications has the department received? The Minister indicated that the department was open for groups to apply to the department for funds so they can participate at these international events, such as the North American Indigenous Games. What is the status of that? Have we fully funded all the requests? How many do we have on hand and have been approved?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been numerous applications that have come forward and the take-up has been a lot more than anticipated. Currently, there is an application before the department for 224 individuals to attend the North American Indigenous Games originally totalling \$125,796. However, in looking at the total amount of applications that came in, there were a few dual applications, particularly for juvenile volleyball. It doesn't make sense to send two teams down, so it is suggested there be a playdown of those two teams to eliminate one of the funding applications. Or, they could combine a team if they chose to.

Also, there was a request from senior athletes and the department has considered not allowing them to be eligible because the games focus on the younger participants. So taking that into account, the total applications that would be eligible would be approximately \$106,605. Originally, the department had put aside \$50,000 for this event, but we have decided, in recognizing the importance of the event and the games, to find it within the department to fund all applications, if they go forward. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Thank you. I am glad the Minister knows that it is of great importance. I agree. Mr. Chairman, last year in the fall, I made a Member's statement with regard to uniforms for our participating athletes. I understand that the Yukon team that participated had designed uniforms. I made a suggestion to the department that our government would provide uniforms for our athletes. Is our government going to provide the uniforms for the participants going to the North American Indigenous Games? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent of the department is to provide uniforms at cost to the athletes attending the North American Indigenous Games. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, we are providing them, but the athletes will be able to purchase them after their use...(Microphone turned off).

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

I'll just go back to Mr. Zoe again.

MR. ZOE:

Okay. Are we going to do it the same way as the Arctic Winter Games uniforms are provided, where the athletes can purchase them at the end, or is there a different method? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the uniforms will be provided to the athletes but they will be provided at the cost of the manufacturing of the uniforms. The uniforms will be similar to those we have used for other games, and in particular in this case, what is

being used for the summer western games. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The question was, will they be providing them, and I think you say that they will be providing them at cost to the government. Thank you.

Sport and recreation, total O and M, \$9.262 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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---Agreed

Community Planning And Lands

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Community planning and lands, total O and M, \$2.756 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Details of grants and contributions, grants, page 11-13, \$5.001 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Detail of grants and contributions, contributions, \$48.29 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Grants and contributions, \$53.291 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties, page 11-17, total department, \$401,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Revenues are information items. Back to page 11-07, program summary, total O and M, \$67.993 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that we are now concluded with Municipal and Community Affairs?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. The committee would like to thank the Minister and the witnesses for assisting the committee. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the committee members and my staff.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

That was a very short session for your first time, Mr. Minister. Okay, before we proceed on to the next item which is the Legislative Assembly, the committee will take a short 15-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

Department Of Economic Development And Tourism

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The committee will come back to order. We are going to deal with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. When we last dealt with this matter, it was deferred because of two items. One item was on page 14-19, tourism development and marketing. The other item dealt with grants and contributions. A motion was carried requesting that the Minister provide some information to the committee and, subsequent to that, a document was tabled on April 12th, Tabled Document 90-12(7). It's entitled "Executive Summary: NWT Tourism Industry Association Review." Are there any comments from Members?

Line By Line

Tourism Development And Marketing

Page 14-19, total O and M, \$2.989 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Details of grants and contributions. Grants, \$420,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Contributions, \$14.835 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Total grants and contributions, \$15.255 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Detail of work performed on behalf of third parties. Total department, \$97,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Move to page 14-11, program summary. Operations and maintenance, total O and M, \$34.258 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that we are concluded with Economic Development and Tourism?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Minister and Mr. Bailey.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you.

Legislative Assembly

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The next item is Legislative Assembly and that is on page 01-9. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I see Mr. Speaker has joined us at the witness table already. Mr. Speaker, do you wish to have some of your staff present with you?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Hamilton.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Do you agree that Mr. Hamilton joins him?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. A person who needs no introduction, Mr. Hamilton, is joining the Speaker at the witness table. Opening comments, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker's Introductory Remarks

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Management and Services Board, I am pleased to appear before committee of the whole today to present the proposed budget of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Chairman, as you and other Members know, this is a new position for me and I would like to thank Mr. Lewis, who was acting Speaker and carried the Assembly's estimates through the Standing Committee on Finance.

As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, once they have been approved by the Management and Services Board, the estimates of the Legislative Assembly have traditionally been forwarded to the Financial Management Board for inclusion in the overall government's estimates. This method has always been followed in order to emphasize the independence of the legislative branch of government from the Executive branch. This is not to say, Mr. Chairman, that the Legislative Assembly does not develop its budget without due concern for the overall fiscal realities. However, due to the financial climate that is facing the government, then Speaker, Mrs. Marie-Jewell, worked out a protocol with the Premier and chairman of the Financial Management Board that the Legislative Assembly would participate at the deputy minister level on the government's envelope committee review.

The Clerk participated in all the meetings of the Infrastructure Envelope Committee, so as to protect the independence of the Legislative Assembly. It was also decided that the Minister of Finance, at the

direction of the Management and Services Board, would carry forward the decision of the MSB to the ministerial review of the envelope committee's work. During the review, the Legislative Assembly had initially proposed reduction options of 10.5 per cent to the O and M estimates.

Like all other departments in the infrastructure envelope, in which the Legislative Assembly was placed, there were forced growth requirements, new initiatives and revenue options considered. As a result of the review and subsequent decision of the MSB, the Legislative Assembly has before you today O and M estimates in the amount of \$9.357 million, which is an overall reduction of 7.2 per cent.

Mr. Chairman, the Legislative Assembly organization underwent a review by the MSB late last fall which resulted in a new organizational structure which was approved by the MSB, and subsequently by Cabinet, and which will provide for a more efficient and clearer reporting for staff and should assist Members in dealing with services.

The structure before you today does not reflect the new structure, as it was approved too late in the budget process. The appropriate task restatements will be completed after the start of the new fiscal year. As a result of the organizational review, two positions were identified to go on half-time status and one position was eliminated and privatized.

Mr. Chairman, the estimates before you today were carefully reviewed to ensure that the dollars being requested would accurately reflect the spending patterns of Members and the workings of the Assembly. I am sure all Members are aware that this is an election year and certain cost savings can be achieved, with the requirement to prorate certain allowances in the year of a general election. This has been included in the estimates. As well, a reduction in the number of sitting days that are normally budgeted for has been made.

Mr. Chairman, the original 10 per cent reduction has been offset by costs related to the holding of the general election and are to cover our commitments for the running of the election, mostly in the educational and promotional areas. I must stress to Members of the committee, as I will to all Members, that this budget is probably one of the most accurate as to our requirements and, thus, has no room to cover unexpected or additional expenditures.

Mr. Chairman, in the coming year, the Legislative Assembly will be redefining further the operational requirements to identify additional cost efficiencies, including placing some positions on a sessional basis. In addition, steps will be taken to prepare for division of the territories, with the development of a transition strategy specifically for the Legislative Assembly. This strategy will address the issue of staffing requirements for the two new Legislatures, staff training opportunities in the areas of the Clerk's office, research and general administration and library services.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks, and I am prepared to entertain any questions. Thank you.

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---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would a representative of the Standing Committee on Finance be prepared to make their opening comments? The chair recognizes the Member for Baffin Central. Thank you. Ms. Mike.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

Commissioner Of Official Languages

MS. MIKE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In her opening remarks to the committee in January 1994, the Speaker noted that there is some confusion and concern regarding the reporting relationship between the Languages Commissioner and the Legislative Assembly. Over the past year, clear reporting relationships have been established for the Official Languages Commissioner. This year, for the first time, the Languages Commissioner appeared before the committee to discuss the office's budget and explain planned expenditures. However, committee Members noted that the Languages Commissioner's presentation dealt less with the function and budget of the office than with more minor technical issues.

Given the relatively small size of the Languages Commissioner's budget, the committee is pleased to see that, rather than using the office's human resources for financial administration, an arrangement with the Legislative Assembly for the provision of financial services is in place. The committee encourages the office of the Languages

Commissioner to continue to make the best use of the limited resources available and stay within the allocated funding.

Interpreter/Translator Services

During this review, the committee was informed of the final negotiated amount of federal languages funding which would be available to the government. Committee Members expressed a concern with the impact reduced federal languages funding will have on the ability of the government to provide the level of interpreter/translator services previously available. The Legislative Assembly is a major user of these services and, through them, provides official language coverage of the work of the Assembly and its committees.

The committee encourages the Legislative Assembly to be actively involved in government discussions regarding the provision of interpreter/translator services. At the next O and M review, the committee will be looking for an appropriate balance between the need to inform all residents of the workings of the Assembly and their representatives in the official languages, and the government-wide need to focus dwindling dollars on programs at the community level.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Ms. Mike. General comments. Does the committee agree that we proceed with detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Line By Line

Office Of The Clerk

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Office of the Clerk, total O and M, \$4.541 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Office Of The Speaker

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Office of the Speaker, total O and M, \$157,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Expenditures On Behalf Of Members

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Expenditures on behalf of Members, total O and M, \$4.134 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Office Of The Chief Electoral Officer

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, total O and M, \$172,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Commissioner Of Official Languages

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Commissioner of Official Languages, total O and M, \$353,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The chair recognizes the Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could get consent to go back to ask just one general question?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Mr. Ballantyne is seeking approval to go back to ask a question. It looks like we have approval, Mr. Ballantyne.

General Comments

MR. BALLANTYNE:

I apologize to Members. I thought that this particular topic would be outlined. I have some concerns about the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and about what we are going to do as an Assembly to ensure that we don't have the sort of thing that happened to the Premier, where someone

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can make a totally unsubstantiated complaint against an MLA at considerable cost to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, one thing that I think perhaps should be in the Legislative Assembly budget book is a page specifically for that particular cost so the public can really see at the end of the day exactly what the cost is. The reason I would like to ask the Speaker is because the Speaker, probably more than any Minister, is the one that would probably have to lead any changes that the Legislative Assembly might want to consider. Are there any thoughts, Mr. Speaker, to put in some parameters under which people can make a complaint? If someone makes, as the last one did, a complaint that the Commissioner finds irresponsible, for instance, could they have to pay for the cost of the inquiry?

I really think that we, as an Assembly, should at least talk about this and discuss it. I am not quite sure exactly what the format would be to discuss it. I think it's important that if we don't deal with this issue, who knows, the next time around there could be a complaint a month against MLAs for any number of reasons. I, for one, support the concept -- if there are legitimate complaints against MLAs, MLAs obviously should be held accountable -- but I don't think that means an open hunting licence on every MLA because someone doesn't like them.

So I wonder if the Speaker has any thoughts or advice to Members on how this issue might be handled?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Chairman, that was brought up during the last Management and Services Board meeting as a result of the last complaint to come before the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. The discussion was on how we might be able to address the situation that arose as a result of a member of the public filing complaints against the Premier. The Management and Services Board is looking at what other jurisdictions have. As well, we are looking at enacting amendments to the legislation so that we might be able to put in a fee for the filing of a complaint. We hope that by the spring session we will have a discussion paper and even an amendment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE:

Thank you. I am a Member of the Management and Services Board, but I thought it was important that we got that on the floor of the House so that all Members and the public are aware of the fact that there are concerns and that we are trying to deal with those concerns. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Line By Line

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Ballantyne, for your comments. Program summary, total O and M, \$9.357 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that we are concluded with this item, the Legislative Assembly?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the committee, thank you and Mr. Hamilton for assisting us.

Bill 22: Forgiveness Of Debts Act, 1994-95

The item that we're dealing with now is found in your legislation book, the green book; Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95. This matter was last dealt with on April 10th. Looking at the unofficial Hansard, a question by Mrs. Marie-Jewell was asked of the Minister, Mr. Pollard, dealing with item 15, who was 902888 NWT Limited. That was in the schedule on page 4 of the document, item 15 was a numbered company. She asked that the Minister provide this information to the committee. The Minister was not sure at the time whether he could disclose this information but would seek some legal advice. I do believe that this matter has now been dealt with. I would refer to either the Minister or to the legal advisor.

I guess it was that we would seek counsel rather than Mr. Pollard. Sorry. We have. I turn it over the Ms. MacPherson, our legal advisor.

LAW CLERK (Ms. MacPherson):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there is no difficulty in referring to the names of officers or directors of a numbered company. There may well be some privacy issues if you refer to a shareholder, but the names of officers and directors are available in the corporate and the companies registry and it is public information. The only caution that Members may wish to take into consideration when commenting on people outside the House is the rule that generally applies to any comments made by persons outside of the House which is found in Beauchesne's and which is often incited to Members is that we have to take great care in making statements about people who are outside the House and are unable to reply.

However, I see no difficulty in answering Mrs. Marie-Jewell's request for the names of officers and directors of the numbered company. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Ms. MacPherson. Are there any questions on that issue? The question then goes back to Mr. Pollard. The question is, who is 902888 NWT Limited? Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, may I move to the witness table and bring a witness into the Assembly, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Yes, Mr. Pollard.

Thank you for being here, Mr. Minister. Would you introduce your witness to the committee, please.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have with me, Mr. Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial Management Board.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, Mr. Voytilla. Now, we'll begin again. There was a question on item 15, who is 902888 NWT Limited? Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, 902888 was Donald Roger Bazett and Kathy Florence Bazett of Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Are there any other questions? Does the committee agree that we go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The chair recognizes the Member for Yellowknife Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since we asked about the directors for 902888, I think we should also ask about the directors for 872244, which is item 17.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, 872244 NWT Limited operated as D&D Electric and that was William Garnet Rankin and Georgina Rankin. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there any other questions on the schedule? Does the committee agree that we go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

I'm sorry, I forgot to ask approval of the schedule. Debts forgiven, total amount, \$1,267,859.30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

We have agreement, thank you. Now, the bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Is it agreed that Bill 22 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Bill 22 is now ready for third reading. We are concluded with Bill 22. Does the committee agree that the Minister remain to deal with the next item, which is Bill 23?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 23: Write-off Of Debts Act, 1994-95

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the Minister have some opening comments? Mr. Minister.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the focus of the Write-Off of Debts Act, 1994-95, Bill 23, is to authorize the write-off of certain debts listed in the

schedule of the act. Mr. Chairman, pursuant to the Financial Administration Act, the write-off of assets or debts exceeding \$20,000 for the government and most boards and agencies must receive Legislative Assembly approval. The write-offs being proposed in this act will not require a new appropriation. The write-offs will be charged against allowances for bad debts, which was established in previous department budgets at the time it was determined that collection of the debts would be unlikely.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to emphasize that the write-off of debts does not relieve a debtor of the liability for repayment or mean that the government will not continue to attempt to collect the outstanding amount. Through continued reviews by staff,

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future recovery of the debts may still be achieved. In addition, we track the principals of each fund for future credit reference.

Mr. Chairman, either I or the appropriate Minister, are prepared to answer Members' questions on these proposed write-offs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Is the representative for the Standing Committee on Finance prepared to make some comments? The chair recognizes Mr. Zoe.

Standing Committee On Finance Comments

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Finance reviewed Bill 23 on April 5, 1995. Members discussed the bill and agreed it should be moved into committee of the whole for further discussion and action.

The total number and amount of debt to be written off is quite small and in keeping with amounts written off in previous years. Members will take this opportunity in committee of the whole to raise any specific questions they may have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. The Minister is already at the witness table. Are there general comments on the bill?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Clause by clause.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause by clause has been called for. First of all, I will recognize Ms. Mike.

General Comments

MS. MIKE:

I have two questions. I would like to know who Karl Victor Gustaw is and who the owner of Guided Arctic Expeditions Ltd. is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Ms. Mike. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Gustaw is a person who is indebted to the Government of the Northwest Territories for money he received under a student loan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. I think there were two parts to the question, Mr. Minister. Who is the owner of Guided Arctic Expeditions Ltd.? Mr. Minister.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Mr. Chairman, Guided Arctic Expeditions Ltd. operated out of Inuvik in the Northwest Territories and the directors of the company were Tom Beaudoin, Albert Elias and Knute Lonnigal. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Clause by clause. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Schedule, debts written off, total amount \$140,521.83.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. The bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree that Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Bill 23 is now ready for third reading. That concludes the Minister's responsibility. Mr. Minister, thank you and your witness for assisting us. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to see if the committee is willing to consider Bill 24 now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Does the committee agree that we proceed to Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Bill 24: Community Employees' Benefits Act

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Okay, the committee agrees. Thank you. Would the Minister sponsoring the bill care to introduce the bill? The chair recognizes Mr. Ng.

Minister's Introductory Remarks

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to address the committee today on Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act, which has been written to replace the Municipal Employees' Benefits Act (MEBA).

The Community Employees' Benefits Act provides the legal basis for a program of pension and group insurance plans currently made available to approximately 80 participating employers and 1,080 participating employees, mostly of municipalities and housing associations. Both participating

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employers and participating employees contribute to the pension and group insurance plans.

Included in the Community Employees' Benefits Act is an enhanced pension plan that provides pension benefits equivalent to those in the Public Service Superannuation Act (PSSA). The group insurance plan provides life insurance and long-term disability benefits, dependant life insurance and accidental life insurance. Optional insurance program include weekly indemnity, extended health care, and dental benefits.

Mr. Chairman, the purposes of the proposed act are to expand the accessibility of the benefit programs under the act to other participants, including Indian bands, entities established under land claims, and other not-for-profit entities, such as the Nunavut Implementation Commission, drug and alcohol centre workers, native court workers, and other entities that perform public functions and are established under an enactment.

The new act lays the groundwork for communities to more effectively assume GNWT responsibilities under the community transfer initiative by establishing portability and commonality of employee benefits among community bodies and agencies.

Mr. Chairman, another purpose of the act is to modernize the composition of the board and to establish the financial and program management authority of the board. In the present Municipal Employees and Benefits Act, there are no provisions setting out the size of the board, board membership, terms of office, appointment of chairperson, payment of honoraria and expenses. These shortcomings have been addressed in the act before you.

Program authority to administer the benefits program has been added to the proposed act to permit the board, in times of dynamic economic change, to establish pension and group insurance benefit plans competitive with those in the pension plan and insurance industries. Under these circumstances, the board requires flexibility to alter contribution levels and to introduce pension and group insurance schemes to meet new contract and employee requirements. Changes have been incorporated in the proposed act to introduce the necessary powers to meet this need.

Mr. Chairman, provisions have been added to provide the board and chairperson with financial authorities similar to those of other GNWT public boards. These powers include the ability and capacity to contract and to expend and invest money consistent with current board practice. The corporate status of the board is established in this act to enable the board to exercise their power more effectively.

To improve financial disclosure, the board will be required to publish an annual report on its activities to participating employers and to those participating employees requesting a copy of the report. Financial accountability provisions have been added, combined with adequate regulatory controls specified in the Pension Benefits Standards Act and the Income Tax Act, both of which are federal legislation. There is a requirement to perform an evaluation of pension plan liabilities every three years and, if required, to make the adjustments to ensure the pension and group insurance plans remain fully funded.

The change from "municipal" to "community" more accurately reflects the expanded scope of the new act, applying as it does to a number of community entities, in addition to municipal corporations. Various community-based organizations have requested MEBA membership, but the restrictive criteria under the present act has prevented this from occurring.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the proposed Community Employees' Benefits Act will provide expanded

access to benefits programs for a wide variety of community-based organizations and their employees. In addition, it will modernize and further specify the financial and program authorities of the board and establish the government's authorities relative to the board.

I am now prepared to answer any questions that you or your Members may have on the proposed bill. If I may, I can ask for my witness to come in to take the witness stand.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. The committee will probably agree to that, but before that I would like to ask the representative from the Standing Committee on Legislation to put forward the committee's comments on the bill. The chair recognizes the Member for High Arctic, Mr. Pudluk.

Standing Committee On Legislation Comments

MR. PUDLUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The standing committee has completed its review of Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act. Although the committee did not receive formal presentations from the public, the Association of Municipalities did convey their support of the bill in a letter to the committee.

The purpose of the bill is to repeal the Municipal Employees' Benefits Act and replace it with the Community Employees' Benefits Act. The bill proposes to transfer responsibility for employees' benefits to community bodies and to expand the accessibility of the benefits programs to more organizations, including aboriginal bands, the Nunavut Implementation Commission and other not-for-profit organizations.

These amendments are in line with the NWT community transfer initiative. The benefits enjoyed by current GNWT employees who may be affected by the transfer initiative will be protected.

The standing committee did enquire as to the possible cost implications to municipal corporations and the Government of the Northwest Territories. The committee was assured by the Minister that there are no financial implications anticipated.

Further, the Minister affirmed that contributions currently made by employers and employees under

the Municipal Employees' Benefits Act would not change in the immediate future.

The standing committee fully supports the principles of Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act, and passed a motion on March 29, 1995, that Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act, was ready for consideration in committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Qujannamiik, Mr. Pudluk. Minister responsible for the bill, Mr. Ng, I would like to know if

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you are prepared to bring your witnesses to the witness table. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Mr. Ng, would you take the witness chair and the Sergeant-at-Arms will assist you to get your witnesses. Mr. Minister, would you introduce your witnesses to the committee.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Mr. Ramsden, the deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. To the far right is Jim France, director of finance and administration, and to my immediate left, Mr. Chairman, is Mark Aitken, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Welcome, gentlemen, to committee of the whole. General comments on Bill 24. The chair recognizes Mr. Zoe.

General Comments

MR. ZOE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a major problem with this particular legislation. It just basically replaces the Municipal Employees' Benefits Act.

I would like to ask the Minister, currently, under the Municipal Employees' Benefits Act, it is currently administered by the Association of Municipalities under the direction of the board. Am I correct? Is that same method going to be used when we pass this particular legislation? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently, the Association of Municipalities administers the group insurance plan on behalf of the MEBA board.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Mr. Chairman, I don't think the Minister completed his statement as he was going to add further, so I will refer back to him because I think he indicated he wanted to say something else but we cut him off.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. It looked like he had concluded to me, but, Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I hadn't concluded but I wasn't paying full attention. The intent is not to change the administration of the plan once it goes from MEBA to CEBA.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. This is from MEBA to CEBA. Mr. Zoe, was that the answer? Thank you. Any further general comments? Does the committee agree that we go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

Clause By Clause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Clause 9. The chair recognizes Mr. Zoe.

MR. ZOE:

Under clause 8, the Minister may issue guidelines to the board respecting the administration of this act. Are we going to continue with the existing guidelines, or is the department going to revise the existing guidelines to complement this new legislation? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently, there are no guidelines for the MEBA board to act under; however, they do act under regulations which are in existence. So, this

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would allow for the Minister to give out some guidelines, if called upon for interpretation of the policies that are in place, using the regulations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 16. Sorry, Mr. Minister. At which clause were you signalling me?

HON. KELVIN NG:

Clause 15.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Carry on.

Motion To Amend Clause 15 Of Bill 24, Withdrawn

HON. KELVIN NG:

Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment to clause 15. I move that clause 15.1 of Bill 24 be amended in paragraph (a) by adding "or the benefit plan" after "benefits program."

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. We need a copy of the motion. We'll take a short break to deal with this matter.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

The committee will again come back to order. When we took our short break, the Minister had proposed a motion. Mr. Minister, are you prepared to deal with that matter?

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to withdraw my proposed motion. Thank you.

---Withdrawn

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. We can proceed from here. Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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--Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 28.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 29.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act, is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you. Bill 24 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his assistants, and I apologize for the confusion that we had in dealing with this little matter but these are extenuating circumstances. Mr. Minister.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the committee Members and the witnesses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, gentlemen, for assisting. What is the wish of the committee? The chair recognizes Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT:

Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Dent. The motion is in order and it's not debatable. We don't have a quorum.

The chair now recognizes a quorum. We have a motion to report progress. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I shall rise and report to the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We are on item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Whitford.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Whitford):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr Speaker, your committee has been considering bills 1, 22, 23 and 24 and Committee Report 4-12(7) and would like to report progress, and that bills 22, 23 and 24 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Seconded by Mr. Zoe. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to deal with Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Hay River is seeking consent to deal with Bill 22. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Pollard.

Bill 22: Forgiveness Of Debts Act, 1994-95

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Members. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 22, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1994-95, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 22 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Pollard.

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to deal with third reading of Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Hay River is seeking consent to deal with Bill 23. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Pollard.

Bill 23: Write-off Of Debts Act, 1994-95

HON. JOHN POLLARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Members. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kitikmeot, that Bill 23, Write-off of Debts Act, 1994-95, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 23 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Ng.

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to deal with third reading of Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Member for Kitikmeot is seeking consent to deal with Bill 24. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Proceed, Mr. Ng.

Bill 24: Community Employees' Benefits Act

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River, that Bill 24, Community Employees' Benefits Act, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Question.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 24 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 am, the Standing Committee on Finance; also at 9:00 am, of the Standing Committee on Legislation. At 10:30 am, the Ordinary Members' Caucus and at 12:00 noon, of the Management and Services Board.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, April 26, 1995:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions

- Motion 18-12(7), Government Use of Airline Travel Points

17. First Reading of Bills

18. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2

19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 1, Appropriation Act, No. 2, 1995-96

- Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Fair Practices Act

- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Retirement Plan Beneficiaries Act

- Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Jury Act

- Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Land Titles Act

- Committee Report 2-12(7), Report on the Legislative Action Paper on the Office of Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories

- Committee Report 3-12(7), Report on the Review of the

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Legislative Action Paper Proposing New Heritage Legislation for the Northwest Territories

- Committee Report 4-12(7), Report on the Review of the

1995-96 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 5-12(7), Report on the Review of Rewriting the Liquor Laws of the Northwest Territories:

A Legislative Action Paper

- Committee Report 6-12(7), Report on the Review of the

Legislative Discussion Paper on the Draft of the New Education Act

- Committee Report 7-12(7), Report on the Second Annual Report, 1993-94, of the Languages Commissioner of the

NWT

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 pm Wednesday, April 26, 1995.

---ADJOURNMENT