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The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 26, 2022****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon-Armstrong.

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 278-19(2):
ENERGY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND
BLUEPRINT**

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories remains dedicated to strengthening its leadership and authority on climate change, as well as ensuring that climate change impacts are specifically considered when making government decisions. As part of this commitment, Housing NWT continues to improve the energy efficiency of its housing stock and continues to make strategic investments in alternative energy solutions that not only help lower social housing operation costs and improve living conditions, but also reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

To help chart this critical path forward, Housing NWT is advancing the development of an energy management strategy and a three-year energy blueprint. These two documents will support both Housing NWT's energy goals and objectives, as well the strategic objectives of the GNWT's 2030 Energy Strategy.

Housing NWT's energy management strategy will propose short to medium term strategies to 2030, as it takes a long-term view towards 2050 to guide energy management decisions and investments. The strategy is supported by the three-year energy management blueprint that will include measurable actions to track progress and outcomes over the course of the next several years.

Mr. Speaker, investments in energy efficiency solutions are not new to Housing NWT. Each year, Housing NWT's capital plan includes significant investment in modernization and improvement projects that include various energy efficiency upgrades as well as new construction with high efficiency standards that exceed the National Energy Code by at least 20 percent.

In recent years, Housing NWT has delivered 13 solar and biomass alternative energy projects for public housing units throughout the Northwest Territories. With federal government support, we also plan on investing in additional biomass district heating systems for public housing seniors' facilities in Fort Simpson and in Fort Providence.

Recognizing the importance of public engagement in the development of the energy management strategy, in December 2022 Housing NWT will be releasing a draft strategy and blueprint for public review and comments. The feedback collected during this engagement process will guide and finalization of the strategy and accompanying blueprint, ensuring successes in creating a realistic and effective approach to the energy management of Housing NWT units while contributing to healthy communities and smaller utility bills for residents.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the release of the energy management strategy and energy blueprint expected for April 2023. Housing NWT will continue to work closely with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, community governments, the private sector, non-profit sector, and our federal funding partners as we address the territory's housing crisis. We will ensure climate change impacts are considered in the development of public housing units, helping the territory transition to a lower carbon economy.

I would also like to thank the staff of Housing NWT for contributing and putting this document together. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 279-19(2):
UPDATE ON MACKENZIE VALLEY
HIGHWAY PROJECT AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made it a key priority to advance the development of the all-season Mackenzie Valley Highway. Mr. Speaker, infrastructure development plays an essential role in the longevity and the health of our communities. A key component to the Department of Infrastructure's transportation strategy, the proposed 321-km Mackenzie Valley Highway between the communities of Norman Wells and Wrigley, will connect several remote communities to the public highway system year-round, make these connections more resilient to the effects of climate change, and create future economic opportunities. Infrastructure projects like the Mackenzie Valley Highway play a significant part in the economic future of the Northwest Territories – not only as we recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but as we advance transformative nation-building projects like this to the benefit of Northerners and Canadians alike. This project will inject millions into the economy, create jobs for residents, build capacity in communities and within Indigenous governments, and open the door to future economic development that will positively impact the Northwest Territories.

We have made progress on this project, Mr. Speaker, and I want to provide an update to Members of this House on the status of the project currently.

In July 2018, \$140 million in funding was secured under Transport Canada's National Trade Corridors Fund for the environmental assessment and planning studies for this portion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project, as well the planning, engineering and construction of the Great Bear River Bridge and Mount Gaudet Access Road.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year, work has progressed on addressing information gaps and preparing the developer's assessment report, which is required to advance the environmental assessment. Engagement with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations in the region is progressing and capacity funding has been provided to the Sahtu Secretariat Inc., the Pehdzeh Ki First Nation, Tulita Renewable Resource Council

and the Norman Wells Renewable Resource Council, so they can participate fully in engagement for the project and partner in the completion of traditional knowledge studies.

Public engagement on the proposed project description was carried out in the spring of 2022 and in-person socio-economic impact assessment related interviews are currently underway.

In the coming months, additional in-person engagement in the Sahtu and the Deh Cho regions will complete the project description and discuss potential project impacts and mitigation measures. The information collected through this engagement will be used to finalize the developer's assessment report for submission to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Review Board which is early 2023.

The GNWT is also working to advance some short road extensions along the Mackenzie Valley Highway alignment intended as capacity-building projects. These projects are advancing separately from the Mackenzie Valley Highway environmental assessment.

The Mount Gaudet Access Road is a proposed 15-kilometre all-season road from Hodgson Creek to Mount Gaudet near Wrigley. The regulatory process for this project was paused in 2020 to provide the GNWT with the opportunity to address concerns raised by the Pehdzeh Ki First Nation.

This past August, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board withdrew the project's application. Follow-up discussions with the board resulted in the application being reactivated. We have committed to taking a collaborative approach with Pehdzeh Ki First Nation and the land and water board to plan for the review of these applications to restart.

The Prohibition Creek Access Road is another capacity-building project that is located near Norman Wells. As I explained in my Minister's statement last week, the procurement for Phase 1 construction is underway with construction expected to begin this fall. The Department of Infrastructure has and will continue to work closely with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations as we advance this important project. Quyananni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1223-19(2): POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk once again about the Aurora College Thebacha Campus and future polytechnic university headquarters.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again reiterate to this House about the role Fort Smith has historically had with the education for the people of the NWT. In 1967 when the NWT changed its capital to Yellowknife, it was agreed upon by the leaders of the day that in exchange for the loss of the capital, Fort Smith would become the education capital of the NWT. Ever since then, the head campus of the Aurora College has been in Fort Smith and many prominent elected leaders from across the NWT have gone to school in Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with certain directions that Aurora College has been taking regarding to its transformation into a polytechnic university. I particularly repute the notion that there will not be a headquarters with the new university. I strongly disagree with the college president dismissing the terms "headquarters" and instead favouring the phrase "administrative centre." I do not want to see Fort Smith diminished in the role it will play within the future university, because I know that Fort Smith will continue to play a vital role within the future of the post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories, just as it always has, and I will make sure of that.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education has reiterated several times throughout this term that the headquarters of the future polytechnic university will be in Fort Smith. On December 10th, 2019, on our first day of session after choosing the Cabinet, the Minister said that there will be no plans to move the headquarters out of Fort Smith. Then, later in October 2020, the Minister said he was not aware of any discussion to move the headquarters anywhere else. Then in March of this year, the Minister said ECE was not going to build a new headquarters because there was already a location for it in Fort Smith. Finally, in June, during our last sitting, the Minister said there's no plan to move the administrative headquarters from Fort Smith to Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Thebacha, it is my duty to look after the people and the interests of Fort Smith and the broader South Slave region; therefore, I will do whatever I

can to ensure my community will thrive and prosper in the future. And I know that the university will be part of that future, even after I'm gone. That is why I will continue to ensure that Fort Smith is the location of the headquarters of the future polytechnic university.

I would also like to thank the Minister for agreeing to meet with the leadership of Fort Smith to discuss the transformation of the college. I will have questions for the Minister of Education later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1224-19(2): EXTENDED CARE BENEFITS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to find out that the extended care facility identified for Hay River has been delayed to 2027-2028 came as a great disappointment not only to me but to the residents of Hay River and to those persons and families in need of the facility for loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, when I heard of the decision to delay the project, it did not come as a surprise. I knew the reasons used would be multiple and would touch on insurance coverage, loss of utilities, and flooding that occurred in the immediate area where the building is to be located. Mr. Speaker, upon visiting the site last weekend, looking at the available area and reviewing the footprint of the proposed building, there appears to be sufficient room to place the building well outside the area that was subjected to flooding. This, Mr. Speaker, would allow the project to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, the logic used to delay construction, although reasonable, fails to account for the urgent need of those beds and services for the community. This project, originally based on 48 beds, was reduced to 24 on the premise that this government wanted to support the initiative of keeping seniors in their homes. The question is, what has this government provided in the way of additional home and medical supports for those seniors remaining in their homes? Have we increased home care hours, home care visits, and have we added additional support staff? Will we add to that if the project does not proceed?

Mr. Speaker, looking after family members at home is admirable but it's not realistic for some. Without the experience of patient care,

with the rising cost of living, with minimal free time, families today are working just to make ends meet. This government does not appear to see much value in supporting those needing 24/7 care, many who are seniors and who have provided so much to the NWT. Mr. Speaker, my priority has always and always will be the people. This government must make people a priority, and it must place people first.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Health to revisit the decision on the extended care facility identified for Hay River and to either reposition the building on the proposed site or identify an alternate location at the earliest so this project can get back on track. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1225-19(2):
MEDICAL TRAVEL

MS. CLEVELAND: Mr. Speaker, I question whether the GNWT is meeting the spirit and intent of access to healthcare as defined under the Canada Health Act. Section 12(1)(a) of the Canada Health Act defines accessibility under the program from which the GNWT receives full cash contribution payable for healthcare services to each jurisdiction each fiscal year. Accessibility, as defined under the program criteria states, "The healthcare insurance plan of a province "(a) must provide for insured health services on uniform terms and conditions", and it goes on to further say "on a basis that does not impede reasonable access to those services by insured persons." But what is reasonable access, Mr. Speaker?

Here in the NWT, GNWT employees are provided top-tier healthcare services over and above the delivery of healthcare for the public. Their medical travel benefit pays for the cost of hotels, per diems that reflect actual food costs, and they do not pay a co-pay for air travel. In the NWT, if you are a non-GNWT employee, you fall into a second-tier category - a co-pay system, \$50 a night hotel subsidy, lower per diems, and different escort eligibilities.

In addition to financial inequity, there is also growing access inequity. Many physicians are recommending patients travel to Calgary for some services given the longer wait times in Edmonton. But because medical travel only funds airfare to Edmonton and not the Alberta city with the most timely-available appointment, residents are often left to cover the additional travel on their own. For some,

this is financially inaccessible and the ultimate cost is far greater than travel to Calgary, Mr. Speaker. But the GNWT health benefits have evolved to an income-based co-pay system, one that I have heard directly from residents does not reflect the high cost of living in the NWT or additional costs many Northerners bear.

Mr. Speaker, I am not advocating for a reduced benefit to public servants but rather a system that entitles all residents to the same access to healthcare. I am advocating for the GNWT to use their own benefits as the gold benchmark for all NWT residents. Access to healthcare should be universal.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1226-19(2):
HOUSING

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that a recent contract to build a duplex in Inuvik was awarded to a company that is not on the BIP registry. I'll be questioning the Minister of Housing as to why this happened; how does a local contractor in my riding lose out on work to a non-BIPed company?

Mr. Speaker, a long-time local Inuvik BIPed business that detailed all the northern business it would use, things like hiring local suppliers and contractors and fully adhering to the BIP policy, a policy meant to give Northern businesses a preference and to keep money in the North, Mr. Speaker, so it was shocking to hear that the Housing Corporation gave a non-BIPed business the same preference as a local long-time business, Mr. Speaker, that did not do the same.

The BIPed policy was to give northern businesses a 20 percent advantage for hiring locals as much as possible. In this instant, Mr. Speaker, businesses in my riding lost out on an opportunity for work by just 4 percent, Mr. Speaker, which in dollar amounts is just around \$65,000, to a non-BIPed business, who for some reason got that same preference as a BIPed business. Today I will be asking when the Housing Corporation is going to support local businesses and ensure that the BIP policy is being followed, Mr. Speaker.

The BIP policy needs to be followed, or we should just tell our contractors now that they

don't need to live here. They don't need to pay taxes here. They don't need to provide jobs and contribute to the economy here and that they can just move south and come up, bring their workers, bid on jobs, because there's no preference for businesses actually operating and living here. And if that's the case, that's not the government that I want to be part of, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1227-19(2):
COMMERCIAL LEASING

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT manages a \$31 million lease portfolio. That is larger than the budget of EIA, Lands, and of that \$31 million, Mr. Speaker, \$21 million goes to one company, that is the combined assets of Northview and KingSett. That's more than we presently provide our communities for water and sewer, Mr. Speaker. We manage 129 leases for 626,000 square feet of office spaces. That's 12 Bellanca buildings, Mr. Speaker; many of them in downtown Yellowknife. And, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that that \$20 million a year, we provide to one company year after year for decades now, has built up that monopoly such that one company owns the vast majority of commercial space in this town and a very significant portion of residential space. And yet, Mr. Speaker, we have done nothing at all to prevent this from happening. In fact, our leasing of commercial property policy is from 1998, and despite repeated requests to the Minister of Infrastructure, we have not amended this policy in over 20 years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, getting a local developer to do any work in this town is becoming rarer and rarer. It's because the GNWT has strategically, over years of either neglect or on purpose, refused to give them work. They have all gone to one company. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I have to speak to the benefits of local ownership to anyone in this House. When you have local landlords, they are more willing to build buildings. They are more willing to work with people. They are willing to add to our desperately needed housing stock. But when you have multibillion-dollar foreign companies or multibillion-dollar REITs, who Yellowknife is abound with them, they don't work with our local non-profits, they don't work with our Indigenous development corps, they don't work with local contractors, and they do absolutely nothing to address our housing

crisis or address what we want our offices to look like.

I will once again have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure of whether she is going to do anything at all to address the monopoly that we have created and we are responsible for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1228-19(2):
SEARCH OF LUTSELK'E DENE FIRST
NATION CULTURAL CAMP

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on September 13th, two uniformed officers arrived by helicopter at the Thaidene Nene East Arm National Park. What followed can only be described as a raid, as officers proceeded to enter a cultural camp of 80 people, including LKDFN elders, children, and Indigenous university students and faculty from New Zealand. Under the threat of arrest, they had to stand by while ENR officers searched their dwellings and seized belongings. Elders stated the raid was reminiscent of their youth and the experiences of their ancestors, being persecuted by colonists for practicing their cultural ways and subsistence lifestyle. They felt it flew in the face of the treaty of peace and friendship they signed 122 years ago.

UNDRIP Article 11.1 states Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present, and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artifact, designs, ceremonies, technologies, visual and performing arts, and literature. Respecting Indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment.

In fact, Mr. Speaker this is exactly the tenet that our world-renowned environmental co-management system is based on. In the NWT, where cultural genocide has led to serious addictions and mental health issues, and in a post-pandemic world that sees rising food insecurity and a cost of living, harvesting country food, hunting and spending time on the land is an ideal way for Indigenous people to deal with the stress and combat some of the harsh realities they face daily. However, what was to be a much-needed time of healing and

wellness on September 13th instead became a situation of traumatization and disrespect.

Mr. Speaker, I am not here to comment on the wastage. As the Minister has stated, we don't know what happened. However, what I do want to comment on was the utter lack of respect shown to the LKDFN, their elders and children not to mention the guests visiting them. What impression did this make regarding Canada and how the GNWT treats Indigenous people?

Mr. Speaker, the Minister states they attempted to contact the band regarding this matter. When? Did the Minister try to mitigate this situation before the officers arrived? Mr. Speaker, if the authorities found something in my neighbourhood, are they going to show up at my door, push their way into my House looking for answers? I don't think so. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1229-19(2):
EULOGY FOR PAULINE BERTRAND

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Pauline Ekotlah Bertrand was born in Snake River, BC, on May 2nd, 1933. Her Dene name was Go-Yah, little sister. Unfortunately this is where her and her little brother Sam had lost their parents at a very young age. Not long afterwards, their grandmother Margaret took them home to Pretty Hill, which is known as La Jolie Butte, to live. From there she was taught how to hunt, fish, trap to which she passed on these teachings to her children. As a young lady, she married her husband Francis Bertrand, and they settled down and made their home in Pretty Hill. This is where their 12 children were born and raised. Together, Pauline and Francis provided for their family by trapping, hunting, and fishing from the land. It has been said that she worked very hard with no complaints. It was part of life. The little joke with the family was even taking care of the household chores such as laundry, which was no match for her.

She was known for always being ready and willing to help her children with the tasks of providing and help looking after their children when needed. As it could be seen, she loved each and every one of them.

Pauline lived and loved the traditional lifestyle of the Dene people and enjoyed travelling with her family, whether it was on river or on the land. She will always be remembered for her

bannock, supply of dry meat, sewing, moose hide tanning, and other personal interests and hobbies she would pick up.

Mr. Speaker, Pauline will be remembered for her beautiful smile, laugh, and she will always have a big hug for her loved ones. It has been known that she loved to sing her favorite songs and sometimes known to dance.

Pauline was predeceased by her husband, brother, two sons, and two grandchildren. She leaves behind three daughters, five sons, and many grandchildren, great grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, and other nieces and nephews. Mr. Speaker, she will be forever missed by her surviving family and friends.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and community at this time.

Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1226-19(2):
EXTENDED CARE

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when this government is looking to delay projects, it has to prioritize those that impact the most vulnerable. For Hay River, that is the extended care facility that supports seniors and persons who require 24/7 care. This facility is needed and cannot be delayed until 2027-2028.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Health confirm when the demolition of the HH Williams Memorial Hospital will be completed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for that question. The demolition of HH Williams Memorial Hospital is well underway and will be completed in this calendar year. Thank you

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm the reasoning behind delaying construction of the proposed extended care facility for Hay River? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the reason for the

delay has to do with the flood. The flood, while it didn't flood Woodland Manor, made services, water and sewer services, unavailable to the site, and as a result all of the residents had to be removed and relocated to other locations. And so we need to choose a site for the long-term care which is not subject to those risks. It is very difficult to move elders in an emergency. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that answer; however, I think moving to another site is one option but my understanding as well is that, you know, we're looking -- this government's looking at mitigation measures to ensure flooding doesn't happen. We're raising roads in the community and things like that. So there are other options.

So, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm if consideration has been given to reposition the building on the site and tying it into the existing Woodland Manor facility? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the repositioning on the site doesn't deal with the problems I mentioned around maintaining essential services to the building. Certainly repositioning could happen, but the maintenance of service is the first thing that needs to happen. What we're waiting for, and I know other departments are waiting for as well, is the new flood maps that will be created as a result of this flood. And the bottom line here is that if the building is not insurable, it can't be built in that location. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to put the project back on schedule, is the Minister committed to revisiting the decision to delay and consider other options, such as another useable site, which she appears to be doing? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report to the Member that the department has a jump on this. Our infrastructure staff have met with the Town of Hay River to talk about an alternate site, and the leading contender is a site called Sun Dog which is adjacent to the new health centre which did not flood in the spring. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

QUESTION 1227-19(2):
HOUSING

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain to me how a non-BIPed business gets BIP preference in the Northwest Territories on housing contracts through Housing NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question as well too. And it's a quite complex question as well, and I'm quite surprised to know of this, that we've awarded a contract to a non-BIPed company. But according to what I've received so far, that the evaluation was completed according to the BIP policy. There were five bids that were received, and as part of the process the companies are provided a rating, if they indicate they will be using local labour and these types of items with Housing will ensure that it's being done.

I will follow up with the department in making sure that these obligations are met and what type of penalties are going to be exercised if these local contractors are not being used to fulfill the needs within the Member's region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, I'm really confused here because, you know, the company that was awarded the contract states that they will be using local content. So I'll be tabling a document later today to show that the local companies - the electricians, the heating and plumbing, the local supplier, were not used. The trucking companies that the -- I mean, the company had actually brought in all the supplies from the south just before I came back after the weekend. So how is this department going to review and ensure that the BIP process was fairly applied to our local BIPed businesses. There's four of them that are BIPed and one that is not, and how does this contract get given to them with a 4 percent difference? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member as well too. And one thing with the portfolio is that we do have such a large housing roll out and my commitment to the Northwest Territories is that we keep majority of those contracts here in the North, and we are providing opportunities for small businesses and businesses within the territory as well.

What has been provided to me is that the contractor did confirm with Housing that they are using -- they are investing locally with the mechanicals that are required for the contract.

But according to the Member's statement, I will be following up with Housing and looking forward to seeing if this has actually been fulfilled and exercising penalties if that is appropriate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm still confused, because if this local company is going to use just the mechanical, what about the supplies? We know that the supplies have come in, and they're from the south. What about the electrical? There's one electrical company there; we know that they're not using them. So I'm asking the Minister to pull this contract and start awarding contracts if they're available -- this is a local company -- and award it to a BIPed company, not be giving our money to the south. This is a company that we paid millions of dollars to rebuild their own builds and then having another local contractors go in and fix their problems. So I'm asking the Minister to pull this contract and give it to a BIPed company. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, thank you to the Member for the question as well too. And I just really would like to express that when these contracts and these opportunities do go out that the Indigenous groups are acknowledged first. There are letters that are out there and sent for interest if they're wanting to pursue these contracts. I will have to pull this back for further evaluation and review and just really taking into deep consideration the comments from the Member. I take this very seriously, and I will be reviewing that within the department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know, we've got Crown corporations; we've got the Housing NWT; we've got the Northwest Territories Power Corporation; we've got N-Tech. We've got all these Crown corporations that our money is flowing through to, you know, and if we're not following one policy that can flow through all of our public dollars that we all have to apply to, then what are we doing? We need to follow one procurement policy within our government, within our Crown corporations, and so we can't be saying well, in this department we do this and in this department we do this.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, what I want to do is if the NWT Housing Corporation Minister will be looking at her policy to ensure that it aligns with our new procurement policy and that it

aligns with BIP policy so that we are doing what we are saying what we are going to do for the people of the Northwest Territories, the residents, the locals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question as well too. And Housing does follow the GNWT procurement policy as well. And like I had mentioned, I take this very seriously. I want to bring this back to the department and provide a further response to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

QUESTION 1228-19(2):
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Education explain what the distinction is, if any, about the term "administrative centre" versus "university headquarters" in reference to the Thebacha Campus for the future polytechnic university? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And of course I don't speak for the college. This House passed changes to -- amendments to the Aurora College Act which has significantly changed my role in relation to the college.

So the college has adopted the term "administrative centre" to acknowledge that the staff who support corporate administrative functions of the college are in Fort Smith. So that is why they're using that term. It's a term that's commonly used in post-secondary environments. Thank you.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, just for clarity, it's one staff member that's doing that, okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, does the Minister agree with the statement that the term "headquarters" in reference to the university campus is solely a government term? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not going to single out any individual staff member. That's inappropriate, it's against the rules of this House, so I'm going to leave it at that. That's the term Aurora College uses. That's the term the institution uses. The idea of a university headquarters is something that is -- it's not really used in

post-secondary institutions. Colleges and universities don't distinguish one campus from another by calling one a headquarters and one, you know, a subservient. Each campus has different roles. Sometimes they have different colleges as part of the same university. So every campus has its own role. I can leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, clarity on a term is not singling out one person, for the record. Mr. Speaker, does the Minister agree and support the notion that Fort Smith is the education capital of the NWT as proclaimed by the former Commissioner in 1967? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware that that would be an official designation. But I think that given the number of jobs in Fort Smith that are education related, the amount of money that the GNWT flows to the community in terms of education, probably more per capita than anywhere else in the territory, I think in that sense, yes, Fort Smith is the education capital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the Minister for acknowledging that. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister once again, assure me and the constituents of Thebacha that the primary campus for the future polytechnic university will be in Fort Smith? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated, each campus serves a purpose. In Fort Smith, that's where the administration of the college takes place, and there's no intention to change that. The other campuses each have their roles as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 1229-19(2):
MEDICAL TRAVEL

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Minister can let us know how the GNWT sets the per diems, hotel subsidy, and co-pay amounts for medical travel? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question.

I want to start with that access to healthcare while it's determined by whether someone is Indigenous, Metis, on a private healthcare plan, or a public healthcare plan, access is the same. That is guaranteed under the Canada Health Act. How you get to that medical treatment I think is what the Member wants to hear about.

So the medical travel program is in place not to reimburse residents for everything that they spend but rather to reduce the financial barrier of travelling for a service that's not provided here. So the benefit program is provided by GNWT on par with NIHB and the Metis Health Benefit Plan. The situation is that if a person has an income of under \$80,000 a year, they're eligible to stay at a boarding home which provides both accommodation and food. If they have a higher income or they choose not to stay at the boarding room, then the per diem is \$68 per day, and that's been the case since 2003. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the costs have gone up substantially, especially over the last couple of years here, and I'm wondering if Health and Social Services intends to increase the per diems and hotel subsidy that they offer to make it more in line with the costs that residents are actually incurring when they travel south? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question. The medical travel program has a number of reviews ongoing in this fiscal year, and that includes the per diem rate, which we've been referencing here, and mileage rates, as well as the exceptions policy, the escort criteria, a number of formal definitions such as "nearest centre" and the air ambulance transportation policy. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I spoke about the GNWT benefit program for medical travel really being the gold standard in the Northwest Territories and one that I think all residents would like the opportunity to have access to. So I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to what the cost would be to provide medical travel benefits to all residents equal to that received of GNWT employees? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT medical travel program is for people who don't have private means to travel through their employer benefits, for example, whether those are public employers like the GNWT, or they are private employers, the medical travel program fills that gap.

In terms of who gets these benefits in the GNWT, the medical travel benefits are part of the compensation package for staff, and so they have them on that basis through their collective agreement.

In the last fiscal year, the medical travel program spent \$43 million for approximately 15,000 cases. So with 45,000 people in the territory, let's triple that and say it's \$150 million to provide even the level of benefits we have now to everyone. So there is no cost estimate. I can just say that it is going to be tens of millions of dollars over what we spend today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister be willing to look at a policy change as well that would allow travel to Calgary for medical travel patients? Right now what patients are saying, or what constituents are saying, is that there's additional wait times in order for waiting for appointments available in Edmonton and that medical travel won't cover the travel to get to Calgary for appointments of the same nature but that are available much sooner. And so I'm wondering if this change can be made at a policy level. This would save on administrative burdens associated with appeals and would also provide timelier healthcare service to NWT residents. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. The way that the referrals work now is that we have an agreement with Alberta Health Services to provide, as a first response, care and services in Edmonton and the associated support services, such as the Larga Boarding Home and medical travel contracts and so on, all support that Edmonton location. I don't have any information about the relative waiting lists of Edmonton versus Calgary, which would be an important dimension to consider here. And also another thing to consider would be whether Alberta Health Services would provide the same care in Calgary as they do in Edmonton. So those are some interesting things to take up.

What I need to say about that as well is that if someone is referred to specialized care in Calgary, the medical travel will pay for them to have that specialized care in Calgary versus Edmonton. If people are accessing care themselves without being referred by the NWT healthcare system, then the cost of medical travel is on them as is the cost if they are using a private clinic. Thank you.

QUESTION 1230-19(2):
SEARCH OF LUTSEL K'E DENE FIRST
NATION CULTURAL CAMP

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I ask my question, I just want to state that I do not -- I have a lot of empathy for the people that had to execute the orders of the Department of ENR, and it is not them that I am criticizing in this.

So my questions are for the Minister of ENR. When did the department reach out to Chief Marlowe to request a face-to-face meeting to discuss the incident? And when the Minister does have that meeting, could we please have a copy of it and minutes from the meeting. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a few questions in there so I'm just going to answer the first one. As soon as the search warrant issue was addressed, we then sent out the letter because it was in the courts, we sent the letter to Chief Marlowe, and he has received it and we confirmed it with his staff today. Thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that letter is dated as of yesterday, after getting questions in this House, and it's my understanding it went to the wrong address for the Chief and not the SAO. My question, though, is, however, yesterday the Minister said with respect to the raid that it, quote, "hasn't been proven it was unlawful." However, the search warrant was thrown out by the courts. So is it not logical then that that search was unlawful? Is this really just not a game of semantics. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we followed this process. It's not semantics. We follow the process. We got a search warrant, and we did the -- they executed a search warrant, not a

raid. It was an execution of a search warrant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, why didn't the Minister consider reaching out ahead of time in order to mitigate the situation with the LKDFN? This is what we've been talking about since we took office, was doing things properly and respectfully with the First Nations. Given that the warrant was thrown out, I think that there could have been a lot of things done here to not have had this happen, to traumatize women and children and foreign dignitaries. Therefore, can the Minister answer whether or not he thought about mitigating this and contacting the Chief ahead of time? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was an investigation. I don't get involved in the investigation. We have reached out to Chief Marlowe. We've set up a time, and we are working with that. We are trying to resolve this and move forward. But I need to stress that the investigation is still ongoing, so I don't know all the matters into that. And I don't want to have any political interference on this. Same as what we did with illegal hunts in the mobile zone, officers do their work and then it's brought to my attention after they do their work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So what I hear is the Minister doesn't know what's going on in his department and he's not interested in mitigating this with the First Nations in a respectful manner. Will the Minister apologize to the LKDFN for this inappropriate raid on their people and their wellness camp, elders and children? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Member from Tu Nedhe-Willideh, the Member in that riding, asked the same thing. As I said yesterday, and I'll said it here today, I've reached out to Chief Marlowe to have a meeting in their community to have this conversation in how we move forward. That's what I've promised, and that's what I will continue to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 1231-19(2):
COMMERCIAL LEASING

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's no coherent reporting of how much we spend on leasing and how much that -- and who it goes to. You can go into the contracts, but the problem is we inherited quite a few of these leases from the federal government upon devolution, and some of these leases are 20 years old and they just seem to be renewed every time they come up. So I'm hoping the Minister can provide me some updated figures on how much we paid Northview since this Assembly started. I suspect it's a number that just continually climbs every year, but I can't actually confirm that with public information, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're not able to divulge proprietary information specific to a single landlord. Infrastructure continues to follow leasing of approved real estate policy which includes obtaining leases through the public procurement unless directed by the Executive Council, which is made up of the Premier and the Ministers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure that is proprietary information. I can go to the contracts reports and filter out who wins leases and who we're paying money to. It's not all there because I said many of these leases are well over 20 years old. And I think that lines up with what the Minister said, that our current leases of approved real property policy is well over 20 years old. I'm not remotely convinced that we are in compliance with it. It does require us to be doing continuous value for money analysis, and it does require us to continue to analyze whether it is cheaper to own buildings versus leasing them. But all that being said, it's a 20-year-old policy that has not been updated. Is the Minister willing to update our current leasing of approved real property policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the Member is aware that the GNWT is currently going through a procurement review. Once the procurement review has concluded, the Department of Infrastructure has committed to work with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, and other stakeholder departments, to bring forward proposed amendments to the leasing of real property policy. It's important that any amendments to this policy are aligned with the outcomes of

this procurement review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that, and maybe I'll have some questions about when we can finally wrap up this procurement review.

My next question is, you know, we're talking about multiple office towers here. I recognize we're not going to empty a 10-storey commercial office building overnight. I think it's going to take probably a decade or two of concerted effort to actually adjust this percentage that grows every single year to one company. But I think a first step would be reviewing when we put leases out whether they could be in smaller chunks, whether we could work with departments that, you know, perhaps they don't all need to be on eight floors of one building and we could break that up into some smaller more feasible things to get local ownership, especially here in Yellowknife where it is such a monopoly. I'm wondering if the Minister will apply that lens to when we go out on further leases. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, reviewing space needs in that way is an approach we use regularly when developing RFPs. It is a consideration when we are approached by departments to obtain/renew space for a program. How much of this space needs to be grouped together and what can be split into smaller spaces, recognizing that this may create opportunities for smaller local landlords. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the Minister -- that the department is already doing that, but I think it needs a little bit of a review because, clearly, it's not working if the end goal is local ownership. It's clear, if you look at the city of Yellowknife skyline, we don't have local ownership. Almost every single building is owned by some multi-billion-dollar REIT. So my question is, you know, I think actually a number of companies, perhaps Indigenous development corps, if you gave them enough notice - three, five years out - that you were looking to renew a very large lease and you were perhaps willing to make it a little longer term, they would actually build us a building, Mr. Speaker. I think a lot of different groups have been looking at this as a possibility, including some of our housing leases. So I'm just wondering if the Minister is willing to look and work with some local potential development corporations or

landlords, give them some notice, and see if we can enter into a negotiated contract if someone will actually build us some leasing space. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member spoke about an approach that we can do to involve local owners. It is an approach that we use sometimes but mostly through a public procurement process.

So in the terms of the RFP, it would allow sufficient time to schedule, to allow landlords to propose new building and long-term lease. This approach was used in several places, Mr. Speaker, including Hay River at the Hay River health and social service accommodation office building. It was used at the new Fort McPherson office building. And procurement is currently underway for the territorial fire centre in Fort Smith. All of these leases, Mr. Speaker, allow for local landlords to build new buildings and lease it back to the GNWT. So we're getting there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 1232-19(2):
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is further to my Member's statement on treatment program that I did on October 20th. So it's for Minister of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, in the House on October 19th, 2022, the Premier noted that the Council of Leaders identified mental health and addiction and community-based treatment as some of the primary issues for NWT residents. With that in mind, the Minister of Health committed to provide me with the number of NWT residents who have accessed treatment services since 2013. Have these statistics been provided? When does the Minister anticipate providing these statistics back to me? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question. I do not have those responses here today, and I haven't been given a date they're available. But I will commit now to making sure she has them before the session is over. Thank you.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Yes, what initiative does NTHSSA currently have to ensure they provide residents with culturally safe addiction services following the Auditor General's report? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in response to the Office of the Auditor General's report, we created a work plan which details our response to each of the recommendations, and we accepted all the recommendations.

We have, as the Member may know, a whole division within the department called community culture and innovation that looks at culturally appropriate services. And to that end, they've done extensive training with staff. They ensure that there is -- when people do go south for facility-based treatment that there is appropriate cultural safety provisions in place. So that's just a very scatter gun approach to the answer but I do want to assure the Member that it's top of mind. Thank you.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yes, thank you. During oral questions on October 20th, I asked if the Minister Green would commit to reopening an addiction-based facility and treatment wellness centre in the Northwest Territories. And the Minister responded no. She said that this -- she said, "the simple reason that we don't have a treatment centre is because they don't work. We tried four times. The effort to provide one treatment centre for all the regions, languages, and culture has not been successful. People do not attend."

So can the Minister provide the number of residents who attended the previous treatment centre in the NWT?

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have with me information about how many people attended the four previous treatment centres that were offered in the NWT, but I will ask the department if they can produce that information.

I also want to say that we have had a preliminary conversation at the Council of Leaders about alternatives to one single facility for healing and treatment, which is what the Member asked for, to see if there's something that could be developed on a regional basis that would better meet the needs of both treatment closer to home and the particular languages and cultures of the NWT, each in a regional setting. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, before we continue, could you

please check your phones. I could hear it vibrating on silence. So if we could just put it to silent, it would be most helpful. Thank you.

Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: That all the questions I was going to ask. But can the Minister provide data to support the statement that "treatment centres do not work." Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the one facility that I am more familiar with is Nats'ejee K'eh.

Nats'ejee K'eh was never more than one-third full during the time that it was open, and the program cycled through 30 days for men and 30 for women. And so if you wanted to seek treatment and they were early into the opposite cycle, then you would have to wait potentially seven to eight weeks for intake. There was a problem attracting and keeping qualified staff. So what we found is that since we started contracting the southern facility-based treatment, the number of people who are accepted into that and who are able to access it in a speedier way and a wider variety of options, including co-ed options as well specific to men and women, the number of people who are accessing the services more than doubled. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

QUESTION 1233-19(2):
EXTENDED CARE FACILITIES

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the extended care facilities and questions for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, construction costs for the extended care facility will likely move upwards with a six-year delay. Will the Minister confirm if her department has considered this in their decision when delaying the project and any idea of what that cost may be? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the cost estimate that is currently available has a contingency built into it. But there's a very important "but." If the site changes and it is no longer going to be where the old HH Williams Hospital was and it's now going to be over near the new health centre, getting the land ready for the

construction has not been factored into that cost and so those costs may, in fact, rise. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the delay, like, we're going to need beds for -- you know, for people who are going to be requiring them in the next six years. So, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm what the plan is for the older portion of Woodland Manor as we will need -- well, we will need those beds. And my understanding from past discussions is that it will require major repairs, such as roofing, mechanical, and interior upgrades if we delay this project. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. My understanding is that there was an addition built on Woodland Manor and opened in 2018 to provide nine new rooms that were previously part of HH Williams Hospital, which was at that point being phased out. So there's the newer part and the older part. The older part has a life of approximately ten years remaining. And to verify that, we have asked the Department of Infrastructure to do a technical evaluation next spring on the existing Woodland Manor to confirm the useful life it has left.

Now, if the new long-term care is not attached to Woodland Manor, then likely the money will go to the new long-term care rather than to Woodland Manor. This is going to have to be resolved through the bed allocation because as the Member has said, we're looking at -- I think it's a 24-bed facility for Hay River. So if we're going to take the current Woodland Manor offline, we would have to account for those residents plus the number that we've already committed to.

The last thing I'll say about this is that the current waitlist in Hay River is four. So it is, while a problem for those four families, not a problem that we can't solve with the current projection. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I understand that, you know, the waitlist, it might be short but in six years, you know, I might be on it. So, Mr. Speaker, if the project is delayed in 2027-2028, will the Minister confirm what additional funds will be provided to the Hay River Health and Social Services to expand home care supports and services while we are waiting for a facility? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member better watch out or maybe by then I'll be a personal

support worker helping him get in and out. So just pray that doesn't happen.

So what we've been able to do to supplement home care is provide funding for three additional positions in the last two years so that there is more staff available because, in fact, there are greater demands for that. The detail there is that's two home care nurses and a home support worker. The additional nursing position has enabled us to create more hours of service. So the service hours are now 8:30 to 4:30 seven days a week. We've also got the Paid Family Caregiver Program active in Hay River, and that is in place for this fiscal year and next. So we have a variety of supports that are available, and more are likely to come as we go further into implementing the home care review, which was completed in 2019. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm if delaying the project to 2027-2028 will trigger a reevaluation of the number of beds required, possibly an increase from 24 up to 48 or 60? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the reason that the bed evaluation was redone is because we had better information from ten years of data as well as better population projections. Following the reevaluation, we committed to further reevaluations every four years. So there is every possibility that the number will change. And we will build the facility to meet the need that we know of, the most recent need that we know of.

One of the reasons that Hay River bed size went down is because it turned out there was a greater need in Fort Smith so it made sense to build two long-term care facilities, one in Hay River and one in Fort Smith, so that people could continue to live as close to home as possible. We understand that that's a priority and that home care assists with that priority, which is part of our mandate.

I also just want to mention, for those people who are on waiting lists anywhere in the territory that has a long-term care facility, there are respite beds available that families can book if they need a longer-term break. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 1234-19(2):
FORT GOOD HOPE SENIORS COMPLEX

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's become a bit of a tradition for me to ask about the Fort Good Hope Seniors Home every session, which has proven that not all traditions are good, but it's been 20 months since the Minister opened that facility. And my question for the Minister of Housing is when can we expect it to actually open? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. We did end up with a lot of different contractual situations, I guess, within talks with the fire marshal as well too which caused a huge significant delay. Housing NWT is aiming for April 1st of 2023 of this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, admittedly I've been asking about this for quite a while now, and I'm still not really sure what occurred here. You know, initially I thought it was just our usual fight with the fire marshal but it's clear there's some larger contractual issues or contracting issues. Can the Minister just try and, you know, in simple terms explain to me what exactly has occurred here? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member as well too that, you know, this nine-plex is actually in my riding. I've had further conversations with the leadership as well too because they're quite anxious for this building to open immediately. But we have been informing leadership as well too as we progress and try to get this building opened. We did have a lot of deficiencies within the building and I just would like to follow up with the Member as well too. I don't know if it's -- I don't feel that it's appropriate to be speaking about that because we did have some issues with the previous contractor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, I think at some point the public record probably needs to clarify what exactly occurred here and maybe that's once we've opened the building and it's all finally said and done, there's perhaps some lessons to be learned. But, you know, I imagine that since it's been so long this is not going to be cheap. Does the Minister have an estimate of what we expect this all to additionally cost us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question as well too, as this seniors complex is a priority in the community of Fort Good Hope as well too, and we do have elders who are eagerly waiting to be moved into this facility. But right now I don't have a tallied-up number of what this is actually costing us right now. I'd have to follow up with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 1235-19(2):
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is going out to -- a question for Minister of Health and Social Services. If a previous treatment centre did not work in the NWT, what has the GNWT learned from this? Did the GNWT consider that GNWT was not implementing the treatment program effectively rather than suggesting addiction treatment facilities do not work. I would like to hear from Minister of Health and Social Services her thought on this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I've learned in the two years that I've been in this role is that people want options when it comes to achieving their sobriety. They want the option of being on the land, in the community. In order to protect their privacy and not to engage with people who are also from the NWT, they want the option to go to different places. So what I've learned is that choice is really important. Telling people they have one place and only one place and one way to go for treatment has not been successful. And just as a matter of clarification, Nats'ejee K'eh was operated by a non-profit organization, not by the GNWT, although the GNWT of course funded the cost of people to attend. Thank you.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: What has the GNWT learned to do differently in regards to addiction treatment based on past experiences already tried and how will the GNWT approach treatment program differently? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to speak in a very informed way about the content of treatment programs. I am not in a position to deliver them, I'm not in a position to need them

fortunately, so I can't give any detail to that question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Written questions. Member for Great Slave.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 48-19(2) DELIVERING THE CHILD AND YOUTH CARE COUNSELLOR PROGRAM

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

The Child and Youth Care Counselling Initiative is one of the Government of the Northwest Territories' programs intended to increase mental health supports for children and youth. The initiative was administered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment until its multi-phased multiyear transition to the Department of Health and Social Services.

In its action plan, in response to the 2020 Auditor General's report recommendations, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment committed to improving mental health counselling services to children and youth to improve JK to 12 student outcomes in the Northwest Territories by supporting the regions with 42 child and youth care counsellors and seven clinical supervisors. (Action Plan page 21 commitment 4.6).

I submit the following questions to the Minister of ECE:

1. Can the Minister explain what engagement or consultation the Department of Education, Culture and Employment conducted with counsellors already working in the school system prior to implementing the new child youth care counsellor positions?
2. Can the Minister detail the qualifications typically accepted for child and youth care counsellors in place in our school system?
3. Do school principals get to evaluate the child and youth care counsellors?
4. Is there a way for school administrators to speak formally to the effectiveness of this program operating in the schools? And,
5. What evaluative feedback mechanisms are in place to assess the effectiveness of the child and youth care counsellor's program?

WRITTEN QUESTION 49-19(2): DELIVERING THE CHILD AND YOUTH CARE COUNSELLOR PROGRAM

MS. NOKLEBY: My second set is for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

The Child and Youth Care Counselling Initiative is one of the Government of the Northwest Territories' programs intended to increase mental health supports for children and youth. The initiative was administered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment until its multi-phased multiyear transition to the Department of Health and Social Services.

I submit the following questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services:

1. Can the Minister explain how the Department of Health and Social Services prepared for the new child youth care counsellor positions; for example, did the department consult with existing child youth care counsellors and were other programs consulted on the integration into the department's existing activities?
2. Can the Minister explain the turnover rate for child and youth care counsellors?
3. Can the Minister describe how the child and youth care counsellors work with school administration?
4. Can the Minister describe how the Department of Health and Social Services works with school administrators to evaluate the effectiveness of the program? And,
5. Has there been any reporting or results produced from the child and youth care counsellor program?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 741-19(2): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ENERGY INITIATIVES REPORT 2021-2022

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Energy

Initiatives Report 2021-2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

TABLED DOCUMENT 742-19(2):
LETTER REGARDING BUSINESS
INCENTIVE POLICY

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a letter from a constituent to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, dated October 25th, 2021 regarding the Business Incentive Policy and Enforcement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Member for Hay River South.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 58:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
ACT

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present to the House Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Pursuant to Rule 8.2(3), Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act is deemed read for the first time and is now ready for second reading.

First reading of bills. Member for Hay River South.

BILL 59:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELECTIONS AND
PLEBISCITES ACT

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present to the House Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act to be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Colleagues, pursuant to Rule 8.2(3), Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act is deemed read for the first time and is now ready for second reading. Member for Nahendeh.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to go back to recognition of -- seek unanimous consent to go to number 5 on the agenda. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize former chief Gladys Norwegian from Jean Marie River but also the former grand chief for Dehcho First Nation. Now she has moved out of the Nahendeh riding and has moved into the Dehcho. So I'd like to recognize her and thank her for being here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if we're going back, I might as well recognize my youngest son Dalyn Bowden who has joined us in the gallery today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I see that Doreen Cleary is in the gallery, and I would like to acknowledge her and welcome her to the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Sahtu.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to welcome Ms. Doreen Cleary. She is originally from the Sahtu but resides here in Yellowknife. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Sahtu. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters Bill 23, 29, 53, Committee Report 37-19(2), Tabled Document 723-19(2), with Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the Chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, committee

wishes to deal with Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act and Tabled Document 723-19(2), 2023-2024 Capital Estimates, Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will take a short recess and resume with the first item.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we've agreed to consider Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act. I will ask the Minister of Finance to introduce the bill.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm here to introduce Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act. This bill proposes four administrative amendments to the Liquor Act that would benefit from immediate attention.

- First, updating personal importation limits to increase the quantities of liquor that a person may bring with them into the Northwest Territories;
- Second, removing enforcement as part of the Northwest Territories Liquor Licensing Board's role due to potential conflict of interest;
- Third, removing the ban on licensed applicants who have been charged with but not convicted of a criminal offence, which is necessary for consistency with the legal principle of innocent until proven guilty; and
- Fourth, officially updating the name of the Northwest Territories Liquor Commission to include cannabis.

The legislative amendments proposed in Bill 53, as well as the more other significant changes that the department is working towards through the holistic liquor legislative review, will ultimately support liquor legislation in the Northwest Territories becoming more nimble, modern, streamlined, and responsive to the needs of residents. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my left is Billy MacKay, the deputy Minister of Finance. And on my right is Stephen Flanagan. He is the drafter from legal division.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 53. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, received second reading in the Assembly on May 31st, 2022, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for a review on October 7th, 2022.

Committee held a public hearing with the Minister of Finance and completed its clause-by-clause review of the bill. Committee received no submissions on this bill.

I thank committee for their efforts in reviewing this legislation. I have no comments at this time, but individual Members may have additional questions or comments. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, are there further questions, comments? Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Minister referenced in her opening remarks that the department is working towards phase 2 of this act, and I'm wondering if the Minister can provide a commitment as to when we will see the bill brought forward on the floor of this House for phase 2. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not in a position to give a specific time at this stage. I am live to comments from committee regarding their interest in the larger piece of this, and I have certainly been working in the last little while with the department towards being in a position to give a more specific timeline. It is certainly my expectation that we will still see the completion of the larger act within the life of this government. But, again, I'm just at a

stage of being able to confirm that hopefully before the end of this sitting. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions, comments?

Is the committee agreed that there are no further general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Can we proceed to a clause by clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay. Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clause 1, does committee agree?

---Clauses 1 through 9 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does the committee agree that Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Does the committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Thank you, Minister, and thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document 723-19(2), Capital Estimates 2023-2024. We will now consider the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Does the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: To my left I have deputy minister John MacDonald, and to my

right is assistant deputy minister of corporate services Sam Shannon.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome. Committee has agreed to forego general comments. Is the committee agreed to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment begins on page 17. And we will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary, beginning at page 19, with junior kindergarten to grade 12 school services with information on page 20.

Education, Culture and Employment, junior kindergarten to grade 12 school services, infrastructure investment, \$5,623,000. Is there any questions? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I recall last capital budget we passed these three portables for Colville Lake, and the intention there was that was going to act as their school while it was completed. But I see now there's been a change here where Colville Lake School has been changed from being built to a planning designation. Can I just get a bit of an update of what the current plan is or what's going on with the Colville Lake School? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the Member mentioned two projects in this capital plan. Colville Lake School planning and Colville Lake School three portables. The three portables are in the process of being constructed. They will be on the winter road in the new year, and they will be set up and ready for school in the upcoming school year. The school itself is still in the planning phase. As the Members are aware, we have adjusted how we budget for capital and so we are only budgeting for the planning phase, which is what we actually expect to spend. We're not budgeting for, you know, builds that we're not going to do. So we've been working with the band in Colville Lake. They wanted to take the lead on this project so we have provided them with funding to do the work that the department would normally do in the lead up to the development of an infrastructure project. And so they are doing that work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I recall, you know, I don't recall what is public or not, but at one point there was some back and forth with the community because they perhaps had much larger intentions of what this school would be, you know, including perhaps some community-based infrastructure in it. Yeah, I'm just hoping if I can get a bit more of an update on how that work is going with Colville Lake and whether, you know, this is going to be the kind of super-school that it was initially planned as or whether this is going to be just a school that is in compliance with our current kind of infrastructure guidelines. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So what we've asked is for the band to put together a proposal for a school according to the capital standards, Education, Culture and Employment's capital standards on school projects. And then, as well, a plan for anything additional that they would like so that we have sort of a base model to go off of and then we can look at additional things that usually aren't in schools and figure out if there's ways to find funding to make that happen. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And can the Minister just remind me where child care spaces have landed in this debate? I know we have new capital standards, and I believe there was some intention when communities wanted to put child care spaces directly in schools. Yeah, I guess more generally speaking, is that now our goal, or is that kind of dependent on the individual school? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So the new capital standards, which were approved in 2020, include provisions for child care spaces in a school facility if the spaces are warranted. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions, comments? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. With the number of schools there that -- you know, that's within the department and some of the work that I see happening, one of the concerns I always have is barrier-free access in our designs and

whether -- you know, whether all schools, even if they're aged, you know, if they're, you know, being retrofitted to ensure that we have barrier-free access for all children and employees. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. And the way this planning for capital works is that the department gathers up all of the different wants from the different school boards as well as information about the state of all the different capital assets from the Department of Infrastructure, and then we make assessments as to what can be done with a budget. And we sometimes have enough for a new school or a retrofit as well as a few -- a couple small capital projects. And the things the Member's referencing - accessibility, ensuring older schools are accessible - those are my priority for when I look at the smaller capital projects that we can advance. And I would have to -- I think it's probably the department's as well. I think we might have been on the same page when I first got into this portfolio. But, yes, I do prioritize those when looking at what projects to advance. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, the other thing, you know, when I think of schools, you know, I think of, you know, a healthy learning environment; I think of, you know, healthy children and, you know, that improves learning capability, you know -- yeah, improves learning, I guess, for children and, you know, it allows them maybe to be role models and mentors for others what may, you know, be kind of on the border of, you know, not sure, you know, what life's all about. But, you know, so one of the things that, you know, I hear sometimes in some of the communities is that lack of, you know, whether it's gymnasiums or places where children can gather and sports and that type of thing. So when we're looking at, you know, major -- major projects like this, do we somehow look at ensuring that gymnasiums are included or would be included? Because it does impact health; it does impact learning. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So under the previous capital standards, gyms were included once a school hits a certain number of students. If the school did not have that base number of -- or that number of students,

then there would be no gym, and the gym that the school would get once they hit that number of students was small and it would gradually get bigger as the population got bigger. What we've done with the new capital standards is included gyms in all schools and increased the sizes according to the enrolment. So I know there are some schools with very, very small gyms, and we won't be seeing those anymore. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. While we're talking about capital standards and accessibility, tomorrow night is the grand opening of a new school in Yellowknife, Itl'o' School, and they did a beautiful job on incorporating gender neutral washrooms in the school and so I'm wondering if that is a component of capital standards going forward. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, that is covered in the new capital standards as well as when we do retrofits. So when we go in -- say a bathroom is in need of repair and we repair it, we also use that lens as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Excellent. Thank you very much for that, Madam Chair. I think that's very important, and I'm happy to hear that the department has incorporated that.

My next question is in regards to Mangilaluk School, which is a major project up in the Beaufort Delta, and it says that the estimated completion date is 2023-2024. And so is it September of 2024 that is anticipated that students will first start school in that new school? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So that's good to hear, and I

know that I've heard from people in Tuktoyaktuk that are very excited for that opening as I know that my colleague from Nunakput is as well. Given that that project was originally awarded long before the pandemic and long before inflation and the rest of it, has there been significant budgetary changes to that project? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: I'd like to hand that to the assistant deputy minister, Mr. Shannon. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Shannon.

MR. SHANNON: Thank you, Madam Chair. There was some -- at the -- before groundbreaking and the awarding of the initial construction contract, there were some scope reductions that were taking place to ensure that the project was brought within budget. As the project has moved along, there have also been a couple of other revisions, kind of really derived from the pandemic and global supply chain management. So, for instance, one of them was the steel for trusses in the gym. We were unable to procure the steel in time, and it would have provided a ten-month delay to the project. By the contractor going back and working with the design team, a new replacement was come up with, or a new design was come up using wood trusses, which reduced that delay by five months. So we've seen little things like that, some adjustments, as we move along. But the majority of the contracts, things were in place prior to seeing the extreme shocks resulting from the pandemic. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So just so that I understand so there was scope reductions and revisions to the design made in order to keep it on budget, or has there been a budgetary change to this project? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. There's been no change to the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm wondering within scope reductions is there anything in addition to

things like changes from steel to wood for trusses, was there actual changes or loss to the community of what they will be receiving within the envelope of that school? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Perhaps for some detail on that, I can hand it to Mr. Shannon.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): ADM Shannon.

MR. SHANNON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So some of the types of things that were adjusted as part of the initial rescoping during the tendering process were things like door canopies, an outdoor fire pit, some changes to the parking lot design, some exterior railings, things like that, a stage curtain was removed, some roof lanterns, some metal cladding, things of this nature, really, so things that are cosmetic but not primary to the delivery of the education program. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And thank you to the ECE staff and Minister for that.

As far as Chief Jimmy Bruneau School and Colville Lake school, which are both in planning phases, when can we expect to see the transition from planning phase to building phase within the capital acquisition plan? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So we're approaching these projects in a much different way than has been done traditionally. And we're not even approaching them each the same; they're each different in their own ways. And that answer really depends upon our partners, so the Tlicho government and the band in Colville Lake so I don't have an answer. We are trying this new way of doing things, and it's going to take longer than it normally would, and it normally takes quite a while to get a school off the ground and built and opened. So unfortunately I don't have a solid date. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Caitlin just asked too, so. Well, it is good that, you know, CJBS working group and technical working

group is created that consists of ECE, Infrastructure, and the Tlicho government, and TCSA. So I was going to ask about the completion date, when, you know, within -- you know, when is it going to be completed this planning stage, like, within this -- because it's noted in the book 2023-2024 but I just wanted to know when, and I think you said that you're working with the partner on this as well, so. But there's no timelines? Do you have a timeline of when this planning stage will be completed and then move on to the next stage?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you so right now it's 2023-2024 is the estimated completion but I would not -- I wouldn't place bets on that. I think it's a very fluid situation and, like I said, it's new to everyone, us as well as, and in this case the Tlicho government. So we are taking the time we need to do it right so I don't have a solid answer. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Although -- well, it is disappointing, you know, that \$40 million is being removed from the -- you know, removed from the capital budget. It would have been nice if that \$40 million was left alone and, you know, look at it as a down payment, you know, left it as a down payment for replacement costs, for a replacement then rather than a retrofit. It would have been nice just left it alone because there's no guarantee that, you know, we will be building the school anytime soon. It's going to -- you know, the planning stage can take five years. So, you know, don't know the -- you don't know the timelines too as well.

So, yeah, it would have been nice because the school is very important for our Tlicho youth and, like we've said before, I said it and Tlicho government has said it before, the school is 50 years old. It is old, and it was built by the federal government of the day without consulting the people. And for 50 years, the young people have been -- you know, like, have been going from Behchoko to Edzo school, and it takes at least roughly about an hour to get from Behchoko. You know, the return trip is, like, roughly about an hour, you know, to be on the road, especially on the main highway coming from that junction to Edzo, it's Highway 3, part of Highway 3, and it's the main route. It's a very busy route. And attendance -- so what we've seen in the past too is that when the student miss the bus what they've done in the past is that they go -- they

hitchhike on the highway from Behchoko, you know, and when the school was going through the retrofit, same thing; students were hitchhiking from Edzo to Behchoko as well, you know. And it goes both ways. So it's really a disadvantage for our young people. So that's why the school is very important for our youth, Tlicho youth, and that's why I really support the Tlicho government on building a new school in our community in Behchoko.

It's not just that one alone too. There's a Whati School as well but I see that there's no project in there -- it was in here. But that one I will, you know, talk to you more about it after. But it's just CJBS \$40 million is a lot of money, and it would have been nice just to left it in there as a -- you know, as a down payment.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And so of course we can't speak to any particular numbers, but I'm not sure who we would make a down payment to. We don't even have land identified for a school yet so we are a ways off. But I wish the federal government would have built a school in Behchoko as well. It would have made this process a lot easier. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Well, the Infrastructure said it before when they -- they successfully found money to build, you know, to complete -- to build the Frank Channel Bridge because they were short, and they successfully found the money. So the \$40 million would have been -- like, if it was left alone as a down payment, then they could have lobbied the government to give extra money because I know that school is not -- it's going to be more than \$40 million to build. And then from what I heard from some of the leaders is that it's like a super-school that we're talking about. So, yeah, it would have been nice so if they left it at that and we could have build on it. And it's just that Tlicho or Behchoko is the only one -- of all the school in the Northwest Territories, Behchoko is the only one that was told -- or Tlicho government were told to go find your own money -- to find the money to build the school yourself, you know. I mean that's the message that we basically heard, is that go find the extra money. But it is okay, though, that, you know -- I mean, they're doing that planning stage. They're doing BIP. They created the working group and a technical working group, so which was greatly needed. But it's just that it moved from that capital -- from the capital project to the

planning. So we're going back again. But if it was left -- that \$40 million was left, it would have been good for us to build on it.

So now I'm just wondering so -- because the school is 50 years old; you know, like it's old. So if any of the infrastructure fails, so is the Minister prepared to deal with all these -- this 500 students because if anything happened to the school, so where we going to school these young people? Like, there's about 500 students that are registered in Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Edzo. So what are we going to do with them if a major -- if the infrastructure fails? Do you have a plan? Does the Minister have a plan in place? Like, I don't know. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the federal government does not fund schools. Bridges are one thing, schools are another. There's a division of power in Canada under the Constitution, and the federal government does not want to get into funding schools, which is generally provincial/territorial area. And so the Tlicho government informed us that they would like to take the lead on approaching the federal government to find funding. I never told them to go find it themselves.

And in terms of what would happen if there was a failure at the school, we don't wait until schools are, you know, about to collapse before we start this process. We start this process well in advance and so that we don't run into situations like the Member's talking about. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yeah, thank you yeah, well, like I said, the school is old. Like, something's going to fail. If something failed, like, do you have money in place -- like, \$2 million, that's for the planning stage, that's what it was. I don't know if it's changed, but -- so if anything happened to the school -- like, I mean, anything can happen, you know, because it is an old school and it's been there, like, since 1972; it's 50 years old. And it's been through quite a few retrofit before that I am aware of. So if anything happens, like, you know, we don't know. Like, so I'm just asking the Minister, like, are they prepared? Is the -- like, if there was some money left in there for, like to deal with, like, major infrastructure failing would have been nice so that we have a plan in place, we know what to do. If not, is the Minister going to, you

know, like transport our students every day from Behchoko to Yellowknife? I guess Yellowknife couldn't even take our kids in. Like, I mean, that's like 500 kids that we're talking about, so. That's why I'm just asking that. It would be nice if there was another plan in place, like, just in case because we don't know when this project is going to be completed. The planning stage, it says estimate -- estimated completion date is 2023-2024, and after that it's the building stage and all that. So I'm just wondering if there's any plan in place. So it would have been nice if there was some money left in the retrofit budget for our capital budget. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you so the Member's raising some very interesting and different budgeting proposals, and I think that's more of a conversation to have with the Minister of Finance. We budget for projects that we intend to complete. And there are funds -- in case of a school, if there is a boiler that explodes in school, it's not like there's no money listed in here that -- so that means we'll just never fix it. We deal with issues as they arise. We perform maintenance. The school is old, but there have been retrofits. There's regular maintenance. So I don't want anyone here to leave thinking that the school is about to collapse and be uninhabitable. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Final --

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Well, I was going to ask the Minister will the Minister commit to building a new CJBS in Behchoko part of the capital plan 100 percent supported by GNWT?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: No. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you are there any further questions? Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, I want to acknowledge that, you know, I'm probably one of the biggest supporters of education, always was, always will be. Education is extremely important not only to young people but to everyone, including adults. And one of the things I wanted to talk about, first of all, was at the recent Council of Leaders meeting, the Indigenous leaders council meeting, one of my

friends there that I've sat with for 14 years, and that was the chief of Colville Lake, and him and I used to sit around and have chats during those 14 years that I've sat around the table with him. And a gym should be compulsory for any small community, because not everybody gets to have that and it shouldn't be on how many people you have in a school. It's a necessity for mental health, for fitness, for everything else. And he always talked about that, and I would really appreciate if the Minister considers some of those things for a small community like that, because it's really important for their well-being. And you know, and I respect that chief very very much because he's a down to earth, very honest, and a very sincere leader. And so I just felt obligated that I have to speak on his behalf.

And the other thing I want to talk about is if we're talking about ages of schools, I just want to make sure that somewhere in the future, I don't expect it today, because there are several buildings that have to be changed in Fort Smith, and we have two federal day schools still standing. And on my school -- our both schools are 64 years old and 66 years old, the two oldest schools in the territories. And I am sure Hay River's not too far behind, okay, because I remember the -- you know, in that area of when the schools were built. So I'm not saying today, but I want to make sure that in the future that we plan -- and we don't expect two schools in one year or anything like that, but I want to put the department on notice that those are old schools. And they are federal day schools that were connected to the residential schools that were served there. And I appreciate that things take time, and I know the budget process here, but I just want to make sure that it will be on the radar sooner than later. And I don't have any other questions. I just wanted to make that comment. Thank you, Madam Chair. And I don't expect the Minister to answer those questions today. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. All right. So if there are no further Members to speak to this section, Education, Culture and Employment, junior kindergarten to grade 12 school services, infrastructure investment, \$5,623,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, please turn to page 21, labour development and advanced education, with information items on page 22.

Education, Culture and Employment, labour development and advanced education,

infrastructure investment, \$3,500,000. Does committee agree? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. We don't talk about the Inuvik Campus much so I'll ask a question or two. Firstly, can the Minister remind me how much federal money is in the Western Arctic Research Centre warehouse replacement here? Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you there's money from a number of sources so I will hand it to Mr. Shannon to discuss that. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you ADM Shannon.

MR. SHANNON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the \$2.53 million that you'll see under the 2022-2023 Capital Estimates is federal money, it came from CIRNAC. The \$3.5 million that you see under 2023-2024 is a GNWT investment in the project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess, I believe this building is already under construction as we speak. Can I just -- are we on track? When do we expect it to be complete? Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you so the work is being done at the site but I don't believe the project's been tendered yet. We're expecting it in fiscal year 2024-2025 to be completed. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess my next question is, you know, we're looking at labour and development advanced education here. There's \$3.5 million this year for Inuvik Campus. That's good. But, you know, we have released a facilities master plan -- or I forget what we called it, for Aurora College. There's hundreds of millions of dollars of work to be done. I'm not seeing that here.

I guess, can the Minister provide us a bit of an update on when he expects to see some other Aurora College projects go first. And I believe first on that list is replacing one of the day

schools in Fort Smith. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you I think the Member was referencing the residential school residence in Fort Smith, not a day school. So we are engaging with the federal government to try and find some funds to make these projects a reality. I'm heading to Ottawa in a few weeks to have discussions with a number of Ministers. So I don't have a date yet because we don't have the money yet. Development of these facilities is highly dependent upon federal funding. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions under the Education, Culture and Employment, labour development and advanced education? Infrastructure investments, \$3,500,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 17. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 317-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 723-19(2): CAPITAL
ESTIMATES 2023-2024 – EDUCATION,
CULTURE AND EMPLOYMENT –
DEFERRAL OF DEPARTMENT,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Thank you, Minister, and thank you to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that the chair rise and report progress. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: May I please have the report of Committee of the Whole? Member for Twin Lakes.

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 53 and Tabled Document 723-19(2), and would like to report progress, with one motion passed. And that Bill 53, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, is ready for third reading. And Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Do we have a seconder? Member for Great Slave. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? Motion is carried. Thank you.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 52:
ELEVATORS AND LIFTS ACT,
CARRIED

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that Bill 52, Elevators and Lifts Act, be read for the third time. And, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Quyananni.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, a recorded vote was requested. The motion is in order and is debatable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. As I mentioned, a recorded vote was requested. So all those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Monfwi, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Range Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: The results of the recorded vote: 14 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 52 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Justice.

BILL 48:
ARBITRATION ACT,
CARRIED

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 48, Arbitration Act, be read for the third time. And, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, the motion is in order and is debatable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. A recorded vote was requested. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Hay River North, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Monfwi, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, and the Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote: 14 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 48, Arbitration Act, has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the day for Thursday, October 27th, 2022, at 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
 - Oral Question 1163-19(2), Homelessness
 - Oral Question 1188-19(2), Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Red Cross
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to the Commissioner's Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
 - Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
- Bill 29, Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
- Committee Report 34-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2020-2021 Annual Report of the Ombud
- Tabled Document 723-19(2), 2023-2024 Capital Estimates

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until October 27, 2022 at 1:30 p.m., sharp.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

