



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, October 18, 2013****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, 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, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 10:01 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Before we start today I'd really like to wish a happy birthday to one of my elders back in my home community of Tuktoyaktuk, Persis Gruben. Her birthday is on Sunday, the 20th, and she's 95 years old.

---Applause

I was speaking with her daughter-in-law last night, and in this day and age for our elders to live this long is a blessing to us. I'm sure she's seen many changes in her lifetime from dog team to trucks to planes, from telephones to cell phones and computers. Just yesterday she was on FaceTime with her daughter-in-law and she couldn't believe the technology.

Her wealth of knowledge about the land, our culture and traditions is invaluable, as well as our Inuvialuktun language. She always tells her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and even myself and anybody she talks to, respect the land and to respect each other.

Persis still lives and maintains her own home in Tuk today and is sharp as a whip. Her irreplaceable knowledge of values will benefit all our generations. We truly have a gem. I'd like to wish her many more years to come and good health and happiness. Have a good birthday party in Tuk on Sunday. I am unable to attend, but have a good birthday party. I wish I was there.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister Miltenberger.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 76-17(4):
OCTOBER 2013 SESSION FISCAL UPDATE

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to update Members on our fiscal situation and discuss some of the things we are looking forward to in the near-term.

Two years ago this Assembly created a plan to restore fiscal balance after years of stimulus spending and deficits, and to provide resources

required to tackle our \$3 billion infrastructure deficit. I am happy to report today that the plan is on track. We have constrained spending growth, reduced short-term borrowing, and achieved an increase in our borrowing limit. As a result, we have kept our promise made in February's budget to increase capital investment by \$50 million in each of 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Our fiscal situation is basically unchanged from the 2013-14 budget. However, the global economy remains fragile and its recovery from the recession is slow and uneven. Therefore, we continue to closely monitor revenues and expenditures to ensure we achieve our fiscal targets. Our efforts to reallocate money to fund new initiatives and make all our programs more efficient and effective mean that we are on track to generate required surpluses in 2013-14 and for the remainder of this Assembly so that we may begin to address our infrastructure deficit.

Our main fiscal challenge continues to be to hold the line on expenditure growth so we can make infrastructure investments that can transform our economy by lowering costs for residents and businesses in remote communities and opening corridors to previously inaccessible markets and resources. Our medium-term economic growth will depend on transformational investments such as the Mackenzie Valley fibre optic link and the Mackenzie Valley Highway.

Our ability to fund infrastructure investment is built on a foundation of fiscal sustainability outlined in our Fiscal Responsibility Policy. Using operating surpluses to help pay for infrastructure investment is instrumental in keeping debt levels sustainable and contributes significantly to our Aa1 credit rating. Fiscal sustainability also opens opportunities to take advantage of federal partnership in building infrastructure through the new Building Canada Plan expected to be announced in the next fiscal year.

Looking forward, April 1, 2014, marks the beginning of the last major transfer of responsibility to our government as we embark on new responsibilities managing the lands, waters and resources of our territory. The Territorial Formula Financing Grant will increase by \$67.3 million to help us fund these responsibilities. Work is underway to ensure those resources are allocated appropriately to allow us to

maintain high standards of program delivery in these new areas of responsibility.

As well, beginning next year Northerners will, for the first time, benefit directly from resource revenues. We have included preliminary resource revenues forecasts in the fiscal framework, and continue to investigate the sensitivity around these forecasts. However, we will not receive the majority of the new resource revenues until 2015 because of the timing of royalty collections. The timing of resource revenues combined with their sensitivity to commodity prices mean that we have to be prudent in our fiscal planning to ensure we are not overcommitting a volatile revenue source.

Continuing the 17th Assembly's commitment to seek Northerners' opinions and consensus on how to build our collective future, the Department of Finance has launched discussions on fiscal priorities and management of resource revenues. This follows our budget dialogue sessions last year to seek Northerners' views on how to achieve our goal of living within our means. Delivering on last year's promise, we are reporting back on what we heard, what we have done with what we heard, and where we are headed. Last year's budget made great strides investing in the priorities we heard, and we stay committed to incorporating Northerners' views as we build next year's budget.

Like last year, we are taking this year's budget dialogue to the regions by visiting all of the regional centres, bringing in representatives from the other communities and inviting people to write in. We are also asking Northwest Territories residents to tell us what they think about our plan for a resource revenue legacy built on infrastructure investments, reducing the debt burden, and permanent savings in the Heritage Fund, as well as our approximately \$1.6 billion budget. We are asking Northerners how they see these investments being made. The approach to managing resource revenues we develop in the coming months will be determined by what we hear about the kind of future Northerners want for themselves, their children and grandchildren. I look forward to everyone's participation in this very important conversation.

Devolution does not change the Government of the Northwest Territories' fiscal strategy to generate surpluses to ensure infrastructure is financed responsibly and sustainably. While resource revenues provide added fiscal flexibility in infrastructure investment and debt management, they will not be used to fund operating expenditures. We will continue our emphasis on disciplined spending to ensure we remain fiscally sustainable.

Prudent planning in the early days of this Assembly has enabled us to protect programs and services while accumulating resources needed to begin to address our infrastructure deficit. At this, the

halfway point of the 17th Legislative Assembly, we remain committed to this path of fiscal sustainability that ensures investments in today and tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 77-17(4):
INCOME SECURITY
PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the department continues to improve income security programs and services based on a report from the Auditor General in March 2013. We received valuable feedback from the Standing Committee on Government Operations in June 2013. As we move forward with effective, efficient government, client service is at the forefront of our minds.

Mr. Speaker, to date the department has made a number of improvements based on the Auditor General's report, recommendations from standing committee, and on actions identified and planned through our own review.

We have improved training and communication with front-line staff by producing quarterly newsletters with policy clarifications, instructions, reminders and information. We are using web-based technology to present training sessions, producing new plain language policy manuals, and hiring a trainer with expert program delivery knowledge. We will continue our efforts by ensuring that all client services officers participate in Mental Health First Aid training, and attend competency-based and disability sensitivity training.

A healthy, educated northern workforce is our future. We have streamlined the Child Care Benefit, and improved payment times to support parents to stay employed. We have enhanced the Senior Home Heating Subsidy Program. We have also increased benefits to students attending post-secondary education, with an additional increase for students with disabilities. We are committed to the 17th Assembly's priority of increasing employment opportunities where they are most needed, by encouraging people to enter and remain in the workforce.

One of the most important pieces of work we are developing is a standard practice for integrating services with other departments. This will directly support and streamline services for those clients that require assistance from various government departments. Many clients live with complex challenges like disabilities that need to be considered as we serve their needs.

Our regional managers now have an audit tool and a file review process. We completed five community compliance audits last year and five to date for this

fiscal year. We are completing the overpayment project to recover costs and auditing 10 percent of student financial assistance files each year. We need to make sure that our clients are getting the right level of support.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to thoroughly implementing our program improvements. Some can be done quickly and others will take time. We are ensuring our programs are transparent, accountable, evaluated, and provide valuable reporting that helps us make continual improvements. We are confident that we are on the right path.

I look forward to providing the House with continued updates on the progress we make on income security programs. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

Members' Statements

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FULL-TIME NURSE IN TSIIGEHTCHIC

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For many years the community of Tsiigehtchic has been asking for a full-time nurse. The request made it into the Health and Social Services 2010-2011 Business Plan; however, the Minister of Health reneged on that commitment.

Also in this House, in February of 2013 another promise was made, but we are still awaiting action, Mr. Speaker.

The lack of housing has been mentioned as a barrier but this is no longer a problem, for the community has set aside housing specifically for a nurse.

Imagine the feeling of insecurity not to have a health care practitioner close by. Imagine having to travel to Inuvik and, in the process, spending precious income on travel, meals and accommodations. Worse still, imagine forgoing treatment altogether because you can't afford to travel. These are the realities in Tsiigehtchic. Honestly, it is a shameful situation. It is plain old-fashioned discrimination against people in the small communities. This government has to do better.

The Minister of Health would become famous in the Mackenzie Delta if he were to find a way to station a permanent nurse or licenced practical nurse in Tsiigehtchic. I ask the government to respond this time with a firm commitment, by weighing in the minimal financial costs against the obvious social and moral benefits.

This issue is a test of this government's principles and priorities. If this government is serious about

enhancing primary care in small communities, there will be a year-round licenced practical nurse in Tsiigehtchic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FORT SIMPSON FERRY HOURS OF OPERATION

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to speak about the Lafferty ferry in Fort Simpson. At a recent constituency meeting, constituents raised the idea that perhaps it's time for our ferry to start opening earlier, about 6:00 a.m. It currently runs at 8:00 a.m. until midnight. I believe that's a great idea, because in the past two years I've seen an increased demand for ferry services at an earlier hour.

As well, constituents have raised the idea that it will, in fact, help constituents with their travel plans for better travelling connections, so I believe the 6:00 a.m. start is a good idea.

I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation questions at the appropriate time. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SAHTU REGION EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING READINESS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a song titled "These Boots are Made for Walking." However, I won't do that song here.

---Laughter

The Sahtu will be idle no more. We want to work. We want to build our region. As I mentioned yesterday, the Sahtu is on the verge of making real and solid contributions to the North. We will do it and you can help, Mr. Speaker, and the Legislative Assembly can help. You can even give us a hand at building the North.

As I stated yesterday, 35 percent of families are headed by single parents in Deline. There are 26 percent of people in Colville Lake living in a house with six or more people. Fort Good Hope has 27 percent of families headed by single parents, 18 percent in Norman Wells, and 32 percent in Tulita. We have single families who are working. They need to have proper infrastructure such as daycare homes and training provided for them. Forty-two percent of people are working in Deline, 44 percent in Colville Lake.

Our people are ready to work, as I stated earlier. We need to set up some training institutes for the people in the Sahtu. Our dollar in the Sahtu doesn't

go quite as far as the dollar in Yellowknife. A hundred dollar bill doesn't stretch as far as it does in the southern communities.

We want to work. I believe my people are ready to work if we create the opportunities for them. I call on this government to open up an investment treasure chest, invest in the Sahtu, invest in them now.

I will have further questions for the Minister later on in the Assembly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON YELLOWKNIFE FARMERS MARKET

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize members of the Yellowknife Farmers Market for their very successful first season. The Farmers Market was started by two friends of the land, France Benoit, a Weledeh constituent, and Amy Lizotte. They say their idea caught on quickly, with many helpful volunteers.

The market operated in the Samba K'e Park next to the Yellowknife City Hall every Tuesday evening for 12 consecutive weeks. Over 70 vendors throughout the summer enjoyed total sales of over \$140,000. Based on studies of other farmers markets in Canada, this farmers market likely contributed over half a million dollars to the Yellowknife economy.

I visited the market several times over the summer and it was a wonderful place. People had stalls selling fish, berries, birch syrup, fresh eggs from Hay River, fresh local produce, delicious home baked goods, international cuisine, and crafts. Early in the season, vendors sold out quickly, so shoppers learned to arrive promptly and vendors increased their supplies as they could.

During June start-up the city staged its summer garden parties at the same time as the Farmers Market, providing a great example of local government working with the community. Entire families came out to enjoy the festivities. Health and Social Services inspectors contributed to market success via their open communications and willingness to try something new. Their reward: a vibrant addition to our community.

Market collaborators greatly appreciated the role of ITI, who funded the NWT Farmers' Association to bring up the president of the Ontario Farmers Market Association for a "Farmers Market 101" workshop in Yellowknife and another in Hay River, a truly sound investment.

Premier McLeod and myself, perhaps others, were invited to ring the opening bell for the market, a real honour.

What started as a small volunteer initiative has quickly become a fully functioning farmers market

cooperative, and I hear that there will be a Christmas farmers market this December. We seem to have a model here that could be successful throughout the Northwest Territories.

Colleagues, please join me in offering our hearty congratulations to all involved. Here's to next spring. I can't wait. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON UPDATE ON INUVIK GAS SITUATION

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to rise in the House and speak to an initiative that I've spoken to on many occasions, and that's the Inuvik gas situation.

Last week there was a pretty big meeting in Inuvik where there was a lot of concern from the community about business and residential. Yesterday I spoke about eradicating poverty in the Northwest Territories, but with the situation we have going on in Inuvik right now, the operating people at or below the poverty line were having a hard time just making ends meet.

I know that we've had this discussion before, where we've said people are paying now what other people are paying in the communities and what people are paying for diesel. However, some of these people who switched to natural gas years ago, including this government, are finding that we're making decisions based on the prices that we were thinking we were going to pay for a longer period of time. Now we're finding the situation where plans that we've made in the past are affecting our financial situation now.

You just have to look at the budget for housing and the amount of money that has increased in terms of money going into housing units.

I'd just like to address that this government has been doing a lot since the situation has come up. I know they've been mediating between the Town of Inuvik and Inuvik Gas, and working to supplement this situation that has been really hurting the residents and the businesses of Inuvik.

I guess my next course of action, rather than always hitting the government well now, rather than the oil well or the gas well, is that we have to find ways where we can mitigate the use of the fuel consumption in Inuvik and find ways for people who have been paying high costs of living that can't actually access some of these alternative energy sources such as biomass, creating a different type of policy. We're having some double-income homes who want to switch over to biomass but they can't afford that initial start-up cost.

I'm going to have questions today for the Minister of ENR about the policy, in terms of how we can get

these people on the system, as well as looking at housing and how can Housing regulate the energy consumption with our housing tenants so that the energy and the gas can last a little bit longer in the community of Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SAFETY CONCERNS OF
YELLOWKNIFE RESIDENTS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use my statement today to talk about my community and recent happenings which have raised concerns in Yellowknife about residents' safety in this community.

Since the spring, Yellowknife has experienced what some consider to be a rash of incidents affecting residents' well-being. Many were identified as sexual assaults, and they've resulted in concern among Yellowknife constituents and, yes, fear; fear of being assaulted or accosted, fear that their homes are no longer safe, fear that we are not safe within our community, in our downtown, on our trails and in our homes. We Yellowknifers are seeing a change in our community that scares us. We are reading and hearing media reports and personal accounts which, valid or not, are scaring us.

On October 3rd my community took a step towards fighting back, a step towards reclaiming our city, towards an environment where we can all feel safe and secure. On October 3rd we held a town hall meeting, titled "A Conversation on Community Safety." My thanks goes to GNWT Justice, who organized the meeting, and to representatives from the RCMP, the City of Yellowknife and Yellowknife Health and Social Services, who attended along with Minister Abernethy.

The meeting was an opportunity to hear Yellowknifers' concerns and to hear what should be done to make our community safer. I was privileged to be the moderator for the evening, and I have to say how pleased I was, how proud and impressed I was with the comments of my fellow residents. They were thoughtful and full of suggestions to address the issues before us.

So what now? Will there be any action? Can Yellowknifers expect some action and, if so, when? The short answer is yes. Five groups are working together: the City, the RCMP, GNWT Justice, GNWT Health and Social Services and Yellowknife Health and Social Services. Work is underway. There will be a response in due course.

But it was made very clear by many at the town hall meeting that we just cannot wait for someone to do something to fix things. We as individuals must also be responsible and take action. We must use our

public spaces, use them in a safe and calculated manner, but use them, and use them all the time. I agree with them. A populated space is a safe space, in my view.

I love my community, that's why I'm still here some 40 years after I first got here. I want newcomers, old-timers and everybody in between to enjoy Yellowknife as I do. It's a great place to live, even with all the recent assaults. I say get out and enjoy our city. Don't let the few dictate how we live. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PREMIER'S RESPONSE TO GIANT MINE
REMEDIATION PROPOSAL

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the summer the Premier told me that he'd like to be the first repeat Premier and he was thinking about running again, he told me.

---Applause

Well, you know what? After listening to the way he spoke to me yesterday, he's certainly not going to get my support unless he pulls up his socks.

When I listened to the Premier's responses, and I can tell you I received a number of e-mails and comments from individuals in our community; they were quite disappointed. It seems very frustrating when the Premier's response to the Members, who have legitimate, reasonable questions about trying to solve a problem, trying to do something about a giant problem and the Premier responds by "we don't respond to single MLAs," it sort of begs the question: What's the point of being here asking the government questions if they just sit there, laugh and think ideas from this side of the House are useless? That's part of the problem. The Premier has never been on this side of the House. He's had a cushy slide into Cabinet, an easy slide into the Premier's seat, and he doesn't know how hard we have to work to get ideas recognized and respected from this side of the House.

I'll tell you, it really makes me frustrated. It makes the public frustrated. Because when we put legitimate questions on the floor, legitimate ideas that should at least see the light of day, it might not be the right idea, it might not be the best idea, but they're good ideas and they deserve some respect. Yet he belittles it and plays coy and pretends he doesn't know what I'm talking about. Well, if he's happy, I'll be happy to walk over a copy of my press release. I'd be more than pleased to walk over a copy of my Member's statement, and if it happens to come to it, I'll even read and walk him through it.

The only issue I'm trying to bring here today, and yesterday is about the dreams and possibilities of what we can do. We can do anything if we put our

minds to it. But we have this guy over there. Let me remind the House of the Premier's very own words in this House: "The government appreciates constructive advice from Regular Members on all matters," but that was a little while ago. Maybe they're just too comfortable over there and start to think that Members, when we're raising legitimate ideas, they slough us off and don't care.

Well, he may be a friend of the arsenic, maybe he's a friend of status quo, maybe he's a friend of I don't know what, but I can tell you right now I have not given up on this idea and this idea needs to be taken to the feds and taken seriously.

Nobody in Yellowknife wants arsenic left here. We want it dealt with, Mr. Speaker, and that's the point I'm making today. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I'm going to remind Members again with regard to the way you're treating one another in your Members' statements and replies. I said it yesterday, let's be fair and work together to get the job done for the people of the Northwest Territories. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SPECIALIZED CARE

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. October 14th to the 20th is Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder Awareness Week. Canadians are being informed about Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder.

About 10 percent of the population suffers from ADHD and many people never get help. Untreated, ADHD often results in failures at school or the workplace. With treatment, people can lead healthy, productive lives.

ADHD is just one of many disorders requiring specialized care. In this area the government is not doing enough. For example, long-term mental health patients, people like Allisdair Leishman, receive minimal care, while priority is given to mental health outpatients.

Little is being done to prevent or response to the devastating effects of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. We are still awaiting a wellness court to assist offenders with cognitive challenges such as FASD.

Another case in point is Autism Spectrum Disorder, which is rising at an alarming rate. Alberta and other jurisdictions spend upwards of \$40,000 per year on every autistic child, but we have no funding earmarked for autism therapy. This is shameful, Mr. Speaker.

The Inclusive Schooling Program is one of the few main avenues for providing specialized care. Recent budget cuts tell us the government's priorities lie elsewhere.

A growing body of evidence demonstrates that up-front investment in specialized care results in fewer resources needed down the road for health care, education, social services, courts and corrections.

ADHD Awareness Week is a time to contemplate the range of specialized care needs. For financial and moral reasons, more should be done in the area of prevention, individualized interventions, rehabilitation, school integration and in-home services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHERN FARM TRAINING INSTITUTE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to advise the House that the newly created Northern Farm Training Institute, short form NFTI, in Hay River celebrated a successful year on September 22nd with its first ever graduating class, and I had the pleasure of attending that graduation at the Hay River Golf Course and partaking in a delectable array of locally grown and prepared food.

This innovative program was developed in response to numerous requests received from across the Northwest Territories to the Territorial Farmers' Association that conducts sustainable gardening workshops and seminars.

Through the Northern Farm Training Institute, workshops were offered during the 2013 growing season to gardening enthusiasts and those interested in small-scale agriculture and animal husbandry businesses.

Each workshop included classroom teachings, hands-on work, all the tools needed, and great resources to give students the confidence and skills to grow their own food and to be mentors and teachers to others in their home communities who wish to do the same.

Workshops covered interesting topics such as designing and planting sustainable gardens, applying permaculture methods in cold climates, garden maintenance, food preparation and cold-climate animal care.

In total, NFTI hosted six workshops from April through September for 15 students each session from 13 different communities in the Northwest Territories. I want to congratulate the following students who received their NFTI certificate for completing all seven workshops: Jeffrey Fabian from the Hay River Reserve, Sharon Pekok from Hay River, Whitney Jason from Yellowknife, and Shelly Empey from Fort Simpson.

This program was made possible through the funding received under the Growing Forward II

Program, a five-year agreement between Ottawa and the GNWT to provide \$1.2 million per year to support northern agriculture.

In addition to providing expertise and hands-on experience, this funding was also used to offset the travel costs for out-of-town students so the travel would not be a barrier to their participation.

I would also like to thank the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Minister Ramsay, for his support in securing this funding. I also want to thank everyone who had a hand in making this inaugural year of this initiative a resounding success, including the folks at the Territorial Farmers' Association, the instructors, and the many partners, farms and community-based organizations who enriched the learning experience of the students by allowing them to observe and participate in real life and cultural operations.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to seek unanimous consent to quickly conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: In offering thanks, I cannot fail to mention Kim Rapati, Mayor Andrew Cassidy, and also, if any of you met her, the most enthusiastic person for northern agriculture that you could ever come across. If you don't believe in northern agriculture, when you meet Jackie Milne you would be a believer by the time you finished the conversation. She's a wonderful, wonderful boost to this program.

I applaud the Northern Farm Training Institute, which has lots of exciting ideas to expand in the future as it continues to grow and support the development of sustainable food systems across the Northwest Territories.

They've had an overwhelming successful year and are looking forward to another exciting year in 2014. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PASSING OF CHRIS BERGMAN

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very rare nowadays to meet someone who leaves an imprint in your life that made them unforgettable, a mark larger than life, an imprint that made you yearn to be a better person.

Mr. Speaker, our community lost one of our beloved, long-time sport volunteers and humanitarians recently to cancer. He was a very special man, a man who touched my life and many others in ways that I was never able to share until today. I know he's looking down on us; so, Mr.

Chris Bergman, I want to thank you and let you know you will be missed.

Long before I knew Chris Bergman, he was a standout football athlete with Idaho State, who followed in his father's footsteps and pursued a career in law enforcement. Early on in his RCMP career, Chris's journey took him north to Inuvik and many other communities in the Mackenzie Delta. It was in Inuvik where Chris met his wife, Dot, who was a nurse, and they embarked on a northern life together to places like Pond Inlet, Fort Smith, Regina, Red Deer, Ottawa and eventually Yellowknife, which they called home for 25 years.

Chris Bergman retired from the RCMP as a staff sergeant after 28 incredible years and served as director of Sport North. Finally, after a brief stint in Airdrie, Alberta, Chris and Dot returned to Range Lake where he worked for Diavik Diamond Mine for the last 10 years.

This larger than life, humble man was a tireless community member and humanitarian. He actively supported many organizations, including the Yellowknife Seniors' Society, Yellowknife Food Rescue and Special Olympics. However, those of us who knew Chris Bergman, knew very well that minor hockey was his true inspiration and his ultimate legacy.

Through all these noteworthy contributions, Chris's proudest achievements were his children – Jennifer, Peter and Kimberly – and later, his son-in-law Steve and daughter-in-law Tasha, along with his grandchildren, Abigail, Noah, Ava, Nate, Journey and Lane, could all be seen at events where you knew "Old Man Bergman" was in the house as his huge, notable, proud voice could be heard over the noisiest of venues.

Chris's life and legacy left such a great impression on so many of us that it makes it easy to share a little bit of his humble way moving forward. At least, I long to try to live my life just like Mr. Bergman, whether it's expected of me and many of us.

An emptiness will be felt in the lives of many Northerners, a space only as large as the man who filled it, but the memories are larger, the impact even greater. He was loved and he will be missed. But as the tears of grief, tears of joy fall, joy at the fact that Mr. Chris Bergman walks on streets of gold today, singing the hymn of Hockey Night in Canada, with a smile. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognitions of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Bromley.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize some Pages in the House today. Niva

Stephenson, who actually is just outside, I believe, but we have in the gallery today her mother, Karen Johnston, and her grandmother, Sue Johnston. A great welcome to them.

I also have a couple of others. I see Grace Clark here and her twin sister, Sophie, has been running around here, both of whom are fiddlers, by the way, of some renown. I would also like to recognize Anne Thomas, who is also a great fiddler, although not a Weledeh resident. Many thanks for the services of the Pages today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 329-17(4): FULL-TIME NURSE IN TSIIGEHTCHIC

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions will be for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Since February 2013, what action has been taken to secure a year-round licenced practical nurse in Tsiigehtchic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been working with the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority, and the CEO from the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services has been looking at options. Actually, we have looked at the licenced practical nurse options and the possibility of training a paramedic to remain in Tsiigehtchic. There are some systematic problems with just putting a nurse in there; although one nurse could accommodate that population, according to the delivery model we are using. However, it's difficult to find a nurse and place a nurse in Tsiigehtchic when we don't have other supports in the community such as RCMP. So that is what our issue is.

We've also looked at the possibility of bringing in a nurse from Fort McPherson that can actually spend some nights in Tsiigehtchic, but there would be some arrangement with the community for security in case there was a nighttime callout. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: That answered part of my second question, but I will ask the Minister, will the Minister... I actually find it very funny that we put a wellness worker, one wellness worker into the community but we won't put a licenced practical nurse. So I'd like to ask the Minister what is the Department of Health and Social Services and the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority doing to remedy this situation.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: In Tsiigehtchic and other communities where nurses do not stay, do not overnight, I know that during freeze-up and breakup in Tsiigehtchic we do place a registered nurse in the community on a full-time basis at that point. But to have somebody stay overnight in all these communities, we have not been able to do that just because of the situation.

The model is actually asking for a minimum of two nurses, if we are going to place nurses into a community, and also that there be RCMP officers in the community when we place nurses in the community. Therefore, that model kicks in at a certain population, and when communities have populations below that, we have to try to find alternatives to try to provide nurses in the community and that's what we've looked at.

We have looked at various options but we haven't come up with something that would work at this time. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: As I mentioned earlier, the community set aside housing for a nurse. Will the Minister work with the community leaders to find a way to put a nurse in that house?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, we have, again, a plan to go into the community. I will go into the community myself with Health and Social Services staff, with the CEO, with the public administrator from the Beaufort-Delta, to try to resolve this issue. We are not trying to hide from the issue, it's just we are having difficulty coming up with a solution that would work for everyone concerned. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems policy is the problem here. Will the Minister and the department work to change the policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We will work on the policy. As I indicated, Tsiigehtchic is one of at least six communities across the North that don't have nursing units, therefore don't have nurses living in the community. We are trying to work on the model that will allow that to happen. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 330-17(4): FORT SIMPSON FERRY HOURS OF OPERATION

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on my questions on the Lafferty ferry operations to the Minister of Transportation. Given that there is an increased demand for opening up the ferry sooner, like a 6 a.m. start, how can the Minister facilitate this by working with the

community and work towards an earlier ferry start? Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would be more than happy to look into the request that the Member brings to the House today. We haven't had that request presented to us in a formal way, at least in the last five years, so we would like to look at this a little bit further and see what it would cost and how it would work. We would be more than happy to sit down with the community leaders there, and the MLA, to discuss options that we could have. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the Minister is open to discussing that with the community. Without pressing the matter further, I certainly would like to invite the Minister. Probably before Christmas we could arrange a meeting like that, if the Minister could commit to coming to Fort Simpson. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, any time that can improve our service, that is something that we would like to consider. Certainly, I would like to take the Member up on his offer, if our schedules permit, to get down to Fort Simpson to have this meeting sometime before Christmas. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 331-17(4):
SAHTU REGION EMPLOYMENT
AND TRAINING READINESS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I spoke on the willingness of the people of the Sahtu who want to work. I spoke specifically to the high percentage of single parents of children. I want to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment what type of infrastructure is going to be considered in the Sahtu to help single parents who want to work and want to contribute to their families.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There are tons of opportunities that are happening in the Sahtu region. We are closely monitoring that and working closely with the regional training committee that is established, consisting of Aboriginal governments and other stakeholders, in partnership with industry as well. We need to identify what the needs of the community are, and based on that, we need to develop plans to move forward. We will be working closely with the MLA and also the community organizations to move that forward. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to those plans being developed. However, I want to ask the Minister, we know for sure that there are high percentages of single parents in the small communities and we know that the unemployment rate is fairly high. I want to ask the Minister in regards to putting in infrastructure such as daycare centres that will allow single parents to have a place where their children can be watched over as they seek employment. What are the plans for those in the Sahtu to have that type of infrastructure in the communities?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the daycare establishment and other facilities will be required down the road because there will be a boom in the Sahtu region with all the employment opportunities, training and business opportunities. Those factors will be taken into account when we talk about the overall training plan and what it will entail. It would have a rippling effect in the community.

At the same time, when we talk about the daycares and the workers, obviously they will be busy at their work and the kids will need to be looked after. Similar to what we did in Inuvik with the Children First Society, those are areas where we need to look at options. When we talk about partnerships, those are the areas that we continue to stress and we continue to work. Obviously, with the Sahtu region, we can make that an area that we can focus on.

What is happening now is we need to develop a plan of action consisting of the community needs. Based on that, we will have areas of interest that the Member has alluded to. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the action now is happening in the Sahtu. People want to work. Single parents want to provide. They want to invest into their children and into their education, and they want to make a contribution to their families.

If the Minister can speed up the planning process, people right now want to work in communities such as Colville Lake, Deline, Tulita, Fort Good Hope and Norman Wells, looking at infrastructure that will put people to work. Right now there is not much support for them.

Can the Minister look at, within this time frame, within a couple of years of this government, to put in infrastructure to support the single parents such as putting in daycare centres immediately rather than down the road?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with the Member that we must encourage the individuals to be employed, either to be trained or part of business contracts. Based on that, what the Member is referring to is having a plan in place where it would be capturing the

daycare establishment. Again, those are areas that we need to push forward.

With our government here, we have been talking about the Sahtu region and other regions that are actively exploring opportunities. The Sahtu region is one of the prime examples, along with the Deh Cho and Gwich'in areas. We will expedite this process. We are hoping that we can see some products in the next upcoming capital planning process. Those are just some of the areas that we can push forward. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to coming to the Sahtu to see for himself the needs to have these kinds of infrastructures in place such as what I'm talking about, the daycare centres?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, by all means, we need to visit the communities, especially in the Sahtu region. I believe we are working with the Member's office to find a date that is suitable for all of us. We need to have our staff go in there. I would like to meet with the committee, as well, the regional training committee, what they've been working on, the training plans and so forth. I am looking forward to the trip. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 332-17(4):

TERRITORIAL MIDWIFERY SERVICES
AND CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES CENTRES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services, focused on early childhood development, questions of midwifery, and child and family services centres. In March of this year the Assembly provided a specific, clear direction and allocated an additional \$330,000 to Health and Social Services to ensure that a midwifery program would be established in Hay River this year. That was six months ago.

Can the Minister confirm that the Midwifery Program in Hay River is now operational or will be within the next few months? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not able to confirm that. I don't believe that the Midwifery Program will be operational within the next few months in Hay River. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm disappointed to hear that, obviously. The House provided clear direction here as a result of several years of previous discussions. When we directed the

Midwifery Program be accelerated for Hay River, we envisioned and stipulated that this would also accelerate the midwifery programs for the Beaufort-Delta, Behchoko and Yellowknife.

Can the Minister please explain how the department is planning to get the midwifery expansion back on schedule, and confirm that the delays in Hay River will not be allowed to delay implementation in other communities as well? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, one of the main components to expansion of the Midwifery Program was to have the Midwifery Program that is currently operational in Fort Smith be the main supports to developing a Midwifery Program in Hay River and then expansion to Beaufort-Delta and ultimately into a territorial Midwifery Program.

One of the midwives resigned just at the point when we were launching into our plan to expand the Midwifery Program, so the first action became the replacement of that midwife. That has been done. A new midwife has been hired. A team has been put together.

In addition to that, another issue was that we had a change in the CEO. The CEO for Hay River had moved to another position. Then we are working on that as well. However, we are proceeding forward with a plan and we put a team together. We are working on expanding midwifery into Hay River now that we have the second midwife back in place in Fort Smith.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, that sounds kind of weak to me. Governments have to be able to chew gum and think at the same time and, in fact, in multiple ways, so I wouldn't expect this sort of thing would allow a delay.

On the area of a related issue – child and family resource centres in Tulita and Ndilo – could the Minister please provide an update on the status of these centres that are long overdue? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The child and family services centres essentially, I guess, would be the Healthy Family Program that we have been expanding. This Healthy Family Program is expanding across the territory. We do believe that we have programs or satellite programs operating in 21 communities. It is a fair expansion. I think that all of the Sahtu now is involving themselves in the Healthy Family Program, then there will be further expansion into the South Slave.

At this point I think that once we have the two expansions in the South Slave, most of the communities where there is any significant amount of births will have a Healthy Family Program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to hear about the Healthy Family Program. I have been aware of that and I think that is an excellent program.

My question was on the commitment to get in place new child and family resource centres. I know those were attempted in the previous fiscal year and they failed to be established. I assume the Minister is working with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment to get those up and operational. Hopefully they are by now. We have been at this now for a year and a half. I wonder if the Minister, if he's not aware of not being able to provide an update, if he could commit to providing me that update very soon. Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I recognize that we were dealing with the child and family service resource centres that are now under the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, but the plan to consolidate programs along with our Healthy Family Program is in the works. It is something that we are doing under the work that we are doing under the Early Childhood Development Framework. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 333-17(4):
INUVIK GAS CONVERSION IMPACTS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am just going to follow up to my Member's statement. I will have questions for the Minister of Housing in regard to how we can mitigate the use of our gas consumption in the Inuvik region. We are throwing money at this problem, which we should be looking at how we can do some prevention, promotion and increase that wealth if we are also keeping the cost low for our residents.

My first question is to the Minister of Housing. How many of our housing units are currently on natural gas or the synthetic gas system? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have 240 public housing units in Inuvik and all 240 of them are all on natural gas or SNG. That would include the boilers and the hot water heaters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, that is a high number of residents that are consuming the synthetic gas at the moment at a very high cost. Any residents that are private or in a market rent area, they are paying a pretty high cost right now, which I think in turn puts a high cost on this government when we talk

about deferred maintenance and other projects where other dollars could go.

Can the Minister confirm that there has been an increase in the costs from when Inuvik went from natural gas to synthetic gas last year over the period of two or three months? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I do know that for the month of January of 2012 the local housing authority spent approximately \$84,000 for natural gas. A year later, January 2013, that cost went up to \$181,000 and that is just for the month of January, and you multiply that over 12 months, we spent over \$1 million. I think it is \$572,000 more than we would normally spend because of the conversion to SNG. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, that is a significant increase that the government is paying to subsidize these housing units. I just want to ask the Minister if there is a way to mitigate that. Would the Minister look at possibly... Well, even before that, the road was shut down recently due to some weather conditions. I know we did put money into the ferry system to prolong the opening of the road. Should the road close down again or the ferry system, something happens to it and we do run out, we don't have storage for synthetic gas or the natural gas well runs out, what would the cost be to convert all of these houses back to either diesel or to a biomass product? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has committed to trying to keep the ferry crossing at Tsiigehtchic opened for as long as possible, where there is no interruption in service, so that would be a huge help.

However, in the event that something does happen, we have to deal with it then. I do know that it will cost the NWT Housing Corporation and this government approximately \$5 million to convert all our units back to diesel in the event that we have to. It's not something that we would like to do. We would like to work with, obviously, the community and the suppliers to keep a continuous flow going so we don't have to convert back over.

As far as the biomass part of it, we are exploring all options for biomass. I do know that in some of the new projects we have coming on stream, not particularly in Inuvik, but we are putting biomass systems into those units so we will see how they work. If there are opportunities in Inuvik to convert some of our multi-unit type buildings to biomass, obviously we have to look at that, especially with the concern with the supply of gas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know there is a lot of work being done on this situation. I think this government should also take a lead role, not only by supplying funding dollars but look at ways we can regulate or mitigate the consumption that some of our housing units are using in the synthetic gas. It would decrease the costs and that can go into deferred maintenance or even housing repairs.

Does the Minister have any kind of campaign in place that might be able to tell the residents in the housing units on their energy consumption so that we can prolong that well until we find a longer solution? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I know, through the LHO, they put out a newsletter every so often. I have been advised that they are going to put a campaign in there as to the consumption of gas. However, that is a hard one to regulate, to tell people that they need to reduce their consumption. I think they all realize, especially those in the private homes. They're probably all turning their thermostats down a bit to conserve.

As I've seen and as the Member is aware, we were dealing with a situation where a senior who owned their own home went from \$700 a month to \$1,400 a month and they've taken every step they could to try and mitigate some of the usage.

So it's a difficult situation the community of Inuvik is in right now. All the agencies are working together to try to find a solution, and hopefully we can find a solution soon.

But as far as Housing goes, we'll do what we can to make sure that our tenants are informed, advised and ready. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 334-17(4):
SAFETY CONCERNS OF
YELLOWKNIFE RESIDENTS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Justice. I talked in my Member's statement about my community, and my community looking for ways to tackle the issues of safety that have come to the fore in the last several months.

Some years ago there was a dedicated group of residents, in conjunction with the RCMP, who began a citizen's watch type program. It was a program called Citizens On Patrol, or COPs. It was a really effective program for a number of years. But as with many programs, when the people who start the program either tire of it or move away, then the program falters, and that's what happened here; it's no longer around. It has been mentioned in the last number of weeks, in conversations about safety, that maybe we should start this program

again and that it should be revived and that it could be a benefit to us in Yellowknife.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice whether or not he's aware of this program, has he heard of the Citizens On Patrol program, what his view of that program is, it's potential for Yellowknife, and if he thinks it will address some of our issues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I'm aware of the Citizens On Patrol program. It was a very good program. Basically their role was to observe and report. Unfortunately, as the Member has indicated, I think it ceased to exist over time. There were probably fewer volunteers than there needed to be and I think it resulted in the unfortunate burnout of some of the individuals who were involved.

This is an issue and an opportunity that keeps presenting itself. We are very interested as the Department of Justice. We are working with the RCMP to see if there's any way that we revitalize this group. We do need organizations to come forward who would like to maybe champion this as well. It is something that we hope happens and we are actively encouraging other organizations to consider it as well.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for his response. I'm really pleased to hear that Justice is behind this.

My next question I was going to ask about is a commitment and I think the Minister has already basically said the department is willing.

I guess I would like to know whether or not the Minister will take the initiative to contact the city, because I think this is something which the city certainly has to be very much involved in.

Will the Minister take the initiative, or the RCMP, will he encourage them to take the initiative to contact the city to see what we can do to get this thing rolling? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: That's already been done. The RCMP participate on the city's Police Advisory Committee. We've had discussions with the RCMP and they also see this as being a valuable opportunity to have some eyes and ears on the streets of Yellowknife to share information with them. I believe they have already taken this to the police, an advisory committee, and have already had discussions on that.

But it's going to take more. It's going to take individuals to come forward as well. As a government, as the Department of Justice, we're very supportive of this opportunity and we will provide assistance where possible.

MS. BISARO: Thanks again to the Minister. He leads me right into my next question. I recognize that volunteers are something which are absolutely necessary to this program. It's not going to happen if we don't get the volunteers from the community who are willing to be the eyes and ears and to actually go out and do the patrols.

I'd like to know from the Minister what kind of supports the city or a Citizens On Patrol group, whether it's attached to the city or not, what kind of support can this group expect from the Department of Justice. I'm talking about PYs – person years – money, actual dollars, and/or equipment. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It's difficult to quantify at this time. We know that the RCMP want to be supportive of this initiative and they will work with any community group that comes up. Through that, assets or requirements for PYs may be identified. We're happy to have that discussion with any groups that come forward. We're happy to work in that way.

Just for historic reference, in 2004-2005 as well as 2005-2006 when this organization did exist and was supported in Yellowknife, we did provide some support to help them cover their van leases and some other things. These are things that we would be interested in looking at again, but we don't know what those costs are right now, so it would be very difficult for me to commit to a dollar figure.

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

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate that you can't commit dollars, but it's gratifying to hear that we are on the same page and that you're willing to support this group if we can get it going.

One of the things that I mentioned in my statement is that there will be results from the community meeting that was held. I'd like to know from the Minister if he can give us any kind of an indication of when the working group might be reporting.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, we got a lot of good information at that meeting and we're obviously looking for more on a regular basis. To that end, we have posted the minutes from the meeting on our website, and we're also seeking additional input. We're seeking ideas from the community on how to deal with some of these public safety issues.

There are a number of things that have already started. Issues were raised about communication between RCMP and the municipal enforcement division here in Yellowknife, both from a personal communication but also technical communications issues have been brought forward to our attention on those issues, so we're working on those. We're trying to improve communications, improve

relationships. We are looking at COPs and we're looking at other opportunities.

I will commit to having something to committee and Members later in the fall, towards the end of the calendar year, but we need a little bit of an opportunity to put some of the ideas that are coming forward through a bit of a filter and figure out how we can make them work. I will commit to getting something for the Member before Christmas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 335-17(4):
CLOSING OF NATS'EJEE K'EH
TREATMENT CENTRE

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to continue my questions from yesterday with the Minister of Health and Social Services on addictions and, more importantly, the closing of the Nats'ejee K'eh Residential Treatment Centre.

It's clear that this Assembly and the people at large have a Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for 2012-2015, which we were told were the guiding principles, or I guess the compass points, if you will. We waited meticulously for many months for the Minister's Forum on Addictions. That's on one side of the equation.

All the while, what's happened on the other side of the equation is the fact that we now lost our only residential treatment facility. We've received, in this House, quasi responses with respect to whether or not we now have detox beds. Now we've got interim contracts that will expire March 31, 2014, with four southern contractors that are supposed to represent and solve our problems in the interim, and we have no idea what those costs are and the standby costs for those.

All the while we'll have a Minister and department that have compass headings. They've got a compass unit on their dash, but I'm not sure if that thing is plugged in, because it's definitely giving us some mixed reviews here, as we've heard in the last day or so.

My first question is, is that it's well documented that the Minister of Health met with the board of directors of Nats'ejee K'eh on March 26th of this year. The Minister requested that this board of Nats'ejee K'eh produce a detailed business plan to consider the range of programs and services, its staffing and its staffing needs, and incorporating more of an Aboriginal culture component. Did the Minister receive this business plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We received some documentation from the board, and that's something that we could move forward with. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that there was a business plan that was produced. We know because committee on this side of the House has received this plan. It's a very detailed plan, a very good plan, as far as I'm concerned.

The question that we're hearing is that we've got parts of the plan, yet we were given a full plan, so it doesn't quite make sense.

My question, with respect to this plan, if there was this plan given as a result, as I indicated that we did receive on this side of the House, why was the funding still cut? What was wrong with this plan?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Regardless of how good the Member thinks the plan was or what we thought of the plan, the bottom line was that one counsellor, one person to do counselling for all the people that were supposed to go there, that only one person was in the position there to help the people who were going there for treatment. The board themselves, through the executive director, had indicated that she thought there was a safety issue here. To continue on to have intake of people into Nats'ejee K'eh with only one counsellor was a problem, and this created a safety issue not only for the counsellor but for the people coming in for counselling. It was the executive director that approached the board that said, I think it's time to shut down Nats'ejee K'eh. At that point, we took action and we cut the funding effective September 30th this year. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Now we're getting into some of the details, which is good. We've been waiting for this for a while.

My interpretation of the plan is my interpretation. I'm assuming anyone on this side of the House who read the plan, as well, would have their own views. We know the department has their own views and I think the public might have their own views.

Would the Minister like to enlighten us and maybe table this plan for everyone to see, because, quite frankly, Nats'ejee K'eh is closed, so what harm would that do?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I guess I can talk to some of the individuals. I do believe that the board is now non-functioning. The properties that they presented to us, I don't know who has the ownership of it. I don't know whether or not I would be allowed to table a document such as that. If I can, I would be glad to do it. Thank you.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it sounds like we're going to have to do another

ATIPP request, and thank God I've been collecting bottles all summer because this seems to be the pattern of activity here for Regular Members.

I guess we've heard from the Minister that he's going to go back and talk to a defunct board that no longer exists, to ask permission to table something that is in the ownership of the department.

Again, will the Minister commit to tabling this for everybody to see what was the action plan of the Nats'ejee K'eh and how unsafe, really, was it?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I'm not asking anybody to request information to go through an ATIPP request for information. What I said was if I'm allowed to table a report or a business plan that's been presented to me by a board that's now defunct, I would be pleased to do it. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 336-17(4):
ISSUES ARISING FROM NEW
HEALTH FACILITY IN HAY RIVER

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I'm happy to report that the new Hay River health facility is well underway. There's a nice tall structure standing there, and the contractors continue to work, and the weather has been on our side, so it's been a good fall for construction.

The few outstanding items – well, there are many outstanding items, but there are a couple I want to ask about today as a result of the new health care facility – I'd just like an update on, if we could here in the House, because it's something of a popular topic of discussion in Hay River, and that is the 10 extended care beds currently located in our existing hospital and how the loss of those beds, when the hospital is relocated, how those beds are going to be replaced. I just wonder if Minister Beaulieu would have any kind of an update on what path we're taking on that challenge.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point that plan is being contemplated by the department at the deputy minister level with other deputy ministers responsible for infrastructure in the GNWT. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Of course, we know that the new hospital won't be commissioned for a little while yet, so we do have some lead time, but I would like to ask the Minister when he contemplates we might have a more clear plan with respect to the replacement of those beds as a

result of these discussions amongst the deputy ministers, some kind of a timeline we can share with our constituents. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, those, although they're called extended beds in H.H. Williams, are actually long-term beds. Those long-term beds will be outside the current new health centre that is being constructed in Hay River. In fact, the direction that we are going now is with the expansion of the Woodland Manor, to add the 10 beds to the Woodland Manor. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, people of Hay River will be very glad to hear that. That does seem like that is a fairly prudent direction to take, a good choice.

Another issue that has been raised in this House before, which I would also like an update on, was a request for a functional review of the existing H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital, to determine whether or not that building would be suitable to be re-profiled for some other use and to be kept as a piece of infrastructure in our community as something other than a health facility. I would like to ask the Minister if he has an update on where that request is in the system. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I will ask that the Minister of Public Works and Services provide that response to the Member. We are having discussions with that department. I think there is going to be a bit more time before we are able to do that type of evaluation on the building, as the building is still being used as a hospital at this time. Soon, I think, prior to us moving into the new hospital, that evaluation on future use of that building will be completed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if I can change Ministers mid-questions here. I guess not. Okay. Well then, I will just have to suffice it to say thank you for the update, Mr. Beaulieu.

I am not one who likes to see brick and mortar, institutions, buildings that have some functional use torn down, so I will be continuing to pursue this. If there is any reasonable life left in the existing hospital, I will be pursuing a further set of questions with the Minister of Public Works and Services on that at some point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 337-17(4):
HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS
VACCINATION PROGRAM

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Worldwide the Human Papillomavirus, or commonly

known as HPV, is a common sexually transmitted disease. I could go on at length, but it's not necessary today, regarding how many problems Northerners have with sexually transmitted diseases and the fact that it is a real problem here. It is a problem whether you live in a large or small community, so we must do whatever we can.

In short, when was this program for vaccination rolled out? The NWT was one of the last jurisdictions. It would have been the last if we didn't have Nunavut behind us, to finally implement this back in 2009.

It was only implemented for girls. I am going to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services: Do young men matter when it comes to the HPV vaccination, and when will they get their opportunity to have this much needed vaccination to help protect their health? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To answer the first question, all people matter, as far as health and social services go. I don't know when and if young men are going to get a needle for this virus. I don't have the information here, so I couldn't give him a date, or if, in fact, it is going to happen at all. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I am elated to hear the fact that all people matter, according to the Minister, but I would like to hear when young men will matter in this particular case.

What can the Minister commit to today on clarifying this huge error for a huge percentage of our population? Young boys matter, as far as I'm concerned. Young men matter, and everyone. These kids matter.

What is the Health Minister willing to do today to show that they matter to the families out there thinking that this is a much needed vaccination? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to have the department check with the physicians that make a decision on which individual groups should be getting a certain type of shot for certain types of viruses. If young men or young boys are not getting the shot for the virus due to an oversight on the part of the department, then we will give them shots too. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his inquiry, if he finds out it is a clerical issue or it's a money issue, will he issue a directive from his office to ensure that this process starts right away? I am being contacted by families who are concerned that their young boys, their children are being left out of

this process. Again, a much needed vaccination that is accepted across Canada, why not in the Northwest Territories?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, yes. If it was a money decision and it was thought that we should only give young ladies or young girls the antidote or virus needle, as opposed to ignoring the boys, or if it was a clerical error and then we forgot the other gender, then we will correct that. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, for my final question of the day on this HPV vaccination, I want to make sure it is absolutely crystal clear in this House today that the Minister is saying he is going to see if he can correct it. He says he is going to see if he can fix this process to ensure that they are fairly covered.

I want to make sure it is clear before this House and certainly clear for the people of the Northwest Territories. If this is not the case, I would like the Minister to clarify this in the House through a Minister's statement, explaining why these young men will not be getting the vaccination. For these parents who are concerned that their children aren't getting it, the Minister is the one who will account for it, not the MLAs going to explain to parents why the Department of Health can't do it. I want the Minister to account for it. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, whether I make a Minister's statement on this vaccination or not would be determined within Cabinet. We do have a certain amount of Ministers' statements that we would like to present in the House for providing information. If I'm not able to do the Minister's statement, I would be pleased to provide it in writing to the Member or to the House. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 338-17(4):
ATTENTION DEFICIT
HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I made the statement on the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Awareness Week, and I want to ask questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

What, if any, specific measures are being taken to address the issue of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in the NWT? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We work with the various organizations across the territory that deal with children and adults with

various types of disabilities, including children with attention deficit hyperactivity, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, even autism and various other disabilities. We also, at the department, have some funding to work on these various disabilities. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: Is the Minister aware of the vast discrepancy of funding for Autism Spectrum Disorder between NWT and other Canadian jurisdictions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: No, I'm not aware that there is a vast discrepancy between the money that we provide as a government and the other governments across the country provide specifically for autism and Attention Deficit Disorder. I do recognize that it is fairly new work, but we are getting involved in many areas of this type of area where we're starting to learn more about the impacts, and we're learning more about the actual recognition or the prevalence of these various disabilities as we're working at the national level with other jurisdictions. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: I'm disappointed that the Minister is not aware of the funding regimes between the NWT and other Canadian jurisdictions on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

If he's not aware of it, would he direct the Department of Health and Social Services to review this issue that's confronting the population of the NWT? Would he make an effort to ensure the public that this matter on Autism Spectrum Disorder will become a priority with the department, and that at some point he'll report back to the House that a specific amount of funding will be allocated for this effort?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Like I indicated, we are getting more and more involved with this type of work. I don't have the budget numbers here compared to the budget numbers of what the other jurisdictions are spending. I could easily get that information; I'm aware of that.

I know that as far as the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, we are pretty well at the same level with any jurisdiction across the country in our work. So, specific to hyperactivity or attention deficit or autism, I don't have that information, but my assumption is that we're working with jurisdictions and we're working with non-government organizations across the territory to try to support these individuals with their disabilities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister commit to a yes or no, that at some point he'll come back to the Assembly and give a specific number in terms of the value of priority of the GNWT on funding for Autism Spectrum Disorder? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I can do that. I can provide the information to the House on our work in all of these areas. I don't have a problem with that. I can provide information on the amount of money that we're spending in these areas. I can compare that with what other jurisdictions are doing as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 339-17(4):
EXPORTING NORTHERN
HYDROELECTRIC POWER

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier. I'd like to follow up on the discussion that he had with my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen yesterday on power and hydro grids and so on.

As we know, we're approaching 25 to 30 cents, possibly greater – we have stipulated increases in our rates in this part of the Northwest Territories – whereas provincial rates are in the order of six or eight cents. I'm very disappointed that the Premier would encourage the impression that the Northwest Territories has any potential for selling power to the South. He mentioned the other big markets down there in Saskatchewan, BC and Alberta. Given our costs, and even with larger-scale developments, we could only sell power at a huge loss.

Would the Premier agree that it's very irresponsible to leave the impression with the public that we would be selling power to the South and that this impression should be corrected? Mahsi.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn't think we're misleading anybody. We are looking at a plan. We are looking at options and we have excess power. We are working on a business case. If the business case presents that it's feasible to export power after we've looked at the northern demands first, then it's something that we are looking at.

MR. BROMLEY: We could use all the extra power ourselves. Economically that's been demonstrated. For some reason we're not; we're using fossil fuels instead. Again, the Premier did not refute the fact that we have 30 cent power, they have six to eight cents power. We are not going to be selling, so this is a very irresponsible position to take.

In contrast, and I've talked to people in the Hydro Corporation and the NWT Power Corporation and they agree with that, of course. Has the Premier talked to those people in the Hydro Corporation and the NWT Power Corporation? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I speak to them all the time. I speak to the Minister responsible for the NWT

Power Corporation all the time, and we are all working on developing a business case. We're also developing the technical information to back it up.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. I'm glad to hear the Minister is talking to our people. Building transmission lines is extremely expensive. ATCO, during the most recent Taltson fiasco, came up with about \$750,000 per kilometre. Now we're talking about building grids to the South at that rate. So that puts us in the many millions of dollars, in addition to our 30 cent kilowatt hour of power cost, so now we add that to that cost to sell our power to the South. Clearly, that's not about to happen.

I'd like to ask the Premier what the cost of a transmission line to the South would be. What are the estimates?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: That's what we're doing, is developing a business case. I expect that would be somewhere in the order of 500 to 700 million dollars. It would all depend on whether there's a business case or not.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope that seals the deal. I hope this does correct the impression for the public.

The last question I have, very briefly, is: Has the Premier informed our public that if we do in fact connect to these grids and import power, that we will be importing primarily coal power, the dirtiest possible fuel and the most inefficient use of fuel to generate electricity and the most damaging of the fuels to climate change? Has the Premier informed the public about that aspect as well?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't follow his logic, but I'm not surprised that he's not supportive of developing hydro, which is a very clean renewable resource. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 340-17(4):
BEAUFORT-DELTA FERRY SERVICE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions today for the Minister of Transportation in regard to the ferry operations and the Dempster Highway, specifically working with the gas situation in Inuvik. I just want to get an update on what's happening with the Mackenzie ferry and what are the timelines he's looking at in terms of operations at the Mackenzie ferry. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The operation in the Mackenzie Delta and in the Beaufort-Delta area is going to be enhanced this

coming winter. We've put \$400,000 into upgrading the Louis Cardinal so that it can operate in winter conditions and in ice conditions. We've set up two spray pumps so the ice crossings can be prepared as soon as possible. The anticipation, Mr. Speaker, is we will run both the Abraham Francis and the Louis Cardinal. The Abraham Francis is a cable ferry able to operate in ice conditions. We will run both of those ferries until we get the ice crossings in place.

This is going to be a great advantage to the residents in the region. They won't be faced with higher prices for goods that have to be airlifted over and into the region, so I think it's going to be very beneficial not only for the situation with the gas in Inuvik but also for the consumer in the region, I think, and businesses as well. This coming fall I think it's going to be a tremendous advantage. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: I know we've done some upgrades to the Louis Cardinal ferry at the Mackenzie Crossing. Have any upgrades or any enhancements been done to the Abraham Francis? I know it's a smaller river and a smaller crossing, but would there been any disruptions in the crossing at the Abraham Francis that would affect all the investment that we put into the Louis Cardinal ferry to have a different impact on the opening of the road during this time?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As I mentioned, we have put \$400,000 into upgrades on the Louis Cardinal. They include some frost fighters, some control system upgrades so the ferry is able to operate in winter conditions.

Again, with the Abraham Francis, it is a cable ferry and it can operate in winter conditions. We expect it will be able to perform in winter conditions for us and for the travelling public in the region and businesses in the region this coming fall.

We have also put \$1.4 million in O and M funding into the region to maintain continuous service at both of those crossings during the freeze-up period. That was fully supported by MECC in response to the gas situation in Inuvik, but again it's going to have more of a profound impact than just the gas situation in Inuvik. I think it's going to be good for residents there to not be paying higher prices for goods this coming fall. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: In regards to the Dempster Highway there, has there been any additional costs for, not the upgrade, but mostly the maintenance for the transportation and the propane, and as soon as the LNG gets going with the Power Corp, are there going to be any extra maintenance costs to offset the extra wear and tear on the Dempster Highway for the next fiscal year or even as soon as it starts operating?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: There would be some small costs associated with maintenance for the

Dempster and I can get the Member those figures. I had mentioned earlier, we are putting in the \$1.4 million to ensure the continuous services at both of those crossings. That figure of \$1.4 million may include some of the maintenance work on the highway itself. I will get that detailed information for the Member.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the upgrades to the Louis Cardinal and the ferry system, does the Minister expect any disruptions during that time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Outside of Mother Nature, I don't expect any delays, but I can't predict water levels and storms and things like that. We anticipate that we will be able to operate both the Louis Cardinal and the Abraham Francis well into December, until such time we get the ice crossings in place. That's the anticipation, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The time for oral questions has been concluded. Item 8, written questions. Mr. Yakeleya.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 28-17(4): SUPPORT FOR SINGLE PARENTS IN THE SAHTU REGION

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment:

1. Please provide a listing of all programs and services that direct supports to single parents in the Sahtu communities.
2. Please provide a listing of the different types of infrastructure in place to support single parents who want to attend an educational institution or to gain employment.

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

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 122-17(4): NEWS RELEASE: YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE MLA CONCERNED ABOUT GIANT MINE REMIEDIATION PROPOSALS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table my news release regarding an innovative idea on how we can stimulate some good thinking and maybe some ideas to help solve

the Giant Mine problem where we have arsenic that will be perpetually taken care of. I am suggesting, let's reach out and coordinate. My press release spells that out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Blake.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 22-17(4): APPOINTMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST COMMISSIONER

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, October 21, 2013, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that pursuant to Section 91 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories the appointment of Mr. David Phillip Jones as Conflict of Interest Commissioner, effective December 1, 2013.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Ms. Bisaro.

MOTION 23-17(4): GIANT MINE REMEDIATION

MS. BISARO: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, October 21, 2013, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that the Government of the Northwest Territories accept the measures and suggestions contained in the Report of Environmental Assessment and recommended by the Review Board pursuant to s. 130(1)(b)(i) of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act;

And further, that the Government of the Northwest Territories urge its federal counterparts to do the same, to ensure the timely and cooperative remediation of the Giant Mine. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015; Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013; and Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Good afternoon, or is it still morning? I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Yesterday when

we left off, we were on general comments on Tabled Document 107-17(4), and that's where we left off. I'd like to ask, what is the wish of committee. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. We would like to continue consideration of Tabled Document 107-17(4) and continue with general comments.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. We will resume with that after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I would like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. I would like to ask Premier Bob McLeod if he would like to bring witnesses to the table and join us at the witness table for general comments.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Yes, I would, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I would like to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses to the table.

Premier McLeod, for the record, please introduce your witness.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. With me I have Michael Aumond, deputy minister of Finance. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Moving on with our general comments on the capital budget, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the committee allowing me to make some general comments with regard to the budget.

First off, the whole budget process has proved quite interesting how it works. We heard some very strong comments yesterday by some of the Members on this side of the House. It got me thinking last night, when I was leaving the Assembly, that it is quite interesting how we get to this process in terms of budgeting. At one point during the fiscal year, we do see the budget ahead of us and we look at it, we break it down and give recommendations and it comes back to us. What gets me is how this budget ever gets to us from what Members have said in previous years. I know there are some new Members in this Assembly, but there are Members in this Assembly that have been here two, three, four, going on to their fifth years but yet things they have fought for have never gotten into the budget year after year. Yet, they continue to fight for them and I give them the respect and acknowledgement that they fight and can continue

year after year. That is a pretty frustrating process to try to get what they need into the budget plan for their constituents.

I have been through that process two years myself, Madam Chair. I do feel when we do get a budget in front of us such as this, when I have had colleagues on this side of the House in their second and third terms that are frustrated not seeing whether this budget is going forward, but at the same time, as a new Member, I see where the fiscal responsibility comes in and how we have to be prudent where we spend the dollars.

It was a night of thinking on the whole budget and government operations and focusing on the Northwest Territories. You heard a lot here yesterday on how we have to provide services, roads, transportation, health centres and schools for the people of the Northwest Territories. You know, it is kind of a crazy thought thrown out there if you spent more time travelling in the Northwest Territories and doing more surveys and inspecting our schools and health centres and seeing what people in the Northwest Territories need, rather than going out and then trying to find out...maybe getting investments or creating partnerships that in years and years to come might not even show.

I mean, there was an article on CBC the other day that said the mining economy is going to be low for the next year or so, and that all three northern territories are going to have to, I won't say take it on the chin, but we expect the economy is not going to be as high. So in circumstances like that, I think we should start looking at how we as a government can start looking at our own territory and start looking at how we can be self-sustaining, rather than always worrying about big industry coming in and saving us.

I know that the Premier and Cabinet have been doing a good job with the Canada Building Fund, working on trying to get some infrastructure with the federal government. But just thinking outside the box, as was said around the table a couple of times, just focus on our territory more and get our territory up and running.

There was an article in a newspaper – it might have been the Yellowknifer or on CBC North – about increasing our debt wall again by our Finance Minister, I believe. That was never spoken to. To read that, it was quite interesting. We now have an opportunity, with two years left, to start focusing on people in the Northwest Territories and our communities that the people live in.

We're talking about devolution and we have to talk about getting our communities prepared for lease spacing for offices and for housing.

In terms of the budgeting process, I was really interested. I'm just going to take the operations budget, for example. I know we are on general

comments, but the operations budget came before committee last year. We looked at it and we said no, we have to start investing in our people, prevention and promotion, early childhood development, treatment facilities. We put pressure on Housing. Housing did a good job with coming back. Education, income assistance. If we just approved that budget the way it was before us, where would the government be?

We have a good opportunity moving forward here. I don't know who puts the budget together and brings it to us as legislators, but it is a concern and I believe Members on this side of the House have been doing a good job. I work with these guys every day that I'm here in Yellowknife and I know they do their reading. We have really concrete and detailed discussions in our committee meetings, and I do respect the Members who have been bringing up a lot of their constituency concerns. Not only constituency concerns, we have the Inuvik-Tuk highway and we did get a lot of support on this side of the House for that. I know there were some people who weren't in favour of it, but at the end of the day, those discussions are laid out in committee rooms when we have a big project. Coming from a person who's a new Member and somebody who has worked on many committees that did a lot of good work, I support all Members here who have been here in the past, moving forward with their projects. I know when they speak up in this House asking for something, that it's legit and that we need to look at creating that.

Anyway, that was my budget talk and how budgets work in this government. I just wanted to get it off my chest, because last night I thought long and hard about it and I was just kind of bewildered on how the whole process works out and who brings the budget to us and moving it forward.

With the particular budget in front of us, you've heard a lot of people talking about a lot of different things yesterday. I'm not going to try to repeat any of it, but if I was going to repeat one thing, it would be the deferred maintenance. I think that's one of the biggest issues we have in this government and it needs to be addressed.

In terms of the Inuvik and Beaufort-Delta side of things, I'm glad to see the fibre optic link is still proceeding. The Inuvik-Tuk highway, I know there was some discussion that was thrown out there, to try to make the project a little bit longer. Take some dollars out of the year and put into infrastructure. Coming from Inuvik and seeing the gas situation that I have, I won't be able to support that. We need to get that project done on time, only because there are some wells that fall along that route that Inuvik and Tuk can tap into to get to a gas well and provide both communities with cheaper fuel costs. We need to get that infrastructure built in time so we can try and tap into that.

Another one, in speaking about highways, that's just coming up with a plan for all highways in the highway system. I'd like to see where the update is on the Arctic Tern facility. With the new school, I know the new school was a big project of the last governments in Inuvik. But there were some minor things that had happened and one of them was with the dental office. Last year there were no students who got any dental work done because the dental therapist couldn't do the work in the area, and the same thing is happening this year. So, if there's any way we could alter that dental office in the school so students are able to get the dental work done that they need. As government here knows, oral health care in the NWT is very high and very needed, and you've already lost out on the year with some of the students in Inuvik. It provides services to kindergarten to Grade 6 and that needs to be addressed.

I'd just like to thank Members for allowing me to vent a little bit about the budget process and also talk about some of the things that are going well, but also some of the things that also need to be addressed there.

I respect everybody that brings their concerns to the floor year after year after year, and hopefully we get to see some changes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Member for his comments. As we all know, the draft capital budget was presented to Members back in June of this year, so it was early in the process.

There have been a number of briefings on how the capital budget process actually works. We have a formula where all of the projects are run through and they're ranked on a priority basis. Based on the amount of money that's available, the highest priority projects are funded on that basis. For every project, there are five criteria that are used. One is the safety of people, the safety of assets, the environment, financial – whether there are other funding sources for the project, whether we're talking 50 cent dollars or 30 cent dollars – and if this is for program and service enhancements. So, all of those projects are run through that.

Also, there is what we call red flag projects. Those are the ones where a political decision has to be made in terms of whether there's funding available. Essentially that's how the capital planning process works.

We worked with the committees to come up with this proposed capital budget that we are discussing here today.

On the budget limit right now, we've talked about it but we recognize that if we're going to do anything

with regard to hydro, the budget limit will be something we'll have to address.

Arctic Tern, that building is being fixed up by Public Works and it's still to be determined what it's to be used for. It's identified as a surplus building.

With regard to dental, we'll bring that to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to see what we can do to address that. Thank you for those comments.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Next on the list for general comments I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The media was quick to pick up in the capital plan that there's nothing for Yellowknife, and I'm glad.

---Laughter

Well, I've been at this table here for 10 years and finally the needs in the regions and communities have outstripped what's going to be spent, most particularly for one fiscal year. But at the same time I'm not lost to the fact that inclusion of the Inuvik-Tuk highway has taken a lot of capital away from all regions. In fact, I think it's like \$70 million this coming fiscal year, so we have to keep in mind how many resources that takes away as we try to focus on the North.

At the same time, Members always say, well, it's the first time we've seen this budget kind of approach. That's not true and I think Mr. Premier pointed that out. We all work together on this budget. It's a consensus-style government that we run. But it's hard. It takes a long time for individual ridings or projects to come up. Sometimes regions get their special projects but you just have to be patient and hopefully eventually get yours, and I'm still waiting for mine, Madam Chair.

---Laughter

But it does take a lot of work. Most particularly I have been pounding on the table for Fort Simpson, to address the library concerns, and it's finally made it in the budget but it took 10 years. I thought I'd just share that with the Members. I'm pleased to see that.

As well, there are frustrations about ongoing projects such as the Trout Lake Airport. It should have had its opening this year but it may be deferred. But at the same time, we have to bear down and help manage these projects.

A stand-alone school in Trout Lake is a high priority for me and a high priority for the community of Trout Lake. We have some planning studies and hopefully we'll work towards planning a new stand-alone school for Trout Lake.

Even though the bulk of the money is going to big projects, I'm pleased to see in Transportation that

chipseal got a little bit extra money. Most particularly, I'd like to speak about the section from Providence junction on Highway No. 1 towards Fort Simpson. I drove it several times this summer and it's deteriorating, and we've had to come up with a plan to alleviate that. We don't want to lose infrastructure that's already there and turn it back into gravel is what I'm trying to say. So in my opening comments I would urge that we work towards that.

As well, in terms of highways, we're also looking at some expenditure of Highway No. 1 from Fort Simpson to Wrigley that's very, very much needed. It's been neglected for years and years, and I'm pleased to see some expenditure in that area as we move towards our long-term goal of the Mackenzie Highway as a permanent highway.

Just with that, I'll continue my job and work with committees and work with the Ministers, and advance the priorities of my riding and ridings of other Members, as well, as we work towards it. But at the same time, people cannot get everything all the time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you for those comments. I appreciate your perseverance. I think that the items in the budget, certainly Fort Simpson and I know the Trout Lake Airport has been worked on for some time. The Trout Lake School, as you know, there's some planning money for it. The chipseal, obviously we wouldn't want to see all that fine chipseal disappear, and we'll talk to the department about that. I think we have some money for Highway No. 1. We were talking to industry about more investment in that area.

In the longer term, in talking with the federal government, they are very interested in what we're talking about with regard to the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I think at some time in the future there will be more work done in those areas. Thank you for those comments.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Any further general comments? Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll just quickly run through a few of them. Although a number of them have already been mentioned, it is certainly worth noting.

I have expressed over the years, 10 years certainly, the need for an expanded role for Aurora College and certainly for the Department of Education to respond to the need. Aurora College has, within themselves, outgrown their existing space here in Yellowknife. I'm certainly always pleased to hear Members like Mr. Menicoche talk about how they want to work with other Members to achieve our goals, too, so I look forward to him helping this

project move forward, because it is a project that is good for everyone in the North. I appreciate that the olive branch is offered and I look forward to seeing that in action.

What I often hear people talk about, well, we worked together on this budget, and they talk about that. It usually tells me they already got what they wanted. It is when you don't hear that you hear the opposite, that people have been struggling continually. I look forward to the day that the excuses end for why we don't have a stand-alone Aurora College here in Yellowknife. I certainly think that we must be coming to the end of them. I mean, after 10 years they can't keep coming up with new excuses. Mind you, they have recycled many of the old ones, which sort of dusted off does give them a polished, new look.

When I hear the Premier's little list of why projects are done, I think we should add a sixth criteria: Are we failing our people? I certainly think we are failing our students by not allowing them a place to go. I think we are failing our educational institution. I think we are failing Northerners at large by not being prepared and investing properly in that. It is not like this has caught people off guard. This has been the same story, same arguments, same scenario for years, and yet it is always why we shouldn't do it.

When I first started, back in 2003, Mildred Hall had begun its renovations. The former Member and, certainly, former Minister, who also represented Yellowknife Centre, was pleased to be involved in sort of getting it kicked off. I remember the launch of the semi-completed Mildred Hall renovation still called for many things to be done, and 10 years later they still need to be finished. We find that Mildred Hall, because they've spent some money, they continue to neglect its needs and necessities. Without the finished school look it's never had, it is very difficult and challenging to encourage other students to come to that school. They always want to go to the new, big shiny school, and that school has never been given a fair launch. It has always, in my view, received half a renovation, and if you ask the administration, the students, the education board, they have always felt that as well.

Equally so, the J.H. Sissons School continues to be shuffled down the list. I look forward to the day when we actually hear that that is actually going to be a priority in this Assembly. The children and certainly the education system, I need not go at length, certainly would say are being not only disappointed but failed as well. It is a failing of this government that we continue to ignore these things. I don't say that easily. I recognize that, like Mr. Menicoche's Trout Lake community hall school – because it is not really a school; it is a community hall being taken over by students – it is not a shining example of where the education system

should be heralded as doing a good job. It seemed like a stop-gap measure to deal with a problem, which I think was heroic in its own way, but it wasn't meant to be the permanent solution by taking over the community hall. The system itself, as I said, maybe item seven under the list of criteria, should have been are we failing. I think we are.

Continuing on the theme of letting people down, addictions. It's funny; a few years ago, I remember when Minister Lee was the Minister of Health and Social Services. She talked about getting rid of the territorial treatment centre that is on the Detah road. I thought, this must be a fantastic day, because if we don't need a treatment centre, we must have cured all addiction ills. We should be trumpeting this day. We should be having ribbons, bands and balloons, because why would we be giving our addictions treatment centre away if the problem is still a problem? It turns out the problem still is a problem, but as we migrate forward on this issue, we lose another addictions treatment centre out of Hay River.

I think to myself, maybe there is a clever master plan I'm missing. Maybe the Minister has this amazing plan that he's rolling out. He is just shuffling his deck just a certain way and maybe the cards haven't rolled out the way I thought they would, maybe most Members thought they would. Maybe the public hasn't seen the great plan provided by the Minister of Health on how we are going to tackle addictions. We continue to wait, but there continues to be no investment in dealing with these problems.

I'm not sure how much longer we need to keep asking for a treatment centre. I think Member Dolynny and certainly Member Moses have, as of late, been on this problem. I certainly welcome the work that they raise. I have often said, and I will stand by, that I will support a true addictions centre in the Northwest Territories wherever it is established, because if it is built properly to confront the ills before us, why would I find ways not to see it built? I even suggested at one time that if the Minister wanted to do something, in my view, innovative – there's that innovation word again; it seems to get noted every day here – that he could build it on to the wing of the new Hay River Hospital. I would have no issue with that. I thought that would be an innovative way of doing this. We could plan accordingly, plan the beds for detox and plan the beds for maybe couples' treatment, plan the facility for males one month or whatever it takes, then females the other couple of months, it doesn't matter to me, but a residential type of treatment.

But, you know, innovation barely gets the light of day around here. If you are getting a sense I'm disappointed, I would say just go see my previous Member's statements and you will understand why.

The Stanton Territorial Hospital is certainly a project that we all know that is well overdue. I would just hope that when that does finally show up, we have kicked that can so far down the road, there really isn't any road left. That road could be described probably as Highway No. 7, if you're looking for a good analogy. I look forward to all Members getting behind that particular project. I wish it was in this capital budget where we were spending the amount of money necessary to deal with that problem.

The plan is coming forward, and I certainly look forward to the plan with full detail to the public to show them where it's going. I think it is a good plan and I certainly welcome that.

But I do have final notes. It was mentioned by Mr. Moses; I wasn't going to mention it, but it was about Arctic Tern. The Premier said it has been identified for surplus. I know no one seems to really want that building. It doesn't seem to be able to be put in a position for programming. I would suggest that we should offer it up to maybe a partnership between the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit, to allow them to take it over for free. I think the territorial government built that building in error and they knew that at the time and that hasn't changed. So, what has changed is we have nothing in there, but we still own it. I would encourage the Gwich'in and certainly the Inuvialuit, although they have partnered on many things, to maybe look at this as a partnership opportunity to tackle some of the social needs that the Territories are burdened with, with maybe a new opportunity there.

I see that the GNWT should really walk away from this building and hand it over. If somebody could put a new life into it, a new spin to it, as the Premier said, it has been identified for surplus. What better way to work with our other governments at hand or other types of representatives who are equally concerned about people that we should walk away from this boondoggle of a building and see if they could put another opportunity, maybe a life, into it, inject it with something, but I would not want to see the territorial government to invest any more money in this building than they have to date. There is a time when you kind of say enough is enough. I think this is enough of this building. As I said earlier, this will be a chance for someone else to come in, and maybe they can put a new life into it. With that, Mr. Chair, it brings me to the end of my time, but not to the end of my time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. We'll go to Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With regard to the comments of the Member with regard to Aurora College, funds have been identified for '15 and '16 to do some planning on what this expanded role for Aurora College could be.

Another priority for our capital formula: Are we failing our people? We are always open to changing

the process for the rating of projects, and certainly if that's a recommendation coming from committee, I'm sure the government will be pleased to address that.

On Mildred Hall, the Department of Education has identified a need for renos to enhance the life of the assets and they are looking to identify funding, recognizing that there's a lot of competition for scarce resources.

J.H. Sissons, there's a planning study planned for this year to look at the problems or issues with J.H. Sissons.

An addictions centre, this Assembly, at the very beginning, all agreed we wouldn't build any new addictions centres, that we would use existing facilities, and there are some plans being developed. This is an O and M issue, but after I make my comments I will ask Mr. Aumond to say a few words on that.

Stanton Territorial, there's money identified for next year. As a government we are looking at how to approach it. We recognize that we would have to spend in the neighbourhood of \$325 million to \$400 million to address the Stanton Territorial renovations.

Arctic Tern, it's a government surplus, and we are just doing work to maintain it and to see if any departments use it. If no department wants to use it, then we have a process for disposal of buildings. So, through you, Mr. Chair, I would like to ask Mr. Aumond to talk a bit about the addictions facilities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess the decision to shut down Nats'ejee K'eh was a result of the operations of Nats'ejee K'eh. It wasn't related to the infrastructure of that facility. I believe that Health and Social Services, in response to the Minister's Forum, will be looking to discuss with the Social Programs committee some alternate forms of delivery to treat addictions. That does not include a new treatment facility being constructed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Moving on with general comments we have Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we have been hearing here this afternoon are, truly, general comments, not specific to this particular capital budget but very general. That's a good discussion to have and I think it's a good discussion to have in public, so that people can really kind of hear where we are coming from.

A few things I want to touch on, we talk about our infrastructure deficit here in the North and we talk about putting a few more millions of dollars, \$50 million extra into the infrastructure capital budget. I

don't know how we compare to other jurisdictions, but might I be so bold as to suggest that for a jurisdiction such as ours and the number of people we have, that we have a lot of very, very good high-end infrastructure. Maybe we could be more easily compared to another territory, but I bet if you went into communities in northern Saskatchewan, northern Manitoba, northern Alberta, places like that, and you look at the infrastructure they have, I would say we are the infrastructure elite here in the Northwest Territories.

This building we are sitting in is an example of it. I objected when this building was built 20 years ago. I thought it was over the top. I thought meeting in the Explorer or the Yellowknife Inn was good enough. I kind of objected to it. Now that I've worked here for 18 years, I kind of like the place.

---Laughter

I made a bold statement back then when they commissioned this building, that if I was ever elected to this Legislature, I would pitch a tent in the backyard and protest for the government spending this many millions of dollars, but I've actually had my office indoors all this time.

I think we have to sometimes put things into perspective, you know. When we build things, we build them large, we build them grand. I mean the Inuvik school. I don't know what the final number is, I don't even want to say a number because who knows what the real number is, but we go into these projects maybe not with the most utility frame of mind. I am going to have the NWT Construction Association and the NWT Architects Association mad at me, I'm going to say that right off the bat, but we go into it with a very open mind and a very open chequebook. I don't think when we're building infrastructure like that, we're thinking about ways to save money. I don't think we're thinking about energy efficiency for the operating costs as we go along. So when you see the disparity between that school and then some of the needs in some of the smaller communities where we haven't got basic things, I question how we approach capital projects with such a basically unlimited budget. That bothers me.

I have said for years, I still think when the government builds stuff, it costs a lot more than when anybody else builds things. When the private sector goes to build something, they are very attuned to all those kinds of ways of getting the most value for money, getting the most energy efficient. The private sector would look at all those things. I don't get the sense that our government looks at a lot of those things and it kind of bothers me.

I guess growing up in small town Ontario where the house I grew up in was 100 years old...The other thing that amazes me still is when we do spend these millions and millions on infrastructure, we

don't really build for the long term, it doesn't seem. It seems like we are planning for a midlife retrofit or everything to all be changed in 20 or 30 years. Again, I don't know. Maybe that's what it is everywhere. Certainly if you go to Europe you'll see some old buildings, but when we build buildings it doesn't seem like we are planning for the long term. If we are going to spend all that money up front, let's make sure they last a really long time, and I'm not sure that's something that's taken into consideration. Maybe it is and I just don't know about it.

I think if we want to get more stuff on the ground, more projects on the ground, I think we need to really look at the purpose of the building and not be building monuments to somebody's creativity, monuments to whatever local focus group came up with boutique kind of ideas for approaching capital projects.

One of the things that used to bother me a lot, too, and maybe we've gotten away from this now, is when we look at the soft cost of a project – and everybody has heard me say this before – do we have to reinvent all those soft costs and all those fees when we are designing or building things like community buildings or fire halls or things like that that are utility type things? Do we have to have all the design costs associated with that? Do we have to keep reinventing things like that? I think there are ways to do things, if we truly have an infrastructure deficit and we do want to get more infrastructure on the ground and more projects built in the communities where they need them, I think that we would not have things like the Inuvik school, if we really believed that. I think we could have done more projects for that total price tag of that school and given a few other communities a small, reasonably priced school and not put so much...The Inuvik school needed to be replaced. Sometimes infrastructure is worn out and it is not practical to fix it up, but sometimes – I am going to bring up the Hay River hospital – maybe doesn't meet government standards but it's still workable infrastructure for it to be used for something.

So I am really reluctant. An argument can be made to me to convince me, but I would be very surprised if that building doesn't still have a useful life in it for something.

On the subject of Hay River, Mr. Menicoche was talking about how projects get into the capital plan and eventually come to fruition. So, we lost the young offenders facility but we got the new assisted living facility, which was maybe altogether a \$10 million project. That's good. It's up and operating and providing a useful purpose.

The midlife retrofit on the Diamond Jenness Secondary School, we made it under the wire with not having to replace that but being able to retrofit

that. That was a \$35 million project which just finished.

The new health care facility is another \$65 million project, which was in the works for a long time and it is underway. It will probably be completed and operational in the lifetime of this Assembly.

The Health Minister has assured us for Hay River that we will have the replacement in some form of those 10 extended care, long-term care beds, that are currently in the Hay River hospital that are not going into the new facility.

There are new housing units that are on tap for Hay River as well. There's the demolition and removal, disposal and removal of some public housing infrastructure and inventory and there's replacement in the works.

So I would say that pretty much a lot of things that were in the works and in the planning and in the sights of MLAs like myself for many years have come to fruition in Hay River. I would say that there isn't a lot of extra capital projects I am going to be fighting for in the next two years, so it is somebody else's, it is another community's turn to see that and we need to be fair in the distribution of those capital dollars as well.

I'm not saying the Ecole Boreale School couldn't use a gymnasium and an addition if there was capital money available. We'd like to see that along with one of the French schools here in Yellowknife. But for the most part, a lot of the capital needs in Hay River have been addressed.

When we are looking at infrastructure, I just wish as a government we could look at it from the point of view...The Premier read off the six criteria, but also we need to look at its utility, its practicality, its longevity, its efficiency of operating in terms of the costs. There are a lot of things that we need to look at.

Those are my very general comments about how we acquire capital here in our jurisdiction. I don't think we should ever lose sight of the fact that we have some pretty amazing infrastructure for a population of 42,000 spread over 33 communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for those comments. I agree with regard to our infrastructure. We should give ourselves an award in some cases. I think this is something that's been around for a while, being held to a higher standard when we build buildings and other infrastructure. We would be very pleased to take the advice of the committee and find ways to be less grand while still fulfilling all of the Building Code requirements, safety standards and so on.

Most of our buildings, we amortize them over 40 years but most of them last longer than that. I think that the list of projects that you mentioned that we're getting done, they have been on the books for a long time. It's good to see that they are finally getting done. The Hay River hospital, I think it's going to be a very welcome addition not only to Hay River but to the region as well.

The use of the old hospital, I guess that's always a question whether it becomes one of safety or whether it would become more costly to maintain. If they were still in good shape, maybe the hospital could have been kept going longer, I'm not sure. It's always iffy.

The Woodland Manor, I understand, going through the capital budget, that it's slated for expansion.

I can't comment on Ecole Scolaire because it's in the courts.

The criteria, we are always looking to improve the way we rank projects, so if there were any suggestions, we would be willing to consider them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. That looks like it concludes my list of general comments. Is committee prepared to go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Agreed is what I am hearing. Before we begin, Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to bring in a witness, with your approval.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Does committee agree to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could escort the witnesses in, thank you.

While we're waiting for that, committee, the order of the proceedings have been predetermined today. We're going to commence with Finance. So, if you can go to section 3. We'll be starting on section 3-2 in the 2014-2015 Capital Estimates, so if you can turn to those pages.

Premier, if you can introduce your witness to the House, please.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my right I have Mr. Dave Heffernan, chief information officer for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Premier McLeod, do you have any opening comments?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't have any opening comments, Mr. Chair. If we can just get right into it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, section 3-2 is a deferral, so if I can get you to turn now to section 3-4. Finance, activity summary, office of the comptroller general, infrastructure investment summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, if I can get you to turn page 3-6. Finance, activity summary, office of the chief information officer, infrastructure investment summary, information technology projects, \$450,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Agreed. If I can get committee to turn to page 3-2 for the department summary. Finance, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, information technology projects, \$450,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Does committee agree we have concluded consideration of the Department of Finance?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank the witnesses. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses. The next area, committee, we're going to be looking at is Human Resources, so if you can turn your attention to section 2-2 in your capital estimates binder. With that, we will go to the Minister for opening comments.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have any opening comments. They were made by the Minister of Finance yesterday.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Do you have any witnesses you'd like to bring into the Chamber?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber, thanks.

Minister Abernethy, if you could please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me today are Sheila Bassi-Kellett, the deputy minister of the Department of Human Resources; and Michelle Beard, who is the director of HR strategy and policy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister. Welcome, ladies, to the House. I'm assuming we'll go into detail. Committee, agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. If I can turn your attention to 2-2. This is a deferral, so if I could then turn to page 2-4. Human Resources, activity summary, human resources strategy and policy, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$441,000. Does committee agree? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could just get an explanation. I understand this is for a new module for training, to manage training and employee certification. Maybe if I could just get an elaboration so I understand this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The PeopleSoft development module will support the Department of Human Resources e-performance module that we'll launch in 2013-14 through on-line learning plans for employees. It will also support the training programs and initiatives for all GNWT departments. The e-development module will replace existing manual processes with employee self-service on-line applications, managers' self-service approvals, provide auto enrolment, wait listing, auto notifications, and information for reporting what is not currently available.

As well, it will replace the Public Works and Services-based training calendar with our PeopleSoft functionality. In particular, the PeopleSoft e-development module maintained training programs, learning plans, courses, and course catalogues in PeopleSoft where these courses can be easily viewed on-line and related to attached jobs, employee's positions as well as individual competencies. It will allow course enrolment on-line with a capacity to check for prerequisites, wait lists for courses already filled, handle cancellations, provide workflow and notification as well as track completions for individuals.

It also attracts certifications and compliance requirements across the GNWT, and it links training and administration directly to the current PeopleSoft HR payroll system in e-performance and will allow for future integration of the Talent Management Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that explanation. I have to say that's pretty much all Greek to me. Let's see if I can attempt plain language on this and get the Minister's perspective then.

It seems like we're moving into a more and more electronic world all the time. Some basic duties that

everybody has in their jobs across the government, where normally we might scratch on our calendar or something like this or make a call to your local HR officer, now we're doing all these things electronically. Say you ended up with a person like me in your staff, the government somewhere, I'd need to take these training courses so I could sort of look after the basic functioning of an employee. It's nothing to do with my job really, except it might have to do with my pay or my schedule. It's just so that I'm able to do that using the electronic software that we're putting in place across the government. Does that sound about right? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This training module won't only be for PeopleSoft training; it is for training that is mandatory for GNWT employees and training that we may someday make mandatory for training employees. It will track all training.

We're also doing e-performance on-line; we're doing payroll on-line, so every individual employee of the GNWT has to go in and access PeopleSoft. So now they'll have this resource available to them, basically through the same connection, that will allow them to be aware of all training that is available, whether it is mandatory or not mandatory, so that we continue to be a positive learning environment that we try to be here in the GNWT.

It allows people to put themselves on wait lists and they can be automatically notified when a training that they're interested in that they have been wait listed on suddenly may have an opportunity for them to go.

It will also link into e-performance. We will be able to see on the performance evaluations what training they've completed. Usually during a performance process, they'll identify what training is required and they'll agree to that with their supervisor, unless of course it's mandatory, at which point they have to do it. So this sort of brings it all together and allows the individual employees, to some degree, to be self-directed, but also there's a little bit of a push here, as well, to keep everybody sort of moving forward and taking advantage of those opportunities that may be good for them, should they choose to take it.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. I think that has me at least further along. I understand now that this is also really about other kinds of training, not necessarily electronic. It might be training to become a better renewable resources officer or a better manager, personnel manager or something like that. This software is going to help track all that and keep the employee informed and the supervisor informed. I think I'm getting it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I always wonder how many jobs we're displacing with this electronic stuff and how much other software this covers that's replacing PYs, but that's the way of the world. That's all I had. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We'll allow Minister Abernethy to close this.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't believe this is intended, in any way, shape or form, to take jobs away. It's intended to offer employees an opportunity to keep more on top and have us help push some of the information to them so that they can be aware.

But also, everything is manual around training right now and this gives us an opportunity to plug it into the system so it's included on e-performance and all of those types of things. It is a useful tool.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Committee, we are on 2-4 in your capital estimates binder. Human resources, activity summary, human resources strategy and policy, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$441,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Great. If I can get you to turn to 2-2, Human Resources, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$441,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of the Department of Human Resources?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Can I get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witnesses out. Thank you for joining us today. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I will now report progress. Thank you, committee.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report from Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015, and would like to report progress. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Do I have a seconder? Ms. Bisaro.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure committee at adjournment today.

Orders of the day for Monday, October 21, 2013, 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
 - Motion 22-17(4), Appointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner
 - Motion 23-17(4), Giant Mine Remediation
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 3, Wildlife Act
 - Bill 13, An Act to Repeal the Curfew Act
 - Bill 14, An Act to Repeal the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act
 - Bill 15, Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Disclosure Act
 - Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Justices of the Peace Act
 - Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Protection Against Family Violence Act
 - Bill 18, Apology Act
 - Bill 19, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013
 - Bill 21, An Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act
 - Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act

- Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act
- Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013
- Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015

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 Monday, October 21st, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

