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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, October 30, 2012****Members Present**

Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. I'd like to draw your attention to the presence of the House Honourary Clerk and Table Officer, former Commissioner, former Speaker, former Minister, former Member, former Sergeant-at-Arms, Honourary Captain of the Royal Canadian Navy, Mr. Anthony W.J. Whitford.

---Applause

It's always good to have Mr. Whitford back in the House with us as a Table Officer working with us. Thank you.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 77-17(3):
ADVANCED EDUCATION INITIATIVES**

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment continues improving its programming to ensure adult learners have the tools they require for fulfilled, prosperous lives.

The department has been developing a process for adults to receive their high school diploma, called the Adult Recognition Model. Through the Adult Recognition Model, adults enrolled in Adult Literacy and Basic Education programs may receive high school credits for a combination of academic course work and knowledge or skills they have gained through life experience.

They work through the Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition method, by developing a portfolio of formal and informal learning to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and abilities they have already acquired.

This process also includes a link between the K to 12 school curricula and the adult literacy and basic education curricula. Adult students will now have an easier transition between high school and adult

education. They'll have recognition of their academic achievement and prior learning.

We have already implemented this model in Fort Smith and Yellowknife, with plans to expand to Inuvik.

This great work has taken several years to accomplish and is recognized by the Nunavut government as a best practice they would like to adopt. We recently entered into an agreement with them to share resources from our Adult Literacy and Basic Education program, including the new ARM process for recognizing a student's life experiences in calculating high-school credits. This agreement allows Nunavut to use all of our adult literacy and basic education curriculum and resources, providing a foundation for their own curriculum development.

Mr. Speaker, learning comes in many forms and occurs through all aspects of our lives. We learn at our jobs, from our peers, our families and elders. This new approach helps learners connect education to other aspects of their lives and gain a greater appreciation of their strengths and skills.

One of our greatest resources is our people, and we must provide them with the tools to realize their potential. These new tools give them the opportunity to earn recognition on their paths to leading prosperous lives. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 78-17(3):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Tom Beaulieu will be absent from the House today to attend to a personal matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGHWAY NO. 7

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have to give praise when praise is due. This year I'm pleased to say that the Department of Transportation was able to maintain Highway No. 7 in a very drivable condition. Luckily, because we had a dry summer, road conditions did not deteriorate as much as in previous years. As a result, the region experienced an increase in tourism.

Highway No. 7 is the route to some of the Deh Cho's most spectacular attractions, with mountain views and plenty of wildlife to be seen along the way. Tourists on Highway No. 7 can stop to fish for pike, pickerel, or grayling, have a picnic, or visit scenic Fort Liard and purchase unique Dene crafts such as birchbark baskets. Blackstone Territorial Park is on Highway No. 7 and is the entry point for rafts, canoes and kayaks on the river system, as well as people coming out of the famous Nahanni National Park Reserve.

I am pleased that more visitors were able to access these attractions on Highway No. 7 and very pleased with the attention that the Department of Transportation paid to this important road in my riding. But as I said, it was an exceptional year and we still need more improvements on Highway No. 7.

The first 20 kilometres of Highway No. 7, from the British Columbia border towards Fort Liard, should be chipsealed. This project would stimulate the regional economy by providing lower costs, and safe and reliable transportation infrastructure. Chipsealing would provide a firm road not only for residents and tourists but also for industrial users such as the planned Canadian Zinc Mine in the Deh Cho region, Nahendeh region.

Later today I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation on chipsealing the first 20 kilometres of Highway No. 7.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoché. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY ELECTED HAY RIVER METIS COUNCIL

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the new Hay River Metis Government Council. My colleague Mrs. Groenewegen and I would like to thank the newly elected council: President Wally Schumann, Vice-President Trevor Beck, treasurer-secretary Jacqueline Carriere, director Heather Lynn Jones-Hubert, director Rhonda Plamondon, director

Connie Belanger, director Karen Lafferty, and director Tanner Froehlich.

We look forward to working with this newly elected Hay River Metis Council, and look forward to seeing their many activities and exciting projects they have on the go.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WSCC SAFE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM GNWT ASSESSMENTS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my two-part miniseries on the GNWT's poor performance of its WSCC Safe Advantage program, its last year's doubling of penalties totalling over \$500,000, and its continued skyrocketing claims cost, it is only befitting that yet again we ask the question: Is NWT business subsidizing our government's poor ratings and costs to WSCC?

What started yesterday as a hypothesis in design, slowly unfolded into a series of blundering questions and replies surrounding the GNWT's recent WSCC double penalties and out-of-control claims costs experience. In fact, since yesterday I have been showered with e-mails from businesses from across the territory asking basic questions. Why did my rates go from 50 cents in 2000 to now \$1.95 per \$100, a 290 percent increase over 13 years? Why am I paying thousands of dollars every year and I had only one claim of \$500 in the past five years? Why do they say premiums I pay are based on my claims experience, yet I have not submitted one claim in my eight years of being a business owner, yet I am being assessed at a ridiculous increase this year? This is what the economic engine of our territory is saying and we cannot ignore their pleas.

Furthermore, as I review the transcripts from yesterday, the Minister of Human Resources went on to say on record, in reference to the WSCC Safe Advantage program, "Our concern is with the actual administration of the program." This Minister further elaborated that these concerns were brought and shared with the WSCC, and that the GNWT expected an opportunity to provide input so the GNWT's views could be addressed, and we were informed that the WSCC would comply. I'm sorry; do other businesses that are in the double-penalty situation have the luxury of doing exactly that? Can business question the clearly established Safe Advantage two-part questionnaire? The answer is no, they cannot. They don't have the luxury of questioning those fines, penalties, or attempt to manipulate this program. What gives the GNWT this unfair advantage over regular, hardworking business owners? The answer is it shouldn't.

The clearly cash-strapped WSCC may very well be a victim of a downward trend in the investment market and they maybe have dished out more rewards than they've collected in penalties; however, did they collect the appropriate amount of payroll fees from their largest client who appears to be showing non-exemplary demeanour in claims growth and safety programs, and has an apparent ability to question the means test that they themselves agreed to be measured with? This, I am sure, is a question in the minds of many business owners.

With that, I will be asking the Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission later today these very questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ABORIGINAL HEAD START CHILD-CENTRED CURRICULUM

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to celebrate the launching of the Aboriginal Head Start child-centred curriculum. I visited the Aboriginal Head Start Centre in Ndilo last week and spent some time with Reanna Erasmus, chair of the Western Arctic Aboriginal Head Start Council. Reanna is very excited and proud of this Aboriginal Head Start curriculum, and rightly so. It is history in the making.

Aboriginal Head Start is an early intervention program for Aboriginal children and their families. It was introduced in 1995 to enhance child development for Aboriginal children. There are eight Aboriginal Head Start programs in the NWT: Fort McPherson, Fort Providence, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, Paulatuk, Behchoko and Ndilo.

The Western Arctic Aboriginal Head Start Council was established in 1998, and in 2009 the council began the process of creating a made-in-the-North Aboriginal Head Start curriculum. They realized that having such a curriculum would make it easier to deliver better quality programs. It would create a framework for staff that would provide consistent programming across the eight centres, and be a guide for new staff to follow. The council also recognized one of the most important features of early childhood curriculums: that children learn through play.

On October 16, 2012, the first edition of Aboriginal Head Start child-centred curriculum was launched in Ndilo. This curriculum is the result of more than a decade of research and development, with researchers, people at the community level, the GNWT and the federal government. The curriculum is designed to allow each Aboriginal Head Start site to build its own program through six components: Aboriginal culture and language, education and

school readiness, parental and family involvement, health promotion, nutrition, and social support.

This first edition pilot curriculum is intended to be a model for other Aboriginal Head Start programs across Canada, and the plan is to market the curriculum to raise funds to develop a teacher's guide for this curriculum. The curriculum is already getting attention across North America. It is a product made in the North, by Northerners, for Northerners to help meet the needs of NWT children.

Congratulations to the Western Arctic Aboriginal Head Start Council on this achievement. Thank you to them for your vision and initiative to produce this valuable educational resource.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, the ever-increasing degree and frequency of impact of federal actions on our territorial interests, and the lack of consultation and respect for our needs requires equally frequent response. Federal trade negotiations which damage our ability to protect our economy are another example of federal disregard for hearing and addressing our concerns.

A specific example is the recently revealed Canada-China Trade Agreement. It provides China with the right to claim damages against any level of government in Canada for decisions and laws that result in a reduction of their "expectation of profits." Claims proceedings will be held in secret and if negotiations fail, an arbitration board will decide. Their decisions will be secret and not subject to judicial review.

For example, when any requirements are set under socio-economic agreements for NWT employment, purchasing, training, even environmental conditions on developments such as a form of carbon pricing applied under NWT policy, Canadian policy or Tlicho policy could be construed as affecting expectation of profits. How could the federal government be looking out for our interests and ink such a deal?

On a broader front, we have the ongoing Canada-European Union Free Trade Agreement, or CETA, negotiations, as yet still largely secret. A deal there could be signed before the end of the year. Drug policy changes that Europe apparently seeks would increase already high drug costs in Canada by controlling use of generics. Drinking water, sanitation services, transit, health care, energy, public education and health care, currently largely government services, are all treated as

commodities under CETA. New procurement rules could limit our socio-economic benefits powers.

These interests are critical to our people and, just as with Bills C-38 and 45, the federal government operates in flagrant disregard of our interests. We may not be able to stop them, but we owe it to our public to break the silence or, in the worst case, our support. Thank goodness for leaders such as the Quebec government which showed the power of example when it took the blinders off the CETA process and invited input from across its society and economy.

I will have questions for the Premier and Minister of Intergovernmental Relations on this further example of federal sell-off of territorial interests and how we will make our concerns known to the federal government. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK
HIGHWAY PROJECT

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity to look at a media transcript of an interview that I did with respect to the Inuvik-Tuk highway. Just so that it isn't only the sensational clip of saying maybe it is 50 percent off, the fact that the road is on sale, 50 percent off isn't a good reason to buy it. Maybe I should make that a little more fulsome explanation on where I stand with this project.

We are inching closer to the information that we need to proceed with a project such as the magnitude of building a road between Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. Our government is doing the preliminary work. We are doing the feasibility in the sense of the geotechnical. We have been investing in that. When we have collected all of the information, we will go back to the federal government with that information. We will then have that discussion with them.

The federal government has alluded to financial commitments to participate in the construction of this project because it is something they support. Who can argue with nation building and coast-to-coast ability for people to access the Beaufort-Delta, the Arctic in this way? You cannot argue with that. But we as a government, in terms of our contributions, still need to have a fulsome discussion of the pros and cons.

Is this a project that we can afford, not only for the initial capital expenditure but the ongoing operations and maintenance of a road of this size and in this location? These are all questions that we have to ask ourselves and we have to cost out.

There has been reference made to the fact that this would be a tremendous boom to an economy that is something right now in the Beaufort-Delta. That is a very valid argument. I am completely empathetic with that situation. Maybe there are other ways this government can help support that region, as well, without a 200 to 300 million dollar highway if that turns out not to be the way we are going to go. Quite apart from the highway, we should be looking at ways to help all of the regions find things that can be done in their area to boost their economy.

There are many questions. We need to have that debate. We need not to take extreme positions, but it is our job, as the keepers of the public purse to, when we are going to spend money, ask all of the questions and have an absolutely fulsome discussion of those questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INUVIK MAYOR AND COUNCIL
SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I first came into the session here, a lot of my colleagues gave a lot of congratulations to mayors and councillors that had been elected in their ridings or throughout the Northwest Territories. Today I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the mayor and council for the official swearing-in ceremonies last night in the community of Inuvik.

With that said, I would also like to take a few seconds here to congratulate and thank the former mayor, Mr. Denny Rodgers, for his strong leadership, his strong advocacy for the community of Inuvik and the residents, as well as being a strong supporter of the Children First Society. He went above and beyond some of the duties of a mayor, and he did it with a lot of great work in the community and is also a good mentor in terms of some of the leadership in the community, as well, with his councillors.

I would like to congratulate former Premier and newly elected mayor of Inuvik, Mr. Floyd Roland, and all the other eight councillors. I look forward to working with all of them. It's a good mixture of returning members as well as new members on council, and I know over the next three years we're going to have a strong community with some strong leadership and some very strong advocacy for territorial initiatives and priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly, such as the Inuvik-Tuk highway and the fibre optic link. Moving forward, I think as leadership in the Beaufort-Delta, we will have a really good group of people working there. I congratulate the mayor and councillors for their

official swearing-in ceremony last night in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STAND-ALONE AURORA COLLEGE
CAMPUS IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to offer special recognition to the Minister of Education today. We completed yet another capital with nary a dollar to plan for a stand-alone campus in Yellowknife for Aurora College.

Not only is there no money for this project, there is no timeline. The Minister seems content with the perpetual rental of the college at its current location. I can remember when this was a short-term solution because we were going to build a real campus. There was some real excitement and energy behind that prospects of where we were going next with northern education at the post-secondary level. However, since then, various Members have raised the topic more than 30 times, by my count by going through various copies of Hansard and documents, Mr. Speaker. More than 30 times Members have been promised discussions, plans, partners, and more discussions with results in due time. It seems to be a new kind of time; perhaps the 12th of never, or maybe after that. So I'm not sure if this will ever come to pass.

I believe the college's Board of Governors are as equally frustrated as I am, if ideals of expressing and delivering further enthusiasm on northern post-secondary education continues to be met with stony silence and clear, firm inaction.

The years have gone by. There have been at least two Aboriginal groups who have expressed partnership opportunities to work with Aurora College to help build a stand-alone campus in Yellowknife. There are real groups with real opportunity and enthusiasm to be our partners, but apparently no deal has ever come to fruition, nothing has ever really been explored, we've heard nothing and our partner potential fades away.

The only thing that's ever been built so far are the false hopes for students, staff and the general public, who expect us to help work toward developing a northern university. Again, nothing that will come to pass. Instead, Aurora College seems to be forever in limbo as the Education Minister sets new records on ignoring this issue.

The future of Aurora College in Yellowknife is akin to something like swimming in quicksand: the harder they struggle to reach their dreams, the deeper in disappointment they sink. If this Minister does not care nor ever want to do anything on this initiative, I call upon his honourable credentials and say be honest with northern students and the

northern people that you are not going to do anything. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ENTERPRISE AND KAKISA
WATER SERVICES

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As residents of the Northwest Territories, we often take our abundant sources of high-quality fresh water for granted. Every year the Government of the Northwest Territories makes water and sewer contributions to the communities to operate standardized water and sewer services for all residents. Compared to people in many parts of the world, we are blessed, but I want to ensure we are getting the best value for money.

Enterprise and Kakisa, two communities in my riding, get their water from Hay River. The water is drawn from Great Slave Lake, treated at Hay River's water treatment plant and then trucked 40 kilometres to Enterprise and 140 kilometres to Kakisa by a private contractor. Enterprise bills users on a set rate. Kakisa, due to its small population, does not bill individual users for water. Hay River is responsible for the operations and maintenance and replacement of the water treatment plant.

Enterprise reported a little over \$200,000 in water and sewer expenses last year, and trucking water generated close to \$60,000 in revenue for the community. Kakisa paid about \$170,000 for water and sewer. MACA is proposing an increase in water and sewer funding to these communities this year, but last year's funding fell short of the communities' expenses for 2012.

Both communities want to provide water to their residents independently. The Northwest Territories has some of the finest and most abundant sources of water in the world, yet this government seems to think it makes better economic sense to burn diesel fuel to haul water down a long, dusty highway. Private industry uses basic water treatment technology to serve work sites with a higher population than Kakisa, yet we are told a water treatment plant would cost roughly \$2.2 million, plus ongoing costs for operation and maintenance.

We understand governments are under pressure to adhere to national drinking water quality guidelines. We are all familiar with the horror stories of Walkerton and the terrible water quality problems on reserves down south. We know we need to provide water to our communities at a higher standard of quality. At the same time, it is disappointing that a small community like Kakisa cannot even provide water to its homes and buildings. Just as there must be a simpler, less-

expensive way to provide power than diesel, there must be a simpler, less-expensive way to provide water to this community.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. NADLI: If you want to achieve real changes to the cost of living in our northern communities, we need to look at local solutions and develop unique approaches to the needs of our communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure again to welcome Jeff Corradetti to the House. Welcome, Jeff. You're making a habit of this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 255-17(3): INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The legal consequences of the China-Canada Trade Agreement will be irreversible by any Canadian court or others for 31 years after the treaty is given effect. To sue a Chinese company requires only a minority share in a Canadian asset, and they'll be able to challenge Canadian federal, territorial, provincial, et cetera, decisions outside of the Canadian legal system and Canadian courts. Our ability to ensure local benefits under socio-economic agreements or set out environmental conditions that diminish profits is questionable.

My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. I'd like to ask what input we have had to these agreements. I am assuming this is a concern of the government and have we strenuously objected to those provisions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question the Member is asking is very timely, considering we have just returned from a recent Council of Federation visit to China and noted the considerable interest in investing in Canada by the Chinese and vice versa. I can assure the Member that the CETA that he is referring to is not a trade agreement, but rather a bilateral agreement with

China that will provide for reciprocity and protect investors that invest in China.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the Minister's comments. I wish they were relevant to my question.

I guess I would ask him again, national health spending on pharmaceuticals increased about \$7 billion between 2005 and 2010. Under the CETA proposed provisions, costs would increase a further 22 percent. Our Ministers have told us these are significant proportions of our costs. We can't be silent on this.

Will the Premier vigorously communicate to the federal government the negative consequences of such an agreement to our interests and ask that the drug provisions not be allowed, or has he done that already?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I'd like to answer his question but he keeps changing his question. I think now that he's asking questions about the European Trade Agreement, we are participating in those negotiations and we are providing our input into those discussions.

MR. BROMLEY: Some people, obviously, would call this agreement with China selling out the farm. Obviously, from our recent visit to China that the Premier mentioned, there is no lack of interest. I don't see the need to sell the farm in order to generate business with China.

In terms of the European Trade Agreement, other provisions would also limit territorial and provincial jurisdictions' abilities to legislate local purchasing preference, exactly what our BIP, for example, was created to achieve. These were enabled under the NAFTA provisions to protect these provisions.

Has the Premier written, or will he write to the Prime Minister and state this government's strong opposition to the creation of any such restrictions under a new European Trade Agreement?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: There are 24 FEPAs, as we call it, that are in place or underway. There are no negotiations with regard to the bilateral agreement between Canada and China. It's been negotiated, it's been agreed to so that there is reciprocity between both countries and the investments made by Canadians in China would be protected. It is going forward for approval and we are waiting to see what happens there, because it will provide benefits for investors both into Canada and by Canadians into China.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume from the responses so far that, in fact, we have had no input to that agreement with China, that bilateral agreement. The Quebec government has invited comments from its citizens to add the

public voice to its opposition or input. This government has announced its intention to consult the public on a new economic development strategy.

Will the Premier ensure that any consultation on new Cabinet policy invites our citizens to state their views on the need for local preference policies, and in the meantime express our concerns to the federal government over the potential loss of this power?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: A large part of the rationale for engaging in all of these different free trade agreements is to reduce our reliance on trade with the United States. We need to broaden our trade with other countries. We are doing so. We are consulting. We did meet with the NWT Association of Communities and presented to them the discussions we were having on CETA. As part of the development of a new economic strategy, we will make sure that we seek all input.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 256-17(3):

IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGHWAY NO. 7

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I spoke about the benefits to the residents of Nahendeh by having an improved Highway No. 7 this year. Now, that's what I've been talking about for years. Once we improve our Highway No. 7, we will improve the economy, we'll improve tourism and we'll improve and lower costs of living.

I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation, we've got a budget sitting coming up in February/March, can he make a business case through his Department of Transportation to allocate extra resources to Highway No. 7 in the upcoming budget?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for his question. Certainly, as we move forward I have made a commitment in this House in the past that Highway No. 7, if and when we find additional capital dollars, we would try to identify funding for Highway No. 7 as we move forward. That is still our intention.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm glad of the Minister's commitment to Highway No. 7. I would, as well, like the Minister to make a business case to our Cabinet for increased investment to Highway No. 7 in the upcoming budget for 2013-2014. Can the Minister do that, working with his Cabinet colleagues?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Again, I have made the commitment in the past. There will be additional funding for Highway No. 7. I certainly look forward to that as the process moves along. We'll hear more about that at a later date.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: With the upcoming budget, will it have plans to chipseal the first 20 kilometres of Highway No. 7 from the BC border towards Fort Liard?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As the Member knows, there are a number of areas of concern on Highway No. 7. In fact, several years ago the section from the BC border to the community was chipsealed. The surface wasn't such to hold the chipseal in place and needed to be reconstructed. We had reconstructed 20 kilometres of that portion of road. We need to look at the reconstruction to the Liard junction, I believe 38 kilometres. At that time we certainly will look to see if we have any further capital dollars to allow us to chipseal the portion from Fort Liard to the BC border. That is certainly in the plans, but it will require capital dollars to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to urge the Minister, once again, to seriously consider chipsealing Highway No. 7 from the border towards Fort Liard, the 20 kilometres that we had reconstructed. It will just make life so much easier for the residents of Fort Liard that travel those roads, and the men and equipment that are generating revenue by working in BC.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: That will have to be balanced with the other urgent demands for the highway further down from the community of Fort Liard. We certainly hope to find a balance to find the money to get the chipsealing done.

Reconstruction of that highway is a major concern for us. I've mentioned it before. It will probably require upwards of \$200 million to completely reconstruct the highway. We need to reconstruct portions of that highway that are in desperate need of it. That should be where the capital dollars go first.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 257-17(3):

STAND-ALONE AURORA COLLEGE
CAMPUS IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this year the Minister of Education said that his department was in the preliminary stages of finding partners and funds for the stand-alone Aurora College campus here in Yellowknife. Often we get

inaction confused with incompetence, so the fact is we want to know what is actually happening.

Is anything being done? What progress, to date, could be placed before this House as results to getting a stand-alone college in Yellowknife?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This particular stand-alone campus has been in the works since I became Minister of Education back in 2007. It has been in discussion before me as well. What it has come down to is the resources that we have in the capital. The \$75 million a year that we have for capital infrastructure can only go so far. We talk about the new hospital, we talk about renovation at the hospital, over to the Aurora College stand-alone campus. Some of those areas that we have been working towards that are critical need as well.

When I presented in the House about the capital infrastructure, I did mention that I'm working closely with the Department of Public Works and Services because they have certain guidelines that we have to follow. We have had meetings in the past with various private sectors, as well, having possibly the option of lease to own. At the same time, it does impact the borrowing limit of the GNWT. There are implications. I still have to work with Public Works and Services to make this a reality. We are continuing to look at exploring options as well.

MR. HAWKINS: As the Education Minister says, of a critical need, I would have thought the first thing out of his mouth would have been education is a critical need for Northerners, not excuses why we won't move forward on this particular project.

What options, really, have been developed in advancing the Aurora College project, and what is he willing to put on the table today that shows us we're moving forward, as opposed to backwards, under his leadership?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We are moving forward, not backward. We have made progress. The discussion that we've been having, we extended our lease agreement this past summer, as well, with Northern United Place up to three years and potentially up to five years, depending on the progress we are making with Public Works and Services identifying the funds and resources and potential if there's going to be a partnership involved. Those are the areas.

Education is a priority of this government. My department spent over \$300 million on education factors. We will continue to pursue that. It's a great investment into our people.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, the results seem to prove otherwise, that education isn't a priority of this

particular Minister. When I asked him back on May 31, 2012, about actually laying a plan before the House, giving us some clear definitions of the partners, et cetera, on timelines, he wrote me a letter back, which I tabled in the House almost two weeks ago, and it shows nothing other than says they're continuing the lease.

What can this Minister do by demonstrating real progress has been made on this particular file? What can he tell Northerners? What can he table before the House? What can he actually do to prove he's solved any problem on this particular issue?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: What I can do is present this to the committee of the GNWT and put it as part of the priority for my department, but at the end of the day, \$75 million is the number we're working with.

Again, the hospital and other sectors that are out there are in desperate need, the schools and so forth. Those come into play, because we are talking about education factors as well. We talked about early childhood earlier. We need to heavily invest in early childhood too.

It is a pressing issue that we're faced with. What I can do, again, as the Minister responsible to deliver that as part of the priority for this government, but at the end of the day, we're dealing with \$75 million for the whole Northwest Territories. That will be my initiative to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In scouring the Hansard over the last five years, I found over 30 instances where the Minister keeps saying I'm doing discussion, plans, and it goes on and on and on. The Minister's defence is we have other priorities. There seemed to be money when they wanted to build an office building downtown immediately. They put an office building over education. This is not a new issue.

I call, once again, for the Minister to answer the question. What is he going to lay before the House to prove that they've actually done something on the issue of trying to build a stand-alone college here in Yellowknife, because thus far I've seen nothing?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I'm not sure where the Member's been, but there have been new schools up on the horizon. At the same time, this is an area that we've always, always brought forward. But, again, it's a number figure; \$75 million is what we work with on an annual basis. This has been of interest to us as well. Of course I want a stand-alone campus myself, as the Minister responsible, the best resources that we should have, the technology. But at the end of the day, it's number crunching: \$75 million. I will be pursuing that

forward as an initiative, as capital infrastructure and then the decision will be made from there the following year. I will continue to push that forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 258-17(3):
DREDGING EFFORTS IN THE
PORT OF HAY RIVER

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated in this House before, the waterways in Hay River are very important. It's important to keep the waterways in Hay River open to industry, to commercial fishing, to the community flood safety.

My questions today will be for the Minister of Transportation. What has the Department of Transportation done over the last year to do any kind of dredging program in the Hay River area?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've supplied \$60,000 in a contribution to help work with the Canadian Coast Guard and the Town of Hay River to advance this project along, but we certainly need to be looking at the federal government for an infrastructure program so that we can get the work done that's required in the port of Hay River.

MR. BOUCHARD: I know the department has done some of the minor dock maintenance stuff. I'm wondering if the department has done any assessment of the Hay River channel, the main channel, to do any of that stuff.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The federal dredging program ended in 1994. There hasn't been a program in place since then. The federal government has completed hydrographical surveys of the port of Hay River. They've identified several areas of concerns, but yet they haven't been able to come up with the resources that are necessary to, in a meaningful way, dredge the port of Hay River. Again, that's an area that we have identified as a concern and something that we need to continue to address with the federal government.

MR. BOUCHARD: My next question for the Minister is: Has the Minister had any direct discussions with his colleagues, the federal Minister of Transportation in this area of dredging the Hay River?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes, we have, and I've mentioned this in a previous response to the Member, is that we hope that come 2014 there is a new infrastructure plan put forward by the federal government that the Government of the Northwest Territories can avail itself of to cover off situations where we can partner with the federal government on getting programs like dredging in the port of Hay

River done and other infrastructure projects around this territory.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if the department has any commitments for the upcoming years to look at putting any more dollars of the territorial government into dredging.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Our hope is that a new plan will come forward in 2014. In the absence of that, that is something we would consider.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 259-17(3):
INUUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK
HIGHWAY PROJECT

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement today about the proposed Inuvik-Tuk highway, my questions are for the Minister of Transportation. The questions that have been asked by my colleagues this afternoon are a perfect segue to the questions that I'm going to ask. I mean, when I hear people talking about where are we going to get money for the new hospital, a stand-alone college, reconstructing Highway No. 7, everybody's on the same page today. We all want big capital projects.

With respect to the Inuvik-Tuk highway, I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation what is the total capital budget of this government, not for all capital but in relation to transportation infrastructure and roads. What is the annual budget?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were just before the House earlier this session with the Department of Transportation's capital plan. On highways it was just over \$23 million.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: We are proceeding along with spending money to look at the feasibility and viability of building an all-weather road from Inuvik to Tuk. But even if the project came in at \$200 million and the federal government put in \$150 million, I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation where is our government going to get their share?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The project would be connected to the increase in our borrowing limit. We would access that to put our portion of the construction of that road.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: We would borrow money for our share of that road construction. What puts this project in a different category than borrowing money for any project of all the priorities that have been talked about here today and talked about every day when it comes to the aspirations of the

people of the Northwest Territories? What puts that project into the borrowing category?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, what puts this project in that special light is the fact that Canada is one of the only countries in the circumpolar world that doesn't have road access to the Arctic Ocean. Certainly, that is something that the federal government felt, from a security and a sovereignty standpoint, was something that they wanted to see happen.

We will have a road network in this country that will go from coast to coast to coast, finally, with the construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway. It is a project that the federal government deems of having national significance. It is a partnership. The federal government is committed to the \$150 million. We do need to, once the environmental assessment is done in the new year, sit down with the federal government on the funding arrangement. Our hope is that it would be 75-25 cost sharing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Your final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister speaks of the desire of the federal government from a sovereignty point of view to have this road built. What about the aspirations of the people of the Northwest Territories? How are we going to calculate whether the significant capital investment of this government and the ongoing costs to maintain and upkeep this road is in the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories? By what process are you going to gauge that, given all of the competition of these capital dollars? How are you going to find that out? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, on an annual basis, we do go through the business planning process. The leaders in the Beaufort-Delta have certainly been talking about the Inuvik-Tuk road for a number of years now, decades in fact. We see it as the first stage in the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway that will be integral to the economic growth and success of this territory.

It is something that, with a partnership with the federal government, we feel that we can get it done. It is in an area of our territory right now, in the Beaufort-Delta, where there is not a lot of equipment moving, there is not a lot of work and it is economically depressed. We feel that a project of this size, this magnitude, will really invigorate the region, get people to work and also help with the cost of living in the community of Tuktoyaktuk and any goods that are flown out of Tuktoyaktuk to other communities in the Nunakput riding. We do see the advance of exploration of both onshore and offshore with the development of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway as something that is desperately needed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 260-17(3):
WSCC SAFE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM
GNWT ASSESSMENTS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will follow up on my two-day review of the WSCC federal penalty and our Safe Advantage program assessments. There is over \$750,000 in two years of penalties and our escalating claims cost experience, and I thought we should address the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation and Safety Commission with some of the following questions.

Given the dismal performance in the past few years of the GNWT in our safety performance, many would find it odd that the GNWT as a whole has only had a modest increase of 13 cents to our new assessment rate of 79 cents per \$100 of payroll. Can the Minister validate to the public that this rate assessment is truly indicative of the performance claims growth and classification befitting of WSCC's largest client and largest number of clients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT's assessment rate is increasing from 66 cents in 2012 to 79 cents in 2014. That is an overall 20 percent increase, which is also the maximum annual allowable increase set by the Governance Council. If the 20 percent cap wasn't issued or in place by this government, there would be required a payment of 86 cents in 2013. That would be in addition of the 30 percent increase at that time, instead of 20 percent based on the claims experience. Those are the reasons why the Governance Council is pursuing the rate increase as we speak. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to split hairs on math, but I believe 13 cents on 79 cents is more of a 16 percent, not 20 percent. Given we heard from the Minister of Human Resources, health and safety claims both for GNWT showed significant increases for the Department of Health, Justice and also Transportation, if we were to compare these departments with job descriptions and classifications in the current 2013 WSCC Rate Guide, the comparable private industry fields would find the following: for Health, \$1.61; for Justice, \$2.58; and Transportation, \$5.85.

Given the law of averages, can the Minister explain how the GNWT can be assessed at only a single rate of 79 cents per 100 when, clearly, the three most prolific and costly departments with health and safety concerns are, on average, two to over seven

times less than the industry average? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, that information that I have from WSCC is that GNWT is one employer under the Workers' Compensation Act and also is classified as industry subclass specifically developed for government, and whose current rate reflects on government's long-term history of claims experience. Due to that increase in GNWT's claim experience over the last few years, this will continue to increase up to the maximum of 20 percent per year until it covers the full cost of the GNWT's liability. That is where we are at, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's response. Will the Minister commit to facilitate an independent oversight review of the WSCC of all employer industry classifications and assessment rates as it pertains to proper claims experience? Would the Minister commit to facilitate a full public audit of accounting in relationship to written claims made by the WSCC in terms of the depletion of the Workers' Protection Fund due to rising costs of health care services and continued downward trend in investment markets? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the Governance Council does engage in third-party actuary on an annual basis to review any impacts of the Workers' Protection Fund and also the employee industry classification, the claims experience and also the recommended assessment rates. WSCC is also audited annually by the Auditor General of Canada, but we just had a recent audit done. I am confident that the audits of the Auditor General of Canada and the use of the independent actual rate of WSCC have the new checks and balances in place as we move forward. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I have great faith in the Auditor General of Canada. Again, we are asking for some public input in terms of the audit and information shared with the public.

On the subject of governance, will the Minister responsible for the WSCC commit to facilitate a full review of governance on how the GNWT is being assessed by the WSCC employer industry classification and assessment rates? Will the Minister commit to tabling all findings and correspondence from the department and the WSCC to this House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, back in 2001, December, this Legislature completed a comprehensive review of the WSCC. Then it was WCB. That report tabled was called Act Now. The recommendations on the report, coupled with the

2006 Auditor General's operational review of WSCC and the yearly audit by the Auditor General ensured compliance of the WSCC. I will be sharing that information that the Member is referring to today with the chair and the president of the WSCC. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 261-17(3):
BUDGET CONSULTATIONS 2012

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Finance. In the last month or six weeks or so, the Minister and his staff have been travelling throughout the NWT and doing budget consultations. I think they have been very well received in the centres where they were held. I agree that it was a good move for the department and the Minister to take the budget discussion show on the road, so to speak.

Over the number of presentations and discussions that have been held, there have been remarks by the media, there have been remarks by the Minister, they have talked about how the input may or may not be used from these budget consultations. On the part of the Minister and on the part of the department, what is his intent in using the input from these various consultations relative to the 2013-14 operations budget? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. This has been an interesting exercise and there's a number of key perspectives that we were looking for. We wanted feedback from the people of the Northwest Territories. We want to see what kind of responses we can get in terms of the things we're now doing, which in this case confirm the focus that this Assembly has, for example, on prevention and the need to put more money into prevention, the need to sort out red tape, duplication program overlap, the need to look at how we add more money to our infrastructure budget. The other big issue is, of course, the support for sustainable development and make sure we have processes that are as supportive as possible to business.

So as an Assembly we are engaged in a lot of those issues already and it was corroborating support for the fact that this Legislature is fairly well tuned into the needs of their constituents. We also heard a number of very specific suggestions that we're going to look at as we do the budget and fine-tune the main estimates and bring back to committee and to the MLAs to look at. So it was reinforcement that, in many cases, we're on the right track.

We have to always do more and there are some specific suggestions that were given to us in a host of areas that we're going to look at in terms of possible inclusion, if not in this budget, in subsequent budgets. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister. I attended the discussion and the presentation in Yellowknife and I found it very interesting, and the Minister is right that there were some interesting discussions and some interesting ideas that were brought up there. One of the things that was mentioned at the meeting here in Yellowknife was that there was no reference at all to revenue in the budget presentation, and in the documents and in the discussions that were held that night. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he can explain why there was no discussion and no consideration of new revenues in the budget at these budget discussions. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. In fact, at every one of the seven communities where we had meetings, somewhere during the course of the evening we talked about the new revenues that are going to come, and that in our case they are tied most immediately to devolution, that we were not considering tax increases at this juncture, given the economic circumstance and fragility of the world economic landscape. So we've indicated that next time, and we've heard some other requests, as well, for full disclosure of all the budget numbers laid out more in keeping with the main estimates. So we heard a number of issues in terms of the information requested that we will look at speaking to the next go-around when we do this next year. So the revenue piece will be put out there as well.

This particular initial go-around was to give people a sense of the fiscal constraints we're operating under and the decisions we have to make if we want to move money between program areas if there's enhancement required. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister for the explanation. I have to say that I was fully expecting, and I wasn't disappointed, that he brought up devolution and the money that we're going to get from devolution. It's unfortunate but, in my mind, it seems that's the money that we're getting from devolution is going to be the one item that is going to solve all of our problems.

The Minister mentioned that revenue was discussed at almost every one of the meetings, and I would like to say that there have been two roundtables on budget and finance that have been held over the last four or five years, I guess three or four years, and those roundtables in the summary both suggested that the government should look at new revenue sources. The Minister is suggesting we don't need to do that, I think he's suggesting we don't need to do that because we've got devolution money coming.

So I'd like to ask the Minister, we've had recommendations from roundtables to look at revenue options, why have we not done that? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. What I did say was that we are of the mind, as a government, that it's not an appropriate time to be adding new tax burdens onto Northerners, that we struggle with cost of living issues in all of our communities, that it's a challenge to businesses as well. So what we want to foster is a strong economy, which will give us more revenue as opposed to us as a government putting more taxes out there. So our focus has been on trying to put in infrastructure, look at how we do business to be as supportive as possible in an economically and environmentally sustainable way to encourage business. It's to focus on alternative energies, it's to focus on cutting our costs as a government and cutting the costs of living for the people in the communities. So those are all tied to having a strong economy and those will all give us revenue, but not through the tax man reaching into the pockets of our struggling Northerners to take more money out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Minister for his comments. I have to respectfully disagree. I don't think that we have to raise revenues through taxes. There are other options that are available to us, and some of those options were suggested in the summaries from the roundtable.

So I'd like to know from the Minister, other than looking at taxes, has the department looked at other options to increase our revenue sources, such as resource rents, for instance. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We haven't looked at resource rents per se. What we are looking at and what we've tried to invest money in over the years is, for example, to increase the amount of immigration into the Northwest Territories. Right now our population is either static or, in some cases, shrinking marginally, which has a significant negative effect on our Territorial Formula Financing Agreement. So in order to do that, we have to make sure we have a strong economy with jobs, and we have to work with all the groups and communities on things like affordable housing and the services that will attract people into the North. So those are the areas of improving our economy that we're looking at that will very directly impact the bottom line of the Northwest Territories and all Northerners. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 262-17(3):
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment did a Minister's statement on advanced education initiatives, but really, is this really advanced? Do we continue to put residents through the education system only at the end to have to put more money to get them back to a standard of education even to get them ready for post-secondary job education?

This government has the opportunity to invest in the future of a new generation of healthy, educated adults and teenagers. What I'm referring to is the Early Childhood Development Framework, and I made a statement here in the House not too long ago about past reports and reports getting shelved with no action.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment in regard to the Early Childhood Development Framework, I believe there was a 2001 Early Childhood Development Framework and Action Plan and I do understand that there's joint work between the Department of Health and Education. I want to know what is the update on this framework, and when can we expect to see a final draft of that framework brought to this Assembly for implementation and action. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Member that we need to educate our people across the Northwest Territories to the best of our ability as the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education and that's what we're doing. Also, we're heavily focused on the early childhood development. As the Member indicated earlier, there was a 2001 Early Childhood Development Framework that we've embarked on to have a renewal.

We are quite unique compared with other jurisdictions where we want to join forces with the Department of Health and Social Services. My colleague Minister Beaulieu and I had discussed the next step, what can we do to renew? We need to reach out to the communities and regions, the whole Northwest Territories, to hear their perspectives. That's what we'll be embarking on.

Starting next month there will be engagement with the communities, the experts, and also the end of January is going to be when we will be having those experts from early childhood to hear their input, the program managers and so forth. From there we want to table a document in the House during the February session. That's the overall plan

to have our engagement by the two departments throughout the Northwest Territories prior to that. We will be keeping the Members informed of our progress.

MR. MOSES: In regard to the 2001 Early Childhood Development Framework Strategy and Plan, I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment what the current validity is on the work that was done in that plan and what was successful about that plan. Have any of those action items actually been implemented within the last few governments, I guess? The 2001 plan.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: The 2001 Early Childhood Development Strategic Plan has been implemented since then. There have been various initiatives in play. We have Dr. Corriveau leading the administrative discussions with various partners in the Northwest Territories. Some of those initiatives are ongoing since 2001. As you know, this is a long-term initiative. Some have been accomplished successfully. We want to hear from the experts themselves what they want us to focus on. There have been some programs in place that may not have worked in the past. How can we improve in those areas and so forth?

I can provide a detailed list of the things that we have accomplished over the years, since 2001 until today, that have been very successful. I will be providing those to the Members.

MR. MOSES: Early childhood development is a priority of this 17th Legislative Assembly or I wouldn't be bringing it here on the floor as something that we bring up every time we come into the House and ask questions of the Minister.

What are the current action items that the Minister is currently doing or having implemented in the Northwest Territories, especially in the small communities that are having an impact on early childhood development and the investment in our youth, and not just waiting for this plan to implement and do these actions?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: When we talk about early childhood development, there are all kinds of programs within the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. We are also working closely with the Department of Health and Social Services because they do have a framework of programs that deals with zero to three years of age and so forth. Within our Education department, we deal, also, with the college to deliver the certification programs and others, the immersion programs that we have initiated in several of the communities. Those are just some of the examples that have been very successful to date. We will continue to push that forward. I can provide some of the initiatives that we are embarking on. In the February session there will be more opportunity to discuss as we start implementing that programming.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of living in the Northwest Territories, we have a high cost of living, we have a high turnover rate in the communities. In Inuvik, for example, some of the programs have been defaulted or delayed due to the fact that sometimes we don't have any qualified staff in those positions, as well as having up-to-standard building codes. That was specifically mentioned in the Auditor General's report. There are a lot of challenges.

What is the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment doing to address these challenges so that we can continue to deliver those early childhood programs and services to people in the Northwest Territories?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: The Auditor General's report and the recommendations brought forward deal with various initiatives that we need to start working on, start implementing, and we have done so. We're going to follow through with each and every recommendation, such as the daycare inspections, the report, the scheduling and so forth. Those are just some of the areas that we will be embarking on as we move forward.

The high cost of living is a challenge in the communities. Within our Education, Culture and Employment there are programs that support, whether it be the start-up costs of a child care facility or partial mortgage payments and operation costs. We will continue to invest heavily in that area as we have done in the past.

The 2013 February session is when we are going to gather the information. We're doing our research at this point. Having the two departments working together, I believe we are, again, making history across Canada that we are hoping others will follow as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 263-17(3):
ENTERPRISE AND KAKISA
COMMUNITY WATER SERVICES

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 17th Assembly's vision is to work towards individual well-being and empower communities. With that in mind, my question today is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Why has the department chosen to truck water to Enterprise and Kakisa?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been the goal of the Legislative Assembly in the past to empower the communities.

It's one of the reasons the New Deal for community governments was brought about in 2004, and that enables the communities to make decisions affecting their communities a lot better than we can. One of the decisions that they could make is on the provision and distribution of water supply services.

MR. NADLI: What are the nearest potential sources of drinking water for these communities, in particular Enterprise and Kakisa in terms of looking at potentially establishing their own services for their residents.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We work closely with the communities to identify potential water sources as parts of the funding that they receive, especially under the Gas Tax Agreement. They do have the ability under that program, and I know Kakisa gets probably about \$160,000 for that program. That is for water treatment and distribution. They can utilize that money. As well, they get over \$600,000 in community infrastructure money that they receive every year. They're able to utilize that money to help with building a new water treatment plant. There have been some cases in the past where communities have worked together and done bundled water treatment plants. Economies of scale bring the price down a bit. The communities have that ability now to determine if that's the direction they want to go. As MACA, we will work very closely with the community in coming up with some solutions for them.

MR. NADLI: Has the department, at this point, considered trying to move these potential projects for the communities forward? Looking at perhaps entertaining the idea of planning to work with the communities and perhaps the Minister could highlight some of the problems in that area. Have there been talks with both Enterprise and Kakisa?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The communities usually identify a 20-year capital plan and we work closely with them on that. If the communities of Kakisa and Enterprise are exploring the idea of building a water treatment plant, then we would be more than willing to work closely with them. We usually wait for an invitation from the community saying they want to look at these issues, and we would go in there at their request and work with them to come up with a solution that is best for all, including possible financing options. We've had some communities use their infrastructure money to access loans from the bank and that enables them to get their projects on the ground, because they do know that they are going to be getting a fair sized chunk of infrastructure money every year and they can use that to secure bank loans.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very encouraging that the Minister has indicated that there is a willingness to work with the communities.

My question is: What are the possible barriers to both Enterprise and Kakisa operating local water treatment plants?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The only possible barrier that I can see to these communities not operating their own water treatment plants is because they just don't have the desire to. All the other tools are in place to enable some of these communities to work with our department to identify potential sites, help them with the planning. The only barrier right now is their lack of willingness, and that can be reconciled.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 264-17(3):
REALIGNMENT OF HIGHWAY NO. 4

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation on highways. I've noted that people driving to the Yellowknife Airport can now see the work on realignment of Highway No. 4 around the Giant Mine site is underway. I understand that the work will include not only the creation of a safer and better road that avoids the Giant Mine site, but some improvement to the highway onward to the Yellowknife River Bridge might be included.

On behalf of the public and my constituents, can the Minister provide us with some information on the extent and schedule for the work?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, construction has started on the realignment of Highway No. 4 past Giant Mine. The work is being performed by Det'on Cho Corporation. They are in partnership with a number of local companies they have brought in to partner with them on the realignment project. Det'on Cho/Stantec, Det'on Cho/Nahanni Construction, Aboriginal Engineering, CJ Construction, Tli Cho Landtran, and also NWT Construction. They have a number of partners.

The project came within budget. The negotiations were concluded in early October. Construction is anticipated to carry on until close to Christmas time, at which time there will be a shutdown for a few months and then in the spring it will pick up again. We hope to have construction of the seven-kilometre stretch complete by November 2013.

MR. BROMLEY: The Minister anticipated my second question, which was about partnerships. Just on the extent of the project, I know that it will end up sort of close to the Bristol on the road to the airport, but where is it starting, and can the Minister tell us anything about the routing?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I'll do my best. I have maps that I can provide to Members that better indicates the route. It will be down just from the current entrance to Fred Henne Park. That's where the highway will start. It will bypass the Giant Mine site and the remediation work, both aboveground and underground, that is taking place there and come out close to the Yellowknife River. So it's about seven kilometres. It's going to be an important realignment for a number of reasons. I think it also opens up possibilities not only for the city of Yellowknife, but also with Det'on Cho and maybe some advancement on development.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks again to the Minister. Perhaps that information is on some website that people could have a look at. There is also the question of financing this work. My understanding is that how this project is paid for is that redirection of the funds that GNWT has contributed to meet its obligations for remediation of the Giant Mine site. I wonder if the Minister could outline how those funds are being assigned. I know it's a bit controversial. Some people think the money that we contributed to Giant Mine should go more directly into remediation, but I'd say at least a good portion of this project should be considered a legitimate response to the need to avoid the underground arsenic.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The money is coming from the GNWT Giant Mine Liability Fund, which was established in 2005. There was \$17 million in that budget for the realignment and it's expected that the project costs will come in under that figure.

MR. SPEAKER: Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question, just moving a couple clicks down the road there, any update on the Detah road?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: In response to the Member during the capital plan review, we haven't abandoned the Detah road. We do need to identify more funding to complete the work that is required on the Detah road. We're hopeful that, again, in 2014, that there's a new infrastructure plan with the federal government that will enable us to conclude the work that's required on the Detah road.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 265-17(3):
INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK
HIGHWAY PROJECT

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in follow-up, I thought of another question. I gave Mr. Ramsay quite a platform there to make his speech about his much anticipated road from Inuvik to Tuk, when I said what makes this borrowing money worthy, this particular project. A lot of the

reasoning he gave could be applied to, literally, you could take and you could transpose that whole argument to Wrigley to Norman Wells. You could say the same thing. We've got so much activity going on in the Sahtu in the oil and gas. I mean, that's part of the Mackenzie Highway too. It just happens to be the more southerly portion, not the more northerly portion.

I'd like to ask the Minister, are we just dancing to the tune of the federal government when it comes to the priority that's being placed on this particular project? Again I ask, how are we going to gauge the support of Northerners, because it still will be a lot of capital, even if it's borrowed?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No. It is in our best interest, as well, to see the completion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, and it is going to start with the section between Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. Certainly, there are other demands around the territory when it comes to transportation infrastructure that we'll be hearing loud and clear from... I know I've heard from the Member for the Sahtu in his conversations with the leadership in the Sahtu about the advancement of the Mackenzie Valley Highway through the Sahtu, and south from Norman Wells or north from Wrigley or however you want to call it. That certainly will be coming into much more prominence as we move forward and development continues to take place in the Sahtu.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That's quite an assertion on the part of our Transportation Minister to say it will be that road and we will spend money on that road. It will be. It kind of makes me wonder, you know, where we are in terms of our level of commitment on this. When we started out and it was \$150 million from the feds and \$50 million from our government, okay, I could see it. But we haven't even determined what the cost of the road is yet, so how can the Minister say this will be it?

What if the road comes in at \$400 million? How can the Minister make such an assertion? How does he know with such certainty?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I'm always optimistic, I guess. That would be my first response.

In response to the Member, we are going to conclude the environmental assessment. That report will come in in January. We're also going to be getting three separate cost estimates on the project. We need to determine the funding arrangement with the federal government. There are a number of decision points here that have to be made, and they'll be made with Members of the House, with committee, with Regular Members as we move the project forward. That's our anticipation, is that we're going to get that cost estimate. We'll get the funding arrangement. We'll

know exactly what we're going to get ourselves into and then the decision will be made.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I like that answer a little bit better, because that was my understanding when we've been approving these funds for the geotechnical and costing and all these things we've been doing. We understood that as we were approving these dollars, that \$2 million, around \$2 million a hit, that's what we thought we were doing. We thought this was kind of exploratory and that if it didn't go ahead at this time, that was still valuable information that could be used at some time in the future.

The Minister is telling us that, in fact, there are many hurdles and many questions to be answered prior to this government irrevocably committing to this project.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: On a project this size, it is inevitable that, up front, you have to do that type of geotechnical analysis, and the work, the engineering has to get done to get you the cost estimates that you require. That is what we see. That is what we've been pursuing.

Like any other project, it requires an environmental assessment. That's a requirement of the federal government before we can enter into a funding arrangement with the federal government. These are necessary steps that the Government of the Northwest Territories is following and we will be making a decision, based on those cost estimates, during the February/March sitting of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Moses.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 5:
LEGAL AID ACT

BILL 7:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
JUDICATURE ACT

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 5, Legal Aid Act, and Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, and wish to report that Bills 5 and 7 are now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole as amended and reprinted.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Item 14, tabling of documents.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 87-17(3):
WORKERS' SAFETY AND
COMPENSATION COMMISSION
2013 EMPLOYER ASSESSMENT RATES

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be tabling a standard WSCC 2013 employer assessment rate notice that was mailed out to all businesses in the NWT.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Item 15, notices of motion. Ms. Bisaro.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 17-17(3):
ESTABLISHMENT OF NORTHERN
SEARCH AND RESCUE BASE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, November 2, 2012, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that this Legislative Assembly strongly urges the Government of Canada to establish a search and rescue base in a central location north of the 60th parallel.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 83-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013; and Tabled Document 84-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. We have two items before us today. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 83-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. We'll do that after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. The document before you today, committee members, that we will be dealing with is Tabled Document 83-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013. I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to make opening comments. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013. This document provides for a decrease of \$1.26 million for capital investment expenditures in the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Major items in this supplementary estimates include:

1. \$300,000 for the Department of Public Works and Services for investments under the NWT Energy Plan for energy upgrades to the Grandfather Ayah School in Deline;
2. \$375,000 for the Department of Justice to complete the renovations of Courtroom No. 1 at the Yellowknife Courthouse;
3. a transfer of \$3.9 million from infrastructure expenditures of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to operations expenditures for the Department of Public Works and Services for the demolition of the Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Samuel Hearne schools in Inuvik;
4. \$2 million for the Department of Transportation to complete the environmental assessment process, refine cost estimates, and continue project management activities related to the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway Project.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary estimates document.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses to the witness table.

For the record, Mr. Miltenberger, could you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Mr. Michael Aumond, deputy minister of Finance; Mr. Russ Neudorf, deputy minister of Transportation; and Mr. Sandy Kalgutkar, deputy secretary to the FMB.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. General comments. Do Members have any general comments? I guess there are no general comments. We'll proceed, then, to the detail.

If I could refer Members to page 5 of the document, Public Works and Services, capital investment expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$300,000, total department, not previously authorized, \$300,000. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe this is the project in Deline, if I am correct. I know there are some very good energy efficiency upgrades focused with this proposed expenditure. I'm wondering what the future might hold in terms of switching to biomass. Obviously, the long-term operational costs, really, are to be had in the biggest way through replacing fossil fuel costs with renewable energy costs. I know the department, the government is well aware of this and doing these sorts of conversions in a number of areas throughout the NWT. Have we done such a thing in Deline yet, and what's the potential for doing that? What are the conditions that are needed to maybe consider that as the next step after this efficiency upgrade?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member's assessment is correct. The first step of the process is to improve the building envelope, the windows, the infiltration of air, the ventilation system, efficient lighting. Once that is done, then Public Works has indicated they will be considering this school for biomass heating.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the Minister's comments. With regard to that, do we have any projects in Deline yet of such conversions, or would this be a first? I'm just wondering what the availability of biomass is. For example, do we know that yet in Deline, the viability of it and so on?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I don't believe there's any biomass projects yet in Deline. One of the considerations would have to be to do the costing of the shipping in of the biomass, and compare that all-in economic cost to that of the diesel. I still think it would demonstrate a savings, but I don't believe there are existing biomass projects in Deline in government infrastructure.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for those comments. That's really all the questions I had.

Just on that, obviously, it's sometimes worth paying a little more for a ground-breaking project towards reducing overall costs for subsequent projects so it might be worth a bit of an investment, or at least a full-cost accounting approach when we do that analysis. That's all the questions I had.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Public Works and Services, capital investment expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$300,000, total department, not previously authorized, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Page 6, Department of Justice, capital investment expenditures, court services, not previously authorized, \$375,000, total department, \$375,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Page 7, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, education and culture, not previously authorized, negative \$3.935 million, total department, negative \$3.935 million. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Part of our role as Regular Members is public accounts in terms of looking at cash flow and where money is coming from. This is another classic example where government, you know, you have to be very diligent on where monies are being taken from one area and put into another. I think this is another one of those negative supplementaries which is taking out of operations and now putting into capital expenditures for infrastructure.

I have a series of questions here pertaining to this amount of money. The first one is: When was the initial estimate established for the demolition of the Sir Alexander Mackenzie School, or in this case here for this supp?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would have to commit to get that from Public Works and Services. I don't have the specific date when the first estimate was done.

MR. DOLYNNY: It will make the next couple questions that much more difficult, but I guess in my assessment and from getting background information, this original estimate was some time ago. It was not something that just happened overnight. They would have had an assessment.

What was used as a determining point as to what this amount of demolition would have been from the original estimate? Is there a market escalator that was used to determine that amount of money?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. There was an original environmental assessment done on Samuel Hearne Secondary School back in 2006. Subsequently, earlier this year there was a more intrusive assessment done where they actually deconstructed some part of the building to see what

hazardous materials were in the building. On that basis, based on previous experience Public Works would have had with remediation or demolition projects in Inuvik, they were able to come up with an estimate and have some confidence in that. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Madam Chair, if we can get maybe a little bit more information as to what type of confidence was put into that estimate. As, typically, market escalators are used from an original estimate and I guess brought into the future in terms of what that number could be today, can we get some insight as to what tools, what actuaries or any type of assessments were used to come up with a prediction of what this demolition would be in today's dollars?

MR. AUMOND: Madam Chair, as I mentioned earlier, a more intrusive investigation to find out what type of hazardous materials were in the school and in what quantity they were. They built their estimate based on that. I understand that the project has advanced to the point where they have a good deal of confidence in their estimate, and that I believe there was a tender that did close for that project. It has come in. I believe it hasn't been awarded yet, but the bids were in the budgeted price. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Madam Chair, I guess the question is, we put it to tender and we let the market decide what it is. That is one of the methodologies used. The concern I have is that this demolition amount and the taking from one pot of money and moving it to another pot of money and using it for another project, some of the substantiation sheets that we went through as Ministers and as well as Members, some differ in the amount that we see here today. Again, I am not at liberty to say what that lesser number was, but it was a lesser number than what we see here today in the supplementary appropriation bill.

Is there a rationale as why we were given in committee a lesser number and why we are seeing a higher number today? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Madam Chair, I would ask if the Member would give me the number, I would be able to get you an answer.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): We are not really supposed to make reference in the House to documents, and numbers, and information that were before committee. We can certainly speak to what is here. I believe it to be a genuinely interesting question, but I am hesitant to start digging out committee documents for reference. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Madam Chair, can I ask the Member to give me the number, how

much more or less it is than the numbers before us, without quoting the exact number?

---Laughter

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Madam Chair, the ballpark is roughly \$600,000. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Madam Chair, I would have to confirm this with Public Works and Services, but I believe that the quantum that the Member is referring to was money that Public Works already had in their budget to undertake the investigation in the remedial investigative work and was not intended to be the total cost of the remediation. Again, I would have to confirm that with Public Works and Services, without having the number that the Member refers to in front of me.

MR. DOLYNNY: The rationale for the question is that for probably one thing it shows is that the Members actually look at the numbers. Number two, when you have a delta or a quantum of that magnitude, it begs to ask the question as to why. I think that's why we're in Committee of the Whole. I do have some concerns that if a topic of discussion is being discussed in preparation for this type of venue, I'm a bit concerned that we are talking about a delta here and I really don't have much more to say, other than the fact that I'm a bit disappointed that I'm seeing a number here today and discussions that occurred had a separate number entirely. No other further questions, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, education and culture, not previously authorized, negative \$3.935 million, total department, negative \$3.935 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Moving onto Transportation. Transportation, capital investment expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$2 million, total department, \$2 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I know the major project under consideration here. We've had some discussion in the House on it already today. I'd like to ask what is the total amount expended on this project to date over the current and previous fiscal years not including this amount.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's \$9.5 million plus the \$2 million currently before the House.

MR. BROMLEY: I know from my participation here that we have a record of requests for dollars. Obviously, nickel and diming would not be the right term here because these are very significant amounts of money, but they are cumulative, that have eventually proved to be insufficient for the task at hand. In other words, we were told they would achieve this and they haven't, and we've added and so on. I am very concerned about this project in general, as the House is well aware that this is completely in line with expectations that this cost will escalate and that we are, really, underestimating the significance of this project in terms of costs and future costs. That is certainly a concern.

My question would be: Will this be the final request to take us to completion of all of the information needed on which to base a go/no-go decision, or can we expect other requests? I assume we would have in hand as a go/no-go basis, environmental assessment cost estimates, as we heard earlier, and they would all be provided to committee, not just the lowest one, I assume, feasibility work and permitting. If I can get a response to that.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: As we approach this project, the decisions made to ask for the funds in increments so that we would be reporting back to the Legislature and justifying the expenses because of the interest and concern about the project, as opposed to asking for a large amount of money and then at some point in the future coming back. We chose to come forward on an as-required basis so that we would always be before the House as a check and balance to make sure Members were fully engaged. When we conclude this final \$2 million worth of work, we will have the information we need to put a package before this House and before the federal government.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for that response. That was a good response to my question. I appreciate his perspective. My experience, as I mentioned, is a little different in terms of what we experienced on the ground. We were told what would be achieved with the dollars. It wasn't, and they came back for more dollars. That is a concern for the project in its entire extent that we will be monitoring and that we will bring that perspective to the table for any final decision, I would expect, as I would expect Cabinet would want to consider as well. Thanks much to the Minister. That's all the questions I had.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Madam Chair, the Minister of Transportation would like an opportunity to, as well, make a comment, with your indulgence.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to follow up on Minister Miltenberger's response to Member Bromley. To the backdrop of all of this is the fact that the Government of the Northwest Territories has never had to do an EA on a project of this size and this nature. That has led us to do it incrementally. That is a component to this, too, that I just wanted to put out there.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Minister's remarks. I understand that, and that's undoubtedly a contributing factor to these underestimates and part of the point that I was raising. I understand that we're stepping out here, so we need to bring that into consideration as we make our estimates and so on.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Next, I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have much the same concerns about this expenditure as does Mr. Bromley. I would like to, first off, ask the Minister, he mentioned that we have spent \$9.5 million to date on this project. Could I know what amounts were spent in what years up to this point?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Madam Chair. In the '11-12 fiscal year and previous to that we had spent \$5.8 million. About \$1.6 million of that would have come from the federal government and the rest was from the GNWT. That would have been starting with the preparation of the initial project description report and then going into the environmental assessment, doing economic analysis, beginning all the different studies required for the environmental assessment process. In the current fiscal year, in '12-13, we have \$3.5 million to date. The majority of that would be spent on the geotechnical program, about \$2 million of that \$3.5 million, and then to carry on through the environmental assessment process and complete all of the studies that are required as part of that process. We, as well, are working on designs, on preliminary engineering and on cost estimates.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the deputy minister for that clarification. I think we've spent almost \$10 million to date on this project and we're now being asked for another \$2 million to finish what needs to be done, as the Minister of Transportation would say. I appreciate this is a large project. I appreciate it's new for us to do an environmental assessment, but I am concerned that it's almost like we're, you know, Executive is coming back and kind of picking at us, you know, just a million here or \$2 million there. This is the second time in this budget year

that we're being asked to put money into the Inuvik-Tuk highway. I want to be sure that we're not throwing good money after bad, I guess, is where I'm at. I don't yet believe that we have seen the justification for the project in total.

I appreciate the Minister of Transportation's earlier remarks that there are decision points to come. I think it's incumbent on each of us as Members to very seriously consider each decision point that we are presented with, and I hope we get lots of them, because it's been said before and I agree, this is beginning to feel like a bridge project, and I sure as heck don't want to go there.

The other thing that is concerning me about this particular \$2 million request, but also all the requests that are within this supp, is that it is putting us even further in the hole in terms of our supplementary reserve. We will be, if we pass this supp as proposed, almost \$10 million in the hole from our supplementary reserve. So that has an impact on our costs as a government because it will require short-term borrowing for us to deal with the ins and outs of our cash flow.

So the fact that we are so much into our supplementary reserve and beyond is in part due – a large part, I think – to this particular project, and there are a few other things, as well, but it's not something which I recommend us doing as a matter of course, and it's my understanding from the Finance Minister that going in the hole in our reserve is not something that he wants to do as a matter of course. I felt I needed to comment on it. So that's all I have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Member's concern. One of the impacts on our current circumstance was the \$10 million we put into this project a number of months ago. The money we spent that we didn't anticipate was extra money on the bridge, we spent extra money on a number of different areas. But we appreciate the Member's concern. We are still going to hit our fiscal targets, as we laid out in our fiscal plan to the Members. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madam Chair. In regard to this supp before us, being from the Beaufort-Delta and understanding the course of the project as it has come before the Legislative Assembly since I've been in the Assembly, it is something that needs to be done and to get those kinds of reports brought forth so that we can make a good decision. This funding needs to actually go through the supp and get approved so that we can get those extra geotechnical studies that need to be done, so we

can make good decisions on whether this project goes through or not.

I'm not sure if this supp was not to go through, how that is going to affect the Department of Transportation, if they'd have to look at finding funds elsewhere, but this is something that I feel needs to be done. It's something that we've invested in throughout the past year plus, and it's something that I do support. I just wanted to make a comment in terms of supporting this to make sure that we do get the right studies done to make the best decisions that we need to going forth on this project. So more of a comment, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Any further comments? Page 8, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$2 million, total department, \$2 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed, thank you. I would like to thank Minister Miltenberger and the witnesses for their participation here today. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could escort the witnesses out of the Chamber, please.

Mr. Menicoche.

COMMITTEE MOTION 38-17(3):
CONCURRENCE OF TABLED DOCUMENT
83-17(3), SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 2, 2012-2013,
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 83-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 83-17(3) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question is being called.

---Carried

What is the wish of committee? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I will now rise and report progress. Thank you, committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report from Committee of the Whole, Mrs. Groenewegen?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 83-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted, and that consideration of Tabled Document 83-17(3) is concluded, and that the House concur in those estimates and that an appropriation bill to be based thereon be introduced without delay. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Do we have a seconder to the motion? Mr. Dolynny.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 2: MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2012

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 2, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2012, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 2 has had third reading.

---Carried

Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 8: AN ACT TO AMEND THE SECURITIES ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Securities Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 8 has had third reading.

---Carried

Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

HONOURARY TABLE OFFICER (Mr. Tony Whitford): Orders of the day for Wednesday, October 31, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
 2. Ministers' Statements
 3. Members' Statements
 4. Returns to Oral Questions
 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
 6. Acknowledgements
 7. Oral Questions
 8. Written Questions
 9. Returns to Written Questions
 10. Replies to Opening Address
 11. Petitions
 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
 14. Tabling of Documents
 15. Notices of Motion
 16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
 17. Motions
 18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 14, Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2013-2014
 19. Second Reading of Bills
 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 84-17(3), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013
 21. Report of Committee of the Whole
 22. Third Reading of Bills
 23. Orders of the Day
- MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, October 31, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.
- ADJOURNMENT
- The House adjourned at 4:08 p.m.