



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

4th Session

Day 31

13th Assembly

HANSARD

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1997

Pages 919 - 954

Page numbers reflect printed Hansard

The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Jim Antoine, Honourable Goo Arlooktoo, Mr. Barnabas, Honourable Charles Dent, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Honourable Don Morin, Mr. Ningark, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Honourable Manitok Thompson, Honourable John Todd.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

Oh, God, may your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people, for peace and justice in our land and for constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

DEPUTY SPEAKER (MR. NINGARK):

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statement. Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Supporting Diverse Conditions In Communities

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT is a place of wide diversity. Within our boundaries, you can go from the forests of the South Slave to the wind swept tundra of the Keewatin to mountains both east and west. We have a broad range of renewable and non-renewable resources and the people come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. We also have diversity in other ways. We have the most highly educated city in Canada right alongside communities very close by with low education levels. We have communities with active private sectors and others where the only business in town is the government. Some communities have larger populations of young people. As my colleague for the High Arctic pointed out, the cost of living varies greatly in the different communities. Where we often fail to recognize the differences is in the policies and programs of this government. In policy after policy, we seem to take a broad brush approach. Programs like student financial assistance, public housing, seniors' programs and affirmative action seem to be the same no matter what the nature of the community or region they are

directed to. They do not recognize the differences such as cost of living and many other unique factors.

One of the few departments which seems to recognize the differences is the Department of Economic Development, which defines different levels of community development. This allows the government to develop programs for each of the different levels. Mr. Speaker, it is important to have policies which give a general framework for programs and services of this government. Yes, they should be broad. However, they should also have provisions which recognize and support the diverse conditions across this vast space that we call the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, later today, I will be asking the Premier how this can be addressed. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement On Best Wishes To Crisis Intervention Workers

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, yesterday many of us welcomed in the gallery women from our ridings here in Yellowknife for a developmental conference. These women are on the front lines of working with child abuse, spousal assault and family breakdowns. Mr. Speaker, this is a very stressful work place at the best of times. Many of these women are working with few resources and our government, because of the fiscal climate, has had a hard time coming up with money to support professional development, training and resources for these workers and shelters.

Mr. Speaker, there are many people who believe these women are somehow responsible at times for accelerated family break-ups. Sometimes, the shelters are seen as foreign institutions. Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with that assessment. Last night, Mr. Erasmus and I visited the women at their open house. It was a short but very informative visit. We talked a little about their jobs and the fiscal situation and funding difficulties. Having been here since the 15th of January and venturing very little from the Legislature to home, we get caught up in government, budgets, cameras and legislation. Last night, after meeting with the ladies, it reminded me again why I ran for an election and what I had hoped to accomplish. I thank them for that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the women for their kind invitation. I am sure that my colleagues here will join me in wishing them a very constructive session and informative meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Members' statements, Mr. O'Brien.

Member's Statement On Official Opening Of Arviat Business Training Centre

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the official opening of the Arviat Business Training Centre. The training centre is a result of a co-operative partnership entered into by the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Sakku Investments and the hamlet of Arviat. The centre is located in the former office of the Renewable Resources Building. It was purchased by the hamlet and now accommodates a

Page 920

classroom, office space and will accommodate up to 14 students.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the hamlet of Arviat for its vision and enthusiasm in developing this northern training program that will prove beneficial to all the communities in Nunavut. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Affirmative Action Policy

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In opening I would like to send my condolences out to the Robert family of Fort McPherson and also the Allen family of Aklavik. Mr. Speaker, I do not understand why there has been such limited success in affirmative action in this government. We have had a policy in place to support aboriginal people for 11 years. There should be some representation in regards to the number of individuals.

We had such limited successes with the Department of Personnel while they were in place. Now that they are not there, what will happen? Who will push affirmative action without the Department of Personnel? I get concerned when we look at advertisements in the papers that seem to be catered to those with degrees, masters and PhDs. It is harder for northerners to get a university education. We cannot just drive down the street or across town to a university. We need the experience of aboriginal people, yet it seems like they are not qualified. However, we have representatives of aboriginal people in the federal Parliament, in the Senate and also Commissioners and Premiers and Members of this House where a majority of them are aboriginal people.

When we look at 1995 statistics, we have poor results in relation to affirmative action. After the layoffs the past two years, the statistics seemed to have worsened. Even departments like RWED are disappointing. Working with wildlife and the environment are areas that many aboriginal people can relate to. In regards to the latest statistics, we hear that 30 percent of RWED employees are aboriginal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? No nays. Mr. Krutko, conclude your statement. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yet, only one person in that department is in the managerial field. There are aboriginal people who have schooling, degrees and many of them do not work for the government. We need to look at why. There are many questions that need to be answered about the GNWT and affirmative action and we need the government to fully implement the goals that were set 11 years ago for this policy to ensure the aboriginal people and people of the north that it represents are in areas of management and areas of direction to the people they represent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement On Legal Training In The Northwest Territories

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is on legal training in the Northwest Territories. Today, the court workers in the NWT do not have proper formal training. Usually the worker is a community person who gets trained through workshops and on-the-job training. This is not fair to the worker, particularly the worker who is alone in a community without a lawyer to consult whenever he or she wants. We require a method whereby all our court workers have a standard minimum training. Additionally, the GNWT is aggressively promoting community justices. Unfortunately, there is an acute shortage of community people with academic legal training. There are very few northern aboriginal lawyers and no aboriginal judges. There are aboriginal JPs but few of them have much legal training. I propose we initiate a one-year certificate and a two-year diploma program for legal assistants. All court workers will be required to take the certificate program. The program would have upgrading for six to 12 months for those who require academic preparation. That is because some of the people in the course may not be high school graduates and those out of school for a long time may require a refresher to get use to being in school again. This method has been used successfully in the community teacher education programs as well as the nursing program run by Aurora College. The program should be associated with our university so that it can be categorized as post-secondary education. This will mean that people could get student financial assistance. Also, people who finish this could be eligible to get directly into law school. The communities currently have training funding available for the next two years through a federal program called Pathways. The program could be funded through a combination of Pathways and GNWT dollars. For instance, student financial assistance could be used for allowances and Department of Education and the communities, through Pathways, could fund running the courses. Because of that, you would accept aboriginal people first, then non-aboriginal peoples if there was room. The result, you would have court workers with a minimum one-year academic legal training, communities with legally trained people to propel the community justice program, aboriginal JPs with legal training leading to aboriginal lawyers and finally, aboriginal judges. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement On People's Contribution Towards Deficit Reduction

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the last 18 months the people of the Northwest Territories have contributed to resolving this government's financial predicament. Employees have had pay and benefits cut, a significant number of people have been laid off and programs and facilities have been reduced and cut. Mr. Speaker, last May, I raised the possibility with the Minister of Finance, regarding giving discount rates at hotels, travel agencies and similar businesses to all residents of the NWT, in recognition of their sacrifices in achieving a balanced budget. Upon presentation of a valid NWT driver's licence or health care card at participating businesses, a person would receive a discount. The discount would be similar to reduced rates offered to GNWT employees, such as reduced rates at travel agencies, hotels and car rental agencies. Using identification cards issued regularly by this government means this program would not result in any additional costs. Presently, our government has standing orders with hotels and car rental agencies, so it would be relatively straightforward to advise these businesses to accept the card at their establishments.

Mr. Speaker, this arrangement would not discourage travel in the north or give an unfair advantage to southern destinations. Northern businesses may also attract more customers by accepting these cards. The discounts would give a well-deserved break to all NWT residents faced with the double burden of the higher cost of living than the rest of Canada and, in tough financial times, this action could potentially save money for the government, since higher volume of hotel and car rental services could mean better rates offered to our government.

Mr. Speaker, this action would provide people of the NWT with a small, but well-deserved break at no expense to the government. I will be asking the Minister of Finance for some comments on this statement later on in question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Members' statements. The honourable Member for the High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement On Support For Small Business

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I want to support new businesses, in particular, the small businesses that are in the smaller communities. As they start to establish their own small businesses, they often have no place to turn to and, even if they get their supplies from the north, this continues to be higher because their businesses are smaller than other larger businesses. As well, the government has to give more support to the smaller businesses by way of having funding available to them. Regarding the government offices in communities, they have to do more to help the smaller businesses in those communities that run their own businesses. Regarding contracts, when they bid for certain contracts, because they are running on a smaller scale, they often are not given contracts. I will be asking a question regarding this later on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Rabesca. Thank you.

Member's Statement On Solutions Desired From Plan 2000

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Upon reviewing the background information regarding the Housing Corporation's new initiative, Plan 2000, I feel it is only a start in providing affordable housing to those that are in need. However, Mr. Speaker, there are many positive aspects to Plan 2000. I do have some concerns about this program and feel it is necessary to address them. On a positive note, I believe this will be a much better program than is currently in place for those that are able to access this. It will allow this government to use its dollars more wisely and will also free up dollars that are currently targeted for housing to be used elsewhere. Getting the financial institutions involved in the smaller communities has been a need for many years. Until recently, it has been impossible to get a financial institution to venture into this area. There are numerous residents

that could afford to purchase a unit but, because no lending institution would consider mortgages in small communities, it is not a reality. This program should provide for this. I believe this program would also encourage families to seek better employment as they will not be penalized for extra income earned as it is with today's rental scales program. This new housing program may allow three or four times as many units to be constructed than is currently done which will increase construction and employment throughout the north. It will also free up other units that will be able to be used for many more residents that currently do not have suitable housing.

Mr. Speaker, the potential benefits will be long-reaching for this government and for the residents in all communities, which is very good for those who will be able to access it and for those who will also be able to move into newly-vacated rental units, where they presently have none. However, I feel that this program does not go far enough to address the area of low income families, single parents or the elderly. It seems that many low income families, single parents and elderly may be destined to live in rental units for the rest of their lives. It appears to me those that have will benefit and those that have not will never progress in their housing situation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Mr. Rabesca.

MR. RABESCA:

Mr. Speaker, may I have unanimous consent to conclude my statement, please?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Rabesca, you have unanimous consent to conclude your statement.

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We must find solutions for the poorer citizens. I would remind everyone that both our Premier and Finance Minister have stated on a number of occasions that we, as a government will not solve

our deficit problems on the backs of the poor. They deserve to have even stronger efforts on our part. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Rabesca. Members' statements. Item 4, return to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 404-13(4): Acknowledging Community Diversity Through Government Policies

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are in follow-up to my Member's statement I made today. I have listed a number of policies which, since becoming involved with the government, I have been frustrated by, the number of situations which arise when policies are too broad and do not address the differences in the various regions and communities across the Northwest Territories. I named a few of them in my Member's statement but even the difference in climate, geography, proximity of communities to renewable and non-renewable resources, are all things that I believe we need to take into consideration. For example, in housing, the vast difference even between the east and the west with respect to people that are coming out of a wage economy as opposed to those coming out of a traditional economy. I would like to ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, if these diversities are going to be acknowledged and incorporated into our programs and services when Cabinet undertakes a review of policies that the Premier has referred to this summer? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Morin.

Return To Question 404-13(4): Acknowledging Community Diversity Through Government Policies

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now, our policies do reflect the diversity of the Northwest Territories and we will continue to do that. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 404-13(4): Acknowledging Community Diversity Through Government Policies

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to be argumentative here today but I am asking the Premier to commit to further recognize these differences, because there are problems with certain policies. For example, when we talk about the Affirmative Action Policy, we talk about it reflecting the population that we serve and the demographics, if you look at the whole territories, may be such that they would differ considerably from that of a region. We saw that problem come to light with regards to student employment in communities like Hay River and Yellowknife, where there were targets set with respect to affirmative action but they did not really reflect the actual make-up of those communities or regions. I think there is a lot more fine-tuning that needs to be done with respect to our policies and if we are going to undertake a review anyway, I am asking the Premier if he would concur with me. Let us make it worthwhile and take a really hard look at those diversities. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 404-13(4): Acknowledging Community Diversity Through Government Policies

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will do that. In the past, I have attempted to do that as well. I think we have done fairly well on that whole issue of policies addressing the Northwest Territories. Sometimes when you are developing a policy, it is fairly broad so that it does encompass the whole Northwest Territories, but we also try to include the uniqueness of the communities in the policy. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier in regard to the Affirmative Action Policy in relation to my opening statement and also the old question about how a lot of these jobs are being advertised. It seems they are structured in such a way that the individuals they are catered to have to have a master's degree or PhD. The demand for those types of individuals is limited in the Northwest Territories. It disqualifies a lot of northern individuals who may have gone to university or may not have completed a PhD or a master's. I would like to ask the Premier if there is any way they could look at amending that to ensure there is a more equitable way, when they are doing the evaluation process, that they take that into account? We do not have the ability in the north, especially for a lot of people, to go off to university and make a career out of going to university. The human resources that we have in the north are limited so a lot of individuals, once they conclude high school, go off to university in one particular area, then come back home and try to work within that particular field. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As far as qualifications go for jobs within the government, in some cases, we have to ask for certain qualifications whether it be in social care, corrections, justice, school teachers, doctors and lawyers. There are certain qualifications needed. In some cases in government, we can look at what qualifications are being asked for certain jobs. Maybe, from time to time, they are requesting too many qualifications on certain jobs. I will look into that and see if there is a way that we can make sure we have competent people getting those jobs but also we can do it in such a way that it would encourage northerners to be able to get those jobs. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

Page 923

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is in regard to the overall question of the statistics and percentages of aboriginal people within the departments, especially in light of the information received yesterday regarding the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, where 30 percent of the people are aboriginal yet there is only one person in the managerial area of that department in regards to a deputy minister. Is there any way of increasing those statistics to ensure that it is more spread out in the area that the individual people they represent, especially in the area of wildlife, where it relates to a lot of the aboriginal population when it comes to the wildlife management. Will he ensure to also take a look at that?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Honourable Premier, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very clear from the statistics that we do see that, in the lower parts of government and lower jobs, from the director level down, there are a lot more aboriginal people, affirmative action long-term northerners in those jobs, than from that director level up. There are less affirmative action candidates in those jobs. It is an issue that has to be addressed. As I have said previously in this House, Mr. Speaker, we will be writing to the deputies to have them come up with a plan on how to increase those numbers. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Second supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the overall area of training of individuals, could the Premier also advise the House if there is a possibility of individuals who have been in, say the Department of RWED, who may have 15 to 20 years service which are in between the bracket of being at the lower level and looking at giving them the opportunity to take management training as part of their job, so they could move up to that hierarchy in which we seem to be lacking? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that is exactly what I am talking about, employee plans and how to increase the affirmative action candidates at the higher end of government and to develop a plan to make that happen. That will also be part of the deputy's evaluation when I evaluate them every year. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Premier keep the House informed as to the time frame we are looking at for this particular initiative and is there a goal set on a particular time of when you expect to see this accomplished or some document in place to ensure that practise will be concluded? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Honourable Premier, Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 405-13(4): Amending Affirmative Action Policy

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to talk to Cabinet about this to get Cabinet direction but I do not see any reason why the departments, when they present the budget to the committee next year, should not have an employment strategy plan in every individual department. There is ample time. There is ample warning. We as a Cabinet are going to talk about it and then give the direction, but I am sure we can work that out so that by the time you review the next year's budget, they should have a strategy in place for increasing those numbers. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Hay River, Madam Groenewegen.

Question 406-13(4): Rationale Of Designating Communities By Level

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is for the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I was wondering if Minister Kakfwi could give the House an outline of the rationale of designating communities by level? What precipitated those designation and what is the overall intent of that within Economic Development? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 406-13(4): Rationale Of Designating Communities By Level

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the designation of communities, whether they are on level one, level two or level three was done because some communities have, for instance, highway access, they have jet and larger aircraft schedules on a routine basis, they have banking systems and a housing market. Other communities are isolated with no access roads, very high transportation costs, freight costs for goods, very few businesses operating, no banking service and no housing market per se. Their abilities to access loans and investment money are virtually nil compared to these other, more fortunate communities. In order to create some level playing field in accessing loans, we have designated certain communities to be level one, level two or level three. Based on their designations, decided what level of equity might be required in order to access certain loans. That generally is what we use for designating. It is for the purpose of creating a level playing field in business development for communities. Thank you.

Page 924

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Madam Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 406-13(4): Rationale Of Designating Communities By Level

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the level of employment or unemployment in that community also used in that designation of community by level? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Mr. Minister, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 406-13(4): Rationale Of Designating Communities By Level

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is one of the considerations used as well as the size of the population, the size of the workforce and the skill of the workforce. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Madam Groenewegen, second supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 406-13(4): Rationale Of Designating Communities By Level

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This will be my last question. There does seem to be a fair amount of confusion in the public with respect to this whole issue. I wonder, does the government or the department have in their possession a concise document that could be tabled or made public with respect to this issue? There does seem to be some confusion in the communities right now on this matter. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 406-13(4): Rationale Of Designating Communities By Level

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be prepared to make available a document that would address the information the Member is speaking about. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Honourable Manito Thompson. In relation to the statement she made in the House the other day, regarding the community empowerment initiatives going on between your department and the communities, in regards to Mackenzie Delta. The Aklavik Aboriginal Committee is presently in the process of looking at community transfers and also, through the assistance of secondment, of a government staff member. My question to the Minister is what priority do these negotiations have in regards to the ongoing time frames we are looking at in trying to fast track some of these transfers, especially ensuring there are adequate resources and personnel to assist the community and individual to ensure this process is carried out at a very fast pace to try to come to an end and get these negotiations completed in a short time frame, rather than dragging it on for a number of years. What kind of assurances do we have that it will be a speedy process and there are resources and individuals available to ensure that?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Ms. Thompson.

Return To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have had correspondence from Aklavik and the community transfer initiative that is happening there seems to be doing very well. If my budget is passed soon, there will be money in there to help communities with community empowerment. We will be able to help the communities with the resources after my budget is passed because in my last budget I did not have anything for community empowerment. We had to find it from within. We are working with Aklavik and we have good results with them. We have good reports from them that everything seems to be going well. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to ensuring the procedure is carried out smoothly and in a short time frame, I would like to ask the Minister, is there a direct link between the individual who is negotiating on behalf of the community and a senior person within your department to ensure we are not having to go through every person within your department to get an initiative going to speed up the process? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Madame Thompson.

Further Return To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have a person in Inuvik. I believe Lisa McPherson is working with the community. She is the link between the community and the GNWT for community empowerment in that region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko. Second supplementary.

Supplementary To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to Ms. McPherson having the ability to make decisions, does she have the ability to make decisions regarding resources to ensure there are adequate resources in place to carry out these transfers of a particular department or project so there are adequate resources there to ensure that it is carried out smoothly? Thank you.

Page 925

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Madame Thompson.

Further Return To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lisa McPherson is quite capable of doing her job and that is why we have her in that position. She is doing a great job with the community. She is doing everything she can to help the community of Aklavik. So far we have heard good reports on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the overall process of the next phase, once the transfer takes place is there going to be some sort of mechanism to ensure there is an implementation process, so if there are glitches in the first year of a transfer, there are ways of working it through? So it allows the community not to get in trouble right off the start but there is assurance there are adequate resources. Three to five years down the road, there will be ongoing resources to ensure these programs and services will be taken on. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Madame Thompson.

Further Return To Question 407-13(4): Community Empowerment Negotiations With Aklavik

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We want the communities to succeed, that is our priority in community empowerment. We will be available to the communities as long as GNWT exists to make sure the communities are successful in the transfer. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Madame Thompson. Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 408-13(4): Rewarding NWT Residents For Sacrifices Made

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Todd. In my Member's statement today I talked about the sacrifices that all residents of the NWT have made to ensure the Minister of Finance can balance the budget. As a little reward, I proposed that all residents receive, through their health card or a valid driver's license, the same discounts at hotels and car rental agencies that would be available to government employees presently. One of the stipulating factors was that it would not cost the government any money. I asked the Minister about this last May and I would like the Minister now to tell me what he has done about this and when we can expect this type of program to be put in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister for FMBS, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 408-13(4): Rewarding NWT Residents for Sacrifices Made

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me first of all say, it is an excellent idea by my colleague that he brought up in early May and I apologize for the delay in response but I want to assure him that we are pursuing the idea aggressively. We have been in touch with travel agencies, hotels, car rentals, to see if there is a receptive audience out there. I am confident that once we have concluded our discussions with the industry at large, we will put forward and applaud our colleague for his initiative that will cost this government no money. Is that a good answer? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 408-13(4): Rewarding NWT Residents for Sacrifices Made

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister responsible for FMBS has told us that he has contacted the travel agencies, hotels, and so forth. Can the Minister tell us

when he contacted these agencies and what response they gave him initially? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 408-13(4): Rewarding NWT Residents for Sacrifices Made

HON. JOHN TODD:

I had a note on this yesterday because I thought my colleague was going to ask me yesterday. I seem to have inadvertently lost it. I want to assure him, seriously, that we have contacted these associations. We think it is a reasonable request. I do not have the details at my fingertips, but I will get it and report to my colleague tomorrow or before he goes on vacation, so he can take advantage of these initiatives. No, Mr. Speaker, I do not have the details of it. I do want to assure my colleague that we have done what I have said we have done. I will move quickly to try and get resolved to it and report back to him. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Second supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 408-13(4): Rewarding NWT Residents for Sacrifices Made

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister, seeing as he does believe this is a good idea and worthwhile for all residents of the NWT. Normally parents like to take their children on summer vacation. Can I ask the Minister if he would support families in that regard by ensuring this program will be in place before the end of June? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister for FMBS, Mr. Todd.

Page 926

Further Return To Question 408-13(4): Rewarding NWT Residents for Sacrifices Made

HON. JOHN TODD:

I think my colleague thinks I am not dealing with this issue seriously, that is why I was looking for the notes. I am dealing with it seriously. I cannot commit today whether we would have it in place by June. I know, in my discussions with Mr. Voytilla, that we have been communicating with the industry at large outside of the north of 60, in an effort to see if they would co-operate with us in providing this initiative incentive for northern people. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions concern the budget. Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Federation of Business did an assessment of the territorial budget. Overall, their assessment of the budget delivered by Mr. Todd was favourable. However, they did make some good points like regulatory reform and economic development issues. My question for Mr. Todd is, will he be following up or contacting the federation and taking up their offer on the experience they have gleaned from their extensive regulatory reform and ask them for some logistical information or help?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister responsible for Financial Management Board, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I received the same letter from the federation. They have a great deal of experience in that, both in Alberta, and I know there is a considerable amount of experience in regulatory reform in Mr. Picco's former province, Newfoundland. We would take that all into consideration as we move forward in an orderly way to determine what regulatory reform will be necessary to provide the more open balanced approach for business in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Newfoundland comes a poor second to Scotland in regulatory reform as we all know. Mr. Brad Wright will be coming to Yellowknife from the Canadian Federation of Business next month. Is Mr. Todd meeting with him at that time?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important to point out that both Mr. Kakfwi and myself have co-sponsored the paper on regulatory reform and Mr. Kakfwi will take the lead on it because he is intimately involved, being the Minister of RWED. It is our intent to meet with Mr. Wright either here or in Edmonton or Calgary, but we intend to meet with him. As I indicated, while it was co-sponsored, Mr. Kakfwi will be taking the lead on this important issue. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Second supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last year Mr. Todd was able to travel around the territories explaining the major aspects of his budget. I have not seen a travel itinerary for Mr. Todd that he will be doing that this year. Concerning the budget again, will Mr. Todd be travelling around this time? If so, when? If not, why?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take this question because it is for all Ministers of where they will be travelling and when they will be travelling. We will let the Members know when we can make ourselves available to be in your riding. Myself, I think I will plan on doing the Baffin and some of the Ministers may come along. We are going to be going out having town hall meetings with the people of the Northwest Territories. Some of the Ministers, as well as myself, have been in some of the ridings already. We have to try to spread ourselves out as much as possible. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding these town hall meetings, this is the first time I heard of this. As the Premier knows and the Finance Minister, when you are coming to a riding we have to book space, get translators and, in my case, we ask for French translation at times too. I would appreciate as early as possible the Premier or the Finance Minister, whichever one is speaking to this today, to inform the Members of this House and the public at large, when these town hall meetings, these explanations of the budgets, will be occurring outside the capital of Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 409-13(4): Canadian Federation of Business' Assessment of GNWT Budget

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is just the proper way of doing business and we do business properly. I

have talked to the Member about this. I did mention I was thinking of going to his riding before. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance and also overseeing the division issues, could the Minister indicate how important it is that we proceed to start looking at infrastructure requirements and setting up headquarters in Nunavut?

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is important and I believe all Ministers have said this and the Premier has said this, that we need to develop a transition plan prior to April 1, 1999, for the development of two territories, not just the Nunavut one. In consultation with my Cabinet colleagues, we are going to move fairly quickly in the coming weeks to develop that. That is that you want, a pre-implementation plan that is necessary to get some of the basic framework for two new governments in place prior to April 1, 1999. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister move to the other end of the time spectrum and not so much as prior to 1999? How soon, from where we are today, should we be starting on these critical issues so that we are not caught with our political pants around our ankles, scrambling to put the proper

services and infrastructure in place so that we can do simple things like write cheques, et cetera.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what is important here is that we do move forward in an orderly way. We take a hard look at what we think we can realistically accomplish. Some time lines are attached to it. Mr. Henry and others have spoken to it before. I have just sent out what they call a "call letter" to the Ministers and to deputy ministers, that we start to take a look at how we develop that as quickly as we can. I have spoken to Mr. Hamilton today and I did not get an opportunity to speak to you as Chair of the Caucus. I would like to be able to bring the Caucus up-to-date on what we are doing internally, to try to message what I call an "interim step." What can we accomplish in the time lines that we have left? I have said before that you cannot wait until April 1, 1999, and suddenly turn on the light switch. We need to move as quickly as we can. Realistically, if we have the political support out there, I am fairly confident we could actually move in the fall of 1997 with some things, but it is going to require Cabinet, legislative approval, et cetera, and is going to require the support of all Members. The intent is to move with my Cabinet colleagues and the deputies to develop a plan. I would like to present the framework for that plan to Caucus next week to see if there is some general support for it. Then to move as quickly as we can to implement it, assuming there is continuing political support. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Second supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You talk about this interim step very clearly, that this current headquarters operation located in Yellowknife is going to have to be split into two. The particular percentages or sizes has yet to be determined. Will the Minister be taking that approach as opposed to designing or trying to set up

a Nunavut headquarters based on a decentralized model? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are two components to this thing. We have already committed to costing the NIC model with NIC and NTI, our partners to cost that model. They had to move forward with the costing of that model as well as the costing of the status quo in the west to negotiate to formula arrangements. That is the first step that we are doing now. The second step, with relationship to Nunavut which you specifically asked about, is that we need to put into place an interim step based upon a headquarters model that can then be decentralized once the fiscal money and the infrastructure is in place and agreed to under Nunavut. I hope I have been clear there. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister assure me that those processes will be kept separate? That as we cost out the NIC Footprints 2 model with their highly decentralized structure and whatever cost that requires is an issue that, for the most part, will have to be dealt with the federal government over and above whatever costs are now spent on headquarters here? Where we split this existing pot, like you say, is one question separate from the decentralized model proposed in Footprints 2 and the cost that will be attached to that. Thank you.

Page 928

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 410-13(4): Infrastructure Requirements for Nunavut

HON. JOHN TODD:

One short answer to that one is yes, we would do that. I think it is incumbent of me to say, I am hoping that once we get into a discussion with the federal government there will be a recognition that there are going to be some costs associated with, if you want, pre-implementation of division. Again, I go back to my argument. You cannot simply turn the lights on April 1 and not have, for example, a fiscal regime in place. As my colleague just said, we have to make sure the cheques are written and the bank account has money in it. If I can simplify it, it would be our intent to keep them separate but at the same time it would be my intention, in my discussion with the Finance Minister, to get him to recognize that some of this pre-implementation will be fundamentally necessary. This is not political, this is just administratively necessary for a government to function, is going to be paid for. Absolutely. Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Qujannamiik. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 411-13(4): Inuktitut School Curriculums

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the past ten years divisional boards have been working on Inuktitut curriculums from kindergarten to grade 12. I would like to ask the Minister how this process is doing. To the Honourable Charles Dent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 411-13(4): Inuktitut School Curriculums

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the west we have a curriculum called Dene Kede which has been developed for grades K to 6 and in the east there is a curriculum called Inuuqatigiit which, as the Member has pointed out, has been developed for grades kindergarten to grade 12. This allows students to be instructed in their first language. Where there are teachers available who are fluent in Inuktitut, they

could use the Inuuqatigiit curriculum. That curriculum is being implemented throughout the Nunavut regions right now. I am expecting to participate in the official launch of the curriculum some time in the next month or two. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Supplementary To Question 411-13(4): Inuktitut School Curriculums

MR. BARNABAS:

Qujannamiik. (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regards to the curriculum that will be made available in the Nunavut communities, I wonder how they deal with the difficult words? Would this be dealt with through the Language Bureau of the government departments? Is this being dealt with by the technical committee? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 411-13(4): Inuktitut School Curriculums

HON. CHARLES DENT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Language Bureau has participated in some of the development. A large part of the development of the curricula has involved bringing elders together from many different communities across the Northwest Territories. In many cases, it has not required the development of new words. Through bringing elders together and talking about concepts, ways have been found to express the concepts within the Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Oral questions, Mr. O'Brien.

Question 412-13(4): Incremental Infrastructure Costs Prior To Division

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for division. I am curious as to

whether or not there is an agreement in place as to who will pay for the incremental cost on infrastructure that is required prior to division. For example, if there were 50 homes being built in Arviat and 30 offices prior to 1999, who will pay for the upkeep of these units prior to 1999? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 412-13(4): Incremental Infrastructure Costs Prior To Division

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It would be the federal government. It certainly would not come out of this budget. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions, Mr. Roland.

Question 413-13(4): Formula Funding Negotiations

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be directed to the Minister responsible for FMBS and Division. I would like to know, from the Minister responsible for the Division Secretariat, if the draft terms of reference for the negotiations for formula funding, where are they in the process? What timeline are we looking at? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 413-13(4): Formula Funding Negotiations

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If my honourable colleague is referring to the document that I shared with the western coalition last week, my understanding is everybody has signed off on it and we are just waiting for Mr. Martin to send a letter confirming it. The only reason we

Page 929

have not received it is he is very busy selling the budget he announced on the 18th. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary To Question 413-13(4): Formula Funding Negotiations

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform us what timeline we will be looking at for sitting down and beginning formal negotiations with the federal government? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 413-13(4): Formula Funding Negotiations

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have suggested to my colleague and the western coalition while the federal government has the responsibility to call us to the table to initiate discussions on timelines and the framework for two new formula financing frameworks, I think it is incumbent upon us to take the lead and call a meeting of both the officials of the northern coalition, the GNWT, NTI, interim commissioner, and the western coalition to see if there is some common ground we can reach prior to us going to Ottawa at the official level and starting the discussions on the formula arrangements. As we speak, I am having my staff draft the appropriate letters to the appropriate parties, suggesting we meet as quickly as we can to see if we can reach a common position on the approach we will take when we sit down with Mr. Martin's officials in April. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 414-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few days ago I wrote the Minister of the Housing Corporation regarding the contracts for the construction of housing units. This morning I received some more phone calls concerning this same area. In the Baffin region and in other regions of the Territories there might be a

change in the practise of awarding contracts. Usually the contracts for erection of houses are for labour only and these benefited a lot of the small construction companies. Could the Minister tell me at this time, is there a change from the labour only to supply and erect these houses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Minister of Public Works and Services, NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 414-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Housing Corporation has been one of the biggest supporters of small businesses and small construction companies. We have gone to great lengths to ensure the small companies get the experience necessary to be able to compete on their own. The issue the Member is talking about, the two different ways of tendering for the building of new houses, the labour-only contracts and the supply, ship and erect contracts, are two different ones that are used throughout the Territories. In some communities we have used one over the other or a combination of the two.

In the Baffin region, as the Member says, there have been many requests by LHOs to go the supply, ship and erect route by local housing organizations and by some of the companies. It is an area we are looking into, an area that most of the region is interested in and I think is the way of the future in many cases.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Member for Iqaluit, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 414-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a very serious issue because a lot of the small construction companies which provide work in our communities do the labour only. They do not have the cash flow, for example, to bring in materials to do supply and erect and that is the reason for the labour-only contracts. Can the Minister assure this House that he will actually re-examine this area? This is a major change in direction in policy for this government. Can the Minister tell this

House that he will re-examine this and see what the status is? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Qujannamiik. The honourable Minister, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 414-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, this may be a change for a few of the companies that have been working on labour-only contracts. The supply, ship and erect contracts have been going on for some time and is the preferred method for some companies. I do understand the Member's concern. I did see the two letters from two companies in the Baffin. We are looking at them and are considering them. There are cases where a company needs a different type of arrangement for financing purposes and we will remain flexible and assist them wherever we can.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Second supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 414-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the concern is some of these tenders are already out and they are already saying supply and erect instead of just labour. That puts some of these smaller companies behind the eight ball because they have to try now to get the financing to bring in the material and to book it on the ships and so on. It is the Housing Corporation doing this and not the local housing associations, that is what I am told. If it is the Housing Corporation then that is ultimately the Minister. Will the Minister re-examine the tenders that are actually now out, that have not been signed off and to contact the companies? I do not know what type of work was done with consulting with

Page 930

those local firms in our communities. Maybe the Minister could tell us what kind of consulting was done before you entered into this type of an arrangement for all contracts. I understand all contracts now issued are supply and erect instead of labour only. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Further Return To Question 414-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I got every one of those four questions but I did mention we will be looking at the issues brought up by the Member. The change or the different way of issuing contracts is one that was requested by the local housing organizations for more and more taking over the programs we have. This type of contracting has been requested by many of the smaller companies. For those that are still apprehensive about it, we will remain flexible and we will assist them where we can. You have to also remember the way we are financing the housing packages will be through the banks, so the client who is going to build the home will have the dollars ready before the construction season and therefore would be able to make an arrangement with the builder.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 415-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation is to follow-up on Mr. Picco's comments. The change in policy, does that effect the Keewatin region? If so, was any study done to see what the impact would be on the smaller contractors that would not be able to afford to enter into a ship and erect agreement? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. The honourable Minister, Mr. Arlooktoo.

Return To Question 415-13(4): Practise of Awarding Housing Contracts

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Mr. Speaker, as I said, this way of contracting is not new. We have done several in all of the regions. I think that in most cases, most LHOs and companies have matured enough to take on this type of work. In

cases where a small construction company feels it is not prepared to deal with the financing and other arrangements that need to be done, we will work with them and we will help them secure interim financing for these projects.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Item 7, written questions. 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. Picco.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Committee Report 7-13(4): Standing Committee on Infrastructure's Review of Bill 7, Municipal Statutes Amending Act

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 7, the Municipal Statutes Amending Act and wishes to report that Bill 7 is now ready for the committee of the whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Miltenberger. Thank you.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 12, An Act to amend the Student Financial Assistance Act and wishes to report that Bill 12 is now ready for the committee of the whole.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. 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 2, Justice Administration Statutes, Amending Act; Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1997-98; Bill 9, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1996-97; Bill 10, Supplementary

Appropriation Act No. 3, 1996-1997; Committee Report 1-13(4) Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates; Committee Report 3-13(4) Standing Committee on Infrastructure Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates; Committee Report 4-13(4) Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates and Committee Report 6-13(4) Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates, with Mr. Steen in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I would like to call the committee to order. For consideration of the committee of the whole today, we have Bills 2, 8, 9, 10 and Committee Report 2-13(4), Committee Report 3-13(4), Committee Report 4-13(4) and Committee Report 6-13(4). I would like some direction from the committee as to how to proceed. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would like to proceed with Bill 8, Committee Report 2-13(4), Committee Report 3-13(4), Committee Report 4-13(4) and Committee Report 6-13(4) concurrently and continue to consider the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development followed by Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

Page 931

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I would like to ask the Minister, Honourable Mr. Kakfwi, if he would like to have witnesses present.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree to have witnesses present?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. I would like to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to bring in the witnesses. I would like to ask Minister Kakfwi if he could introduce his witnesses please.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my left the deputy minister, Andrew Gamble, on my right the executive director, Doug Doan.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi and welcome to the committee. I believe that yesterday when we left off we were on Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Activity summary for resource management and economic development, total operations and maintenance, \$50,133,000. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, at this point I would like to advise the Members that a business which is controlled by me, Greenway Holdings Limited, has loans with Community Futures and with the Business Credit Corporation which falls under the responsibility of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and as such, I am in conflict in consideration of this line item. I would like to declare this conflict, refrain from debating this matter and withdraw from the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Total operations and maintenance, \$50,133,000. Agreed? Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. On page 11-15, detail of capital. Resource management and economic development, buildings

and works, headquarters, total region, \$495,000.
Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Fort Smith region.
Total region is on page 11-16, \$739,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Buildings and works, Inuvik region, total
region, \$343,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Thank you. Buildings and works, Baffin. I
recognize Mr. Evaloarjuk.

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to
ask a question. I think it was last year, 1996 in
November, I asked the Minister at that time about Hall
Beach wanting a wildlife officer and he mentioned that
he would get back to me once he finds out. I just
wanted to know if the Minister has had time to consult
with his department in regards to getting a wildlife
officer in Hall Beach or not. Thank you. (Translation
ends)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Evaloarjuk. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have that
information here with me so I will request the
information from the department and have a meeting
with the Member before the end of the day. Thank
you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have buildings and works,
Baffin. Mr. Picco.

Page 932

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just want
to clear up a couple of points before I ask some
questions. Yesterday I said in the unedited Hansard
on page 1534, I guess there was a media report today
that I was trying to make accusations that money was
going west and not going east. I should reiterate my
point in the unedited Hansard because that is not
what I said. I said in the unedited Hansard "I am not
trying to make accusations that money is going west
and not going east, that is not what I said." That is my
quote. Now after saying that, I would like to point out
Mr. Kakfwi, in the unedited Hansard said there was a
million dollars in the capital budget for Sylvia Grinnell
Park in Iqaluit. But when I look at the detail of the
main estimates for capital for that park, I only see
\$50,000 and there is nothing in future years
anticipated. Can the Minister tell me where this
money, this budget, this million dollars is coming from
and why it is not in the detail of capital or why it is not
in the mains? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. I would like to remind the
Members to slow down a little for the interpreters
please. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the detail across from
Grinnell Park, Iqaluit for prior costs instead of a blank,
it should show about \$332,000 and the future years
anticipated should read \$939,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Mr. Speaker, am I to understand that now that indeed
this money is for my park and is not obvious in the
detail of capital because it is a typographical mistake?
Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

That is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Buildings and works, Baffin.
Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, can the Minister then tell me what is budgeted for next year for this project? Again, I do not have the line in my book. Future years is not here. Could the Minister tell me what they are budgeting for 1998 and 1999?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I believe I indicated it was about \$200,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

For the record, Mr. Chairman, can the Minister repeat that to around \$200,000? Does he have the figure there to tell me if it is 210, 220, 250?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

What we are tentatively targeting is approximately \$204,000 for the next fiscal year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That figure seemed to be familiar to me because when I look at the 1996/97 capital estimates, again there were no prior year costs, so I do not know where the \$300,000 came from. There were no future years anticipated in the 1996/97 capital, but now the figure the Minister just

gave me was the figure spent last year, \$204,000. Is the Minister telling me that there is a typographical error last year also for Sylvia Grinnell Park and now this year again? There is an error for prior year costs and future years again, but he is telling me there is money in the capital. My point is again maybe only in Sylvia Grinnell Park, only in two books, two mains, there seems to be mistakes. I want this clarified because it is an important project. I brought representation to the Minister, I went to the Resource Committee months ago on this and it seems to me there are discrepancies. I do not want to make any allegations and I am not making allegations, but it does not make any sense here. I do have the 1996/97 mains and there is no anticipated and there were no prior year costs. The Minister just told me prior year costs was \$300,000. In the capital estimates from last year, I see \$204,000, which is the same amount now that is supposed to be in the budget for next year. Could someone clarify it please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This substantiation document, breaking down the projected expenditures we propose to make in the next few years, was given to the standing committee. It is an error of omission. In the detail that you have before you, on the budget estimates, it reads a blank and it should not have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Buildings and works, Baffin.
Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am not trying to be adversarial, I am not trying to make any accusations. So, the Minister will confirm now, for the record in the Hansard, that indeed future years anticipated for '97, '98, '99, which is next year, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is actually budgeting \$200 and some odd for this park. Every other Member in this House can look at their capital in parks and visitors' service and those Members can see what is in the capital estimates prior year costs, future's anticipated and total capital projections. I cannot because it is not listed because of a typographical error. When I go back in my book from last year's main estimates, the

same problem occurred again. Maybe it is just an Iqaluit thing, I do not know. I would like the Minister to confirm right now, for the record, what the actual capital expenditure projections are for next year and the total capital projections for the Hansard.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

What we needed was some clarification and I thought I had provided it. For the information of the Member, as it only showed a capital expenditure this year of \$50,000, that the prior year's cost was shown as a blank. I am saying now, it should show \$332,000. That presently it shows a blank and I am telling him it should read that we anticipate and, we propose in future years, to spend an additional \$939,000, subject to the fiscal outlook remaining the same for this government and subject to approval of next year's budget and the subsequent budgets. It is only our proposal that if we start spending money and continue to do so under the current fiscal conditions, we would propose to spend an additional \$939,000 on this particular park over the next four to five years. Approximately \$200,000 per year is what we propose to spend over the next four to five years. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, can the Minister tell me what the actual expenditures were last year? I know now and thank the Minister for anticipating \$939,000 over the next x number of years, I still do not know what is in the budget for next year. I understood it was \$200,000 for this year, it is only \$50,000. I would like to know how much was expended for 1996/97 exactly? And I will ask the same question again, what is proposed for next year in their revised capital plan?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Picco, for the record, can you identify for me what you are talking about, whether it is the regional office Iqaluit or whether it is Sylvia Grinnell Park?

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, for the record, I am looking at page 11-16, Sylvia Grinnell Park, Iqaluit.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I am kind of lost as to what the Member is seeking. Is he seeking more money, less money? I am not clear any more what the Member is seeking. What I have said is, in prior years we spent \$332,000, which means since this park was first designated as a park, we have spent a total of \$332,000. This year, as you can see, we are proposing to spend \$50,000. Next year, as I have said, we are proposing to spend \$204,000. That is what we are anticipating we will propose to spend. A breakdown, year by year, of what we propose to spend in the last five

Page 933

years or since the park was first designated, with what we had actually spent? If that is the case, we can provide that, but it is not available right here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. I am not sure, Mr. Kakfwi, if the Hansard got your total reply. The mike was off for a while. Could the Minister repeat his response?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, I will begin with my last statement. If the Member is asking for a breakdown of the \$332,000, which is the total amount that we have spent on this particular park since its inception, I do not have that information here. If he is asking for a breakdown of the annual proposed expenditures on this park with the actual expenditure at year end, we can provide it to him but it is not available to me right here. Previous to that, I just made the comment that I am really unclear about what the Member is trying to get at. Is he trying to increase the amount that we are spending or decrease it? I am not clear what the intent of his questions are. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Picco, for the information of the Members, the main estimates only include

those projects that are in progress. Many are multi-year projects that take two or three years to complete. Members should refer to the five year capital plan when looking at future spending on infrastructure projects. Therefore, prior year costs could be actual costs but, like the Minister said, this is a forecasted amount of expenditures. I am sure the Member understands that. Do you have a further question, Mr. Picco?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Picco):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess it is as clear as mud. The point I was trying to make is this, Mr. Chairman. If I look at the '96/97 main estimates detail of capital, there was \$204,000 approved last year to be expended in my park in the constituency of Iqaluit. That would mean, according to Mr. Kakfwi's figures which, with the prior year costs of \$332,000 in the past 12 to 15 years, since that park has been in place there has been \$108,000 spent over that 12 year period which gives me the total of \$332,000. When I look at the 97-98 main estimates, Mr. Chairman, the total budget is \$50,000 but there is no prior year's cost and there were no future years anticipated and it seems to be a typographical error according to the Minister. Then the Minister came back for clarification purposes and he said that for next year, you are looking at \$204,000 budgeted for 1998-99 for my park for Iqaluit. But that was also the same amount that was in 1996/97 which is \$204,000. The two points that I am trying to make are was it the same typographical error or omission just for Sylvia Grinnell Park in both books and I would take the Minister's word that it is a coincidence again, but I guess that is what happened. Then my question on the \$50,000 was, how much money was spent last year, because there was \$204,000 budgeted. How much was actually spent? Was the total spent? Because if that was the case, it shows that park, which has been in existence for about 12 years, has had \$332,000, roughly less than \$12,000 a year over that period of time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Picco. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, perhaps the deputy minister would be more clear and concise in his response to Mr. Picco's question. I will give him the opportunity to clear it up. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Kakfwi, thank you. Mr. Kakfwi, it is my understanding that he wants to know how much money was spent last year on that park and he wants to know what the future years' estimates would be under future years anticipated. That is my understanding of the question. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I was just trying to pass off the question, the response to my deputy minister because I thought I already said and responded to the question that I do not have those figures about the actual expenditures last year and the previous year. The proposed expenditures as they were shown in the main estimates with the actual year-end expenditures, I do not have that information. That part of the question I thought I answered. The other part, which I understand he is asking is the previous year's estimate of \$204,000 just coincidence that it is the same as what I am proposing to spend next year, maybe it is coincidence. I do not know. This is all done within the department. I was trying to ask my deputy minister to take the opportunity to give a real, nice, clear concise answer to Mr. Picco.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I thought you were asking for a clear question from Mr. Picco again. It is my misunderstanding. I recognize Mr. Gamble.

MR. GAMBLE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before this year, the actual expenditures were \$128,000. The current year budget is \$204,000. The current year is not complete yet and I do not have the expenditures to date with me. We can certainly get that information to see what the actual expenditures are or are projected to be by the end of this current 1996-97 year. As noted, we have budgeted for '97-'98. \$50,000 and the projected numbers, which are shown in the five year capital plan, are \$204,000 for '98-'99, \$237,000 for '99-2000, and \$200,000 and \$300,000 in the next two years. The only actuals we can provide are prior years. This year we will do that. We can certainly provide actuals at the close of the year and we certainly can provide the Member with year-to-date expenditures on that project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Gamble. Building and works, Baffin. I have Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we have completed this end, I would like to go back to the Inuvik region. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Perhaps, Mr. Roland, if I could get a final on total regions for Baffin, I will then put forward your request. Baffin region, total region, \$290,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that we return to buildings and works, Inuvik region?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. I recognize Mr. Roland.

Page 934

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, colleagues. My question in the area of parks for the Inuvik region. There was funding for the Happy Valley Park and the Highway No. 8 signs and pull-outs. Can the Minister inform me as what has happened in those areas? They do not show up here. Has there been a total reduction in those projects? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I believe what we have done here is reduce in other areas so we maintain the commitment to spend money on the Gwich'in Territorial Park. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are the amounts for those projects deferred or are they totally taken out of the budget?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Deferred.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take it all these parks are territorial or regional parks mainly for tourism. Can the Minister inform me if he would have the numbers as to the visitors that go through these facilities and parks throughout the Territories? Would those numbers be available? If not available here, could they be made available to us?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, we can provide that information. I believe there is some information available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the reasons I request that is the fact that the Inuvik region depends quite heavily on tourism. I grow concerned when these projects are deferred and funding is pulled right out of them and other areas, where I do not know if they will have as much tourism and if their facilities will continue to be funded at a fairly high rate. I would like to have those numbers made available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, I will make sure the information the Member is requesting is made available to him. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have building and works, Inuvik region, total region \$343,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. On the same page, page 11-16, building and works, Keewatin region, with the totals for that region on page 11-17. Total region, \$44,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, when you look over the numbers, you see HQ with \$495,000 total, Smith \$739,000, Inuvik \$343,000, Baffin \$290,000, Kitikmeot \$116,000 and Keewatin \$44,000 with only \$27,000 of that indicated for parks. Can the Minister explain why there is such a variance in the numbers? In one area we see \$739,000 and when you get to the Keewatin you see a total amount of \$44,000. Why is there such a major difference in the allocation of funds? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe some of the parks we have in existence were started many years ago. I do not know how the total prior years capital expenditures would show now, but I would say in areas like the Kitikmeot and Keewatin, it would show to be substantially less than other regions. This is because of the smaller population, the inaccessibility of many of these places, and that is the way it is. It is

low and we have tried to use certain guidelines in deciding where the expenditures should be. With the reductions, we have prioritized those capital projects that were already in progress. This is the priority that we placed. We also then followed with capital expenditures we would think would benefit the greatest number of people and would enhance our tourism marketing strategies. That is what we have done. Hopefully that is useful for the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could buy into that if the Keewatin did not have any parks at all. But when you go from spending three quarters of a million dollars in a region to \$27,000 for a park, it just does not make any sense. We do have parks. They do need attention. They do need maintenance and upgrading. I would like to ask the Minister if he would review this with his department and also if he could advise me as to who prioritizes the monies that are spent in each area. Is that the regional office or is it headquarters? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The view of park development and the proposed expenditures on the individual parks is done by the regional office together with the department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have buildings and works, Keewatin, total region, \$44,000. Mr. Henry.

Page 935

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A quick question on the parks, does the department have a cost recovery? Are there fees charged for use of these parks in the various communities? If there are, do they bear any resemblance to the expenditures? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe on one of the following pages, 11-30, it would show some revenues that come in from parks and visitors sales and more specifically campground user fees. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have total region, \$44,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Building and works, Kitikmeot, total region, \$116,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Total buildings and works, \$2,027,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Acquisition of equipment, headquarters, total region, \$81,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Mr. Chairman, regarding the mobile equipment for wildlife management, what particular equipment are we talking about? What is it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is \$32,000 that is being requested to replace all-terrain vehicles used by biologists, I believe, as well as snowmobiles.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. If the committee would agree, could we look towards taking a short break after we finish this activity on the next page? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

My question is more in relation to the equipment for wildlife management.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I said \$32,000, I am reading the wrong figure. It should be \$25,000 and that is a total being requested to replace three all-terrain vehicles and one snowmobile. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Total region, \$81,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Fort Smith region. The total for that region is on page 11-18, total region is \$69,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Inuvik region, total region is \$90,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Acquisition of equipment, Baffin region, total region, \$99,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Acquisition of equipment, Keewatin region, total region, \$58,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. I am sure the Ministers are listening. Acquisition of equipment, Kitikmeot region, total region, \$59,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total acquisition of equipment, \$456,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Thank you. Total activity, \$2,483,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Could we agree to take a 15 minute break?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I call the committee back to order. We are on page 11-19, forest management, operations and maintenance. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate the status of the review of the fire centre that was going to be done? I am also interested in any plan to have a comprehensive inventory done of timber. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Minister Kakfwi.

Page 936

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The review of the fire centre and its operations located in Fort Smith is not complete. I am not certain when that review will be complete. In regard to survey of timber resources in the western part of the Northwest Territories, that is being done on an ongoing basis, on a needs basis. We are doing it on a more specific, side-by-side basis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister clarify if it would be done in areas that are under a certain amount of pressure from the forest industry, such as the Liard area or around the South Slave, where there are a number of lumbering initiatives? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, that is correct. We will work with communities and groups that are advocating timber harvests in specific areas. We would view those to be a party. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

My final question on that particular issue, Mr. Chairman, is having an up-to-date inventory a requirement before any substantial leases or timber cutting permits are given out so we have an idea of the impact and the reserve of timber that may be there and the kinds of timber that are being requested to be cut?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Where we do not have a comprehensive survey of timber inventory, where there is a request made, we tend to be very cautious, but we do not outright reject the request. In some cases, because we do permits on a year-by-year basis or approval on a year-by-year basis, with usually a condition that there be some effort made by the community to come up with a management plan that would look at trying to establish the inventory and a management plan that would tell us and the businesses what is sustainable with the inventory. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have operations and maintenance, Mr. Erasmus and Mr. Ootes. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was wondering if this government has an overall timber harvesting policy?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I am not certain if there is a specific policy as the Member is referring to. I do know that we

do have some regulations and policies that guide the department in dealing with requests by communities and businesses to harvest timber. We do have guidelines and prescribe the approach that we take to deal with these applications. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Often it is too easy to treat different regions inconsistently if there is no overall policy. First of all, I urge the Minister to ensure we develop an overall forestry and timber harvesting policy. Secondly, if there is no overall policy, could each region be treated differently?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not think it leads to that. This business of getting into timber harvesting is not one that is commercially viable in all regions. It has been done in the South Slave for a number of years. I am not sure how commercially viable they have been as stand-alone operations. We know that in the Liard/Deh Cho region, it is commercially viable, but very often it is more an area of where you cut down the timber and ship them out for processing in the south. We do have a policy, again I am not certain that this is one policy or one that is a series of policies or whether they are even written. I know it is our approach to support timber harvesting where it is viable in terms of the inventory and it is sustainable. That it is done on a good management basis. There is a management plan either in place or expected to be in place within an acceptable time frame by the local or regional people involved. It is harvested and processed in the Northwest Territories as much as possible. Trying to create jobs and substantially more benefits than there would be if we just allowed for businesses to cut down the trees and then ship them down south for processing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the Liard area, since that has been brought up, how much say do the local communities have in awarding timber harvesting permits?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, we have extensive discussions with the communities regarding timber harvesting. For instance, in the Fort Liard, we have worked with the communities there to develop acceptable co-management plans for the potential harvest of timber in the immediate areas. We do consult with the communities when issuing licences and permits. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister indicated they have extensive discussions and consultations. Does this extend so far that if the communities do not want a permit to be awarded, that the department complies with the communities' request and not reward a harvesting permit?

Page 937

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, under certain conditions, yes, we would be doing that. Usually when a community objects to a certain activity, they have a reason. Usually these are valid reasons that have to be dealt with before we proceed on anything. As a general rule, not that they have a veto, but they have a substantial amount of influence on the decisions we make. For instance, if a community group or a business person wants to cut a certain amount of timber in a certain area, but the community object because they want a good management plan for the resources in that particular area first and we think there are valid reasons for asking for a delay, we would seriously look at delaying. That is a bit of a

hypothetical situation, but it highlights the relationship. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. The Minister indicated if a community group or businessmen wanted to do some harvesting they would put together a plan. I would like to know if a southern logging outfit can also apply for a harvesting permit, pull up with their many logging trucks and haul our logs away? Can a southern logging outfit also get harvesting permits in the Liard area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are not really encouraging southern businesses to apply to come in, cut the timber and ship it south. We have tried to make it clear to applicants and interested groups that they must have some northern, local or regional involvement in their businesses. Especially if they are southern based, there has to be some plan in place that says that within a year or two they will start to look at creating more jobs here in the north by starting to process some of the timber cut right here in the Northwest Territories before shipping it south. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have operations and maintenance. I have Mr. Ootes next, but I also have a note from him to kindly introduce his wife, Marg Baile.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is the forest in the Deh Cho area, some of the timber is amongst the best in the world simply because it grows so slowly and is excellent wood. It no doubt has a great deal of value. I am wondering if the Minister

could tell me how much the territorial government receives from the stumpage fees on an annual basis from the NWT forests?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize a former member of the Legislative Assembly and member of the Executive Council, Mr. Silas Arngna'naaq.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe what we have for this year is \$1,872,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the department have a value of the timber that is shipped from the Deh Cho area, what the market value of that timber is?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We probably have that, but it is not readily available here. We can provide that to the Member. As far the Deh Cho and the Liard Valley, we have indicated to the operators that apply for timber permits in those areas that within a year or two of their initial operations that we expect to see some evidence they are going to start processing and cutting rough lumber, for instance, in the north as a condition of license renewal in the future. We are trying discourage the notion they can come in, cut the timber and ship south. We want some jobs created. We want to see some finished product or semi-finished product processed in the north before shipping south. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was going to be my next area of questioning. Why are we not encouraging more cutting and processing of the timber in the Territories? When we were in Fort Smith last summer, we had several presentations made to the Resources Committee by independent sawmill operators who were having difficulty getting timber rights. It would seem to me we are shipping timber out of the Deh Cho to the south with very little benefit to the communities. Although \$1.8 million is very substantial, we could increase that if we were to commit the independent operators to work in concert with the band councils and the communities of those areas. They have the mills. They are not large mills, but they do have the mills. With the government's support, then it could possibly set up larger mills or portable mills to work in these areas. I am wondering if the Minister could comment about what steps are being taken to touch base with all the private operators and see if they can work with the community organizations on this matter?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the officials that deal with interested business applicants have been consistent in informing those businesses that apply for harvesting permits, to show some substantive indication they will, if they do not in their initial year of operation, early in the following year or years show some substantive commitment to processing a semi-finished or finished product by setting up a sawmill or showing they will sell to a sawmill located here in the Northwest Territories. In

Page 938

one case that I know of, that was the condition of the issuance of a permit. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the department looked at the feasibility of setting up a sawmill in the Deh Cho area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have been actively encouraging the communities and businesses involved in this sector to look at establishing a sawmill operation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The stumpage fee that is charged to the companies operating in the Deh Cho area, is it comparable to stumpage fees in British Columbia?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we have and are moving towards making sure that while we do not discourage activity and business in this sector, we also get a fair return comparable to southern jurisdictions given our own circumstance in the north. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. For the record, we are on Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1997-98, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, page 11-19, forest management, operations and maintenance. I recognize Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister can give us a little background on the forest fire management as far as the amount of hectares of marketable timber that have been saved last year. Is there any data that would provide that type of information? In other words, to compare it against money we are spending fighting forest fires, are we in fact saving any marketable timber? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to isolate it to that extent, but we do know how many fires were started in the Deh Cho area and how many were put out within the first 24 hours, how many went out by themselves through the grace of God or whoever is running this entire operation. We know how much we have spent on the initial attack phase. We know how many fires went out of control and those that stopped through natural forces. We know what our total expenditure is. Last year, we know how many fires because we thought they would be a threat to communities and or private property. For instance there was a big concern along the Ingraham Trail. It is always a big concern. There is a very high priority area along the Ingraham Trail, not much timber potential there. Timber potential is one of the factors we use to decide where the priorities are for fighting fires. Maybe that is another way of answering the Member's question. If it is possible, I am not sure it is, we could try to give the Member some idea of how much potential timber we saved in the Liard area by fighting the fires we did, which could have threatened so many million dollars worth of harvestable timber, which is actually the entire Liard Valley. We could try to do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the department have a line drawn or are there certain areas, other than the protection of property, that they have arbitrarily decide they will not fight fires in other than for protection of property? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, we have areas of priority. We also work with communities. We would be requested very often by a community leader, perhaps a chief, to consider fighting a fire that may have started 200 miles from the community but for reasons that are important to the community they want us to fight the fire, we would do that. But we are sometimes requested by outfitters to fight fires that are say 150 miles out that threaten

their business. We do have areas that are of high priority. We are flexible. Last summer, for instance, we offered to communities to have authority at the community level to spend up to, I think, \$30,000 on the initial attack operation. For instance, we were prepared to give the chief in Rae, the mayor or local committee if the community wished the power to spend in the initial attack on the fire up to \$30,000, so they would have that type of local control. As far as I know, none of the communities last summer in any case, took us up on that offer, apparently being quite satisfied with the response capability and sensitivity by our department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a final question. The Minister has talked about fighting forest fires as regards concerns about loss of property and also about loss of potentially marketable timber. Where does health fit into it? I think it is fair to say a number of communities have expressed concerns with the amount of smoke in the air. What is the department's position? Is it the same as last year and are they proposing to continue that level of acceptability of smoke in the air? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know there were some years when Calgary was complaining about the smoke from the Northwest Territories, including places in Alaska and in Saskatchewan. There is not much we can do about it when we have the kind of fires we have seen in recent years with the drought conditions, the low water content in the ground and the low annual precipitation we have seen in certain years, as well as the kind of summers that we have seen with a lot of lightning activity for instance. We do try to keep the fires down to a minimum within a certain budget. We do not fight all the fires, but we do try. We have tried to increase our response capability so that in the initial attack

phase we are trying to increase our capability of putting out as many fires as possible in the initial start up times. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have forest management, operations and maintenance and I have Mr. Ootes, Mr. Erasmus and Mr. Roland. I will recognize Mr. Roland, seeing as he has not had an opportunity to speak on this activity. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of forest management, I would like to know if there are any plans within this budget to close any facilities for forest fire fighting? Are there plans to close any down or to privatize any areas of it? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have an on-going commitment to privatize where we can. For instance, we still have a number of government crews for fire fighting. We are prepared to privatize all of them as soon as the private sector is capable of taking over those functions and we are satisfied the fire crews we have are going to be treated fairly and properly in the process of privatization. As far as particular operations are concerned, I am not aware of any particular moves to shut down operations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

I take it then from the Minister's remarks, that what we had in the previous year will still be functional this summer and I am speaking specifically in the Inuvik region.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I do not think there are any reductions, but just to make sure that I am not lying about it, that is why we are going through the figures here. Perhaps

I should not jest. We had a rough day yesterday, but I am not aware of any reductions in that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I now recognize Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the Cansos Contract was let last year, it was to be on a trial basis, I understand, and an evaluation was to be done at the end of the forest fire season. Could the Minister tell us if this evaluation has taken place?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have reviewed the Cansos operations last year. It is not quite complete, but we know that because of the low level of activity, it would not be as substantial as we would like. We will probably proceed to continue the operation this year and continue with the review to see how well it is operating as it was originally intended. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister tell us where the Cansos were based and where other airplanes were based?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had intended one in Deline, one in Wha Ti and one in Lutselk'e, but I know they were moved around depending on the conditions through the summer. I think the CL-215s were also moved around. The same with the DC 4s, but we could provide to the Members a pattern where we proposed to locate them and where they were actually located through the course of last year's fire season. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you. The provision of up to \$30,000 expenditure for community authority in early warning system. Could the Minister tell us how many communities accessed that funding?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware that any community took up our offer to let them have that responsibility. If I am wrong, I will let the Member know and correct myself. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Is it correct, though communities do have the authority to spend up to \$30,000 for early detection and suppression? I guess that is a question for the Minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

That is true. Mr. Chairman, we offered and I went to Fort Simpson, for instance, early last year in May to have a community meeting to deal with two primary issues. One was the incredible concern and the distress the community suffered in the previous year because of the very thing that Mr. Seamus Henry referred to, which is the smoke and the difficulties that many residents faced, especially the elders, the senior citizens and the women and children. There was not much we could do about it. We monitored that and in fact thought about evacuation, which was done, as you know, two years ago in Tulita and Norman Wells. We treated it as a very serious concern. However, the only thing that we could do is try to fight fires at the initial stage and to try to improve our capability there since once fires get larger and more out of control, our capabilities are almost insignificant most of the time. We offered to try to improve our performance in Fort Simpson and to all

communities. We communicated that through our officials. If Fort Simpson wanted to, they could have a budget approval to spend up to \$30,000 without involving the fire centre in Fort Smith. They could use that to hire crews to hire whatever equipment, manpower, aircraft that was available to them to combat fires at the initial stage. Once they hit that \$30,000 mark, if they had not put out the fire, then to relay that to us so we could engage our other resources beyond the \$30,000 mark if we felt it was required. Thank you.

Page 940

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Under what conditions can communities access this program? Is there an understanding by every community that they can proceed and deal with the fire centre in Fort Smith on this and state they have a problem on their hands? They understand they can spend up to \$30,000?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, that is how it works. If a community is interested in exploring that or taking advantage of such an arrangement, they would contact my office or the fire control centre in Fort Smith and we would make the necessary arrangements. We would make it a condition from the initial stage that they would keep us aware of what they are doing, so there is co-ordination with the fire centre in Fort Smith. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I believe that was five questions from Mr. Ootes. I have Mr. Erasmus on the list.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister has indicated an area of logging and harvesting logs and that. The Minister had indicated a sustainable development, I believe was the words that he used. I was wondering

if he could explain a little bit more what he means by sustainable development of the forest resources?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We have forests and we know there is an indication that entire forests have literally burnt to the ground. Then there has been new growth. We now have new forests. With human activity increasing, we are obliged to look at a way in which we could manage these resources in order to make sure that our forests never burn in huge quantities the way they have. We have fire fighting capabilities that would minimize such an occurrence. For instance, in the Liard Valley, we know the entire valley is a mature timber stand and that at some point or other it could potentially go up in smoke, given the right conditions. We try to have a fire fighting capability that would minimize such an occurrence. We also try to put a management plan in place and are requesting that management plans be developed between our department, with the help of researchers and other work with local people at the community level and regional level. We would put together a plan, do inventories of harvestable timber, and give us a plan on how much timber they think could be harvested under what type of harvesting conditions that would allow for the forest to still be there for the people today, with regrowth for people tomorrow and for future generations. That is what we are talking about when we say sustainable, that there is no erosion or loss of forest habitat, growth or top soil as a result of harvesting. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The management plans that were mentioned, would those include the people doing the logging having to plant trees or seeds after they have done some logging in an area?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. It is supposed to be part of the management plan. It can be part of the conditions set out in the management plan. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Does this mean that some management plans might not include the planting of the trees and seeds by some forest harvesters?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Depending on the method of harvest and the conditions under which timber is harvested, I would say normally it would be included. For instance, if there are fairly narrow strips of timber being harvested in a certain area, then it may not be necessary to do reseedling. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Is this the way it is done in the southern provinces such as BC?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In British Columbia and other places, they generally follow the same approach. At least, that is what they say they do. Clear cutting is not something that we encourage. Everybody is looking at good, sound management plans that depend on the type of terrain and the type of timber being harvested. Very often reseedling is a condition for the timber permits and sometimes they are not. It just depends on the terrain and the type of conditions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Final supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister referred to reseedling. Does this mean they would plant seeds or do they plant little trees, seedlings?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In Tulita, a couple of years ago, most of the timber around the community burnt and was scorched. It included our landmark at Bear Rock. We worked with the community on a plan to bring seedlings into the community and have them plant these in certain priority areas, namely around the immediate vicinity of the community. Sometimes, if you leave it, it takes years and years before anything substantial comes back. If you

Page 941

want, seedlings are the answer. If you want to keep spruce coming back or there is a large growth of poplar or birch, then you often have to go to seedlings. Even at that, sometimes the birch and the poplar push the spruce out of the area. That is the type of thing I meant when I say it just depends on the conditions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Next, I have Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to get some information on the fire centre in Fort Smith, both at the centre and the headquarters. How many employees are employed there on a permanent basis?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

We will look for that information and provide it to the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Madam Chair, what I am interested in knowing and the reason I wanted the number of individuals is, do these people all work on the fire suppression program or do they have other duties and responsibilities beyond the fire suppression program?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We will try to provide a breakdown for the Member. We have moved towards integrating forest management with fire fighting at the regional level. It may be difficult. We can make an attempt to define who the people are, who are solely dedicated to fighting fires located in the fire control centre in Fort Smith. We will see if we can do that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. On the forest management side, would the Minister know how many people are employed on that end?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Madam Chair, I want to ask the deputy minister if he could provide the detail that the Member is requesting?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Gamble.

MR. GAMBLE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In this activity there are a total of 79 PYs. About 9 are involved in management, 49 in the forest fire program, 15 in forestry development and they share a technical support staff of about six positions. Six positions are shared by the forest fire and the forest management programs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Gamble. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I am not sure what type of work is done by the forest fire suppression individuals in the winter time, for example. Can the Minister enlighten us as to whether there is a possibility of combining these areas and responsibilities so that down the road we can economize if necessary?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Gamble.

MR. GAMBLE:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In fact, that is one of the reasons why we combined the two activities into one. A large number of the positions in forest fire management are actually seasonal positions and, in a year where there is not a lot of activity in a particular region, we feel that we can use those crews to do things like timber inventory for commercial harvest, et cetera. That certainly was one of objectives in combining the forest management and forest fire management activities to be able to use in the fire season. Everyone can be working on the fire program. In a year or an area where there is not as much activity in the fire side, they can also be doing the inventory work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. We are on forest management, total operations and maintenance, \$27,484,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. My question is about the forest fire centre in Fort Smith and the feasibility of it being maintained to operate year round. A lot of the people that deal with the forest fires, such as fire fighters, are laid off all winter. At the Fort Smith fire centre, there are people that have been hired in the warehouse and also at the fire centre year round. This was a concern of the Resource Committee in which we were asking for exact inventory of the feasibility of maintaining this operation. You are tying it into the forest management side and saying that was one of the reasons for amalgamation. I would like to know exactly what is the cost to operate and maintain that forest fire centre all year versus having to shut down during the off-season when there are not any forest fires?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We can get the budgets and actual expenditures for the fire centre from previous years and provide it to the Member. As I have said, we have undertaken a review of the operations of the fire centre to see what we can do to better utilize the resources we spend in this area, knowing that it is a seasonal operation and finding ways, for instance, to privatize certain operations. The review is not finished and we do not have the report as of yet. We still have some work to do. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. My other question is about individuals who take their holidays during the summer

Page 942

season when the fire season is on, yet they work at the fire centre all winter. It does not make economic sense. They are there to basically manage fires, but there are individuals who seem to have taken their holidays during the summer season when the fire is on. Is that a common practice of this department?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you Madam Chair. I am not aware of it. Perhaps the Member could share that information with me. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Krutko

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister of this department check into that to ensure that is not the case? I believe last summer when we were in Fort Smith, this did come forth to the committee.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, I will inquire about that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In regards to ensuring that we have an adequate workforce during the fire season, who specialize in forest fire management, would it become eroded because of the extra duties that the fire centre is having to take on?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

No, I do not think so. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Any further questions, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO:

How soon does the Minister intend to have the report completed and in regards to the review?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

I would hope within a month or so. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. That was five questions, Mr. Krutko. I do not see anyone else's hand up. Forest management, total operations and maintenance \$27,484,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Agreed. Thank you. Detail of capital, forest management, buildings and works, Fort Smith region, total region, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Building and works, Inuvik region, total region \$330,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In the area of building and works for the Inuvik region, I would like to know if the Ninelin Lake's lookout towers are still in the five year capital plan or have they been removed? I believe there has been some money reduced in this area.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

I do not have that information, Madam Chair. I would have to get back to the Member with that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Buildings and works, Inuvik region. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister ensure that these will remain in the capital plan and they will not be deleted? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. We do not anticipate any change in this area. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister inform me if this amount for the lookouts in Inuvik region has

been reduced? Is that the number that was there from last year?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes. There has been no change, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Total region, \$330,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Total buildings and works, \$630,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Acquisition of equipment, headquarters, total region, \$363,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Acquisition of equipment, Fort Smith region, total region, \$15,000.

Page 943

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total acquisition of equipment, \$378,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Total activity, \$1,008,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Moving on to page 11-21, details of grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$4,172,000. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Could the Minister tell us what the grants to the western hunters and trappers associations are? How much do they total this year? This past year?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The revised forecast for this current year is \$2,667,000. There may have been a very recent addition to this number, but I do not have that number. As you can see, we are proposing to spend less than \$2.5 million this coming year as requested by the committee.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

If I recall correctly, the committee had recommended that communities be advised of the process and the communities should apply a year ahead of time, so the government could budget correctly for this particular area of expenditure. I wonder if this procedure is being followed, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We have worked with the communities to let them be aware of this program and have indicated we would like to stay within the projected budget figures on a yearly basis. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Is the program running now on the basis of a community can apply at any time throughout the year and obtain funding this particular year?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. We have been operating on a first come, first serve basis. Some communities apply in a year and it takes six months, sometimes a year before the necessary work for them to be eligible comes about. We have been working on this type of basis. In complying with the requests for the committee, we have attached this proposed figure, that I think is realistic, of how much I think would be accessed by interested, eligible communities in the coming year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

I understand there is a sunset clause on this particular program. I believe in Nunavut it was a five year program for \$3 million per year matched by the federal government, if I recall correctly. Could the Minister tell us when this particular program sunsets, both in Nunavut and in the western territory?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I cannot remember. I think in Nunavut it was \$15 million over five years. The annual allocation has been \$3 million that this government contributes every year to that trust. In the west, the Cabinet had indicated there was a total maximum contribution allowed up to \$15 million as well. There was no timeframe for that, except it would be done over a period of years as communities became interested because of the different make-up of the western part of the territory. Allocating roughly

a little less than \$3 million a year for five years would get the job done. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes, your questions are related to grants or contributions? We are still on grants.

MR. OOTES:

Madam Chair, they do relate to page 11-23, but now that we are on it I may as well finish it.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I am afraid we are going to have to ask you to hold your questions until contributions comes up. Mr. Steen will be taking the chair for consideration of contributions. Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. In the fur price program, can the Minister tell me, there is a reduction here of \$100,000. Are there certain pelts that will be affected by this? What is the overall reduction here? What areas will it be felt in the most? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. I believe the projection is because of the recent increase in fur prices. The amount we have to compensate for trappers in the harvest of fur is going to diminish as a result of increasing fur prices. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair. If the prices go up, the trapper will not receive any less because it is balanced off because of the prices of the sale of the item versus the

Page 944

amount of grant they receive from this government? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Thank you. Mr. Roland. Total grants, detail of grants and contributions, total grants, \$4,172,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):

Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

For the record, we are on resources, wildlife and economic development, grants and contributions, page 11-22, contributions. Total for contributions is on page 11-25. I have Mr. Roland and Mr. Ootes.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of a number of contributions, the wildlife management boards, both the wildlife committees, regional wildlife organizations, the committee to harvester assistance program, community organized hunts, if they are all related, the way I look at it in that area alone, they are receiving a \$747,000 reduction. Is this going to be felt? It is to do with the hunters and trappers committees. Am I correct in that area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is true, we are cutting our support to these various organizations and institutions, but we have been shaving support through other programs such as the Harvester Assistance Programs. So the amount of money available for core funding, you might call it, has diminished as it has for organizations across all departments right across the territories, including government departments. We feel we have compensated for that by providing additional money, for example, the minimum price fur program and the

Harvester Assistance Program, both in east and west.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Correct me if I am wrong. With all of these reductions you say that is being balanced out in the area of the western harvesters, for example, in the west, the Western Harvester Support Program, in one hand they are reducing the hunters and trappers committees and associations from this area and the other side you are bumping it up. Am I understanding you correctly?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is true we have cut the amount of money for core funding for administration of these organizations that operate on behalf of harvesters, hunters and trappers, but we have increased support and increased the amount of money flowing to the harvesters and hunters and trappers, for instance, through the Nunavut Harvester Program and the Western Harvester Support Program. So we are providing more program money directly to hunters and trappers. We have decreased the amount of dollars we are making available to the organizations for the operation of their offices. It reflects the cut backs being faced with all organizations, including the government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the past chairman of the Hunters and Trappers Committee, although you are saying you are making money available to the actual hunters and trappers themselves, and I understand this will have to be matched equally by dollars, a lot of hunters and trappers still practice this style of life and need the support of the central location of an office to help them access different program areas and understand a lot of the changes that have come down. For example, gun control has raised a lot of concern in the Territories. Without a

place like an office to go to, they would not receive the help and, in some cases, the translation to make it more understandable in layman terms. I am very concerned that we are cutting so much out of all these areas, from the committees that help the people remain in this lifestyle. In some areas it is fairly active and productive, actually a bit profitable, especially if the prices of fur are going up. I am very concerned we have hit so many different areas all at one time. Can the Minister inform me of what affect that will have on the different committees and boards? Is there an average number that will be affected or will it be higher in one area versus another? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no way to avoid the reductions that we have. It has been literally right across the board as the Members are aware. What we have been doing in recent years is trying to find ways to increase the support we give to hunters and trappers. The Nunavut Harvester Assistance Program, for every time this government has put \$3 million dollars into it, the Nunavut land claims organizations have put a matching \$3 million into it. When we are done, there is going to be in excess of \$30 million dollars in a trust account that will be there for them forever. It is the interest from that which will be made available to the harvesters in the Nunavut territory.

The groups that are applying for this money in the west are operating on the same basis. It is not to be used for administration, but simply to flow directly to benefit the hunters and trappers within the community or region where the application is made from. This money is matched by these groups, put into an account and it is the interest from it that they are going to start using. That is generally what we have been doing. I agree the reductions should not be made, but as I said, every organization in the territory has been faced with reductions and the hunters and trappers are not exempt from that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Again, from my experience from being on a hunters and trappers committee, I know that there was an

agreement signed. I do not know if it was a contribution agreement. Obviously it was a contribution agreement that at

Page 945

one time was set up for a five year period. Has that agreement expired or is that just being withdrawn and this new one being put in place with the reductions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of that detail, so I will have to enquire about that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the department have information available on how the different regions will be affected by this reduction?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

We can make that information available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Contributions. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the Western Harvester Support Program, does the federal government match the contribution that is made by the territorial government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

No, the federal government is not involved in these arrangements. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the federal government contribute an equal amount in the case of the Nunavut Hunters Income Support Program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

No, Mr. Chairman, the federal government does not contribute there either. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move on to the NWT Development Corporation which is part of this particular details of grants and contributions under resource management and economic development. The 1996-97 revised forecast had \$11 million dollars and the 1997-98 contribution is \$6 million dollars. Could the Minister tell us what the \$5 million dollar difference is for, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. That blip is attributed to the Mortgage Investment Fund that was supposed to be set up. The \$5 million that is shown as a blip is going to be lapsed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

So if we have a lapse of \$5 million dollars, Mr. Chairman, does that mean that we have \$5 million dollars left over this year in our general revenue fund and is that available for expenditures in other areas?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, for greater certainty, the question should go to the Minister of Finance. I do believe that he was aware a few months ago that money would lapse and has taken that into consideration in preparing his budget outlook. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

The \$6 million dollars that is contributed looks like it is done on an annual basis, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could tell us what this \$6 million dollars is for. Why does the Development Corporation need a further \$6 million dollar injection this year, when it has been done for several years?

I am assuming that the corporation is running a number of companies and that, of those companies, presumably some should be profitable by now. I am wondering if the Minister could identify where this money goes within the Development Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. I believe that we tabled a report--if we did not, we should have--of the NWT Development Corporation. I know we made it available to the standing committee. What that \$6 million is for is to continue to provide a subsidy to operate those businesses that the Development Corporation was originally mandated to set up. That is, to create employment in regions and communities where there is little prospect for investment by any other source, investing money and subsidizing businesses that have little or very low prospects of getting a return, in order to create employment opportunities.

As you know, we have a new president for the Development Corporation, who has undertaken the rather ambitious workload to look at ways in which we could diminish the dependency that these subsidies, these business entities have on continued subsidies--to look at ways we could create more efficiency and looking at market plans, for instance. But at this time, it is holding at this figure of roughly a little over \$6 million a year that we require on an annual basis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I will now recognize Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had a similar concern to Mr. Ootes on the \$5 million dollar less for the NWT Development Corporation, but that has been explained as money for the Mortgage Investment Corporation. This \$6,111,000 dollars for the Dev. Corp, does that include their O and M?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. Mr. Kakfwi.

Page 946

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, it does.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

So this is actually a reduction then, is it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Erasmus, I do not think all your question was recorded.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just looking back at 1995-96 and it is \$70,000 less, I guess it does not matter because that was a reduction for last year, and this year it is actually going up \$100,000 if we are taking off \$5 million. So that is fine, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. I recognize Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I looked through these four pages for a total of approximately \$20 million dollars and I notice examples where funding is provided for economic development officers.

I would like to talk a moment about the economic development arm of the city of Yellowknife. Some years in the past, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism supported the city of Yellowknife through a contribution similar to what is happening with a number of other communities. I believe that those monies have been put to good use and not only for the city of Yellowknife, there is one initiative that they took on in trying to promote the Northwest Territories from the film point of view and it is a very heavy intensity of employment used in that particular industry. The spin-offs that have been generated in other communities from work done by the city of Yellowknife development officers created work performed in Iqaluit, some in Fort Simpson, and some in Fort Smith. I think that this position has demonstrated that there have been spin-offs to the Territories and not just localized.

As I look at these pages, my question to the Minister is where would the city of Yellowknife, especially in these difficult economic times where we have lost a number of employees and could use some financial support to try and get this worthwhile venture back on its feet, could the Minister point out to me on these pages where his department could be approached by city officials for some financial support in their economic development office? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no money specifically allocated in this budget for the fair city of Yellowknife. We have tried to maintain those things that we feel are of utmost importance, especially to the really hard done by communities. No doubt the city has done, and could do, continued good work that benefits people right across the territories.

If there are initiatives like that, as a Minister, certainly as a government, I think we would be prepared to look at it. I do not have anything specific to offer at this time. If there is a specific initiative advanced by the city of Yellowknife, I would be prepared to look at that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I have contributions. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

You have the floor, Mr. Ootes.

Committee Motion 29-13(4): Recommendation to Provide NWT Development Corporation Subsidiaries' Annual Financial Statements to the Resource Management Committee

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee recommends that the Minister of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development ensure that any company in which the Northwest Territories Development Corporation has a controlling provides financial statements to the Minister on an annual basis in a timely manner. Further, that these statements be provided to the Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Ootes, your motion is properly translated in the appropriate language and appears to be in order. To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe we have a quorum.

-- Bell

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

I recognize a quorum, Mr. Ootes. You have the floor, Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason for this motion is that the Standing Committee on Resource Management would like to be able to review the financial reports of each of the corporations that the GNWT has a controlling interest in through the Development Corporation. Additionally, the Auditor General's report stated that companies and corporations in which the government is expecting annual reports, these are not received on a timely basis. I think we have included the word timely that would address that particular issue as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. To the motion. You have the final say, Mr. Ootes. Question is being called. All those in favour? Thank you. Opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a further motion that we extend sitting to complete this department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour to extend sitting? Opposed? The motion is carried. We will extend sitting until we are finished with this department. I am back on contributions. Contributions. I would like to draw the committee's attention in consideration of an issue I wish to pursue under this item. I would like to request the concurrence of the committee to allow Mr. Roland to assume the chair of the committee. Do I have the agreement of the committee?

Page 947

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Mr. Roland.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you. Under resources, wildlife, and economic development, under contributions. Total contributions, \$20,313,000. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could identify how many committees would have access to the \$358,000 identified?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Point of Order

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Point of order, Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The people just voted to extend sitting, now there is nobody here. There is no quorum, sir.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. You have raised a point of order on no quorum. You do have a point of order. Therefore, I shall ring the bell.

-- Bell

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

I recognize a quorum. Mr. Steen had asked a question. Mr. Kakfwi, response.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the audience. We can provide to the Member a list of every organization to whom we provided a contribution last year with the amount. We anticipate the same groups that we have provided money to last year to be requesting contributions again this year. As the Member realizes, there is a reduction in the contributions this year of about \$2 million. There is a reduction. It is a reduction faced by every group that has received funding from this government because of the reductions faced by the government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated earlier that the Western Harvester Support Program is accessible to the groups in the west. The Nunavut area gets funding through the Nunavut Hunter Income Support Trust. Is the Minister suggesting that those committees that have access to this harvesting support program through their corporations are going to be the ones that are going to be reduced versus those that do not have access to this program will not be reduced?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have not thought about that. The groups that we provided contributions to last year at the community level, we are just going to have to reduce it on a pro-rated basis because the total amount that we are contributing this year has been reduced. That is how we are going to do it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Mr. Chairman, if the Minister could forget I ever suggested it, if he has not thought of it yet. Mr. Chairman, I am very concerned about the reduction similar to the other Members to the Hunters and Trappers Administration Fund. That is really what it is. It is not really used for any other purpose except to pay a part-time secretary to do the paper work, to do the filing, to arrange the minutes of the committees and to keep track of the committee minutes. It is a very small fund if you divide it by the amount of committees that have access to that fund. It is going to hit the hunters and trappers where they really need that support. I noticed in the opening statement by the Minister that he suggested that all of his cuts in his department have been mostly away from the harvesting support programs. I appreciate that. I think the hunters and trappers appreciate that. I am really concerned about the hunters still having the ability to keep track of their paperwork.

It must be realized that these hunters and trappers do not respond to their own members' concerns. There are all kinds of paperwork that comes through that office, including scientific application permits from this government, requests from this government for information on land use applications, as well as from the federal government. There are all kinds of applications that come through the hunters and trappers. They need this administration funding. I believe it would seriously affect the ability of the hunters and trappers committees to operate. It could be argued that some of the money that is being directed towards Western Harvester Support Program, in particular my region, hunters and trappers would have access to that funding for administration purposes. It takes away from the purpose of why the money was there in the first place,

which was to help harvesters, not do the paperwork. In that sense, the money that is available to the group and let us not forget, it is only the interest that is available to them, it is not the principal. If you divide those interests up into the communities, it does not amount to much when you divide it by the population. It is very small. All that is available is the interest. The principal is not available. Do not forget, those people are using their own land claims money in order to set the program up so they can use their own money to harvest. Obviously that cuts down on their requirement to the government to harvest. It does not cut down on the requirement of paperwork that comes through those offices. My point, Mr. Chairman, is reduction to that particular program is a reduction to the ability to the hunters and trappers to respond to government. I am prepared at this time, Mr. Chairman, to put forward a motion, if I may?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Continue, Mr. Steen.

Committee Motion 30-13(4): Recommendation to Reinstate Funding for Local Wildlife Committees to Levels Equivalent to the 1996/97 Fiscal Year

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move this committee strongly recommends that the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development reinstate funding for the local wildlife committees at funding levels

Page 948

equivalent to the 1996/97 fiscal year. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. The motion is being distributed. It has been translated and it is in order. To the motion. Mr. Steen.

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I believe I spoke long enough on the motion or the principal of the motion. I would appreciate comments back from the Members if they feel they would like to comment on the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. To the motion. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am supporting this motion. I know the local hunters and trappers association does a lot of work and, due to some unfortunate circumstances, they have not had any funds for some time. This is the first year they will receive a bit of funds and I know it was not very much. From the looks of this, those funds would almost be cut in half. The money they receive is not even enough for a part-time secretary, never mind someone to run the organization and to ensure that things are happening properly and information is being disbursed, perhaps safety courses are being organized and run, those types of things. I can not in all good conscious agree to see this fund reduced by close to half. I will be voting in favour of this motion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Erasmus. To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have also given some thought to the motion and I feel I can support the motion from the sense that I feel this is going to an area and a group of people who are independent, they are out there working and they are maintaining their lifestyle through this. So many times we see money going into areas to support various areas such as the social envelope area. I am not critical of that, I also feel that we have to start encouraging people who are independent who are able to provide work through a good means and will contribute economically to the territories as a result overall. I am supporting this motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be supporting the motion. Mr. Steen was most eloquent on the situation and his concerns. I would like to point out the information I have indicates to me RWED plans to lapse the \$5 million that was in the budget for NIC. I am hoping, given that kind of lapse and the other amounts of money that are in this budget, that the Minister will have room to be able to readjust and still hit his targets. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will also be supporting this motion. The hunters and trappers association plays a key role in a lot of our communities, especially with the downturn in the fur industry. We are finally seeing the rebound. I believe it is critical we support initiative of enhancing that industry and support it in whichever way we can. By this drastic cut, I do not think that is a way of support. Also, if there are areas they are looking at for funding, I did make a brief (inaudible) to the fire centre in Fort Smith with that review, maybe you can also look at the savings that can come with that review and put it back into this particular area. I will be supporting this motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. Mr. Steen, do you want to have the last say?

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to say to the Members that I appreciate this support you have shown for this very important program for the hunters and trappers. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roland):

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, contributions, total contributions, \$20,313,000. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the northern accord contributions, I note that the contribution is for \$140,000 and for 1996/97 it was \$100,000 and \$93,000 the year before. Mr. Chairman, where are we with the northern accord? I see money being expended here, but I have not heard what is being accomplished. Can I be informed as to what is happening with regard to the northern accord and what is the likely outlook for it for this coming year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I wish to extend my appreciation to Mr. Roland for doing a good job in the chair. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Premier is the lead on the devolution file. He is presently assessing prospects for further work in regard to the positions of the aboriginal organizations. We anticipate some more work in this area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to know what work is being done? We are spending \$340,000 in the last three years. What work is being done?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The government has been proposing to accept administration for oil and gas and minerals and more recently, looking at the framework that would look at taking over responsibility for inland waters and lands as well. We drafted a proposed framework agreement and have circulated it to the aboriginal organizations for comment. We are currently looking at their base response to-date, possibly revising this framework agreement and possibly looking at a more simplified staged series of agreements to arrive at the same goal. The Premier is handling that, as I said earlier. It would be more appropriate to ask him for more detail if the Member wishes to get more detail beyond what I have provided. Thank you.

Page 949

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do we have people within the Department of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development working in this area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Mr. Chairman, I am a bit confused. We have individuals working under the direction of the Minister, but I have to ask the Premier about where this is going. Why do I have to ask the Premier about the northern accord situation, when the individuals working on this and the finances are within the Minister's responsibility?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, you might call it a gentleman's agreement or Premier's prerogative, but on this particular file the Premier, because of the political sensitivities, has asked to take the lead on it. I have agreed and arranged for the department to work directly with the Premier on this file. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the Business Credit Corporation and the other economic (inaudible) through the lending agency of this government, yet we find ourselves writing off a lot of bad debts with a lot of these loans every year. Since it is public funds being used, can those names of individuals who receive funds on behalf of this government be listed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe those are all brought to the Legislature for approval. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So an individual gets a loan from the Business Credit Corporation or the Development Corporation, the names are listed automatically?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that we do this and it is done by the Minister of Finance. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The point is that it seems like a lot of these loans are allocated to companies in the larger centres. There does not seem to be as much access from the smaller communities or the outlining regions versus the larger centres, say within the Fort Smith region or the Yellowknife area. Does he have a listing of where these dollars are being allocated? What percent is going to any particular region versus being spent in the larger centres.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Both the NWT Development Corporation and the Business Credit Corporation provide annual reports that are shared with Members of the Legislature. We have offered to provide more detailed reports, if Members wish, through arranging meetings directly between the Members and, for instance, the NWT Development Corporation. We have just passed a motion asking that each subsidiary, each company under the Development Corporation provide annual reports, detailing accounting of their operations to this Legislature. I think people are moving towards acquiring more information. As a general rule, you would see that in terms of contributions, it is the smaller communities that get a greater percentage of

contributions, the larger centres looking at the larger loans. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not think my question was answered. I asked if they have a breakdown of funds being allocated through loans or grants to particular regions and if there is a regional breakdown on the specific amounts, so we can have a general idea of how much is going into any particular region, so we can say those funds are being accessed more from the larger centres versus the regional outlining regions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

(microphone off) ... Business Credit Corporation annual report gives a very detailed breakdown of applications submitted and approved by communities, by regions, dollar amounts, and it is all available there. You just have to read it and go through the charts and the figures. It is available. If there are more specific details that are required, if the Member is specific we could probably help him get that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is great to look at a book that statistically tells me that in my region there was \$12,000 given to my particular region in relation to those grants, yet we are talking of hundreds and millions being spent in other areas. That is the point I am trying to get at. Should there be some discretion given in regards to how that money is allocated so it is more fairly distributed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I believe that was a statement. Do you wish to respond, Mr. Minister?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not certain how to respond to that. Are we suggesting that we should stop providing contributions and loans to the large centres and focus solely on the small communities and the

Page 950

smaller regions? I am not certain what the suggestion is. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I will allow Mr. Krutko one more question to clarify his question to you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not think that is the point I was making about taking the money out of larger centres and putting it into small communities. The question I was asking is that I believe that there has to be a more equitable way of distributing funds to ensure that all regions and communities in the north have the same access as larger centres when it comes to accessing funds from these lending institutions that this government funds. Is there some insurance that all regions will be dealt with fairly in regards to the allocation of funds from these lending institutions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a good suggestion. People have to apply for these grants and contributions and loans. In large part we respond to applications. We are also moving to increase the number of community futures programs. There is one set up in Inuvik that serves that particular region. We are looking at setting up more of these to better serve the small communities in those areas that are not being currently served. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I now recognize Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following up on comments made by Mr. Krutko, are there any outstanding loans

from any of the funding agencies of the department, the Business Credit Corporation, the Development Corporation? There is no economic development right now, no business development fund. Are there any inactive loans within those organizations at this time?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can not seem to get clear amongst ourselves here what the question is, what the Member means by inactive loans. Perhaps you could ask if he could rephrase his question? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Clarification, Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Loans that have been made by any of these agencies to businesses that are no longer operational but that have not been listed as bad debts to the government or for write-off. Are there any loans to individuals or companies that have not been brought forward that are, for all intents and purposes, defunct, that have not been brought forward to the Legislature for write-off as bad debts?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Henry, we are in grants and contributions. These are not loans.

MR. HENRY:

Mr. Chairman, grants or loans, it is the same thing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Kakfwi, do you want to respond?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The grants are not repayable, but the loans of the status that the Member refers to are. I believe that there is a legislative obligation on our part to actively protect any outstanding loans that are out there. We have to take every reasonable measure we can to make sure that those are repaid. It is only when we can legislatively

give up any possibility of retrieving those things that the status of them change. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question is on the northern accord contributions. I can appreciate where the aboriginal organizations have to be brought on site and can contribute to the initial work of what should be proposed and the negotiations for the northern accord. Has the Minister been approached by any municipalities or Chambers of Commerce for contributions from this fund so they can also participate from a financial or even a regional area, but mainly from a financial area of expertise to make suggestions or work up ideas to be presented to the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Henry. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Chairman, I have never had the good fortune to be directly responsible for the devolution file. It is a rather challenging file, as you know, by the number of Ministers who have tried to reach a successful conclusion in this area. Again, the question would have to go to the Premier as to how he thinks he can best achieve some results and whether that would include having a partnership or working and funding organizations other than aboriginal organizations in pursuit of devolution.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Henry.

MR. HENRY:

Mr. Chairman, just a comment. The group that is working on formula financing and related matters in the west is made up of Chambers of Commerce, municipalities, not to forget MLAs, and also aboriginal groups. I suggest they are working extremely well together, so it may be something for the Minister to keep in mind and also for the Premier to be aware of, that this type of group may be as good a vehicle to work on a northern accord. It is worth a try. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Do you wish to respond to the comment, Mr. Minister?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

I will just thank the Member for his comment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. I recognize Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister has stated the question should be directed at the

Page 951

Premier, but there are perhaps some questions that the Minister may be able to answer with regard to the northern accord, since some officials in his department do work on this particular area.

Could the Minister tell us if a timeframe has been set for this whole northern accord program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

No, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I am a bit frustrated with the fact that I can not find out what the program is about. I have to ask the Premier, but here I have to approve the funding. I find that rather conflicting because I have to make a decision as to whether I approve the funding. Could the Minister tell me, is he part of the Minister's committee on the northern accord?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Premier does keep me informed of the current activities on this file and I should say that what we are requesting as a government is for the Legislature to approve the allocation of this file. It is generally intended as what we think we are willing to expend in the coming year on this file, provided we think there is reasonable opportunity to get agreement from the aboriginal organizations to proceed with this file. That is what that allocation is for, to contract individuals to help the government get beyond the stage where we can get an agreement, convene a meeting with aboriginal organizations, and cover the costs of reaching agreement with the aboriginal organizations to pursue a devolution agreement with the federal government. That is what the amount shown would be used for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister did not answer my question as to whether he is a member of the Premier's committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no committee on devolution. The Premier does keep us informed on his present activity on this file. What I know is what I have so far informed the Members about in regard to this piece of work. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I am surprised that we have a department and we are funding it through that particular department. I am wondering why this particular funding was not in the Executive and why it is under this particular department when the Minister can not answer the questions? I need answers to these particular questions in order to deal with the funding and it is inappropriate to put the funding here, to put the individuals here, if the Minister cannot answer the questions to it. I think that is a very

important element in my considerations as to what I am doing with this budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again, the monies allocated for devolution have always been under the Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. That department was amalgamated and its original mandate is now within the mandate of this department. For budgeting purposes, this is where it shows up.

The plan of the government, as far as I am aware, is that the Premier will continue to try to reach agreement with the aboriginal organizations, to proceed to actively engage the federal government in reaching an agreement for devolution in the future. The money we allocated here is to provide the necessary money to contract individuals or pay for meetings that will help us reach agreement with the aboriginal organizations. I might say it is my understanding that once the substantive agreement has been made with the aboriginal organizations, I was under the assumption that the Premier would then flip this file over to me. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could tell us who the groups or group was that received \$100,000 last year and what it was used for.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not certain whether that was a contract or a contribution to pay for meetings or whatever it was. I would have to get the details of that for the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Yes, Mr. Chairman, thank you. I would like to have the details of that and who received the funding and what was accomplished with the funding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Yes, it shall be done. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Could the Minister indicate to me when I might be able to receive this information?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. The honourable Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the department and see if we can provide it to the Member before the end of tomorrow. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is in regards to the accessibility of the public to the Business Credit

Page 952

Corporation in regards to a comment made by the Minister about people having the right to fill out applications, but maybe it is in regards to the accessibility of where this office is located. A majority of those loans being lent are in Yellowknife and Hay River, areas adjacent to Yellowknife. Could the Minister look at the possibility of ensuring that the Corporation make itself more visible to the outlying regions and the other communities within the Northwest Territories that it represents?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you. We have given loan authorizations to regional superintendents up to \$250,000. It has been in place for over a year now. We are moving to make loans and contributions more readily accessible to the communities in the last year and will continue to try and do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to the region I represent that caused the question of the \$12,000 being given, which is one loan to an individual, I feel there has to be more effort from the Inuvik region to ensure that there is more accessibility, especially with the downturn of the oil and gas industry. There is not too much economic potential there, but ensures any possibility of accessing funds through this funding agency will be greatly appreciated, so I would like the Minister, if he could ensure there is more attempt given to the Inuvik region or my region in particular, to ensure they have access to these programs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are looking for possible models for how to improve services to communities. Right now we are trying to provide access through community future boards, regional boards that provide access for loans up to \$75,000. Loans above that, up to \$250,000 can be approved right at the regional level by superintendents. Anything above that is still done at the territorial board level. We are moving towards that. If there are specific suggestions or interest at the regional level, that should be entertained and we are definitely interested in hearing proposals on how we could be more responsive and better organized to respond to community needs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister tell me exactly how many aboriginal and non-aboriginal corporations have access to these grants and loans to date, especially with the Business Credit Corporation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reports that have been submitted do not break down into aboriginal and non-aboriginal categories. We do it by regions and by whether you are a level 1, level 2 or level 3 community. I am not certain if I can provide the information that the Member is requesting. I will have to check with the department and the corporations involved. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Can the Minister make an attempt to see if there is a possible way of ensuring that there is some sort of way of monitoring how many aboriginal versus non-aboriginal corporations are accessing these funds?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the contributions that this government makes to promote, stimulate and enhance business development in the Northwest Territories, the annual report of the Business Development Fund, which is available to Members, shows a breakdown on the last page, page 8, which shows the distribution of contribution approvals by aboriginal and non-aboriginal businesses. The total contribution by the government last year was \$3,064,170. Of that, \$2,400,849 went to aboriginal businesses, which is about 78% of total contributions made.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do you have a breakdown exactly where those allocations were made, which regions and communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we tabled the report, it had an accompanying document that provided the information that the Member is requesting. I do not have that here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Minister. I was on total contributions, \$20,313,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed? Thank you. Total grants and contributions is \$24,485,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 11-26, information item, active positions. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in the area of active positions, the reductions we show in positions here. Have those already been done through the amalgamation process or is this past, we are not going to be seeing more reductions in this area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, that is correct, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Active positions, agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Page 11-27, information item, fur marketing service revolving fund. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Thank you. Work on behalf of others, detail of work performed on behalf of third parties, page 11-28, and the total is on page 11-29. Total department, \$3,485,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. I now ask the committee to move to program summary which is on page 11-9. Program summary, resources, wildlife and economic development, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$88,703,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Capital, total capital, \$3,966,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you. Total expenditures, \$92,669,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Does the committee agree that consideration of the department estimates is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Agreed. Thank you. I will now like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for attending the committee. I will rise and report progress.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I would like to call the House back to order. We are on item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Steen.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Steen):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1997/98 and Committee Report 4-13(4) and would like to report progress with two motions being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Steen. Seconded by Mr. Arlooktoo. The motion is in order. All those in favour please signify? Thank you. Opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Meeting of the Ordinary Members' Caucus at 9:00 tomorrow morning.

Orders of the day for Friday, February 28th, 1997:

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
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 11, Loan Authorization Act, 1997-1998
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2, Justice Administration Statutes, Amending Act
 - Bill 8, Appropriation Act, 1997-98
 - Bill 9, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 1996-97
 - Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act No. 3, 1996-1997
 - Committee Report 02-13(4), Standing Committee on Government Operations, Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 03-13(4), Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 04-13(4), Standing Committee on Resource Management and Development, Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 06-13(4), Standing Committee on Social Programs, Report on the 1997/98 Main Estimates
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Page 954

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Clerk. House stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. Friday, February 28th, 1997.

-- ADJOURNMENT