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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, February 23, 2010****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:36 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. It gives me great pleasure to welcome our colleague back; Mr. Abernethy is back with us today.

---Applause

Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 80-16(4):

OLYMPIC VISUAL ARTISTS

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, many Northwest Territories residents are watching with great interest as our Canadian athletes, including Hay River's own Brendan Green, strive to "Own the Podium" at the 2010 Winter Olympics.

It is important to note that the Olympics are more than just a sporting event. These Olympics are not just Vancouver's games, but Canada's games and, more importantly, have been the first Olympics to fully partner with aboriginal people. The 2010 Olympics are also a celebration of arts and culture, which we witnessed when our performing artists put on a tremendous show during the Victory Day celebrations held at B.C. Place on NWT Day last Friday. Today I'd like to highlight the Northwest Territories visual artists we have at the games.

Mr. Speaker, the 10 visual artists representing our Territory at the games are from all five regions of the Northwest Territories. They represent various genres of our arts and fine crafts sector and produce work that ranges from moose hair tufting to beadwork.

The Olympics experience will be an invaluable one for these artists. They will be able to expose their work to a large audience during the games. This audience encompasses not just Canada, but the world. They will also collaborate with other artists, acquire marketing skills and meet art gallery owners.

But it's not just these 10 artists that will benefit from the government's Olympics presence. Our Territory and its arts and fine crafts sector will also gain much exposure from this initiative. That's because the artists are not just there to showcase their work, but to act as ambassadors of the Northwest Territories. While they are in Vancouver, they are taking part in workshops, telling stories about our land and culture, providing hands-on demonstrations of their work and promoting the Northwest Territories as a place to visit, live, work and invest in.

Mr. Speaker, we believe the investments we are making in our artists during the 2010 Winter Olympics will strengthen national and international awareness of Northwest Territories art and highlight our traditional arts and fine crafts. In turn, this will potentially open up new markets for our arts and fine crafts sector and create awareness of the Territory in general, of our land, our people and our enormous potential.

Mr. Speaker, these 10 artists are examples of the depth of talent we have in the arts and fine crafts sector and I'd like to publicly acknowledge these talented individuals at this time.

The artists are Brandy Wilson from Fort Smith; Cecile Deneyoua from Hay River; Mary Okheena from Ulukhaktok; Elizabeth Drescher from Inuvik; Janet Grandjambe and Lucy Yakeleya from Fort Good Hope; Jennifer Walden and Jamie Look from Yellowknife; Karen Cumberland from Fort Liard and John Sabourin from Fort Simpson.

---Applause

I would encourage the Members of this Legislative Assembly and all Northwest Territories residents, to visit the government's Olympics website to learn more about these artists, who they are, the work they do and where they are from. This website contains detailed biographies of all 10 artists and a wealth of information about the government's other activities to promote the Northwest Territories at the Olympics.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the rest of the Members of this Legislative Assembly to join me now in saluting our Northwest Territories artists, as a sign of support for these individuals who are doing so much to help the government achieve its goals of promoting this great land of ours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 81-16(4):
NWT BIOMASS ENERGY STRATEGY

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, later today I will be tabling the Northwest Territories Biomass Energy Strategy.

Biomass energy is renewable energy derived from organic plant materials produced by photosynthesis. Essentially, it is solar energy stored in the mass of trees and plants. Biomass energy is available in the NWT in the form of wood and wood pellets.

An increased use of wood and wood pellets as an alternative source of energy supports the Government of the Northwest Territories goal of an environment that will sustain present and future generations.

Given the increasing cost of heating our homes and businesses, our growing concern about the impacts of climate change and the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, wood and wood pellet heating is an economically and environmentally friendly alternative.

Mr. Speaker, climate change remains a serious issue for the people of the Northwest Territories. Our government continues to support, investigate and implement initiatives that will assist in adapting to and mitigate the impacts of climate change in the NWT. The sustainable and wise development of forest resources will help us achieve this.

The Biomass Energy Strategy is an integral part of the Greenhouse Gas Strategy as any progress away from fossil fuel consumption towards a carbon-neutral fuel will dramatically reduce emissions. By using carbon sources that already exist in the ecological system, we use energy without adding new carbon into the system, which has been the largest factor leading climate change.

We hope this strategy will lead to an increase in the use of biomass products, such as wood and wood pellets, by promoting the use of local and important biomass products and reducing our dependency on diesel fuel.

Mr. Speaker, more than 33 hectares of land in the NWT is covered by forests. With careful planning, our forests have the potential for the sustainable harvest of biomass energy because the forest industry currently operates at very low levels. As advances in new technology bring new furnaces and boilers to market to replace or augment oil as a fuel source, wood and wood pellet heating is becoming more and more popular.

Wood pellets are a Canadian renewable resource made from forest industry waste-wood and are used in wood pellet stoves, boilers and furnaces.

Burning at a very high temperature, wood pellets eliminate the waste product often associated with wood heat.

Biomass is also available in the NWT from: wood resident in the form of woodchips from forest fire burn areas; forest thinning for community protection; road building and maintenance and pipeline or seismic line cutting; cardboard, paper or construction and demolition waste; and fast growing willow or poplar.

When a tree is harvested and burned as biomass energy, it is considered carbon neutral as long as the forest is regenerated, both naturally and with silviculture. This cycle results in tree replacement and greenhouse gases neutrality. The department is currently drafting an implementation plan for forest renewal in the Northwest Territories to ensure the sustainable use of our forest resources. It will focus on planning processes and harvesting guidelines that are created to promote natural regeneration and minimize site disturbance.

Timber harvesting continues in the NWT and may expand with recent interest in the potential of harvesting for biomass crops. While ENR will continue to actively reforest harvested lands, the management methods incorporating natural regeneration are expected to become even more important.

By adapting our usages of energy and carbon, we are beginning to reduce the negative effects on the overall world climate and the NWT. The strategy will guide our actions to reduce emissions, and the costs associated with home and business heating, through the increased use of wood and wood pellets. It also established the conditions necessary to enable biomass energy to become an integral part of the energy in the NWT.

We will continue to work very closely with the NWT communities in both the implementation and planning of biomass initiatives. Mr. Speaker, the NWT is working to become a leader within Canada on alternative, sustainable energy. The Biomass Energy Strategy should help us achieve this goal. Mahsi cho.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 82-16(4):
EDUCATION WEEK

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, Education Week, February 22nd to the 26th, is a time to thank educators across the Northwest Territories for the difference they make in the lives of northern students and families. It's because of their hard work that students are able to graduate and pursue

a post-secondary education and fulfilling employment opportunities.

Each year, the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association honours our northern educators with the Thank You for Making a Difference campaign. They continually received nominations from students all over the Northwest Territories who want their teachers recognized for the difference they make in their lives. Our teachers are on the frontlines of our education system, teaching our young people the skills they need to reach their full potential and achieve success. They invest a great deal of their time, both in and out of the classroom, tutoring students, coaching teams and, of course, preparing class material.

I think it is safe to say making a difference in the lives of students is why most people become teachers. It's great that they have opportunities like this to hear these words of appreciation. All our teachers deserve our gratitude for everything they do. I want to congratulate everybody who received nominations, and those who are receiving Thank You for Making a Difference awards.

One issue our teachers face is the need to improve student attendance. When a student is away from school, they miss valuable lessons and fall behind in their work. It is important to remember that education is a collective responsibility shared not only by teachers, but by parents, students and other members in our communities. We all have roles to play to help our young people achieve success. The department recently launched a campaign to improve attendance. Look for our ads and other promotional items that address this important issue.

Programs like the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative are bringing healthy meals into schools so kids are ready for class in the morning. The Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative also provides laptops to high school kids and money for school libraries to purchase much needed books for literacy. Schools across the Northwest Territories are also developing mentorship opportunities that bring students together with elders and there are rewards and incentives for improved attendance. By working together, we can help our students receive the education they deserve.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the teachers and educators across our Territory who commit so much of themselves so their students can be successful. I also want to thank our partners in the communities, aboriginal government, industry and at Aurora College, who continually work to improve education and training opportunities for our people. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SALVAGE COMPONENT TO THE DEMOLITION OF DEH CHO HALL

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to speak about the demolition of the Deh Cho Hall in Fort Simpson. This is slated to be done in the summer and completed by the fall time. I have been advised that nothing can be salvaged from the building for community use. Residents of Fort Simpson find that very hard to believe. Why would our government not allow residents and/or organizations an opportunity to use salvageable material for the benefit of residents or their organizations?

Mr. Speaker, I am in favour of coming to some kind of solution that will benefit the community. We have had previous buildings of the same age and construction completely retrofitted and the material was used in the community. The benefits are many. In fact, members of the Catholic Church are looking for a cost-saving solution to replace their existing church. I see that lumber and framing material from the Deh Cho Hall can go a long ways in assisting them. I also see that constructively taking down the building will provide many man hours of work. I will, once again, ask the Minister of Public Works and Services to consider this request before the work begins this coming season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON IMPROVEMENTS TO SAHTU STUDENT PERFORMANCE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm informed that the percentage of NWT aboriginal high school graduates has increased significantly since 2000. In 2008 approximately 50 percent of graduates were aboriginal; in 2000 only 30 percent of the graduates were aboriginal. In the same period the total number of graduates in smaller communities nearly doubled. Fifty-five percent of those 18 years and older in the NWT are now graduated from high school.

That all sounds like good news to me, but I'm still discouraged. Many of the Sahtu high school graduates don't have a real high school graduation. They don't have the right courses and credits to move into post-secondary programs. I don't think this is a problem that is unique to the Sahtu students or schools, I think this is an issue for Northerners throughout the Northwest Territories. But I will talk about my Sahtu people and their perspectives.

It seems that the higher the grade that you get to, the more likely that you are really far behind in that grade. Evidently students in Yellowknife perform better than students in the small communities and are least successful in their tests.

I know the Minister wants to blame much of this on students and their parents, but let's be fair here. There's a lack of success everywhere. Take some responsibility: the department, the school boards, the DEAs, the teachers and the principals. The Minister receives funding to improve education services in small communities.

The Minister says he's doing new things to support education in small communities. What are these activities that he's supporting? How many students are taking the 30-level courses and succeeding? The Minister received new funding to launch the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative to reduce the gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal students' performances. What is being done in the Sahtu communities? What results should I expect to see? I hope it is more than empty stomachs make empty brains, the newspaper advertisement. I hope it is more than new government employees in Yellowknife. What are the initiatives in the Sahtu communities? What difference are they making?

Young Northerners need good education so the young people can be what they want to be. Education is an investment. We will see the results from that investment when our young people return to the Sahtu as teachers, doctors, nurses, pilots and carpenters, even politicians.

I believe the GNWT's department of education can work with our boards and DEAs, and our teachers and principals, with our parents and students, to ensure that they have quality education in the Sahtu.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION WEEK

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Members will know by now, this is Education Week. Today I also want to recognize and salute educators.

---Applause

NWT educators come in many forms. Most are in our formal education system -- kindergarten to grade 12 and college programs -- but there are many who are not. NWT educators include daycare and child care staff, non-government organizations' educators, English as a second language teachers, playschool and preschool teachers, elders, coaches and parents. We have a huge number of informal educators who work with NWT residents of all ages to promote and enhance lifelong learning.

Teachers and mentors impact our children most particularly and we're blessed to have many excellent, dedicated teachers in this Territory. They love their job, they love their students, and they work hard to help every one of them to excel. All students don't, of course, but many do and it's because of the teachers in their lives.

I'm sure most of us can name at least one teacher who influenced us when we were young. For me it was my Grade 11 History teacher. He taught me to think beyond my reach and try to achieve beyond my capabilities. He taught me that teachers are human and that learning can be fun, even if you think you don't like the subject.

So this week, Education Week, take the time to tell someone in education that you appreciate their efforts, that they make a positive difference in their students' lives. If you have a child in the school system, think about how you can become more involved in their schooling, how you can better support their learning efforts through taking part in school activities or helping with school programs.

We don't recognize the contributions of teachers often enough and kudos must go to both the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the NWT Teachers' Association for their programs which salute teaching excellence. The NWTTA Thank You for Making a Difference campaign has grown significantly over the years and now draws in students and parents from across the NWT to nominate an educator for recognition.

Because it's Education Week, I want to formally say thank you for making a difference to all NWT teachers and to the teachers in Yellowknife schools in particular. But I especially want to single out the staff of Ecole William McDonald School and Ecole Allain St-Cyr, both in the riding of Frame Lake. Thanks to all for your ongoing hard work and dedication to our children. We often say you're preparing tomorrow's leaders. I know our future leaders will be great because of the teachers in their lives today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LUTSELK'E MINI-HYDRO PROJECT

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about the mini-hydro project on the Snowdrift River near Lutselk'e. Mr. Speaker, this project has many positive implications. The completion of the mini-hydro project will have positive impacts for the cost of living for the Lutselk'e residents and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I know the government is taking the environmental impact very seriously and the people of Lutselk'e

realize the economic benefits of paying less for power and other opportunities of the project such as short-term construction employment and ongoing operational employment.

Mr. Speaker, in order for this project to move ahead as planned, the GNWT must ensure its responsibility to conduct proper and effective consultation for the people of Lutselk'e. In fact, the project planning on the mini-hydro should be well underway now. Mr. Speaker, according to the leadership of Lutselk'e, this project seems to be proceeding along at a very slow pace and they are wondering why.

It is imperative that a consultation process is started immediately. The construction of an all-winter road to the mini-hydro site must start this summer. The project looks like it can be a real win-win project for all parties, with all kinds of favourable outlook for the project. The GNWT should do everything in its power to expedite the project.

Mr. Speaker, concerns were expressed by the community of Lutselk'e on how slow the process is and a fear that when the time for construction comes, the money may not be there. According to the community, this project has been in discussion for years and it's time the government sits down with the community and get on the same page as when the community can celebrate the transmission power to the community of Lutselk'e. Late today I will have questions for the Minister of ITI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TIME OF ACTION TO REDUCE HIGH ENERGY COSTS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I stated my perspectives on fighting down the high cost of living through poverty reduction and reduced energy costs. This government owns the public utility providing the bulk of electrical energy to NWT customers. Through the decades, government has jiggled and tweaked, studied and reviewed, and we are not one centimetre closer to meeting our energy needs.

What are our energy needs? The cheapest possible power at the lowest environmental cost with the greatest local business and employment benefits. I can hear the reaction now: that's easy for me to say. Well, it is and here's why: in Nordic Europe, I and my colleague Mr. Krutko saw biomass-based energy systems owned by communities the size of ours using fuel we have in abundance here; communities earning the dividends of local investments and flourishing with local employment and new businesses. We saw proven technology in millions of homes and businesses that had slashed

greenhouse gas production dramatically, cut energy costs and stopped the export of wealth into volatile foreign oil markets. Yet, here we remain stuck at square minus one.

NTPC review, rates and regulations review, the same old shell games. Millions of dollars of dithering, producing nothing but places to hide the pea. This isn't some far-fetched dream I'm talking about, Mr. Speaker. Energy is our single largest controllable expense, and there are ways to cut these costs staring us in the face at huge greenhouse gas benefits, as many of us have stressed repeatedly. If our biggest priorities are an end to personal poverty and progress in fighting climate change, and I can't think of any greater priorities, we have to stop studying, stop playing card tricks to hide the cost of power, and actually do something on the ground, do something about it.

I couldn't be more disappointed in the latest of the endless rounds of reviews and I'm calling on this government to get serious on the solution the world is using: green energy. Let's really reduce real costs. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECREATIONAL VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This winter the Northwest Territories has received a great amount of promotion and attention as a place to visit for tourism. For the first week of the Olympics, over 70,000 people had the pleasure of visiting Canada's Northern House, which, as many Members in this House will know, was a joint effort between the Government of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon. This gives people the chance to learn about northern culture, crafts, tourism, and opportunities to travel to the Northwest Territories and Canada's North.

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of visiting this facility and I'll tell you it's certainly a top-notch or first-class presentation of what the North has to offer. Mr. Speaker, over the winter the Globe and Mail had featured colour, full-page photos promoting the Northwest Territories beauty, its romance, and certainly a place to visit for opportunity and adventure. We must make sure that we live up to this promise to people we're trying to attract.

Tourism comes in many forms, and as I've said many times before, one of the forms is recreational vehicles. RV parks can be found just about everywhere across North America and it continues to be a very popular activity even though the fuel prices have certainly gone up, and up. In the quest

of bragging rights across this country, RV'ers like to take their creature comforts off the beaten path and I think the Northwest Territories offers that experience that they're looking for.

Often Yellowknife in the summer will find these large vehicles parked in places not necessarily suited for them. Sometimes you see them at the boat launch, the Rotary Park down by Great Slave Lake, or in rest stops along the highway and picnic sites along the Ingraham Trail. We need to increase our capacity to offer services to these types of tourists, our RV'er community. They are looking for good scenery, shopping, arts and music festivals, museums and other special interests that the North presently offers. So, Mr. Speaker, where are the discussions of the RV park here in the Northwest Territories and certainly just outside of Yellowknife?

There once was a site being picked by the Folk on the Rocks, but for various reasons it didn't work out. It's time for ITI to find ways to make sure that we build incentives into the developing RV facilities here in the Northwest Territories and definitely here in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, without this type of opportunity, our small business community has a difficult time meeting the challenges, because tourism dollars are a serious investment into our northern economy. Later today I'll have questions for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment about what we can do to help further support the RV community with parks to meet their needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION WEEK

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This being Education Week, I also would like to take this opportunity to recognize the educators in the Northwest Territories in our formal education institutions and Ms. Bisaro listed off a number of areas that people could serve in this capacity.

Mr. Speaker, it's a challenging task that lies ahead of our educators in our communities here in the North. In any community anywhere, it is a challenging task. It's something that I admire greatly in those who choose that profession, something that I know I could not succeed in just by virtue of the amount of discipline it takes to stay on course.

Mr. Speaker, I went to school many years ago and I just want to say that I am grateful to the people who educated me for the basics. I wasn't a good student, but the basics of arithmetic and grammar and spelling and the very basic essentials of education, in spite of my lack of enthusiastic

participation has stood me in fairly good stead going forward in my life. I would have liked to have more formal education, but I came from a home where there was not a high priority put on formal education. My parents were not formally educated and so they did not, in turn, convey to us the importance of that. You'll notice a lot of times teachers' kids are the best students because they have that strong parental influence in the home, that getting a good education is a really important thing.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also recognize some of the outside of the box kind of thinking that's taking place in education. I think of the storefront high school program that's in Hay River, that's located in the downtown, where we did take students that were not doing well in the routine and regular process, and we found a place where they could participate perhaps in a different way, in a different place, but we did not discard them because they could not accomplish the same amount as kids in the academic program. So I do thank the Department of Education for that kind of creativity, thinking outside the box and trying to make sure that as much as is reasonably possible we meet the education needs of children in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COLON CANCER SCREENING

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to be back. I read with interest a Northern News Services story on colon cancer prevention several weeks ago. I was pleased to hear, given the high rate of colon cancer in the Northwest Territories, that the Department of Health and Social Services is taking a proactive position and directing family physicians and other health care providers to encourage residents over 50 to get screened every one or two years.

Although I support this direction, I do have one concern. I have talked to a number of people on the list for screening, as well as a couple of the physicians, who have indicated that the waiting list for this procedure is anywhere from 12 months to 18 months. According to the newspaper article, the department indicated that if blood is detected, the department tries to have a colonoscopy scheduled within three months, which is the Canadian standard.

Unfortunately, I have learned that there are still a number of high-risk clients throughout the Northwest Territories who have been waiting for far longer than the standard three months. Given that the department is encouraging a large number of Northerners to get this procedure, the demand on

the system will only increase and wait times will only continue to grow.

I fully agree that this is something that needs to be done. However, I'm not sure delivering a service like this without adequate space and staff and resources will prove to be successful. There is a good chance that it will actually cause significant frustration for our residents. I'm aware of some of the challenges. Space is at a premium at Stanton. Staff is limited. Colonoscopy equipment is also limited.

Fortunately there are, in my opinion, organizations and passionate people in the Northwest Territories who I believe can really help us overcome these challenges; for example, the Stanton Foundation. Over the years this foundation has proven they can mobilize and raise significant funds for specific projects. If given a concrete ask, they will be able to raise significant funds for colon cancer prevention that will help us overcome our challenges to timely screening.

I encourage the Minister to meet with the foundation and work with them to raise the funds required to pay for leasehold improvements to create or modify existing space at Stanton or off-site, purchase additional colonoscopy machines, and cover the cost of additional staff so that additional screening can be facilitated. This could be a win-win for the foundation, Stanton, the Department of Health and Social Services, and for all residents of the Northwest Territories.

I believe that a lot of good is being done and that the direction being taken to increase the number of colon cancer screenings is appropriate. Let's take the next step and ensure that our system can handle these increased loads without causing undue frustration and stress on the residents of the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONTRACTS AWARDED TO FORMER SENIOR BUREAUCRATS

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use my Member's statement to again draw attention to this Cabinet's increasing practice of awarding lucrative contracts to former senior public servants without any competitive process.

In a reply to a written question asked by Mr. Bromley and tabled in this House earlier this session, the government highlighted an alarming number of contracts that have been awarded to former senior bureaucrats on a sole-sourced basis. The Premier told us in the House that such contracts are justified because they are a way to ensure that our most talented people earn a living and stay in the North.

Many of the contracts in question have been awarded to former senior bureaucrats who no longer live in the North. Many have been awarded to former deputy ministers who were terminated by this government shortly after coming into office. In one case it would appear that a contract was awarded to an accounting firm to teach a basic accounting course to the Department of Finance. The principal of that firm that the contract was sole sourced to is the partner of a current deputy minister.

What exactly is going on here? There is a sense of entitlement that seems to have come over this Cabinet and the bureaucracy that does nothing but erode public confidence in how our money is spent. We're not talking about negotiated contracts with legitimate companies here. We're talking about individual service contracts that any number of northern companies are qualified to bid on.

I'm not suggesting that the people who have received these contracts are not competent. I'm not suggesting that they're not offering a fair price. What I'm saying is that there's no way to be sure of either of these things if we do not use a competitive process like a tender or an RFP. This is particularly true when we are sole sourcing contracts to individuals with very close ties to government. If you look closely behind some of the more controversial issues surrounding this government, be it the Deh Cho Bridge Project or behind-closed-doors loans to Discovery Air, former senior bureaucrats with close ties to the government are always seen to be lurking in the background.

The time has come to end this sense of entitlement and restore public confidence in our contracting processes. I call on this Premier and this government to put an end to this practice. In the meantime, they can rest assured that I will be paying very close attention to the contracting reports that will be tabled in this House for the remainder of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to recognize Chief Edward Sangris of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 368-16(4): COLON CANCER SCREENING

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Soon some of the staff at Stanton will be vacating the hospital to move to a new mall here in Yellowknife. This may free up some space that can be modified to allow for additional colon cancer screening. This may be a great opportunity for Stanton and the Stanton Foundation to mobilize to raise funds for increased screening which may help reduce wait times in the Northwest Territories.

Would the Minister of Health and Social Services commit to meeting with representatives from the Stanton Foundation and work with them to help address these challenges, specifically space, equipment, and staff, facing colon cancer screening in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm always willing to meet with any group or organization to hear them out and see what we can do in terms of working together. I can tell the Member that I have met with the Stanton Territorial Foundation executive director and chair quite early in my mandate. We have also learned that in fact the deputy minister of Health and Social Services is a member of that board, which has not been exercised in a while. We are certainly willing to work with the foundation and see what projects we can work on together.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'm happy to hear that. I was wondering if the Minister could tell me when she might actually have an opportunity to meet on this particular issue about finding ways to reduce wait times for colon cancer screening in the Northwest Territories.

HON. SANDY LEE: If we were to, well, I mean, I know that the deputy minister is planning on meeting with the foundation as a member of the board or invited member of the board. With respect to cancer screening, that's a service issue and it involves... The wait list is not necessarily because of the spacing issue but is because of the lack of specialists. Part of the work we are doing is we're looking to see if we can offer that service not only in Yellowknife at Stanton but also in Hay River and possibly Inuvik. That's part of the Territory-wide service plan that we're working on. We would certainly be happy to work with the foundation on capital projects that they want to have to raise funds.

MR. ABERNETHY: Once again I'd like to thank the Minister for that. I hear what the Minister is saying, but at the same time there are a large number of

residents in Yellowknife, a large number of people who are going through or scheduled on the waiting list, waiting 12 months or 18 months or often longer for colon cancer screening in the Northwest Territories. The foundation has an opportunity to help raise money, not cost the government money but help the government raise money to actually facilitate some of this screening. I'd like to hear the Minister tell me today that she is going to meet with the foundation and work with them to help identify ways or help them target money and fundraising that could help us help our residents get the screening that is required in the Northwest Territories, specifically at Stanton.

HON. SANDY LEE: As I've indicated, the deputy minister will be participating in that board and any proposals they may have for raising money for capital, obviously we're willing to work with that and see how we can work together. I think we should be careful that raising money for capital equipment is for capital equipment. Often it's the O and M and the ongoing funding that is a lot bigger than the capital funding itself. We should be mindful of that when we are talking about fundraising projects. Obviously, I appreciate and value the work that the foundation does and any idea they may have that they want us to look at, we'll be happy to do that.

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

QUESTION 369-16(4): CREATIVE APPROACHES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT SUCCESS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister of Education for his Minister's statement today. It is good to see the creative and innovative approach that our government department of Education is taking in the education of the children of the Northwest Territories. As I said in my statement, we cannot expect that every method of education will work in every circumstance in every child's life in every community in every home. I think back to my days in school and I don't think my parents ever asked me once if I'd done my homework, yet I think sometimes we expect that support is there in the home.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he or his department has ever contemplated the semester systems in the schools and if something perhaps shorter than one whole half of a year. Sometimes students become discouraged because they may have some disappointing grades in some tests and things and that actually wipes out an entire half a year. Has consideration ever been given to smaller modules where you could have small victories, small successes and something that wouldn't affect the entire academic year of the child?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the Member raised a good point there. That is one of the areas that are part of the discussions that we're having with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. Ongoing plans are to have a package ready by this summer. We haven't really talked specifically about the semester itself, and the Member alluding to maybe a particular program or courses could be in line with maybe a shorter version or difference factor. Those are the areas we need to explore. We are always open to ideas, as I stated in the House on previous occasions. I think this is an area that we definitely need to explore and see if it will benefit the schools in the Northwest Territories.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: The education of a child I think we have to adopt the idea that it's not all about the time spent in the classroom in that very, very formal setting. I'm glad to see the Minister has referred to mentoring. Again I only have my own experience to draw on, but harkening back to when I was a youngster in school, we had an opportunity to go out into the community and get involved in different things. I worked in the library, in the public library after school. I didn't like reading the books but I just liked the books. It was a great opportunity to become involved in something in the community that was worthwhile.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he could expand a little bit on this mentoring program that he's talking about where the children would have an opportunity to have exchange with people doing various things and perhaps some of the elders in the community.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We are looking at other alternatives to educating our students. The Member is correct that in some of the areas it could be based on their performance as opposed to their attendance. That's an area we're also looking at. We're also dealing with the attendance issue on formula funding on enrolment. But there is a very successful project happening in the South Slave region. We went to visit Fort Simpson and Fort Resolution on their particular program, an alternative program. I must say this is an area we are very interested in as a department that we can probably pilot project in other regions. I will be coming back to the House to discuss this further on the successful program in the South Slave region.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I know that attendance is a very important issue of the teachers that are trying to make progress and inroads in the educating of a child. However, again drawing on my own experience, being raised in an area that was surrounded by agriculture and a farming community, when it was harvest time the kids who lived on farms missed school. I mean, they would

have to help their family with the harvesting. If you translate that to the more traditional activities here in the North, if a child did miss school and it was to go with their family for time on the land or spring hunt, I hope that when they return, even though attendance is so important, that that time that they were able to spend doing something so important and so educational would still be celebrated by the school and that they would not be reprimanded or somehow discouraged by the lack of their attendance in that formal setting. I'd like to ask the Minister what is the government's policy regarding attendance when it is to pursue activities such as that. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, according to the Education Act there are so many days that students have to attend in a year. But at the same time, we continue working with educational councils and also the education authorities. On-the-Land Program is very important to us as a department and also to the communities. They've worked into part of their curriculum development where it could be classified as taking an On-the-Land Program. The Tlicho community is a prime example that we've used as a model in other jurisdictions. Other regions are taking on the initiative as well. Mr. Speaker, those are the areas that we continue to be innovative and creative on identifying whether it be enrolment or part of the attendance. It hasn't been a huge factor to date, but we continue to make progress in that area. Mahsi.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if teachers coming into the Northwest Territories who will be teaching in a cross-cultural setting, is there currently a formal training module, orientation to the culture of the North that is required to be taken by teachers who will be teaching in our communities? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we are currently developing a framework for the whole Northwest Territories, but each jurisdiction has their own orientation package. Again, I'll refer back to the Tlicho Community Services Agency where they have the On-the-Land Barren Land Program where newly recruited teachers go out on the land with the elders. It has been a very successful program, but that's one jurisdiction. We're looking at the cross-cultural throughout the Northwest Territories as an orientation package. Mr. Speaker, we are developing one and we'll certainly get back to the Members on that. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 370-16(4):
CONTRACTS AWARDED TO
FORMER MINISTERS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a response to my second set of written questions regarding contracts to former Ministers was tabled yesterday. Again, the Premier has disrespectfully refused to answer the precise questions asked, so I must again try to drag out answers. I asked the Premier to provide “copies of the documentary evidence supplied by the contractor to demonstrate that the contracted services were provided.” No documents were given.

The Financial Administration Manual requires that “sufficient documentation is retained to substantiate recorded transactions and is verifiable for audit.” The Premier said in the House yesterday, according to unedited Hansard, “everything that we do as a government will flow out of the Financial Administration Act.”

So, Mr. Speaker, if the Executive obeyed the law, the documents must exist. Will the Minister supply those documents, as I have repeatedly asked, or perhaps, if appropriate, admit they don't exist; whatever the case may be? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Executive, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the contracts that we have in place that we put together so that we can position ourselves when it comes to discussions with either the federal government or industry, at times, are necessary and in place, and we use that, different departments use those as well, and we do have documentation on those. In some areas the documentation is provided directly to and short form to appropriate Ministers. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, former Minister Todd was contracted for up to \$48,000, at \$1,500 a day, 32 days of work. The FAA requires “that amounts claimed are correct as to quantities and prices for goods or services provided.” So the law required the Executive to verify documentation of the exact services provided. So where's the invoice that says how many days, even, Mr. Todd worked?

For what I demand is the last time: will the Premier prove the Executive obeyed the law and produce the documents that were verified to approve payment, or was this actually a one-time \$48,000 schmooze fee? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I'll caution Members to not refer to Members that are not in the House. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is now not a rookie anymore. He's been around this Assembly long

enough and he's been digging up information for quite some time and making strong suggestions out there or language that we can get on and debate and challenge each other on. He's not satisfied with the information we've given him. There was no schmooze fest, as the Member is suggesting. Contracts were in place; meetings did occur, and a number of them. He's not satisfied with the information we've given him. I am sorry he's not satisfied, but I don't know if there's anything I can do that will satisfy him short of having him sit beside me in meetings and take the notes for me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Yes, I appreciate the vote of confidence on the Premier that I'm coming along as an MLA, and I apologize for mentioning names here.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's report that was tabled yesterday in the House noted the need for some serious tune-up of our contracting services, unlike the Premier's opinion of things, so these questions are not frivolous questions that I'm dreaming up or anything like that. I've asked very specific questions repeatedly. So let me offer my third one, specifically, and I will happily shut up, Mr. Speaker, if I get a response that stands up.

As this House knows, the Executive let two sole-source contracts to two contractors at the same time for exactly the same services and described each contractor as “uniquely” able to provide the services. My written question asked how this could be, and the question was ignored. Will the Premier, for the first time, explain now how it is possible for two identical services provided to be unique, and if the answer is that these two unique contractors were providing the same service, why was the contract not bid competitively to get the best price? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, in many forms of contracting, best price isn't necessarily the best work that you want to get. Especially in the critical days of a government coming into power, it wants to ensure that the information it is collecting, the position it is preparing for in meetings, in opening some of those doors, each person can bring their own unique qualities to the table. For example, with our establishing a relationship with the federal government that's in place, that requires a unique set of capacity and capabilities, and we received that.

When it comes to dealing with industry, as well as some of the bureaucracy in the system, again, the individuals sought for their experience and ability to open doors and set up meetings for us. So those were done, those were contracts that were entered into initially with our government, and we used those at the time when we felt that we needed them. Since then, we've established those networks, we've established our criteria and

competence with Ministers across the country, whether it is federal, provincial or other territories, and now with that level of confidence and our positions well established, we've no need for those contracts. That, as well, shows that with our contracting in place that we did not extend those contracts. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Of course, these are just examples. There are many contracts that we could be talking about here and perhaps will in the future. But I'm asking about process here, Mr. Speaker. So I'm asking the Premier what will he do, given the Auditor General's report and some of the obvious irregularities that we're raising here in the House, to tune-up this process in a way that gives us the confidence we need, and our public need, that things are being done appropriately and with appropriate documentation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I understand that response was tabled in this Assembly, our response to the Auditor General's report, on the initiatives we would undertake to deal with those issues. As well, in remarking to other questions earlier this week, the Financial Administration Act is being reviewed and out of that can flow further changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 371-16(4):
RECREATION VEHICLE
INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about tourism, my support of it, and certainly I recognize the hard work going on in the ITI shop to make sure that the Northwest Territories is certainly advocated in a very positive way to attract tourism. But one of the areas that I'd like to find out today and lay before this House is what is this government doing specifically to provide services for that type of tourism market. I referred to the RV sector, which is a very popular tourism group. Mr. Speaker, specific to investment in the Northwest Territories, what is the government doing to prepare for these RV tourists? Are they investing in infrastructure or services that can be seen? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Specifically to increasing the infrastructure to provide for RV parking, I'm pleased to announce to the Member that we are increasing the number of parking sites or camping sites that people with RVs can pull into. We're also looking or studying the

potential for expanding Fred Henne Park and we're also looking at whether there are any possibilities out at Prelude Campsite. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, that's certainly good news. In the riding of Yellowknife Centre there are a lot of small businesses and they certainly rely significantly on this infusion of tourist dollars and, as we all know, the Territory's economy relies seriously on the infusion of new types of dollars. Could the Minister elaborate a little further to what he means by looking at extending the Fred Henne Territorial Park to accommodate RV tourism, that type of sector? Can he elaborate to basically explain size, what dollar investment and when we can expect something? Thank you.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: When I say we're looking and studying Fred Henne Park, we're looking at the available land that we have. We're also looking at how many campsites we can build in there. Once we get all of that information we'll have to put together a business case so we can come to the Legislative Assembly as part of our business planning process to obtain additional resources so that we can expand our capacity for RV camping. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my Member's statement, Northern House, in my view, is a clear example of hard work and certainly an excellent demonstration of what the North has to offer.

Mr. Speaker, I've been highlighting my issue, trying to raise awareness about preparing for RV'ers, and certainly I know the staff working down there are clearly providing excellent examples of how people can get here and things to do. But if all that work is for naught, if we're not prepared for them, I'd like to find out from the Minister what type of work is being done by Industry, Tourism and Investment to prepare for these types of tourism and hopefully a wave of tourism that may come this summer? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We've been doing a lot of work and preparing for this invasion of tourists. In 2009-10 we've spent resources to upgrade our facilities. We're planning to do additional work this summer. As well, I should point out that we will be examining opportunities with some of the land claim organizations or land claim, their government or businesses, to see if we can work in partnership with aboriginal governments to identify opportunities in the tourism sector. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I like the phrase of the Minister "preparing for the invasion of tourism," but I would encourage the Minister not to

count them until he sees the whites of their eyes crossing our border.

But, Mr. Speaker, how do we find out if this investment is working? That's what I really want to make sure, is that all the investment done at the Northern House and all the work being done to attract tourism, how are linking it to any type of results to ensure that type of investment will be long-term dividends to our northern economy? One dollar spent anywhere in the North helps the whole North, so it's about a big northern picture. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: There are a number of ways we can analyze how successful we've been at Northern House. One is to impute the value of all of the media coverage that we've been getting. We've been on major international networks, we are getting a lot of coverage from the tourism media and different newspapers and publications, so that's one way of imputing value. If we had to pay for all that coverage, it would probably be in the millions of dollars, perhaps in the tens of millions of dollars.

Other ways will depend on how many people come to the Northwest Territories, and we capture that information through our tourism surveys and exit surveys, and I guess we'll see on the ground. We've been getting very positive comments. A lot of people have indicated they're coming to the Northwest Territories. So that would be how we would determine how successful we were with our campaign at the Olympics. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTIONS 372-16(4):
IMPROVEMENTS TO SAHTU
STUDENT PERFORMANCE

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, my question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I want to ask the Minister in terms of the education issue here. I want to ask the Minister what improvements to education have been made in the Sahtu communities because of the new investments approved through the budget process.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Through the new initiative, we've had several meetings on the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative and they've made some recommendations to our department and we've implemented those particular initiatives. Although it may be small, it's a start. We provide funding to each of the school education councils, so they can deal with enrolment issues, enrolment challenges.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, we've provided a laptop to the grade 12 students and now we're looking towards next year of providing possibly to grade 11 students and other initiatives along the way that will certainly provide benefits to the students, to the communities and also the community as a whole. So those are the areas that we're looking at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the Minister, in his ministerial statement, talked about education and I also heard some Members talk about the Mentorship Program here. I want to ask the Minister, I've been working quite diligently with him over a couple of years to look at a mentorship program in the Sahtu in terms of involving our real teachers in our culture, the elders. How do you get the real teachers into an education system to work with us and the parents? When will the Minister put forth a directive saying elders now have to be involved in our education system?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the amount of funding that we provide to education councils, it's to their discretion on where to disclose the funds, whether it be to the elders or to the Mentorship Program. Some of the school districts are providing mentorship to improve student attendance using various examples. So it will be up to the Sahtu education council to provide that available information.

Mr. Speaker, although this is a small initiative that we've initiated, we are already making progress, we are seeing some changes in student attendance going up a bit. Mr. Speaker, on a going forward basis, this summer we're going to have a package available from the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative and I'm looking forward to implementing that with the support of the Members. So I will be coming back to the Members on an update. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: I look forward to the initiative that the Minister will bring forward to the Members on the Aboriginal Achievement Initiative. We know students have to do hard work. They have to be disciplined. They have to have the parents influence them to go to school. The Minister is right; if you're not in school, valuable lessons will not be learned. In terms of monitoring support for students, is the Minister monitoring the types of supports that can be provided in the school and the types of supports needed to have successful graduates to come out with a quality diploma?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I think the Member touched on it; parental involvement and community involvement. It has to be monitored at the community level as well. The school can only do so much. The education council can only do so much as well. As a department, we can do what we can to make a very successful program. So there are all these partners actively involved, Mr. Speaker, but we do have ongoing... We are currently discussing

what the Member is alluding to, such as a Mentorship Program where elders could be involved. So those are the initial discussions we are having to date and the outcome will be this summer. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: There are many issues in the Sahtu regarding education. I just recently was notified that two students that did attend a Fort Smith course at Aurora College and one wanted to attend the NAIT program. Both dropped out and went back to the Sahtu and are now working. Mr. Speaker, these are two young men that weren't able to pursue the post-secondary education. That's a crying shame, Mr. Speaker, in terms of supporting our students. With regards to all these issues that can be raised in the Sahtu, the Minister will be getting an educational symposium proposal from the Sahtu to have education looked at seriously in our region here. Is he open to areas that education could be looked at differently in the Sahtu in the Northwest Territories, so we can have culture and spirituality tied strongly into our education system?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I do believe we are making some changes in our curriculum, as long as it benefits the communities, benefits the schools, benefits the students. If we do it for one, we have to do it for all jurisdictions, not just one region. So, Mr. Speaker, those are the areas that we continue to have with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. There is valuable information and discussions taking place. Each of the regions are well represented and very fruitful discussions are happening. So, Mr. Speaker, all the issues addressed here today are being addressed at those particular committee meetings. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 373-16(4):
LUTSELK'E MINI-HYDRO PROJECT

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I talked about the mini-hydro project near Lutselk'e. There are many positive implications to the project; however, that means nothing unless we get started. So I have questions for the Minister of ITI. Mr. Speaker, Lutselk'e is eager to see some actual work started. Can the Minister tell me how the government is engaging the community on this project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has identified the falls in the Snowdrift River as an ideal place for a mini-hydro development and work started in 2007-08 and there

was additional work done in 2008-09. We are also planning a large infusion this year. Hydro projects do take time and we have to collect about two years of baseline environmental data, we have to undertake the engineering work and also figure out the regulatory process that we have to go through. Once we get all of that information and develop the cost estimates and work plan, then we would have to develop a business deal with the community of Lutselk'e, and our expectation is that would have to be done within the next 12 months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister provide me with a schedule of the work plan that he just spoke of? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are expecting the results of all of the detailed work by April 2010. The expectation is that by October we would have our cost estimates and work plan developed. Assuming that the project is technically, environmentally and financially viable, then we would proceed through the regulatory process. Mini-hydro has a very small footprint so it won't be flooding any large areas. The powerhouse is very small and the transmission line is very short; it's only 17 kilometres. So our expectation is it wouldn't take us very long to get regulatory approval. Assuming that, probably the earliest we could start construction would be in late... The decision to construct would be made in late 2010, and potentially could start construction in 2011, with power being generated in 2013-14. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: The community is very eager. Can the Minister commit to holding a public meeting in the community as soon as possible to discuss the project with the community, including the leadership? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: It's our expectation to do exactly that, so we can commit to doing that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an essential part of developing mini-hydro in Lutselk'e would likely be an all-season road to the site, which is about 20 kilometres. Can the Minister commit to working with the community in hopes of trying to get that all-season road started this summer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think the initial plans envisage that we would just have a quad trail to the site. In my view, I think it would be beneficial to have a road, recognizing that that would add to the cost of the project, and it could make a difference whether the project is viable or feasible. So I think once we get the information to allow us to determine whether it's feasible to build an all-weather road, then we could make that decision.

We expect the government will have all that information by this October. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 374-16(4):

SOLE-SOURCE CONTRACTING PROCEDURES

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to continue asking some questions of the government on how they sole source contracts. I'm having a little bit of trouble understanding the rhyme and reason that the government uses for sole sourcing contracts in certain instances.

On the Department of Public Works website, they have the opportunities for people to sole source contracts throughout the government. I'd like to ask the Minister of Public Works, other than negotiated contracts, under what circumstances can deputy ministers of Minister award contracts without some sort of competitive process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Public Works, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess there are three considerations that would be utilized for a sole-source contract to be awarded. First of all, the goods, the service or the construction have to be urgently required and the delay would be not in the public's interest. We would also consider if there was only one party available that is able and capable of performing the contract. If it's a contract with a consulting service or a company, that it will not exceed \$25,000 in value, and if there are other types of contracts, of course, but that's the basic criteria we use for sole-source decisions. Of course, some of those decisions are made outside of headquarters. We also have the ability for some of the regional offices to award the sole-source contracts, and they are required to follow the contracting authority that's there. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I thank the Minister for that. The next question I'd have for the Minister: in sole-sourcing contracts, when sole-sourcing contracts are being considered, I'm just wondering if the Minister can let me know if that's considered to be a best practice by the department. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, of course, Public Works is responsible for the contracts awarded within the ranks of Public Works, and sole sourcing is one method that we use, it's a management tool. There are criteria that sets out when it can be utilized and that's what we follow. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I'd like to ask the Minister of Public Works what measures are in place by Public Works to ensure the contracts are awarded fairly. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, of course, the financial end of a contract, the end result of a good product, those things are all considered as we do an evaluation after the project is completed. Mr. Speaker, we have to point out that sole sourcing, of course, is only used in the situations that I outlined in the previous questions. So those are what we utilize as a guide and the end result is usually what determines whether the best practices were used in the case. Thank you.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of Public Works whether or not his Cabinet colleagues are all fully aware of the policies that are on the Public Works website when it comes to sole sourcing contracts, and whether or not they have actually read that section of the website. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, this is a management tool, as I indicated before, and each department has their responsibilities that lie within the contracting policies, and they have all read the terms and are all up to date on the practices of this government. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 375-16(4):

SALVAGE COMPONENT TO THE
DEMOLITION OF DEH CHO HALL

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to follow up on my Member's statement and the questions in the House of last week with regard to Deh Cho Hall, to the Minister of Public Works and Services. Our government has been on a campaign to reduce, reuse and recycle, and here's an opportunity to do it with our Deh Cho Hall that's slated for demolition this coming summer. But I've been hearing reports that there may be an environmental report out there saying that all the material is contaminated. Can the Minister tell me if this is true?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was a little surprised to hear the Member raise the issue of the demolition of Deh Cho Hall. I thought maybe he was recycling his Member's statement, or in the event that we were both talking about the same thing and he had some information that I wasn't aware of. Mr. Speaker, we have made a commitment in this

House to the Member that we would look at a salvage component to the demolition of Deh Cho Hall. We have not had any information, at least that has come to my attention, that all the materials are contaminated. We assume there is going to be material that is contaminated, but we have, as part of this program, put in the requirements for a salvage and recycling program. I can certainly check with my officials to see if there is any concern regarding contamination, but as far as I am concerned, we are moving ahead and there is going to be a salvage component. Of course, we can't have a free-for-all and it will have to be controlled. That is what will have to be worked out as we move forward on this. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I am glad that something like this can be worked in the terms of reference for demolition of Deh Cho Hall. I'm glad that the department has not made a decision that no material can be salvaged. So once again, perhaps I'll just ask the Minister what is the timeline for developing the terms of reference for demolition of the Deh Cho Hall.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Once again, yes, we want to have a program in place that will allow the community to have some benefit from the materials that are available through salvage and recycling. We certainly need to ensure that there is a safety component incorporated in this process. Direct access is probably not something we want to see. We'll have a controlled area where salvage material will be dropped off so that people can come and pick through it or take what they'd like. The scope of work is already being determined. We'll have all the different components required prior to going out to tender this summer. That's our intent, is to have this done in the next little while and completed over this year or so. That's our plan. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm glad that the opportunity is there, maybe there, to salvage as much materials as we can for the public and special interest groups. As to the timing, does the Minister know yet about the timing, when the demolition will begin and when it will be complete? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We don't have any firm dates as of yet. As soon as we do, we'll make sure we forward it to the Member. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in terms of organizations or myself, contact with Public Works and Services when it comes time to award the contract, who would we contact on behalf of the residents and organizations about material and salvage material for special interest groups? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we can certainly commit to having our own Public Works

staff to notify the different levels of local government in the community. Any public notification and how the salvation program itself would be operated I'm assuming would come from the contractor that has the contract and would determine what the safest way to distribute materials and salvage and dismantle this building would take place. So we can provide notice to the Member as we notify the community governments. The rest would have to be up to the responsibility of the contractor. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 376-16(4):
CONSULTATION ON SUPPLEMENTARY
HEALTH BENEFITS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my questions today to the Minister for Health and Social Services. I have some questions in regard to the recent release of information about possible change to the Supplementary Health Benefits Program. I am very appreciative of the work that's been done by the department and the staff in the department to do a lot of research and to provide a lot of data. My questions go to the process that has been used to date and the process that's been planned for the future in terms of consultation.

The motion that was passed last year by this House required the Minister to involve the public and to involve stakeholders and any consultation with regards to bringing Supplementary Health Benefits Program changes back. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister how she feels that involvement of the public and the stakeholders was done leading up the recent release of information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is right; we did make a commitment to have a full consultation process as we went back to work to improve on the information that we had and the discussions that we need to have with the public. We have had that discussion with the public working group as a stakeholder representative. The departmental officials met with them and my information is at the last meeting they had, they wanted the department to come back with more detailed information and this is what they received last Friday. Since then, they have given us feedback that we are considering. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: To the Minister's answer, I understand that process. I know that the working group was established. I know there were a couple of meetings, at which I understand there was very little substance, very little discussion about

possibilities and so on. So I am concerned when the Minister says they asked for further information. That's probably true, but when did the department ask the stakeholder group or the working group for their opinion? I am very concerned that I don't think there was an opportunity for wide-ranging, creative thinking outside the department input to the department from this particular working group. So if the Minister could comment on where that opportunity was for the working group prior to the release of the information that came out this last week. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: I think it's important to note that working group was part of the discussion process, but they weren't meant to be the exclusive or the only group of consultation. Since our last experience, we've discussed with the committee about how to improve on things. We've had a few meetings on that. Departmental officials have met with health providers, the authorities. I have discussed it with the chairs of the boards. We've met with the NWT Seniors' Society. They've invited me a couple of times and we've had discussions on that. So I think it's important to note the public advisory group was part of the consultation process and what the Member is saying we should do, which is to think out of the box, talk to other people, not do all the work in the department, is exactly what we have begun to do as of last Thursday and Friday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: I think the important thing to note in the Minister's answer is she said that's what they started to do since last Thursday and Friday. The working group was established before Christmas and my understanding was they were supposed to help to develop what the department seems to have determined a draft plan. It seems they have a plan which they've put out and they are looking for consultation on, a plan which apparently would charge a fee. I just have to take exception with the fact that the working group was not involved in the drafting of that plan. I guess I'd like to ask the Minister why the working group, not that they were necessarily ignored, but why they weren't more involved in drafting the plan as opposed to being asked for a response to a plan. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, the Member is absolutely wrong in saying the department is coming up with the plan. I think we've learned the last time that coming up with a plan and asking the public to approve the plan did not work. We have learned that. The department staff has been working really hard to gather the data on who the users are, and what their backgrounds are, and what the cost of the services are. We are just providing the raw data. We provided that to the media. We provided that to the committee. We provided that to the public working group and anybody who wants to see that, it's on the website now. We have suggested that this raw

data points to some direction that we should look at. We are not coming up with the complete plan and we are asking the public for feedback, and we are going to have town hall meetings and public hearings, and anybody who wants to talk to us because these are important programs and we don't want to ask the public to ratify that the department has, but have them give us input and have a public information session. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister, we have to agree to disagree, which I do often with Ministers it seems. But in terms of what's out there, I took this recently from the website. It's a dialogue with the public that talks about grandfathering, talks about copayments, talks about catastrophic drugs, residence requirements, third-party coverage. That is what the department is looking for feedback on. To me that sounds like a bit of a draft plan, albeit it's not hard and fast, but it sounds like a plan to me. I'd like to ask the Minister again, how were the working group and other stakeholders involved in the development of this draft plan?

HON. SANDY LEE: That Member is looking at the material that the committee received. Our discussion was that the data shows that we need to consider those as a policy direction. We're not going out to say we should do this or we should do that. Copayment is a possible option, but the data or grandfathering or anything else, that's a transition measure or where do we go next that we should consider. I think Members should take that when we say that we are consulting with the public. In order for the public to respond to us, we need to present them with some hard facts about what is the cost of extended health benefits, which is separate from insured service. Who is using it? What are the age groups of the people using it? What are their income levels? We are going out with an open mind and the hard facts. We are asking the public to respond. The public working group is just a part of the public.

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

QUESTION 377-16(4):
CONSULTATION ON CARIBOU
MANAGEMENT MEASURES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of ENR. I'd like to ask the Minister to provide the House with an update on his official meeting with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation on the sensitive issue that we've been dealing with for the time being here. Can the Minister provide an update on his meeting with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've had some discussions with some of the Yellowknives. We've also had some contact with the national chief, Bill Erasmus, about a process to possibly help us work to resolve the current circumstance with the Yellowknives and the access to caribou and our offer to work with them to hunt outside the band area as well as a very small controlled hunt within the band area.

MR. YAKELEYA: I know you have mentioned this in the House, that you hope to have some conclusion and resolution to this critical issue here. I've been hearing this for almost a week and a half or two weeks. I want to ask the Minister about concluding this issue with the Yellowknives First Nation if he can give me a date on hoping that both sides are satisfactory and a conclusion or resolution can be imminent and this issue can be put to bed.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I think everybody would like to have this resolved as soon as possible. One of the issues is the Dene Nation has come forward with this and they want confirmation that they are speaking on behalf of the chiefs on this issue. The suggestion was to each identify a person or staff member to be able to sit down and start negotiating some of the outstanding issues. We're involved in that process at this point.

MR. YAKELEYA: About identifying some of the outstanding issues, is there a time frame of when this issue will be resolved? Is the Minister willing to commit, even 24/7, to have this discussion done, to have a sit down with the Yellowknives First Nation and Dene Nation, and come up with an agreement like in the good old days when we negotiated our land claim agreements?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I'd like to point out that we've had six meetings with the Tlicho Government and Tlicho people. We've had three very successful community hunts outside the band area, working with the Tlicho communities, and got caribou into the communities to be dispersed and distributed. We're looking to have the same kind of arrangement with the Yellowknives. We have an offer on the table in terms of a small controlled hunting zone working with our own biologists and elders based on traditional knowledge as well as the science. We're waiting for specific feedback to that issue. As well, we have on another track the discussions that I've just touched on with the Dene Nation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations on your success in the Tlicho region. I'm talking about the Yellowknives Dene and

their issue here. I'd like to ask the Minister again if he would commit all his time and effort to his officials to sit down with the Yellowknives Dene and the Dene Nation involved here, sit down, go somewhere, hammer out a deal, hope that by this week we can have a deal. Listen to both sides, come out with an issue. This is a critical issue here. I ask the Minister if he can commit the time and effort and resources to hammer out a deal with the Yellowknives Dene.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: One of the issues that the Member talks about meeting with the Yellowknives, which we're prepared to do. At the same time we have the Dene Nation telling us that they're acting on behalf of the Yellowknives. There's some confusion that has to be cleared up in terms of who we are dealing with and has the decision-making authority to resolve this issue. We have our staff who have been, and continue to be, willing to sit down any time of the day or night to try to sort this out.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The time for question period has expired. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 7 on the Order Paper.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: Return to item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Oral Questions (Reversion)

QUESTION 378-16(4): CONTRACT AWARDED TO BDK APPLIED MANAGEMENT SERVICES

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to continue asking questions about sole-source contracts that the government has recently entered into. I guess the first question that I probably should ask the Premier about is I'm wondering if the contract to BDK Consulting and Communications for work provided for the cultural component of our participation at Vancouver 2010, was that contract sole sourced and how much was it for?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That portion of the work was an RFP.

MR. RAMSAY: How much was that for?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The contract I believe was issued under ECE and I'll have to get that detail to him.

MR. RAMSAY: I'd like to ask the Premier who was on the review team reviewing those RFPs.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I believe it was representatives of the Department of ITI as well as ECE. But we can get that information as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 379-16(4):
NURSE VISITS TO TSIIGHTCHIC

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding the written request that I asked for information on the cost of physicians and registered nurse visits to Tsiighehtchic. I noted in the response, the Minister stated that there were eight physician visits to Tsiighehtchic between 2008 and September 2009. She also made reference to nurses-in-charge have made 20 visits to Tsiighehtchic between October. All together, between the two positions, it's 28 days they visited Tsiighehtchic, which is less than a month.

I have been asking this Minister for going on two and a half years to find a nurse for Tsiighehtchic. Today we're no closer than we were two and a half years ago. I ask the Minister, when are you going to find a nurse for Tsiighehtchic in this decade, before you leave office, before we leave this House? Can you get an answer to me so that the people in Tsiighehtchic know that we are going to deal with this issue and not continue to slide it on to the next group? I'd like to ask the Minister when the people in Tsiighehtchic will have a full-time nurse in their community.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect, the information that the Member just read should be read together with other information that we have provided. The information on nurses-in-charge, we know that we've had at least 36 weeks of nursing coverage in Tsiighehtchic for a community of 170 people. The Member knows that I am committed to enhancing nursing services in Tsiighehtchic and all the small communities. That is the work we are doing with Foundation for Change. It is wrong when we tell the community members that they don't have nursing services. We have nursing services in Tsiighehtchic. I understand that there is not a nurse living and sleeping in Tsiighehtchic all year round, but for a community of 170 people we have 36-week coverage by a nurse. It works out to about 10 hours a year for doctor service. So we are doing the best we can to provide services in Tsiighehtchic.

MR. KRUTKO: The community of Tsiighehtchic want a full-time nurse in that community, just like any other community of similar size in the Northwest Territories. That's all we're asking for. To continue to stand here and say, well, we're providing services, but they might come in once a month or twice a month is not service. For me that's a referral system that this government is turning into. I'd like to ask the Minister what efforts are being made to get a full-time nurse in Tsiighehtchic.

HON. SANDY LEE: Every effort is being made to make sure that we provide a good health care coverage to everyone in the Territories. The community of Tsiighehtchic is getting better service than any other community that size in the Northwest Territories.

MR. KRUTKO: Well, the Minister hit it right on the head; that is the problem with your service system. The service system you have for small communities is a referral system; it's not a service system. I'd like to ask the Minister, since you're the one that raised it, what are you doing to provide service to all the communities of the Northwest Territories so we have services that are real services, not referral services where you find somebody to come in and check you out, they find out your sick and medevac you out?

I'd like to ask the Minister if you are going to do anything to improve the services in all the small communities in the Northwest Territories so we can really actually see a quality of health care for all our small communities in the Northwest Territories that really meet the needs of those people and provide them adequate health care.

HON. SANDY LEE: I tabled in the House about three weeks ago satisfaction surveys from residents all over the Territories about the services they're receiving in health centres and hospitals. Over 80 percent of people say they are satisfied with the services they have. It is wrong... I understand the Member would like to have a resident nurse in Tsiighehtchic. A lot of our services, even in bigger communities, are by referral services. We're not able to have resident doctors, resident nurses, resident radiologists, resident everything in every community. We do spend \$326 million for 40,000 people scattered in 33 communities. Our services are managed by eight boards and we fund boards in block funding and they are doing everything they can to provide as much service as possible to every community. If you compare any data, Tsiighehtchic gets really good service for the people that need. We will continue to work to improve that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask a direct question to the Minister. I'd like to ask the Minister if you even have the capacity to do this job or should we find someone else to do it.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, I would ask you to direct your questions to the chair. Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has been here for 14 years, and he asked exactly the same question, and he understands the challenges we face and the challenges I face as the Minister of Health. This government is more daunting than we've ever had before. We have demographics that are changing; needs are changing. We have increased our budget by a large percentage, but our boards are struggling to provide all the services that they need. All indicators are showing that we, by far, are doing better than any other place for this kind of remoteness and this kind of size and the challenges we are facing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 380-16(4):
CONSULTATION ON CARIBOU
MANAGEMENT MEASURES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago I called upon the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources to organize a small and limited caribou summit about organizing the chiefs, the right type of personnel, and I'm not talking about a flood of bureaucrats, I'm talking about the people. I feel this caribou issue is more about politics than legal questions. I'm just curious. Would the Minister explain to me: is this a caribou summit? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, just to reaffirm that this issue is first and foremost about the caribou and protecting the caribou to give them some help in their time of need to regenerate and, hopefully, have their numbers grow as we come through with a larger harvest management plan. I'm not quite sure what the Member is talking about in terms of is this a summit. We're working to resolve the immediate short-term issue related to the no-hunting zone and working with the Yellowknives to access enough animals for their communities, similar to the arrangement we have with the Tlicho. At the same time, we are working with the Wekeezhii process, which will bring together a whole host of interveners, as well as the aboriginal governments, will flow over into the Akaitcho and the Northwest Territories Metis. As well, in addition to that, we are working with the co-management boards and their executive directors, at present, and chairs to look at pulling them together in the not-too-distant future to look at the very many overlap issues that are before us with all

the herds that we currently manage in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I called several weeks ago that we organize in such a way that we deal with the politics of this type of issue and both the outcry and the fall-out that could happen. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm just trying to get clarity on what type of meeting the Minister is having. Like, what type of format, what are the objectives of this meeting, and what is the goal of this particular meeting? Unlike what I had suggested, a caribou summit to discuss the issue to work together. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The summit we had in Inuvik about three years ago now was about a half a million dollars, and it brought people in for the first time from around the North to discuss caribou. Things have progressed considerably since then in terms of the planning, what's happening to the caribou herds, the need to work very specifically on a herd-by-herd basis with all the boards to develop harvest management plans. I've just laid out for the Member basically three tracks that we're dealing with with the short term, the mid-term and then the longer term to sort out the harvest management plan for the Bathurst herd. Those processes are all currently underway. Thank you

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, every time I mention "summit" the Minister seems to think that I'm talking about planes and planes and trains and buses of people. Mr. Speaker, I continually point to the fact that I'm asking about a small group of people. I often wonder why it's so difficult on the other side of the House to say that was a good idea, maybe we should do that. So how much different is my call to rally a few people, the affected chiefs only? Again, keep the bureaucracy at home. How much different is this call for a small meeting than the one being described by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources? And I'm prepared to accept his apology if it's the same thing.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Member says tomato, I say tomato. We're on it, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for recognizing that we're on it. If he would like me to say tomato instead of tomato, I'd be happy to say that, but the point is, we're going to the same place and the Member's suggestion is an excellent one: supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.

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

QUESTION 381-16(4):
CONSULTATION ON SUPPLEMENTARY
HEALTH BENEFITS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask a few more questions of the Minister of Health

and Social Services with regard to her and the department's plans for Supplementary Health Benefit Program changes. The information that's on the Health website talks about town hall meetings being scheduled and a discussion paper that is going to be released. I'm not sure if it's been released or not yet; I haven't had enough time since I've been back. With regard to the town hall meetings, there are five or six scheduled, I think. I would like to ask the Minister what format is planned for these meetings and how will the input of those attending these meetings be sought. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The meeting being planned is a town hall meeting so that any interested parties can attend. The location and time will be advertised well in advance. I believe it's on the website and, if not already, will be advertised in the paper and other medium, so that as many people can come and they can have the information in front of us and give us their feedback based on the facts that we have on things like whether there should be some sharing of costs.

We should remember, everybody should know that we're not talking about the range of benefits that are available. Those are going to stay the same. We're not talking about changing any benefits. The main question is who should access that benefit and whether there should be any criteria or eligibility list. So those are the kinds of questions that people will be asked to put their input in. As well, we'll be looking at asking people to respond on-line for those who cannot attend because they're not in town or the time is not appropriate. So we are interested in hearing from as many people out there as possible as to how we should make changes to the Extended Health Benefits Program.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I really didn't get a sense, from her answer, what the format of the meeting is going to be. She's talking about information being in front of people. I question how it's going to get there. There is an awful lot of data that has been gathered, and I spoke earlier, I commend the department for doing that data, doing that research, but it sounds to me as though the department is putting the data out there and asking people to interpret it, and I'm not so sure that that's an easy thing to do. Are they asking people to make their own conclusions? So I'd like to ask the Minister again, the format of these town hall meetings, how is the information going to get to the people who are there, and does she think it's realistic that people can draw their conclusions from the data? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: I'm not sure if I understand the question. I'd like to give our public a lot more credit

than what the Member is suggesting. I think if you see the material on the website, it's quite plainly written. There will be a facilitator at the meeting that will present the facts. We're not going to tell people to interpret. We will present the facts and then engage in a dialogue, very much like what we did with the standing committee and very much like what we did, I believe, with the public working group. You lay out the facts and then ask the people for their input. The facts are important, because people need something to base their input processing rather than asking just open-ended questions. But really, we are interested in hearing from the people and giving them the facts for them to discuss. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I have to thank the Minister for that information. The first time around, I didn't hear anything about a facilitator, and that changes hugely my vision of what's going to happen in these stakeholder meetings. That a facilitator will present the information will have a much different impact on the people that are there, and I think it will allow them to provide the kind of input that Members and, I think, the public are looking for.

The other thing that's noted, in terms of consultation, is a discussion paper. I'd like to ask the Minister how the department intends to generate input through this discussion paper. Are there questions involved or is it simply open-ended? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: The input will come from the feedback that we would receive in the town hall meetings. As well, we will be posting questionnaires on the website and we would advertise that so people will be able to go in there. There are some checkbox kind of questions, but there are also spaces where people can write their opinions on the questions they ask. So it will be designed in a way that will allow people to give their feedback on the information they see and what other suggestions they might have. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 382-16(4):
CONSULTATION ON CARIBOU
MANAGEMENT MEASURES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of ENR. Mr. Speaker, as I said in the House yesterday, I just returned from Deline where they had a traditional hand game tournament. In the tournament, they had two teams on both sides. They also had a shooter that shoots for the team in terms of guessing where the stick is in the player's hand. I want to ask the Minister regarding naming a shooter or an official of ENR. The chief of the Yellowknives Dene says he is the man who is going to talk, not the Dene Nation president. It's the chief himself. So I want to ask the

Minister who is the Minister who will sit down with the chief to hammer out this deal?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we sort out who, in fact, we're going to be dealing directly with the authorities, be it the chief or the Dene Nation. We will deal with this and we will continue to deal with it through the two most senior officials in the department, both the deputy minister as well as the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Once this has been confirmed, as I said I just had a discussion with the chief of the Yellowknives and he is the man. He is the head of his people here and, like I said, they have different players on both sides. Sometimes they cross boundaries and that's part of the whole issue here with the meetings. The Minister said the deputy minister and the assistant deputy minister on the GNWT's side. If that can be confirmed today, can they have negotiations or have the meetings hopefully between now and Friday. Would that happen?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Those realities are currently in place. The contact has been made. We're waiting for the clarification. The deputy minister, of course, has been on top of this along with his very able assistant deputy minister to stand ready to try to resolve this. We'll see what happens by the end of the week, but we hope we'll be able to move this process forward quickly. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I look forward to some good announcements hopefully in the next couple of days. I want to ask the Minister in terms of the meat that was seized from the hunters by the ENR officers in terms of how that was distributed to the Yellowknives Dene or to the public.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. You are kind of going in to a different line of questioning here, but I'll allow the Minister to answer. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The meat was distributed according to the very clear detailed order by the justice of the peace. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 383-16(4):
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT
COMPLIANCE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Finance. I want to start with a couple of questions. The Financial Administration Manual accounting

control section notes that failure to comply with policies and directives of the Financial Administration Manual may result in actions under part 10 of the Financial Administration Act. I'd like to ask the Minister what is the process for determining whether policies and directives have been complied with or not. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The act lays out processes for various departments. Ministers, deputies and all their staff have that information available. There are checks and balances through the system, approval processes required. As well, there are audits done on a regular basis. We table all the reports in the House. When there are concerns raised, they are backtracked to wherever they originated and we make efforts to remedy those situations. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: My second question is what are the steps needed to start such a process in action? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: This is a daily practice that managers deal with throughout their various mandates and authorities. If circumstances come to light, if they are considered to be illegal or criminal, there's a process. If there are steps that haven't been followed or steps that have been missed, there is a different process that comes into play. We table all the contract documents on a regular basis. If there is a concern in this House that they want to assert that there's flagrant wrongdoing, that's a whole different matter than the normal practice than we have here of making sure that we are accountable in a transparent way to the public through all the documents that we table and the processes that we have through the FAA. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: The Minister makes some kind of subtle distinction there and I guess I need to ask more what is meant by that. I asked what the process is for determining whether something has been complied with or not, whether a process has been complied with and what the steps are needed to initiate that process. Apparently there are two different processes that the Minister is talking about and I require more information on distinguishing between those two. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: When a contract is let, there is a process that is initiated from the time depending on what kind of a contract it is, if it's an FRP, if it's a tender, if it's a different kind of contract, there's a process. There are checks and balance all along the way within the various departments to make sure this is being done by the numbers. The Members stand up in the House and raise issues about specific contracts with veiled and not thinly veiled allegations that there is some type of wrongdoing. We've got all the

documents here. We've laid it all out. Issues in the Legislature are different from the normal course of action that happens on a daily basis in government is the distinction that I was making. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last point of confusion here is what documents have been laid out. I haven't seen any documents on this other than what I've researched myself. I am very interested in the documents that the Minister is talking about. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We bring to the House public accounts, we bring to the House contract documents over \$5,000. This is one of the documents that's tabled. It's on the Internet. If the Member wishes specific information that he doesn't have access to, I'd be happy to assist to make sure that he's given all the information that he thinks or would like to have access to. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 384-16(4):
CONTAMINATED SITES WITHIN
MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources questions in the area of environmental protection. In Fort Resolution the community feels there are enough sites to warrant some sort of contaminated soil from within the community. Does the Minister have data on all the sites that are contaminated within the municipal boundaries in the Northwest Territories communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a list which I'd be happy to share with the Member. I believe there are six sites in Fort Resolution all assessed as low risk and there's another seven in Lutselk'e all assessed, as well, as low risk.

MR. BEAULIEU: Does the Minister have a schedule to clean up all of the sites that were identified as contaminated sites in the community even if they are low risk? I think the community wants them cleaned up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We have an extensive list, both between ourselves and the federal government, which is responsible for Crown land mainly outside of municipal and community boundaries. There are many hundreds of sites. The ones in communities we're looking at. We work and we are intending to work and are going to continue

to work our way down the list from the high priority areas to those that have been assessed as lower priority. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Do the amount of sites currently identified as contaminated still warrant the contaminated soils farm in Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, what I would suggest to the Member is that I will share the list with him and he can give us his advice. He is far more familiar with the sites than I would be. Then we could, if it's the wish of the Member, we could set up a meeting with the department officials to get an update for both of his communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell me if there's a good possibility that work could be done this summer, the summer of 2010? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The one that I can tell the Member about with some certainty based on questions in the House is the Stark Lake site. The ones within the community, once again, I would have to commit to the Member to sit down with him, share the list and get an update for the Member from the department about the status of all the sites. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 24-16(4):
PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO FUNDING

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

1. How have pupil-teacher ratios been impacted at a territorial, regional and community level since the legislative changes were initiated in 2000?
2. What impact has the decline in enrolment had on funding/services/teacher numbers?
3. What evidence is there of a link between pupil-teacher ratio and student achievement in the Sahtu region and NWT?
4. What accountability mechanisms are in place to guide, monitor and report on the implementation of pupil-teacher ratio funding?
5. What accountability mechanisms are in place to guide, monitor and report on the implementation of inclusive schooling funding?

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

WRITTEN QUESTION 25-16(4):
DETAILS ON CONTRACTS FOR NATIONAL
ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SUMMIT II

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Executive.

With regards to food catering for National Aboriginal Women's Summit II, specifically SC 411268 and SC 411279 for the amount of \$53,668.54 and \$16,647.50:

1. Did conference participants have to pay a conference fee that would cover some of the costs of the conference?
2. Did any participants receive from their employers a per diem for the time they were in Yellowknife?

WRITTEN QUESTION 26-16(4):
RATIONALE FOR CONTRACT TO FACILITATE
BASIC ACCOUNTING COURSE

My questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Regarding SC 411794 Facilitate Basic Accounting Course:

What was the rationale for sole sourcing this contract?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 9, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 18-16(4):
DETAILS ON SOLE-SOURCE CONTRACTS

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a return to a written question asked by Mr. Ramsay on February 4, 2010, regarding details on sole-source contracts.

Mr. Ramsay asked that I provide the "purpose of" contracts PM 007910, PM 07671, and PM 06818; the reasons for sole sourcing these contracts; and the value received as a result of the contracts.

Contract PM 007910 was with the Tait Communications and it provided research, development and placement of advertising, as well as hosting focus group sessions held in three NWT communities to get a baseline understanding of how residents perceived the GNWT and the GNWT's communication efforts and how those efforts could be improved. The final element of the contract was the drafting, design and printing of the Northerners Working Together document, which was distributed to all NWT households in October 2009. The contract required an unusual degree on

integrated communication services beyond graphic design services and Tait Communications is the only NWT communications firm that focuses exclusively on integrated communications planning services and advice as its primary business. The contract was for \$213,000 which included \$115,275 in print advertising costs.

Contract PM 07671 was a \$259,600 contract issued to Terriplan Consultants Ltd. for research, facilitation and project management services in support of the development of a Land Use Framework for the Northwest Territories. The issues involved are complex and require extensive background and departmental consultation and the work had to be complementary to the work on the Water Strategy being coordinated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The need to align the work on the Land Use Framework with the work on the Water Strategy led to a sole-source contract awarded to the same contractor that had been awarded a Water Strategy contract through a competitive bidding process.

Contract PM 06818 was a \$15,000 contract awarded to BDK Services for the provision of strategic communications advice and preparation of written materials to the Minister of Finance. The contract covered a 12-month period in which the contractor provided the Minister with communication advice, feedback on various issues, recommendations on policy options and observations on trends and events. The contract was awarded in accordance with the Government Contract Regulations which provide that a contract authority may enter into a contract without issuing a tender or RFP if the contract is for consulting service that will not exceed \$25,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 82-16(4):
NWT BIOMASS ENERGY STRATEGY

TABLED DOCUMENT 83-16(4):
BEVERAGE CONTAINER PROGRAM ANNUAL
REPORT 2008-2009

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled NWT Biomass Energy Strategy and Beverage Container Program, Annual Report, 2008-2009.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

TABLED DOCUMENT 84-16(4):
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES)
NO.1, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Supplementary Appropriation (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 1, 2010-2011. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act; Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act; Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011; Tabled Document 78-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Operations Expenditures) No. 3, 2009-2010; Tabled Document 80-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 4, 2009-2010; Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy; Committee Report 5-16(4), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Human Rights Commission Annual Report, with Mr. Bromley in the chair. By the authority given me as Speaker by Motion 12-16(4), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, and in accordance with our rules, I hereby appoint the Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Dave Ramsay, to act as Committee of the Whole chair.

**Consideration in Committee of the Whole
of Bills and Other Matters**

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order and ask what is the wish of committee. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your committee would like to entertain Supplementary Appropriation (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 4, 2009-2010, followed by the Departments of Justice and Human Resources, in that order. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. We shall proceed after a short break. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. Break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Committee, we've agreed to start with Tabled Document 80-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 4, 2009-2010. I would like to start by asking the Minister if he would like to start by providing us with some opening remarks.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I am here to present Supplementary Appropriation No. 4, 2009-2010 (Infrastructure Expenditures). This document outlines an increase of \$16.205 million for operations expenditures and \$2.669 million for capital investment expenditures in the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The total supplementary request is \$18.874 million.

The major items in this supplementary request include:

1. \$15 million for the Department of Transportation to advance contribution funding to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation for the construction and other costs associated with the Deh Cho Bridge Project.
2. \$1.8 million for the Department of Transportation to complete the project description report on the portion of the Mackenzie Highway from Wrigley to the Dempster Highway. The costs incurred in 2009-10 will be fully offset from a contribution by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.
3. \$904,000 for the Department of Health and Social Services to complete the Laboratory Information System.
4. \$315,000 for the Department of Public Works and Services to complete a planning study on the portfolio mix of GNWT owned versus leased office space in Yellowknife.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Would you like to bring witnesses into the House?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. If I could ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses in, if committee agrees.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Proceed.

Welcome. I would like to ask the Minister to introduce his witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of Finance; Russ Neudorf, deputy

minister of Transportation; and, Sandy Kalgutkar, deputy secretary to the Financial Management Board. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. We're open for general comments. Mr Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a question of clarification. I was wondering why the \$16.205 million is for operations expenditures.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a contribution, which is why it's listed that way.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Beaulieu, further general comments? No? Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would assume that's a contribution to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and that who knows what's going to happen. I guess every day that goes by is a surprise waiting to happen. This \$15 million, obviously there's good reason for us to be looking at supporting this \$15 million. I believe firmly that if the Minister wants my support for this \$15 million, I think the government's got to come clean on the current disposition financially of that project. What claims are put against the project and by whom? How much money has been spent to date? What are the outstanding legal issues? What are the costs? I haven't seen anything to that effect that would indicate that we have one iota of a clue about where we're at with this project. That's a sad state of affairs for a government for all intents and purposes to be building a \$182 million bridge across the Mackenzie River to not know exactly where we're at on a day-to-day basis. I'd like to see the government pull that detail together.

Also, the issue with public confidence in the government's handling of this project, and I've asked the Minister of Transportation on two different occasions last week about who exactly the project management team is. I want every assurance, and let me be clear about this, I want every assurance that this money and this project is going to be managed effectively and well. To date it hasn't been. I believe that before I approve the \$15 million that the government's asking for for this project, I want to know who exactly is in charge of the project, what exactly their credentials are and their experience, have they worked on projects of this magnitude before, this size, this nature, a bridge project. We need to know those things and the public needs to have confidence that the government is handling this mess the best way that it can. Those are some things that I think are fundamental for me supporting the \$15 million. Obviously those are some pretty fundamental questions and those are questions the public has.

Members of this House have a right to know, a right to get that level of detailed information, considering the gravity of the situation.

The gravity of the situation is that this project has the ability to cripple the government's financial wherewithal in the near term. Absolutely. Make no mistake about it. It does. We had better be managing the project in a way that minimizes our liability and exposure and financial risk. Are we doing that? I can't say with any certainty that we are, because I personally don't know.

I hear information from the various Ministers when they need to come and tell us something. That's the extent of what I hear. I mean, I'm hearing more about this project on the street, from e-mails I'm getting from other companies that want to bid on the work, from former government employees. You name it; people are chiming in on this project and its status. People aren't very happy about the current disposition of this project.

I think again, I believe the Finance Minister and the Minister of Transportation and the Government of the Northwest Territories should lay everything on the table for everybody to see where exactly we are on this project. I have heard through good sources that the \$15 million is just the start of other money that the Government of the Northwest Territories is going to have to come up with to put towards this project. I hope that is just a bad rumour, but, again, reputable sources close to the project. Is this just the beginning? It's a scary proposition if we start dumping more and more millions of dollars into this project without first taking stock of where exactly we're at.

Like I said, I'm of the belief that we should have gone to tender on the second portion of this project. Why we didn't go to tender, I guess I'll never fully understand the logic that the government's using on that. I think the lenders themselves would obviously look at the Government of the Northwest Territories going to tender as good faith on our part in trying to get the best price we can for the remainder of that work on that project. Did we do that? No. Did we learn any lessons off the fiasco with ATCON and the sole-source contract to ATCON? Obviously not. We didn't learn too much if we're just negotiating with one company.

I can't underestimate my disbelief that the government has resigned themselves to the fact that the best way to proceed is just to work with one company and we'll get the best price we can from one company. That doesn't make any sense. Not one iota of sense. Not to industry experts I've talked to in western Canada that bid on projects of this nature. They say it's ridiculous. It's unprecedented. I'm left to believe them. I'm left to believe them that this is what we're left with.

Again, I think there's going to be a lot of questions that Members have before we approve this \$15

million and I think the government has to be able to answer these questions before we approve the \$15 million.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Next on my list I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the appropriations that are before us, there is the \$15 million for advance contribution to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. I had remained largely in support of the Deh Cho Bridge Project and largely quiet on the issue. However, the feedback I'm getting from my constituency is that their initial gut reaction is they are fed up that they want the taxpaying public to bail out this project. My members were sceptical of the \$165 million price tag. Like my colleagues in the House, they knew that over-expenditures were coming. As well, they're not convinced that a \$15 million request in this supplemental is the end price tag for this project which is now at \$180 million to \$200 million.

They do want to know a cradle to grave; I wouldn't say grave, but a timeline and expenditure line of the project to date. It's an opportunity for me to do it here with the Minister that's before us to see if we can get that commitment. The constituency is not interested in a lengthy forensic audit which can be costly and/or one of our tools as legislators is to seek full public inquiry. That's not a route that they want to go to either.

However, now that we are in control, we should have the capability to provide an examination of how we got here to date. The feeling, of course, is that any over-expenditures will be draining resources away from other regions, like my constituency of Nahendeh.

I believe that this Minister's office that's before us or the Minister of Transportation do have the capacity and capability of providing at least an explanation of how we got here to date. Yes, in our briefings we're told certainly there are circumstances beyond our control, but I think we do owe it to our public to provide that the best way we can. I'll certainly speak more on this topic as we deliberate this request that's before us. With that, thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Next on my list I have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, do not have 100 percent confidence that this could be the last of the money. I hope it is. I have never supported the bridge, but it's proceeding, and I have never said so publicly either. I know that there is no impact upon, or very little impact, unless this goes into deeper cost than what we're looking at here, to the people of Fort Resolution. It does impact the people of Lutselk'e by way of freight costs if the cost of freight, the totals coming across

hauling freight and groceries which are ultimately flown into Lutselk'e. I feel that we're in this now as a government for the long haul. I don't think that it would be viable to stop the construction of the bridge.

What I would like to see, I think that you're physically looking at the project. It's kind of scary to think that we have put up four piers and we're here asking for money to support a budget that was already in excess of the original budget plan. I'm not sure, I mean, I'm sure it's some sort of cash flow issue.

Therefore, I would like to, of course, see some sort of financial progress report and run that with a project status report. Originally my assumption is that there was some sort of project schedule that runs percentage of completion alongside the cash outlay. What I'd like to see is that exact thing. A financial progress report running alongside a project status report will give us an indication of exactly where we went off the rails, I suppose. Then also it could give us the comfort that if we're headed along and we're progressing and both the financial expenditures are not outrunning the actual construction. By comparing the financial expenditures with the percentage of completion, it will at least give me some comfort that there's hope that we will get there.

Just from physically looking at it while crossing the river at Fort Providence, you don't really get a feeling that they're halfway completed. Yet we're asking for a little bit of money here that's 9 percent of what the budget is. To me, I'm having difficulty matching the two to try to understand that the project is actually only off schedule by 9 percent, we'll say. That maybe the project is off schedule by more than that. If the project is off schedule by more than that, I think it's going to give the House here a heads up as to exactly where the project is headed and if the project status report comes off, you know, it's not running parallel to financial expenditures, it would be easy for us to identify, it would be easy for the government to look at that report and do a quick check as to what would be needed to get the status back, get the project back on, I guess, I'm not quite sure what the term would be, but I guess getting it back on the tracks to where the expenditures are not outrunning the percentage of completion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. General comments. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, this is not happy news for any of us to have to ante up with \$15 million that is GNWT money that could be spent on something else. I was never a supporter of the bridge. I just didn't think we needed it. Other people thought it was a really high priority and thought it was really important to push it forward regardless of the cost

going up, regardless of the cost benefit analysis not being very favourable. There were people who thought that it was important to push this ahead.

Back in the 14th Assembly, when we passed the Deh Cho Bridge legislation, I mean, everything seemed all kind of motherhood and sweet and, you know, I mean, who could say that we wouldn't want bridge infrastructure, who could say that we wouldn't want to have a bridge over the Mackenzie River at Fort Providence? I mean, that's the problem, sometimes these things seem like a really good idea at the start, but when it gets closer to the time when we actually have to get involved in the working out of everything, it sometimes can take a turn.

The other thing that was really hard to say no to was the fact that it was self-financing. So it seemed kind of innocuous in terms of our government's exposure at the time. We were told that the tolls would pay for the bridge. It made a lot of sense, actually, but I still didn't think that it was... I didn't have any great fears in the beginning about the kind of stuff we're facing right now, but as time went on the thing got really changed a lot.

So here we are today. We're looking at voting GNWT money into this. I would like the people who are owed money and who have done work in good faith on the bridge, I would like them to get paid. In that sense, I think that this goes some ways toward our government doing the honourable thing in terms of respecting those people who have done work and who would be financially very negatively impacted by not getting paid for the work that they've done.

I don't know about the going to tender part. It seems that that would be a good thing if it could save something like \$15 million and we weren't having to come to the table with this. However, I'm not sure what all is involved in that and what kind of documents would have to be in order in order to do that.

Mr. Chairman, well, we could spend a whole lot of time here talking about what we could have, should have, would have, but I'm not really sure that that's a worthwhile exercise at this juncture either.

The public/private partnership of this aspect has made it a very different type of capital project and creature than what we are used to dealing with as public governments managing capital infrastructure budgets and capital projects. This has made it a very, very different process. It's not one we're familiar with and it has caused some concern. I'm still hopeful that someday I hope that my grandchildren will be driving over that bridge going I'm really glad they built this back in 2010 when the cost was only \$200 million instead of today when it would have been \$400 million. I don't know. I mean, everybody says why didn't we build it 30 years ago when we were talking about it and it only would

have been \$15 million. So I don't know what inflation is going to do. I don't know what's going to happen. Hopefully somebody will look back on us and say this was a good idea, because it doesn't feel like it right now.

I think it is an opportune time if the government is going to become more involved to examine this, even if it's in the sense of, kind of a post-mortem of where we've been so far, I think it would be really good to examine this and see how we would have done things differently if we could have. But I think we do need to get on with finishing this project. My time is up already?

That's okay, Mr. Chairman. That's all I had to say for now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I think the chair probably should take responsibility for that. I'm willing to grant you a couple more minutes if you want them.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That's all I have to say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Next I have on my list Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Oh, look, I have 10 minutes.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to provide a couple of comments on this supp. In general, I've mentioned this before, I am always amazed at the amount of money that Finance comes back for after we pass an initial budget and asks for more money, and the amount of money that is asked for kind of blows me away. In looking at the items that are in this particular supp, there certainly are some which I can agree with. I think the \$1.8 million, no, sorry, it's one point whatever, but the money that's required for the Mackenzie Valley Highway project description report, that's \$1.2 million, I think. To me, that's an expense which we could not foresee, and I see that as an understandable supplementary appropriation expense.

Certainly the \$15 million for the bridge, that was unforeseen. I provided my comments last week in a statement and I am, unfortunately, not surprised that we are over budget. I do think, though, that we have to approve this amount of money. It's kind of one of those things where you have to hold your nose and jump in.

There are a couple of transfers of money back and forth between departments and from one year to the next, and I don't have a problem with those. The funding that's going to the City of Yellowknife to finish the bypass road; fairly obviously, I support that. It's not a total cost to this government and it will allow the road to get completed. So I think our cost in that is probably, I think it's \$300,000 or \$600,000, so it's well worth the expense, I think, and that with the city covering the remainder.

The lab information system that the Department of Health and Social Services is looking for, I'm not absolutely sure that this is an expense that couldn't have waited until the next year. I realize that this is an old system and it needs to be replaced, but it kind of goes to my difficulty with the lack of planning that seems to happen sometimes in terms of budgets in general and, you know, something comes along and it's... All of a sudden, well, we need the money so let's ask for a supplementary appropriation and get the money now instead of either planning better, earlier, or waiting and asking for the money when the regular budget comes through.

There is some transfer of money between departments for Tuk Airport. I absolutely support that. Then there are some transfers back and forth for infrastructure, federal infrastructure, stimulus funding money, and I don't have a problem with those.

So, in general, I can accept most of what's in here, but I do have problems with particularly the lab info system, which I'm not sure is of an emergent nature. That's probably the only one that I have a really large problem with. So other than that, Mr. Chair, I have no further comments at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Next on my list is Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, this particular bridge has to be built. The reasons not to build it just don't make sense anymore, especially when you have pillars in the Mackenzie River, you have projects, you have about eight pillars there to finish it off.

Mr. Chair, the issue that I have is with the management of the project. With the additional \$15 million to this project you really question the control and the management team and the previous arrangements in regard to how this happened in that this is so high and we really were asleep at the wheel on this one in terms of the money that's coming forward. Now, I'm going to ask that in the future we have some good people on it that will take care of the project.

Mr. Chairman, the issue I have that rubs against my support somewhat is the issue of our request in terms of seeking a bridge in the Sahtu, the Bear River Bridge. There was cost escalation and there were all kinds of things that we just couldn't put a bridge on the Bear River. When we have a bridge here that's in a huge cost overrun, I don't know quite all the insights to it, but we're having a request coming like that to support, but they couldn't get support in the Sahtu for the Bear River Bridge. It doesn't sound very good when you're out in the Sahtu region for our bridge.

However, I know that this bridge needs to be built, should be built and maybe there should be a different name for the bridge here: the Could Have, Should Have, Would Have Bridge, you know? Deh Cho in our language means big spirit or in English it means big river; but the true meaning of Deh Cho means big spirit, if you know our language.

As I said before, Mr. Chair, I have talked to several elders and one or two here in the House, in Fort Providence and the elders stopped in the hallway and said you have to support us because we want to build a bridge. When an elder talks to you, you have to listen to what they're saying. So that's why I'm following his words in my support for this. Otherwise, it would be a different story I would be talking about.

Mr. Chair, the bridge here is a significant infrastructure piece in the Northwest Territories, but probably on a larger scale the federal government is going to say, well, it's probably a \$200 million bridge and yet you guys want to build a \$1.8 billion road and you can't even get a bridge right and in place. So it has a lot of things in terms of significant play at a larger level.

We have to give support to the Minister to do this and get it done. Like Mrs. Groenewegen, the MLA for Hay River, said, hopefully when we are resting and retiring, that our grandchildren can go across the bridge and say thank God this bridge was built. Only history will tell.

There's more to write about this bridge and this is only probably the second volume. There are a lot of hard lessons to be learned and I hope the government employees are taking these lessons how not to how to. It's very important, Mr. Chair. The Members brought up some really good points here. Don't take them lightly. They brought up some very good points here of how to do business in terms of this bridge. So in saying that, hopefully we can also get some attention in terms of the Bear River Bridge one day.

I wanted to also say that this piece of infrastructure is going to be finalized. It's the YK bypass road here in the Kam Lake area from the airport. That's really important infrastructure because of the safety issues, very important for the people in this region, in this city. I'm glad that is going to be done.

Mr. Chair, a few more comments I have is the importance of the federal infrastructure stimulus funding and hopefully some of our communities that require attention on dust control, paving, that we have the flexibility of this government to bring paving to our communities, allocating other paving areas. I do support communities that do get this, because their people also are going to benefit. So just as much as I want to see people in the Sahtu have some paving programs in their communities so we don't have to deal with dust every summer. In six seasons now since I've been here we've had

to deal with dust and every summer it comes up. So I hope that we have some creativity and some planning, some fortitude to say yes, people in our small communities can have a paving program.

You have lots of good people working for you, they surely must know how to work the system so we get pavement for our communities. So I ask that of the government. One of my elders who is no longer here, Chief Paul Wright, said that when you start supporting communities, hopefully you'll get that type of support back on some big initiatives before us here in terms of the approval of this supp and going forward.

I wanted to say overall that the Deh Cho Bridge does -- and I'll cross my fingers -- bring the benefits to people in my region, people up here. I'm not too sure; I'll have to see for myself, I guess. But certainly, I want to say for the record, Mr. Chair, I certainly support the initiatives of people in Fort Providence, the band, the Metis, I think they had good intentions when they committed to build this. There were some questions as to the impacts of the bridge on the Mackenzie River in terms of the fish, the wildlife and there are some people that live traditionally along that community. I'm not sure what kind of impacts you're going to have further down the river in Tulita and in the communities I represent along the Mackenzie River. Only time will tell, but I think there's some things that I'm not aware of yet that may come to light in the next couple of weeks or days because of confidentiality issues and sensitivity to the bridge. We're not privy to... It's not before us right now in this House.

So I hope that once this bridge is completed, that there will be a good book written about this project and I don't know who is going to be the author, but I say to our leaders here and on Cabinet, please pay close attention to the details of this project. Put good people on the project, let them know about funding and management and work with the people in Fort Providence.

So, Mr. Chair, that's all I have to say in terms of this supp. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Does committee agree that there are no further comments, general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. I'd like to call on the Minister to respond to the general comments.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Members for their comments and feedback. I would also like to offer to committee a package of information that we have pulled together to address some of the concerns for more detailed information. It contains the Dehcho Bridge Project and Construction Management Structure, the Dehcho Bridge Project

Estimates Summary, the Dehcho Bridge Project Costs to December 31, 2009, Dehcho Bridge Project Timeline and the Ruskin Team corporate capacity. Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence as well, I would ask that Minister Michael McLeod, Minister of Transportation, be allowed to respond to the general comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Minister Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks, committee, for allowing me to make a few comments on the Deh Cho Bridge.

First of all, I guess, in hindsight, if we knew what it was going to cost, we would have built it in 1958 when the project was priced at \$6.2 million and we wouldn't be at this juncture.

Mr. Chairman, first of all I have to point out that I don't think that anybody is happy with the news that the project has a cost overrun of \$15 million. We certainly didn't want to be in the position to come and request additional funding. It is unfortunate but it is a reality.

Mr. Chairman, it is also unfortunate that a project that we put a lot of faith in as a P3 type of project that had a self-generating portion to it is being viewed in such a negative light. I certainly agree that we have to build the public confidence that this \$15 million is going to cover, as some of the Members stated, all the past claims, the costs of the new design and the construction costs to complete the new bridge. We have made a lot of changes, we have changed the project management team and we certainly want to confirm to the Members that we have a new team that can manage the project effectively along with our people, our own Department of Transportation people and people who have the proper credentials. The ability to cripple the government is always a concern. It has been there from day one and we certainly recognize that. We want to be able to relay as much information, to give comfort to all the Members on the table as it was put.

We agree that projects of any given size and nature should, if the opportunity is there, go to a public tender. This time we did not have the time. We were informed that we were not going to be able to make an arrangement with the prior contractor at the end of December. We had a milestone to meet, two milestones to meet, first of all to have all design completed by the 29th of January and another one to complete that we still have to focus on and try to ensure that we have all the ingredients right is the March 1 deadline to have a contractor and a plan to go forward. Given the timeline and the costs that were of concern, we decided to go with this company and we recognize the contractors, the company that is calling, at least Mr. Ramsay certainly has been calling us and has been quite

agitated and has said some very negative things; however, the decision is to move forward.

We are providing a timeline for the project and we expect that over the life of this project, we will recover the \$15 million. We have a new contractor, new design, new project management. The project is currently 50 percent complete. We have eight piers that will be done within the next week or so. We are looking at this project to roughly cost us about \$8 million per year to finance and half of that will be raised through tolls. Two million dollars of that is money that we are already spending on operating the ferry at Fort Providence crossing and also for construction of the ice bridge. Granted there is a subsidy portion to this, it is \$2 million per year; \$2 million worth of subsidy on an annual basis.

We are seeking the supplementary funding through known channels. We are following the process agreed to in the Concession Agreement. The extra funding will get us to the finish line on the bridge project and we certainly have to look at other projects as we go forward, if there are opportunities to move forward with a portion that could be self-generating.

The Bear River Bridge has been raised, of course, by Mr. Yakeleya on a number of occasions. In that case, the situation is slightly different and the project didn't qualify for funding that we expected to realize. The Mackenzie Valley Road is another one that we have to look at with great seriousness and, Mr. Chairman, I say this because many people have pointed to the cost-benefit analysis that has been done by our government, our department, which pointed out that there will be a negative cost benefit to this project. But at the same time, we should recognize that we probably don't have any projects on our books or that have been done in the history of this government that has had a positive cost-benefit analysis.

The irony of this is that initially when the \$65 million project came forward for the Deh Cho Bridge, it was one of the few projects that had a positive cost-benefit analysis and if we are going to use that as a deciding factor, then we will not move forward on any other projects, including the Mackenzie Valley Highway, because we are not going to see a positive cost-benefit analysis on that project.

We have to face the fact that we are a government and we build projects, we build infrastructure that nobody else is going to build. In this case, we have a cost overrun of \$15 million that has a recovery mechanism, it has self-liquidating provisions in the agreement and we need to move forward to conclude this project, finish this Deh Cho Bridge. I think that everybody would agree that they would like to see this crossing completed.

Will we look back and see there are lessons to be learned? Absolutely. We want to be able to look at

the whole concept of P3. We want to be able to see where things went wrong, where things could have been done better, where the government maybe could make provisions to insert themselves a little easier or quicker. There are a number of things, but, Mr. Chairman, the bottom line is, and the reality is, there is a cost overrun.

The project was decided some time ago that it was a good one for economic reasons, for environmental reasons, for safety reasons and a lot of those reasons are still there. I think we have to continue moving forward on this project. I thank all the Members for their comments; I certainly appreciate it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Minister Miltenberger, anything further?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: No, Mr. Chairman, we are ready for detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. Committee agreed? On with detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): We will start on Page 5 of the 2009-2010 Supplementary Appropriation No. 4, (Infrastructure Expenditures). Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, community operations, not previously authorized, \$305,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did have a question here. I just have to find it. Sorry; I can't find my question, that's okay.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Committee, agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Excuse me, committee, we'll do that again. Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, community operations, not previously authorized, \$305,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, total department, \$305,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have a question on this page. The \$315,000 that is identified here to complete the planning study rebalancing the portfolio of owned versus leased office space. My question is not I support the project. I guess I'm just wondering why this needs to be in a supplementary appropriation, why this couldn't wait for the next infrastructure budget.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Just to confirm, we're on page 5, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, Town of Inuvik paving. So we're, yes, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$305,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 6. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I'd just like to start out by applying a little bit to what Mr. McLeod had to say. I think the project did make sense when it cost \$60 million and it would be self-financing. It made absolutely no sense when the government had to ante up the \$2 million extra a year indexed, I must say, for the next 35 years and commit every government for the next 35 years to that expenditure. I would beg to differ with the Minister on whether the project made any sense. Also given the fact that it was a substantial negative cost-benefit to this Territory by building the bridge at \$165 million. I can debate that until the cows come home with my colleagues across the floor, but that's my belief, is that it never made any sense at that price tag.

There's a reason. I know the previous government went to Ottawa looking for money for this project time and time again. Every time we increased the loan guarantee to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation the former Premier said the money from the feds is being worked on, it's going to come and the project won't go ahead unless we get the money from the feds. I can quote him from many meetings we were at saying exactly that. The money never materialized but the project did.

The reason the federal government didn't come to the table with any substantial infrastructure dollars on this project was twofold. One, they were planning this P3 initiative national campaign that's started up now that we could have subscribed to had we waited a couple of years. The other thing is, I don't believe the federal government ever believed that a bridge across the Mackenzie River to service 25,000 people was a good expenditure of public funds. And I'm just being straight up honest.

I know there are a lot of people here in Yellowknife that think we need a bridge and we want a bridge. I want a Ferrari too, but I can't afford a Ferrari so I'm not going to go out and buy one. That's the mentality of the last government, was we can't afford a bridge but you know what? We're going to go out and get this bridge anyway. No matter if we have to mortgage the future we're going to get that bridge. That's what we're doing, is we're mortgaging our future, future projects of this government for this bridge. Make no mistake about that. That's happening.

Now, I just have a few questions here. I'd like to thank the Minister for this package of information.

Perhaps he could get us a clean copy that's got names we can read on the project organizational chart and the Ruskin Management org chart. We can't read the names that are on there. I'd like to get a clean copy of that.

Also, I want to talk about the project management team that the government has offered up. Has anybody on our project management team -- and I'm talking about people that are going to be available on a day-to-day basis -- had any experience building a multi-million dollar bridge across a river?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I apologize for the poor copy. We'll send this electronically to all the Members so they can see it clearly. With your indulgence, I'll ask Mr. Neudorf to respond to that question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We certainly have assembled what we think is a good team with all of the qualification skills required in order to successfully conclude the project. It would start with the contractor that we have in place and including their major subcontractors, which are laid out. We have signed up Associated Engineering and they have a qualified team in place that have been supervising and do have the skills and abilities to undertake and manage a bridge of this magnitude. We're very confident in the skills that they have along with all the subcontractors that they're going to be bringing to the bridge.

We do have on our own project team. Certainly there are lots of people who are very familiar with building bridges and very familiar with building bridges in the North. We have never built a \$160 million bridge, but that is why we are bringing in the Associated Engineering team to help us manage the project and all the details. You'll see on the GNWT side that there are many people involved. We want to do whatever we can to ensure that going forward it's going to be successful and that we will be able to meet the commitments that we have laid out for you here.

Final comment is there is also a lot of other information available in terms of the project teams and their corporate experience and individual resumes. If committee would want that, then we will be pleased to provide that to committee as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the project coordination under the org chart for the Deh Cho Bridge Project and Construction Management Structure, maybe it's blacked out

somewhere, but under the project coordination I don't see Associated Engineering anywhere under the project coordination heading. Also, under that project coordination heading I'd like to ask the Minister or deputy minister who has experience building a 1.1 kilometre bridge across a river anywhere on this project coordinating team.

MR. NEUDORF: On the Project Construction Management Structure Chart that was sent out, the boxes in the middle that are orange and then down to purple and green and yellow at the bottom, that's all the Associated Engineering team. So project manager, project engineer, on-site supervisor, carrying all down, those are all Associated Engineering people and they do have experience building this type of bridge.

MR. RAMSAY: When you start looking at us approving this \$15 million -- and I don't believe that's the end of it, I think there will be more -- you go back in time and I don't think the project made any sense once the government had to ante up that extra \$2 million. That decision was made by the previous government. My constituents and the people that I represent and the reason I'm here are to hold people accountable and responsible for decisions they make or don't make. There have been alarm bells going off on this project since day one. There have been problems with the subtrades. There have been problems with the general contractor. There have been legal issues. There have been design issues. You name it; there's been the full gamut of issues on this project from day one. So how come somebody over there didn't step up to the plate and remove that project management team long before we got to this stage of the game? Who ultimately takes responsibility for that inaction?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Member pointed out, there's a history to this project with some considerable trials and tribulations. Our responsibility as a Cabinet and as a government and as a Legislature is to manage our way through this. I'm sitting here as the Minister of Finance. Mr. McLeod, as Mr. Ramsay pointed out, is the Minister of Transportation. And, of course, the Premier is here as well. Collectively as a Cabinet we're intent on managing our way through this. As Finance Minister I'm accountable in the role that I play and we are here to manage our way through this and we are accountable to make sure we get this done in the best way possible.

MR. RAMSAY: I appreciate the response from the Finance Minister. I know we need to move forward. There's no sense crying over what hasn't happened in the past two and a half years that this government has been responsible for this project.

Nobody wants to take responsibility for the inaction. That's fine. But going forward -- and I'm talking about from right now -- somebody has got to take this project on and take responsibility for it being delivered effectively, efficiently, on time, and on some kind of budget. We can't have an endless pit of money being dumped into this project with nobody taking responsibility for it. I'd like to ask the Minister going forward... Let's not talk about the past, let's talk about going forward. If this project continues to slide off the rails and go sideways, who is going to be responsible to the taxpayers in the Northwest Territories?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I'd like to point out that while there are certain challenges ahead of us, that this project is 50 percent done. We have made a lot of significant changes. The Member may disagree with the timing of the decisions that were made and when they were made, but we are in fact moved forward on this.

The GNWT has taken over project management design, as we have indicated. With our ongoing discussions, the lenders are leaning towards the GNWT assuming a greater role and we have been stepping into that role. The Cabinet here duly assembled was put in place by this Legislature. We are accountable. I indicate once again that I am here as the Minister of Finance with my role to play; the Minister of Transportation as well; and, of course, the Premier has delegated our portfolios to do that. The final analysis is that we stand accountable and we stand accountable to the Legislature.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Page 6, Transportation, operations expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$15.9 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Transportation, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$15.9 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thanks, committee. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I just want to know from the previous item if that information shared with us on the timelines was able to be shared with the public.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. We're back on page 6. We're still on page 6. Mr. Menicoche is asking whether or not the information package the Minister gave committee today can be shared publicly. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Anything further, Mr. Menicoche? We're on page 6, Transportation, operations expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$15.9 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Also I just want to ask the Ministers about the role of the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation in the new arrangements and setup going forward for the corporation and the status of the corporation for this bridge here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We continue with the current arrangement with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. The Members are aware that there are negotiations and activities underway, but at this point we are proceeding with the structure that has gotten us this far. As we sort our way through the work ahead, we'll be keeping committee fully apprised of any developments.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you for the update here. The Minister stated that they're continuing with the relationship with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. Are there going to be some changes? Because the way we've been dealing with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation has gotten us to this place right here. If that's the case, then I'm not feeling too comfortable in terms of if things are going to change, because right now we have a \$15 million supp that is going through the process here. I hope some things are going to change in terms of our relationship with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. Otherwise, are we going to come back to see another \$15 million supp? I need some level of comfort, I guess, from the Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, the project management, as it is now set up to involve the territorial government, is going to continue on. The corporate structure that is currently there will continue until we sort out the implications of our discussions with lenders. But the project management is now fully and firmly going to be run by the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Transportation. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Minister. That does tell me with the new structure now I feel that Ministers have heard our concerns on this side here and a tightening of the belt, so to speak, in terms of how we proceed to conclude the construction of the bridge here with the corporation.

I guess there are a lot of things that we really can't say because of the sensitivity and the negotiations and the confidentiality of some of the issues here, so I guess I'll wait to see in terms of on a going forward basis dealing with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, because they were one of the key

players in this whole business of putting the bridge across the Mackenzie River here.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I appreciate the Member's comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a few more questions on the \$15 million. As I understand it, the lenders issued real-return bonds which are adjusted for inflation. I guess they're slated to be interest only until December 1st of 2011, at which time we'd make the first payment on the principal. I'm just wondering, what portion of the \$15 million that is in this supp is going to pay interest costs, and can the Minister provide us a breakdown of where that \$15 million is being allocated to the project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct that the \$15 million is added and it will bring the total project budget to \$181.4 million. The breakdown of that \$181.4 million is provided in one of the tables titled Deh Cho Bridge Project Estimates Summary. So in the final column it breaks down how the \$181.4 million will be spent and that includes the \$15 million that is being requested today.

In terms of specific interest payments, actually, the one-year delay in the project will cost additional interest of about \$5.5 million. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I thank Mr. Neudorf for that. On the breakdown of the \$15 million, though, if you look at the projected estimate, February 2010, if \$5.5 million is going toward interest, where's the other \$9.5 million going? Thank you.

MR. NEUDORF: The other \$9.5 million is going to the various items that are noted. If you want to break it down a little bit further, the actual construction has gone up a little bit, but stays more or less the same. There's about \$7.5 million of claims to deal with from the first two years of construction, so a portion would go to that. Then, with the Bridge Corporation and their uncertainty in equity around the changing of the general contractor, then we require an additional \$2.5 million to replace that money. So \$5 million interest, \$7.5 million in claims and \$2.5 million lost equity would equal \$15 million. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I'm just wondering, too, if we're just paying interest only up until December 1, 2011, are the total project costs building up on themselves over that period of time, because we're not actually making payments. Are we going to expect an inflated project cost on December 1, 2011, than what we're talking about today? Thank you.

MR. NEUDORF: The total project cost noted here is what we expect the total cost to be to get us to a completed bridge in November 2011. With the financing on the project, all of the money was given upfront to the project. So \$165.5 million from the lenders was given to the project. It's sitting in construction accounts, and as expenditures are incurred, the project draws upon that funding. So some of the expenses would include the interest cost on that borrowed money, as well, which is included in the estimates. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: On a construction infrastructure project like the Deh Cho Bridge, I'm just wondering, in terms of management, construction management, corporate management, things like that, typically what would a project like that encounter in terms of a percentage of cost. If we're looking at close to \$30 million on construction management, construction overhead, to me that number seems a little bit inflated and it's close to 15 percent of the total project costs. I'm just wondering, is that industry norm or standard or how do we explain that. Thank you.

MR. NEUDORF: Typical project management related costs for a GNWT-managed project would be 10 to 15 percent, maybe 8 to 15 percent. So this is obviously on the high end of that. I'd attribute it to the structure of the project. It is a P3 project; it took us a long time to get it to where we were ready to sign the Concession Agreement. It's got a lot of oversight on it because of the magnitude of the funding associated with it. So it's at the high end of what you would expect. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Chairman, I'm just wondering if there is any legal recourse for the Government of the Northwest Territories to pursue the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation for their inability to deliver the project on budget. The design, like I said, the issues with the design, the issues with the subcontractors, the issue with the general contractor. They've been removed. I mean, can we go back after the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation to recoup some of the costs that they've forced the government to incur? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of options like those available for a number of different facets of this project. The key for us now, though, is to get the project stabilized, get the funding sorted out and flowing so that we can, in fact, conclude this project, and do as Minister McLeod indicated, a review, and see where that information and review would take us in terms of next steps, once we're past the immediate challenge and imperative, which is to get this project stabilized. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I understand and appreciate the fact that we need to stabilize the funding and move

this thing along, but like I said, at the end of the day, I think those who didn't deliver what they were supposed to deliver, whatever recourse the government has to ensure that happens, I think we should pursue it with vigour, Mr. Chairman.

The other question I have: this contract, and it hasn't been signed as of yet with this company, and I suppose now that you're going to make this document public it's probably public knowledge that you're close to signing or have signed a construction contract with one company. What is the amount of that contract and what is the contingency built into that price, as well, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amount of the contract that has been negotiated with Ruskin Construction and their team as laid out in the package is, for the phase 2 work, \$68.1 million. That is the amount that is noted in the table that we provided. There is still some work that Ruskin needs to do to complete the phase 1, the construction from the first season. There is about \$4 million worth of work that will be carried over to next summer, mostly around abutments and finishing that work. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I know the deputy minister said \$4 million, but on the chart it says there is about \$22 million of outstanding work by Ruskin on phase 1, so maybe, is it four or 22, because that is a big difference.

MR. NEUDORF: The amount shown on the chart, \$22 million, is the amount that is required to complete the four piers on the north side plus the abutments, so the four piers will be essentially done in a couple of weeks. There will be \$4 million worth of the \$22 million that will be carried over to next year and completed.

The Member had also asked a question about contingency, the second last line item reports a contingency that is built into that \$15 million estimate, or our \$15 million supplementary request. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: One of the other areas of concern was the fact that the design has always been something that hasn't been... We haven't really arrived at a finalized design. I know the Minister just last week was talking about there being some components to that design that still are outstanding. The question I would have is: how can the government sign a contract with this construction company with those issues outstanding? Because in my experience, Mr. Chairman, going back to my days as a city councillor, when you start, design changes on the fly, it costs you nothing but money and it gets very expensive. So, Mr. Chairman, how can the Minister assure us that this number of

\$68.1 million is going to be a legitimate number? Because when you add those moving parts out there, with design issues, I think we are going to be in for some surprises, Mr. Chairman. Thanks.

MR. NEUDORF: We do have a final approved design on the bridge. We have been working since last August to get that. It has been very detailed, very involved. It has gone through two separate independent reviews and we are now very comfortable with the design that we have going forward and it is complete and finalized.

There are three aspects of that design that still remain to be finalized and there is a plan for doing that over the next couple of months. Those are relatively minor items representing about 2 percent of the value, that is why there is a line item there titled Miscellaneous Construction for \$2.2 million that would be used to address the three minor items that are not yet finalized. Those three items are for lighting electrical, to finalize that and we are still waiting a little bit because we want to do some work on the toll collection system and see how that relates, and the design of a catwalk underneath the bridge to facilitate operations and maintenance inspections and then the final paving on top of the bridge, the design for that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Committee, we seem to be still on page 6 here. Any further questions? Sorry; I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my opening comments I indicated the frustration of the people in my constituency about the increasing costs and they actually asked the question, why are we paying over here in Nahendeh when we will hardly be using the bridge. They actually brought up the fact that many other large infrastructure projects in other jurisdictions it is a full toll system for everybody, and one of the fellows brought up the Coquilhalla Highway and it actually pays for itself.

In this case, we are talking about a toll for only 18-wheel trucks or a certain amount of axels, but in other jurisdictions everybody pays and my experience travelling out east was that, yes, you are paying \$5 or \$10 to travel on a highway or travel across a bridge, but at least you are seeing that piece of infrastructure. So with that being said, is there any provision in our Concession Agreement to expand on a full toll system for another source of revenue, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in terms of the frustration in increasing costs, I think it has been noted, but it is worth repeating, but the project is 50 percent done, so we are comfortable with that. The new design is complete and approved

so there won't be significant changes going forward. We do have a contractor in place and the contract for that work has been initialled. We just initialled this last Friday so we have got that signed up, and we have got a new and improved project management in place, so we think that we have much more oversight on the project that we will be able to control and ensure that we don't get into the same type of situation that we have right now.

In terms of the tolls and paying for costs and potentially adjusting it for tolls, we have always, in the benefit costs, the economic analysis that we did, we wanted to keep the toll so that the actual cost of the toll was slightly less than the benefits that would be incurred by the public, by consumers as a result of that toll. So we had provided that information previously to the Members. The benefits of the Deh Cho Bridge were about \$7 a tonne. Our toll was set at about \$6 per tonne, so slightly less than. Of course the government had to make up the difference to have the project go ahead. The previous government agreed to an additional subsidy of \$2 million to address the higher costs and we are here requesting another \$15 million again to address some of the cost increases.

I would note that that \$15 million is being funded as per the Concession Agreement, so the Concession Agreement speaks to the Government of the Northwest Territories providing upfront the additional costs that were required for the project, but we would get paid back over the life of the project from the revenues for the project. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I would like to thank the deputy for that answer. I guess the frustration was that taxpayers from throughout the North don't want to continue to see themselves paying out of their pocket for errors and, for lack of a better word, the situation that we are currently in with the Dehcho Bridge Project. People are still out there; they are absolutely convinced that this cost will not stop here and will be increasing. I don't know how much assurance that the Minister or the deputy or the Transportation Minister can give us. Yes, we are 50 percent done and with this amended budget we can complete the project on a timely and on budget scenario. So just with that, Mr. Chairman, can the Minister give us that assurance that we won't be sitting here in a few months from now, six months from now, deliberating a situation where our backs are against the wall, where we have to continue expending public funds and, therefore, taxpayers money on this infrastructure? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know it is the fond hope from all of us that we don't have to go this process again. We

are going to make every conceivable effort to make sure we hit the targets, but we are not in the position to offer an ultimate guarantee. But we will be briefing Members on an ongoing basis here going forward as we work our way forward through these current challenges until we get this project stabilized and then going forward to conclusion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Next on my list I have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the department for the Deh Cho Bridge Project Estimate Summary. I find it kind of interesting that the issue doesn't largely seem to be one of a construction nature. It looks like the actual construction costs have only increased by about 3.7 percent as the estimates that we're currently receiving from the department from the estimates that were originally budgeted in May of 2009 compared to the estimates from the GNWT today that takes us to the end of the project. That's only about a 3.7 percent increase. That's actually pretty good.

I think our issues further down the page there are that there's a substantial increase of the management and interest costs. I guess mostly in those areas and even the contingency's gone down a bit. But it looks like the construction management and corporate management and interest costs are the majority of the request here. It's almost \$11 million of the request for \$15 million. Almost \$11 million of it is just management. This actually gives me a little more comfort to know that the construction costs have a little bit of control here. If it's only estimated to be higher than what the original budget was from May 2009 by 3.75 percent, approximately, then it's actually not too bad.

Maybe the issue here is not what's happening over the waters of the Mackenzie but maybe more or less the management of the project seems to be a little bit out of control here. But to know that's where the cost is, also recognizing that that type of cost is also a lot easier to control than had the cost been more unpredictable with the construction portion of the project. I am offering that as maybe something that would make it easier for the government to manage or control costs, because the majority of the costs seem to be in management.

It's difficult to control interest costs, no doubt. I don't know why the interest cost has gone so high from the original estimates. It's almost \$3 million and just change in interest costs. I'm not sure why that occurred if the money was advanced at a certain date and the schedule for payback is happening, or it's scheduled to happen in the future, then I don't know why the big shift in interest. Maybe I will ask that question of why the interest cost. I think the corporate management, construction management

is probably self-explanatory, but I'll ask on the interest costs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason the interest costs are going up is because it takes an extra year of construction. So we had planned on three years' worth of interest and now it's going to take four years. But that four years is also at the end when the majority or a lot of the expenditures have been made already. So as the funding is actually in the construction account right now, we are paying interest to the lenders but we're also making interest on the money. So the net amount at present isn't that big. But as we have less and less money in the construction account to gain interest, the net effect is increasing.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'm good with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Next on my list is Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of questions. Have the Ministers had an analysis of reducing the costs in my region by having a bridge here? In light of what we're going to increase the budget for the bridge, I think the Minister of Transportation said it has a negative effect on the cost of living to reduce the cost of living. I know at one time it made sense, but now we're adding additional dollars to it. Is this still the case to reduce the cost in the Sahtu and in Behchoko or Fort Providence or even Yellowknife?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The information that I talked about before where the benefits of the bridge were \$7 a tonne and the costs were \$6 a tonne, that's relevant to any traffic or freight that moves across the bridge and comes into Yellowknife. That would include the freight that would be moving forward into Sahtu communities, as the Member has asked. So it would realize that slight net benefit.

In terms of the total benefits, total costs, if you add up what all the benefits and what all the costs are and take it from a high level perspective, then that's where the negative \$50 million number has come up before. That's essentially the subsidy amount that the GNWT has provided to the project.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Anything further, Mr. Yakeleya?

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. Is there a possibility of getting the latest explanation that the Minister gave us on paper for my reading and reviewing?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That information is available on the website for the Member's ease of reference.

MR. YAKELEYA: I will look at it and see if it eases my reference here. Okay. I have to read this before I have other questions I can speak later on to. That will be it for me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Next on my list I have Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One thing just picking up on Mr. Yakeleya's question is that the tolls are indexed every year. The government doesn't often like to say that. But the tolls are indexed as well as the \$2 million is indexed. Everything is indexed in this project for 35 years. I just wanted to put that out there.

One other thing I wanted to touch on is next Thursday is coming pretty quick. Members are going to go back to their constituencies and Cabinet is going to do what Cabinet does, and that's make decisions. I want to know how Cabinet plans on keeping Regular Members in the loop when it comes to this project, and what exactly is happening with this project and how that reporting's going to take place when Members do go their separate ways. How are we going to be kept in the loop?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of ways. We'll ensure that is done. We can do it by e-mail. We can do it, keeping in mind what the situation may be, to try to set up a conference call. But probably the fastest way would be to e-mail and if there's a need to get more collaborative feedback, then we can look at some type of hook-up on a conference call.

MR. RAMSAY: Now that the project has, like I said, for all intents and purposes, become a Government of the Northwest Territories project, I think the reporting on that project should be more readily available, let's say, than it has been in the past. We should know on a day-to-day basis what's happening with that project. I'm not saying I want to know on a day-to-day basis, but at least if Cabinet could keep Regular Members updated once a month or quarterly, even, as the project moves forward, I think that would be good. It's always better to hear from our Cabinet colleagues than from the guy or woman on the street. So I'd appreciate that. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We'll of course commit to keeping the Members as fully apprised as we can going forward and we're also working on improving our public communication so we can address some of the concerns that are out there with the facts and not rely on other

information, but give everybody the best information that's the most current and available. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Just another thing, you know, a lot of Members have talked about it and I've talked about it in the past, but the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Department of Transportation has obviously had to incur some costs. I mean, we've got a couple of senior staff here that are on the project management team. You know, I'm sure we've paid for some of the design review work that's been ongoing. How are we accounting for that? Is that not incorporated in the budget of the bridge or should it be incorporated in that? You know, if we can get some of the costs back as the Minister has mentioned, this \$15 million over time I suppose we could recoup some of that back. Why don't we charge whatever the Department of Transportation is incurring for costs back to the project so we can recoup that cost, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can certainly look at that, but anything that the government provides to the project now it's going to be in addition to the budgets that are here. So it will be government paying one way or the other. Just in terms of since the signing of the Concession Agreement and our expenditures, direct expenditures are about one-quarter of a million dollars or so and it was for some additional analysis that had to be done.

One of our biggest expenditures was actually the design review. So the GNWT hired the territorial advisors that actually undertook the design review. Those were, or have been, paid for by the project and then it's just some GNWT staff time that's being incurred as a result of that. We've had to hire one extra person additionally. We're funding that from within and then it's added to the workload of various other people in DOT that are noted on the chart there. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I think the deputy minister makes a good argument, then, for charging all that time back to the project. The deputy minister himself... I know the Department of Transportation is busy with many other things that they're doing and I know the deputy minister is committed to seeing this project through to conclusion; he spends a lot of time on that project, the Deh Cho Bridge Project. The deputy minister should be charging his time back to that project, Mr. Chairman, so we can at least get that back down the road and I'd like to see us make the effort at least to do that.

One other thing, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask if any other contracts are required on the Deh Cho Bridge, whether the government would commit to at least going out to tender on any other work that's required? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Yes, we could commit to that. That's always our intention, is whenever the ability and the time allows for public tendering of any types of contracts, that we use that method and that's something we'll certainly commit to doing.

MR. RAMSAY: I heard that, but I didn't hear the commitment to make the effort to charge every hour that our departmental staff has spent on the Deh Cho Bridge Project to the Deh Cho Bridge Project so that we can recoup that money. I didn't hear a commitment to do that. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I'm not quite ready to do so. I would have to look at the impact of charging back to this project and whether that's something we'd have to incorporate to all our projects. Right now we don't charge back our time for any project across the Territories. That's something I could have a discussion with my Cabinet colleagues. We certainly could calculate the amount of time that our staff has spent, any costs incurred by our department, but I'm very reluctant to say we're going to charge it back. It may have a further bearing impact that we anticipate at this point. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Nothing further, Mr. Ramsay? Moving on. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm certainly supportive of the bridge and I see this as a 9 percent overrun and we need to address that sort of in the public context, which is going through and I can understand that. Anybody who has any experience with any works projects understand overruns, as unfortunate as it is, it is certainly not uncommon, especially in a public context.

I'm wondering if the Minister of Finance would be opposed to a suggestion of quarterly updates to the Priorities and Planning committee. Would he have any thought on that, because that's really, from my constituent point of view, that's one of the big fundamentals, is keeping a close eye on the project. I know the Minister can only do his sort of fullness and timed responses, you know, is the best we can do sort of context of will this project be managed well, of course it will, you know, those types of statements. But the fear from a Regular Member point of view on my particular position is what do we do to make sure the project stays on the rails. So how would the Minister feel about quarterly updates to the Priorities and Planning committee meeting to make sure that the detail of the finances are kept up regularly to Regular Members through the Priorities and Planning? Would he be opposed to that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins, and I think that was something where a

commitment was already made, but, Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we would not be opposed to that.

MR. HAWKINS: In that particular case, the Minister probably wouldn't be opposed to a motion to that effect. I mean, ultimately constituents of mine are more concerned about making sure the project gets done and that it stays on the rails, as well as the fact this timely information becomes the biggest issue. So, Mr. Chairman, with that I'd probably like to move a motion and shall I read it right into the record now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Go ahead, Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 30-16(4):
TRANSPORTATION, OPERATIONS
EXPENDITURES – PROVISION OF
QUARTERLY UPDATES ON STATUS OF
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT,
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee strongly recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide quarterly updates on the status of the Deh Cho Bridge to the Priorities and Planning committee starting in May 2010. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order and being distributed. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Question is being called.

---Carried

Order, committee. We're on page 6, Transportation, operations expenditures, highways, not previously authorized, \$15.9 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Transportation, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$15.9 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Page 7, Supplementary Appropriation No. 4. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My apologies for missing the page earlier, but I'd like to ask the same question I asked earlier with regard to the planning study for owned versus leased office space in Yellowknife. I do agree that the study needs to be done. My question basically has to do with why this particular expense is so urgent that it needs to be included in a supplementary

appropriation, why it can't wait until our next infrastructure budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The big issue is of timing. Otherwise, if we wait until next fall we will have lost a valuable six months and we only have, I think, 19 months left in our term. Our hope is to advance this and to get it on the work being done as quickly as possible, given the projected savings of possibly up to \$100 million and our concern about being fiscally responsible. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I'm not totally sure I follow the timing. I think I'm hearing the Minister say that the planning needs to be done now so the construction budget can be included in the next infrastructure budget. If I could have that clarified, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'd like to call on the Minister of Finance, Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent is to get enough work done that we can, in fact, come forward through the capital planning process this coming fall with enough work done to make a decision about next steps. So the intent is not to lose that time. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I do understand. I guess I just have difficulty... I'm still having difficulty understanding why the construction needs to be in this next infrastructure budget which will come up this fall. Can it not wait another year? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the planning study is estimated to take around four months to complete, and we are going to be looking at incorporating this project in the capital acquisition plan for this year, 2010. The planning study needs to be done by the end of June. There is some sense of urgency. Many of our leases, up to 70 percent of our leases are coming up for renewal. Present market rates and the conditions indicate that the rising lease prices are likely to stay very high and, therefore, we're going to see significant increased costs associated with renewals. The study that was done, the lease versus to own analysis, concluded that savings are considerable, so there is some sense of urgency to do this project.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that explanation. I had forgotten the information about the timing of leases. So thank you. That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Page 7, committee, Public Works and

Services, capital investment expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$15,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Total department, not previously authorized, \$15,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 8, Health and Social Services. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question here, as well, on the laboratory information system replacement. I mentioned in my opening remarks that I questioned that this is a project that is urgent. Could I get a timeline for this project? I know that these funds, there are some funds being asked for in this supplementary appropriation, there are some funds which are being suggested for next year's capital budget and, I believe, the year after, but I wonder if I could get an explanation of the timeline for the project, when it's intended to start, what the urgency is to get started, you know, within the next, obviously, couple of months, I presume, et cetera. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for the question. The urgency to make this capital investment at this time is because we need this money to replace the laboratory information system. We are responding to the vendor, General Electric, who has given us notice that they would discontinue supporting this system and gave us two short extensions until November of this year, I believe, or support as of December 2, 2009. So we need to make sure that we have a system in place that's reliable, because this is essential to our lab service. It deals with reading and connecting all the lab results, and if the system breaks down and not have it replaced, we could possibly face having to send the lab tests to other jurisdictions and it could cost us as much money as it is required to spend now. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: That didn't totally answer my question in terms of timeline, but prior to asking that again, I note in the briefing note it says that GE told us in 2007 that system support wouldn't be provided after December of 2009. So that's, if it's the middle of 2007, that's at least a year and a half for this project to come forward and for the department to ask for approval. So I'm a little taken that it's now coming before us and it's urgent. I can accept that it's urgent, but I think there's a difficulty with planning or a lack of planning on the part of the department here.

To the Minister, I'd like to know when this project is supposed to start. The briefing says we have two six-month extensions, so I guess that's to the end of the year 2010. So when would this project start

and when is it expected to be completed? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Before I begin the Member's new set of questions, I just want to say the Member is right from the last question that there are two parts to this funding request, the biggest being what's in front of us now under capital funding for \$904,000.

I also want to address why, when we knew this for a year and a half or so, why did this become urgent and is it lack of planning on the department's part. Mr. Chairman, the answer to that is this came as a surprise to us, but it does happen when a vendor decides that they will not support software, and, obviously, software, the support is important, that there's always the ongoing check and if there are bugs, that they will give us maintenance. They have decided to stop doing that. The department did make a proposal to an interdepartmental committee that looks at IT investments such as this, but given this is such a large project, we were asked to look at all options available, including continuing to do a -- there's a technical language for that -- doing something more compatible to what we were using already or should we go to another program or looking at all of the funding options. That's why we did not make the '09-10 funding schedule and we are going into having to come back for a supp.

We were also asked to look for some internal funding and we were able to... The total cost project for this is about \$1.7 million. We're asking for \$904,000. We were able to find some funding from within plus the money that the IT committee gave us.

I think there were some third questions. Right. The vendor told us that they would no longer support after December '09, but they gave us a conditional extension until the end of December, but they would not give us full technical support. They would just have it on, so to speak. So we are at risk of not changing this as soon as possible. At the same time, they're charging us a premium for that conditional use. Whereas the normal charge would be about \$58,000, they're charging us \$230,000 for using this service conditionally.

The last part I think that's of value to the Members is that this system is hooked up to Canada Health Infoway where we get funding from the federal government, and there are some milestones that we need to meet. We need to have this to meet that, in order for us to get reimbursed for about \$700,000. So there are many reasons why this couldn't come right away and why it is imperative that we get this approved and get the project going as soon as possible. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I just want to thank the Minister for that explanation. I have no further questions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Committee, we are on page 8, Supplementary Appropriation No. 4, Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, health services programs, not previously authorized, \$904,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Total department, not previously authorized, \$904,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am trying to figure out this \$300,000 in and out from one department to another. Could I just get an explanation from the Minister, like what happens physically? Like, there is one department that has 300 that doesn't need it but needs 15 so they get 15 then does that money physically transfer to another department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I will call on Mr. Sandy Kalgutkar.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Mr. Chairman, the negative \$300,000 is related to a transfer back into the Department of Transportation under operations expenditures for the Yellowknife bypass road. The Yellowknife bypass road is voted as infrastructure contribution to the City of Yellowknife, which is operations expenditures funding. The \$300,000 is coming out of the Kakisa Bridge Project, which is a capital investment funding. So it is a transfer between two votes; that is why it is showing up twice. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is just more confusing actually, because I was looking at page 7 and seeing that there is a negative \$300,000 there as well, so that is okay. I just can't figure it out, but I am sure I will if I look at it long enough.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu, I am with you. So, committee, we are on page 9. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I will just give this a shot. There is a negative on the Transportation for the construction of the new air terminal building in Tuktoyaktuk, there is a negative \$300,000 under Public Works and Services, and then if you go to page 9, the page we are on, it shows up as transferred from the Department of Public Works and Services, \$300,000. We agree with that, but then what Mr. Kalgutkar is saying is something about the bypass road having impacted that. I think that was the confusion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Minister McLeod would like to shed light on this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. I would like to call on Minister Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, what we are doing here is we are transferring some dollars out of the Public Works Deferred Maintenance Program that we had identified to do some work on the air terminal building and it will now go into the Department of Transportation and will be matched up with stimulus dollars that we have been approved for. So it is a 50-50 cost arrangement and since we had money already in our budget to do the work prior to knowing that this was a project that was being considered for replacement, we are transferring it over. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. That satisfies you, Mr. Beaulieu?

MR. BEAULIEU: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. Committee, we are on page 9, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Highways, not previously authorized, \$1.5 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Total department, not previously authorized, \$1.8 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 10, Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment expenditures, tourism and parks, not previously authorized, negative \$50,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Total department, not previously authorized, negative \$50,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes 2009-2010 Supplementary Appropriation No. 4?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Thank you, Minister. You may excuse your witnesses. I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses from the House. Committee will take a break for a meal.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Welcome back, committee. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. We will start our review of the Department of Justice, as per our earlier agreement. I'd like to call on the Minister of Justice. Do you have opening remarks, Mr. Lafferty?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I am pleased to present the Department of Justice main estimates for the fiscal year 2010-2011.

The main estimates propose an operations and maintenance budget of \$97.992 million, an increase of 5 percent over the 2009-2010 Main Estimates. This consists primarily of forced growth increases such as collective bargaining and strategic initiatives in policing, services for families and community justice.

This department's mandate is to administer justice, including corrections and policing in the Northwest Territories. We support the Assembly's vision of strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories. We do this by providing services directly to the public, by ensuring the Government of the Northwest Territories receives appropriate legal support, and by providing a strong justice system that is responsive to the needs of our people and is independent of government.

Mr. Chair, we support strong individuals by providing one-on-one services through our Community Justice Program, victim services, legal aid, programs for offenders, and a wide variety of public offices that provide specialized services like enforcing child support orders. We also provide funding for our court system, which protects the rights of all of our residents, and for the RCMP.

We support strong families through increased supports to families. The main estimates include funding for a new legal aid clinic to provide enhanced family law services, training for community court workers, and the new program for men who abuse family members.

We support strong communities through a network of services that promote local control and access to justice. The main estimates include \$1.8 million in increases to the RCMP budget to improve services to communities. We also fund community justice programs in all communities, and our new campaign to reduce drug and alcohol-related crime gives control to local agencies. Our corrections system focuses on rehabilitating offenders and reintegrating them into their communities. And our court system brings justice to the people by travelling to communities on court circuits.

Mr. Chair, our focus is on meeting the needs of our residents. We need to provide a corrections system that rehabilitates offenders. We have to support victims and provide a justice system that responds to the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. We must ensure there are appropriate policing services in all of our communities. During 2010-11, we will invest new funding into priority areas: policing, supports for families, and community justice. Our department's main estimates have six areas of activity:

Services to Government

Although this is less visible than much of our other work, the department provides a range of legal services to the government. This is almost always done in house at a significantly lower cost than contracting private lawyers. We're providing legal support as the Government of the Northwest Territories works toward a common vision for the political development of the North. We prosecute people who break territorial laws. We represent the Government of the Northwest Territories in court. We draft legislation and provide legal advice to all Ministers, departments and many public agencies. The French versions of bills and regulations are prepared by legal translators on our staff. Our lawyers are helping to build strong partnerships with northern governments on areas of common interest, fulfill our implementation responsibilities for existing land claim and self-government agreements, and make best efforts to reach final agreements in ongoing negotiations.

The \$9.622 million budgeted for services to government also includes work like providing departmental financial services and the policy research required to develop new legislation. Two pilot programs for families are part of this activity: a mediation program for separating parents and an education program on parenting after separation and divorce to help parents gain the skills they need to be parents in changed circumstances.

Law Enforcement

There has been \$33.586 million budgeted for law enforcement activities contracted by the RCMP. Policing is a priority for this government, especially policing in smaller communities.

The RCMP are key to our goal of sustainable, vibrant, safe communities. The main estimates include \$1.8 million in new funding for the RCMP. This includes funding for salary and pension increases, additional public servant positions, additional positions for the operations and communication centre, and new policing positions. We are adding one member to each of three of our current three-member detachments. We will also be increasing the relief unit by three members from the current six members in the unit. This will provide backup and enhanced service to our smaller communities. We recognize the public safety concerns of our residents. We cannot afford to put detachments in all communities, Mr. Chair, but we can increase police presence by increasing the number of officers in our existing detachments. This allows the RCMP to do enhanced patrols on a regular basis.

Legal Aid Services

The Legal Services Board's budget is \$5.642 million. That covers the Northwest Territories share of the costs of operating three legal aid clinics in

Yellowknife and Inuvik that provide legal services to Northwest Territories residents who cannot afford a lawyer. It also covers the cost of opening a new clinic to provide faster service to clients. As well, legal aid provides court workers and public legal education programs to all residents, regardless of their incomes. Legal Aid is an effective, efficient program with a client-focused, service-oriented approach. They protect the rights of northern residents and promote personal and family responsibility.

Courts

The department provides funding and administrative support to the NWT courts. The total budget is just over \$11 million and covers the Justice of the Peace Court Program, Territorial Court, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, court libraries and reporters, and the three court registries. The main estimates include a \$25,000 increase for territorial court judges' salaries, as directed by the 2008 Judicial Remuneration Commission. The courts are the third arm of government. They protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

Community Justice and Corrections

Our corrections service provides adult and young offender facilities, probation, wilderness camps, and cultural programs to support the rehabilitation of offenders. We provide targeted programming to help offenders with the issues that originally contributed to their crimes. The goal is to rehabilitate offenders and then release them to their communities with the supports they need to become productive, law-abiding members of society. This program activity has a focus on prevention by promoting healthy choices and lifestyles, and the role of personal and family responsibility. Our work to strengthen the role of communities in prevention and enforcement is part of this activity. We also fund victim services, crime prevention and diversion programs in communities, and our new campaign to reduce alcohol and drug-related crime. In all, the budget is \$33.733 million.

Services to the Public

We provide a number of specialty services directly to the public. The \$4.3 million budget includes coroners' services, the rental office, public trustee, legal registries and the Maintenance Enforcement Program. These programs operate under statute and are very similar to those operated in all other provinces and territories.

The main estimates project \$11.371 million in revenue during the next fiscal year. This is mostly from transfer payments and from the collection of fees at our public offices like the legal registry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an overview of the department's 2010-2011 Main

Estimates. I look forward to discussing it with you in more detail. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Does the Minister wish to bring witnesses into the House?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chair.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

If I could ask the Minister to please introduce his witnesses.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. With me I have Ms. Bronwyn Watters, my deputy minister of Justice; and also Kim Schofield, director of finance. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. I'd now like to open the floor up to general comments on the Department of Justice. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just an opportunity to comment on the Department of Justice and most particularly policing. Not so much in this fiscal year's budget, but in last year's budget, in terms of community policing for smaller communities, I am very pleased that the House supported two positions for the community of Fort Simpson dedicated towards a long-term goal of establishing a detachment in the community of Wrigley. The increased patrols are welcome for the community. However, they are still supportive of a full-time detachment.

In the course of the discussion with the RCMP, there is no current capital plan in the federal department to actually build a detachment or have a mobile detachment in the community of Wrigley. They do have patrol cabin type of facilities available, which is commendable. They are doing more frequent visits to the community of Wrigley on a patrol basis, but in the long term. So I've taken to lobby our federal counterpart, our Member of Parliament, Mr. Dennis Bevington, to see if we can pursue that federally and at this time I'd like to ask the Minister if he can do the same. You know, establishing that detachment and fulfilling the commitment to get the detachment in the community of Wrigley. With the onset of development, of an increased highway system, of potentially a pipeline, that's certainly something that will not only benefit Wrigley, but the North as a whole having another point of safety in terms of having RCMP officers at the community of Wrigley. So certainly I seek continued support from our government in pressing that matter and raising it with the federal Minister should our Minister have the opportunity.

Just recently I had a constituency meeting in the community of Fort Simpson. I had a fellow who was concerned about... To him it appears that there seems to be a lack of visibility of RCMP patrols. I think most particularly, if I can bring up a good example, is that several years ago there used to be a foot patrol program in the community of Simpson. I don't know if it was a territorial-wide initiative, but just that kind of visibility goes a long ways for a community to see our members of our police force in the community interacting, engaging in the community and it goes a long ways towards prevention, I believe. So I do support his point of view. I don't know why it was stopped, but I don't know if the Minister can bring it up when he meets with the RCMP, as well, that that's something that residents appreciated and I don't know if they can work towards it again or some similar type of program, and the same goes in all the communities that we have detachments in. I think our members being more visible just so they gain the confidence of the community that the members are there caring for our residents and the community. Because when they're not too visible, then I as an MLA certainly do get lots and lots of comments that you never see the RCMP around. However, they're there and they're doing their best, but I still think and I support the residents that a more visible RCMP force goes a long way to garner continued public support.

I just wanted to raise those couple of issues with regard to the Department of Justice, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you very much, Mr. Menicoche. Next on my list is Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of things on the Department of Justice. I have talked to the Minister about the promotion and the way that aboriginal employees in the corrections system can expect to move their careers along. We've had a back and forth here last week on a situation that I've encountered with a constituent. I know the department is doing its best to try to recruit aboriginal people into the corrections field, but you have to nurture, foster and develop these employees so that they can ultimately take on mid-management and senior management positions within corrections. To not do that I think is doing a disservice to the people we're hiring at the very start. I think the Minister understands that and I hope the department does, too, that there's some improvement that's needed there.

A couple other things I wanted to mention, and I've mentioned this to the Minister in the past, but when we look at opportunities for economic development here in the Northwest Territories I often think that given the aging infrastructure of federal penitentiaries in southern Canada, the federal

government is going to have to build a new penitentiary somewhere in this country and with that would come 350, 400 jobs and it would be a big-time economic boost to any community that a federal penitentiary could be located in. I've asked the Minister previously to have that discussion with the federal Minister of Justice to at least run it by him and say that we're interested, we're looking for opportunities to attract people to the Northwest Territories and get people to live here and what better opportunity than a federal penitentiary? I mean, that would be a big win for the Northwest Territories if we could get a federal penitentiary located in one of our communities here in the Northwest Territories. So I think that's something we should try to stay on top of, because ultimately a decision will be made to build a new federal penitentiary and it should be located in the Northwest Territories, if we have anything to say about it or we can lobby the right people to make that happen.

I've spoken about this before, too, but I'll just raise it again while I've got the floor. I don't think the government should close the door completely on this courthouse issue here in Yellowknife. You know, it's a big expenditure of dollars, yes, but it's a piece of public infrastructure representing the judiciary that will be in place for many, many years. If you look at any other capital city around this country, or a commonwealth for that matter, I mean, they have dedicated courthouse facilities. Our courthouse here, oftentimes we find ourselves having to patch it up and spend little pots of capital dollars here and there on trying to shore that facility up and we've probably paid for that building ten times over, Mr. Chairman. To me it would make sense to finally just bite the bullet, get a courthouse, a dedicated facility here. If it's in conjunction with some other government office space requirements... I know the program review office just went through an office space requirement study here in Yellowknife, which indicated that the Government of the Northwest Territories should proceed and construct a 6,000 square metre office building here in Yellowknife. The first thing I thought of was, well, if they're going to construct a 6,000 square foot office building, maybe the courthouse could be incorporated into that somehow, someway for economies of scale and maybe a lot of the Justice staff could be located in that new office building. It would be something I think that's worth investigating further, Mr. Chairman. Again, I was sad to see the government close the door on the courthouse and it's something I think you can expect to hear me talk about more in the next little while, and hopefully one day I'm around to see it actually happen, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Next on my list I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a few general comments in regard to the budget for Justice. Initially, I believe that the position of the chief coroner is being reinstated to a government position and I do support that. I think that's a good move.

Also a good move I think is the emphasis on increased policing. We've added some members and a detachment in this last year, and I will have some questions as to the timing of the planned rollout of other detachments as we go forward when we get to that section.

I also note that there's an increase in legal aid services with the establishment of, I forget what it's called, but there is a new office being established and I totally support that. I think that we have quite a lack of legal aid services and anything that we can do to increase that and to provide services to our residents is going to be a benefit.

I am supportive of the Not Us! campaign, which the Minister brought to the House in a statement a little while ago. It sounds like it's going to be a good program and I think it's probably going to generate some excitement in some of the communities. My concern is that there be an evaluation of the program after six months or a year to see whether or not it's working. I would hope that if this budget comes back to us in a year's time, that there will be some indication whether or not this program is working and whether there's some results from it. I know, you know, a year is often not long enough, but I would encourage the Minister to plan to do an evaluation.

Similarly, we recently started two new programs, a mediation and parenting programs after separation and divorce. I believe those started maybe six or eight months ago, and I guess I would like to also encourage the Minister in this area to provide an evaluation of whether or not these programs are working well or not working, but just an evaluation in general so that we, again, know whether or not these new programs that we put in place are actually being beneficial. So just down the road, I would be looking for evaluations on those two programs.

I am encouraged that we are continuing with the Action Plan on Family Violence and that we are putting phase 2 into place. I know this is several departments that are doing this program together, and I know Justice does have a hand in it, so I'm glad to see that there's some money in the budget to encourage parts of this program and that Justice is taking one part of it.

My last comment. The Minister has heard this before and I will continue to push this issue, but I think there is a need within the government and the Territory for an ombudsman's office, and I would encourage the Minister and the department to look at this issue again. I know he has told me that it's

been looked at a number of years ago and it was determined that it wasn't necessary, but more and more and more I am seeing, my office is seeing difficulties that residents have with one body or another and it just points me more and more in the direction of the need for an impartial person outside the courts to deal with some of these disputes. That's all I have. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I don't have anybody else on my list. Does committee agree that there are further general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): If I could ask Minister Lafferty to respond.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, first of all, the Wrigley detachment, this has been in the works for the last couple of years now and it's still there. We're still committed. I'm glad that the MP is doing part of the job representing the Northwest Territories at the federal level. We continue to do that continuously every time we meet at the federal/provincial/territorial Ministers meeting. Wrigley and Gameti have always been addressed at every meeting that we've gone to. So we'll continue to do that.

Mr. Chair, we have a joint discussion that's ongoing with the Housing Corporation and also the RCMP, because we have to deal with the infrastructure. So it is in the works. It's just supposed to be scheduled for next year, 2001. So right now we're having more discussion with the new guy that's coming on stream, Mr. Blake, the commanding officer, who has started today. So I will be sitting down with him again. I already met with him before he started his new role. Mr. Chair, it's not being ignored. Those particular two detachments are high priority on our target list, so we'll continue to push that.

Just on another area where direction where corrections and aboriginal employees, yes, Mr. Ramsay has raised this issue in the House. It is of importance to our department to promote more aboriginals in the system. We are developing a plan of action in that respect and so we certainly want to see more aboriginal people move up within the system. I agree with Mr. Ramsay that these individuals that are in the system should be fostered and nurtured and trained to move up in the development stages. That should be the case and that's the area that we need to seriously look at across the board. It's not just our Justice department, but HR also has a strategy in place, as well, for all departments.

Yes, the aging infrastructure, potentially a penitentiary institution. We haven't really raised that issue at the federal level as of yet because we were dealing with the courthouse a while back and we had to set our priorities. What's more important,

that should be before us. The way things are going there are all these different activities that are playing before us. But at the same time, Mr. Chair, we are not closing the door on the courthouse. It's still there. It's just that we haven't been really focused in that area because there are all these community programs that are happening. If we need to go that avenue, then I need to get support from the Regular Members on what is our top priority. So those are areas of discussion we need to continuously have here in the House.

Mr. Chair, the chief coroner reappointment has been in the works for quite some time and finally it's coming into play. We are making progress in that area.

Of course, increasing policing, we've heard over and over from small communities that they want an increased presence of RCMP. So with this new commanding officer we're also pushing for more presence, as Mr. Menicoche alluded to and Mr. Krutko in the past. Increased presence of RCMP in the community makes a big difference. So those are the areas that we need to strengthen with the new commanding officer, and we'll continue to make a lot of noise in that area.

Yes, the Not Us! campaign, there is an evaluation built into that. So we'll be coming back to the standing committee as we make progress, what we've learned, is it's working. The same with the other, whether it be the separation program, the family violence, the mediation, all these different programs that we do have, there are evaluations attached to them as well. I agree with Ms. Bisaro that we need to come back and re-look at the whole picture six months, a year down the road, if we need to invest more or if it's not working should we look at other areas.

Then, finally, the ombudsman. Yes, it's been brought in this House, as well. Mr. Chair, all I can say at this point is I'll continue to work with my colleague and the Executive. This is an area that if it's high importance by Regular Members, as you know, there are cost factors to it. So those are areas that we can certainly explore. At this point we're at the discussion stages with this new office that has been talked about. I think that's the overall discussion. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Committee, would you like to proceed with detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. On page 9-7 is the department summary, which we will defer until we've considered the detail. So starting on page 9-8, Department of Justice, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-9, information item, revenue summary. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I note on this page that there's a fairly large drop in revenue under exchange of services, down almost \$1.1 million. I wonder if I can get an explanation on why. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Ms. Schofield.

MS. SCHOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There were two components with this. The per diem rate dropped for the coming year as a result of reductions in expenditures in our facilities, as well as there was a reduction in the number of expected number of federal exchange of services clients to our facility. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Schofield. Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Committee, page 9-9, information item, Department of Justice, revenue summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-10, information item, active position summary. Questions? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There is an increase of five positions in the North slave region. Could I know where those happened, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, these five positions are chief coroner, crime prevention coordinator, a staff lawyer and a legal secretary. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. We will continue on page 9-10, information item, active position summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-13, activity summary, Department of Justice, services to government, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we discussed business plans, we had a fairly involved discussion with the Minister and his staff with regards to recruitment and retention strategies for particularly lawyers and I think legal aid lawyers was kind of where we focussed our remark. At the time, I believe the Minister said they were going to look at some of the programs which operate in other departments within the GNWT and also I think some other programs that operate elsewhere in other jurisdictions in Canada. So I'm just wondering whether or not the Minister and the department have had a chance to look at some different programs to try to encourage recruitment and then

retention of lawyers and one of the things we talked about was a return of service model. Have any of those things been discussed or are they intending to be discussed in this next year? If I could have some information on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is my department has discussed with other jurisdictions, other organizations, but they are having continuous dialogue on where we can improve our services. Those potential positions that Ms. Bisaro has alluded to, we're continuing having discussions in that area. That's my understanding. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Just a follow-up question. Is return of service agreements one of the areas that is being considered? I gather it works reasonably well within the Department of Health and Social Services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. Ms. Schofield.

MS. SCHOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we have been looking and discussing with other government departments on possibly establishing a government-wide bursary program that would include a possibility of a return to service and that's where the discussions are at this point. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks for that information. That's good to hear. Hopefully something will come out of it. That's great. That's all.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Committee, we're on page 9-13, activity summary, services to government, operations expenditure summary, \$9.622 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-14, activity summary, services to government, grants and contributions, grants, \$49,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-15, information item, services to government, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-17, activity summary, law enforcement, operations expenditure. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I mentioned in my general remarks that I was looking for some information that the schedule the department has to increase RCMP in the communities with, currently don't have a police presence. I think some of it goes to special constables or community constables. So if the Minister could cover both of

those areas in his response, that would be helpful. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi Mr. Chairman. This is a particular area of interest to our department. We are currently in negotiation with the federal government on the First Nations policing. We have shown our uniqueness in the Northwest Territories. The three territorial approach to the federal government and they have finally listened and they are re-examining and reviewing the formula funding that we get and we were told at that time that there is going to be some changes. They haven't told us what kind of changes will be coming but to reflect our northern perspective. So with that in mind, we feel that there is going to be some increase in funding or resources that we currently have. I think we have four PYs in this respect and we have also told the federal government, every opportunity I have met with them, increase the positions. The Community Policing Program is another area that we have voiced our concerns and finally they are doing a pilot project and should be up and running we are hoping by this fall. There should be a federal announcement soon. There are advertisements that are happening. Those are the areas of increase that we have initiated and are still ongoing discussions. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. That information is all good. If for any reason all of that funding falls through, what are the plans for the department in terms of putting detachments in communities where there are none? Is there an outline or a timeline of a schedule that the Minister can advise us of? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We don't have a timeline to whether we have a police detachment in all communities. Of course that is our wish as well, to have detachments in all communities, but we have to continue to work with the federal government. They are the ones with the resources, the funds to cover the infrastructure and with our department we provide 70 percent of the cost factor, so we like to do it the sooner the better. But sometimes we are still waiting for the federal government to give us an approval, especially with the Gameti and Wrigley detachments. It is a slow pace but at the same time it is coming. With the remaining communities without detachments we will continue to push the federal government. We can't do it alone as the Department of Justice Government of the Northwest Territories, but we can work with them for having additional resources in a detachment serving the ones without detachments such as the one we have done for Tsiigehtchic through Fort McPherson area. Those are the things that we can do with the federal government. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: I would just like to follow up. I appreciate that this is something we have to do in conjunction with the federal government, that we do need their funding but I guess I would suggest that there ought to be a target date for various communities that don't currently have RCMP and we may not meet those targets, they may have to be amended but my personal view would be that we should have the communities listed and a target date for RCMP within those communities and that is what we are aiming for, so I would encourage the Minister to do that. Thank you. That's all.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you Ms. Bisaro. No question there, but, Mr. Minister, would you like to respond?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi Mr. Chairman. We can set dates but if the federal government doesn't come into play, then it really doesn't work for us. But I can share with the Member that those areas that we need to discuss further with the standing committee we could give, let's say, 10 years from now all the communities will be filled with detachments. Of course, that is our goal and objective. But at the same time it has taken some time for the federal government to make a commitment in that area, so it is going to be very difficult in small communities.

It is similar with the nursing, with the community populations of 100 or 120 people, it would be difficult to have the infrastructure in the community, so that is why we are heavily dependent on the federal government. I would assure the Member that I will push more at the federal/provincial/territorial Ministers' meeting.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Next I have on my list Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just along the same area, we do have a lot of discussion about having RCMP presence in every community in the North. I think that department should actually do that evaluation, because I don't think we can have police in every community in the Northwest Territories. They don't man the posts by themselves and then we have communities of 50 people and then we have communities that are part of the 33 communities that were recognized across the North that are attached to other communities. Like Dettah/Ndilo would probably not get their own police force and the Hay River Reserve would probably not get their own police force. Things like that I think are important to lay those things out for the Regular Members.

The other thing, because we keep asking the same questions and the answer seems to be we're going to try to put police in every community, but the reality is that's probably never going to happen. So we should probably bite the bullet. I can't see it happening. But my question is more along the line of First Nation policing. It has a better cost-sharing

arrangement. Is there a possibility for the department to negotiate a fairly large chunk of the Territorial Policing Services Agreement into the First Nations? There's a small portion here that's in the First Nation policing. I don't know if the Minister can answer that question directly, but I'm wondering if that is something that's possible.

On another point so I don't have to ask any more questions, but I need to hear what the plan is for the Community Policing Program again from the Minister. I kind of missed it when he explained it to Ms. Bisaro. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I totally agree. This First Nations policing, it's a different agreement than the police contract we have with the RCMP "G" Division. We currently have a 70/30 shared agreement, 52/48 agreement. So it is a big difference. As I stated, we're currently in negotiations with the federal at that level and Mrs. Schofield is part of that and the ADM is also part of that. So those are the ongoing discussions that we're currently having with the federal government and, of course, we're pushing for whether it be more funding or resources that we desperately need here in the Northwest Territories, and I think we're going to see some changes because it has been earmarked as our uniqueness and our northern perspective.

The Community Policing Program, that particular program is similar to special programs, of course. They want to have a pilot project program in early 2010 and the training is supposed to take place whether it be this summer or this fall and three of those officers will be in the Northwest Territories and it will be up to the RCMP "G" Division to allocate where those individuals will be, preferably with a detachment, I think. That's our understanding from the RCMP "G" Division. So it is their call to say where they're going to go.

So, Mr. Chair, those are the key areas of community policing. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Committee, we're on page 9-17, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair, one more question. When the Minister was discussing something earlier or in his remarks he mentioned the difficulties with placing RCMP in communities and the need to provide housing for them. When we discussed the Housing Corporation, I believe the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation indicated that they are working with various departments to try and provide staff housing. So to the Minister of Justice, is there an opportunity to work with the NWT Housing Corporation to provide

housing for RCMP to try and enable officers in our communities sooner rather than later? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. The quick answer is most definitely yes, because those officers that need to go to the communities without detachments, such as Wrigley or Tsiigehtchic, we definitely need to work out some agreement in that area. We want to have more presence in the community by RCMP, but sometimes there's no accommodation. If they provide accommodation, it's not suitable to their standards as well. So we have to identify the specs as well. When I was talking about the infrastructure, that also includes the detachment where it has to be according to the "G" Division specs on the detachment as well. But, Mr. Chair, yes, I'll continue to work with the NWT Housing Corporation in this area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair, that's all I have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. Committee, we're on page 9-17, activity summary, law enforcement, operations expenditures summary, \$33.586 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-19, activity summary. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. During business plans we did discuss the idea of a child advocate from a program that the department, I believe, is thinking about considering putting in place. If I could ask the Minister or his officials for an update on where this initiative is at and whether there's any kind of a date that we can be advised of as to when this might or might not happen. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. When this was brought up at the standing committee, we did share with them that we are working on a children's lawyer. So it would be like an advocate for children in the Northwest Territories. So those are the areas that we've been talking about. I guess the children's lawyer will give the children a voice in legal proceedings that certainly affects them and by also protecting their rights. So I think it's similar to what Ms. Bisaro is referring to, maybe a different title, but that piece of work we've been focusing on and we're making progress in this area. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate you're making progress. Could I have a little more definitive answer as to what kind of progress, is it anywhere near completion or fruition or decision

time? When might we see this particular initiative actually on the ground? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We are doing research in other jurisdictions as well. That should be completed and a discussion paper should be available within the next six months to the standing committee. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Committee, we're on page 9-19, activity summary, legal aid services, operations expenditures summary, \$5.642 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-20, information item, legal aid services, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-23, activity summary, court services, operations expenditures summary, \$11.098 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-24, information item, court services, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-27, activity summary, community justice and corrections, operations expenditures summary, \$33.733 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-28, activity summary, community justice and corrections, grants and contributions, contributions, \$2.061 million. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to ask a question here with regard to the community justice committees and projects. It has been a concern, I believe, to get some of these justice committees going and part of it, I understand, is due to the lack of community coordinators. I wonder if I could get an update on whether or not there's been any progress in getting more community coordinators in place and/or are we making progress on establishing community justice committees. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, with this particular area, it has been our intention that we need to have a thorough review of the community justice programming. We do have coordinators in place, not in every community. Some communities don't have it, but at the same time there are some communities that are performing really well with the Justice department with the court services. I think there are nine without coordinators. Mr. Chair, we continuously

have discussions with... Shirley Kemeys-Jones is the one in charge as the director and in constant contact and dialogue with the community to make some improvement in these areas. I think that's what it comes down to where I told my department we need to have a review of the funding that we provide to these committees. Why aren't some working; some are very successful. We need to provide some incentives in that respect. Mr. Chair, this is an area of concern and, also, I guess you can say, an opportunity for us to move on. So there is work in place for that under review. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Page 9-28, community justice and corrections, grants and contributions, contributions, \$2.061 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-29, information item, community justice and corrections, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-31, activity summary, services to public, operations expenditure summary, \$4.311 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-32. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A question here. The funding that goes to the Y for the Protection Against Family Violence Act, is that \$105,000 used totally by the Y or is it shared with other non-government organizations? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is that it is totally committed to the YWCA. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: I guess I would then ask do we know what the Y uses it for.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Ms. Schofield.

MS. SCHOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funding that's provided here is given to the Y as they are the designate under the Protection Against Family Violence Act to... When a person has been issued an order under the Protection Against Family Violence, they answer the phone, they assist, they do that. So that's what this funding is, to provide that assistance for the Protection Against Family Act. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I didn't understand that all, but that's okay. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We're on page 9-32, I believe, activity

summary, services to public, grants and contributions, contributions, \$105,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-33, information item, services to public, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-34, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-35, information item, work performed on behalf of others, continued. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-36, information item, work performed on behalf of others, continued. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 9-37, information item, work performed on behalf of others, continued. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Hearing none, committee, if you would turn to page 9-7, to consider the departmental summary. Department of Justice, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$97.992 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree this concludes the review of the Department of Justice?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Thank you to Minister Lafferty and thank you to your witnesses. I would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses from the House. Mrs. Groenewegen.

COMMITTEE MOTION 31-16(4):
CONCURRENCE OF TABLED DOCUMENT
80-16(4): SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES) NO. 4,
2009-2010,
CARRIED

MRS. GROENEWEGEN. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that consideration of Tabled Document 80-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 4, 2009-2010, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 80-16(4) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Question is being called.

---Carried

Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Bromley?

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 80-16(4) and Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011, and would like to report progress, with two motions being adopted and that consideration of Tabled Document 80-16(4) is concluded and that the House concur in those estimates and that an appropriation bill to be based thereon without delay. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Wednesday, February 24, 2010, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address

11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010
 - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act
 - Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act
 - Bill 10, Exemptions Act
 - Tabled Document 62-16(4), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2010-2011
 - Tabled Document 78-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Operations Expenditures) No. 3, 2009-2010
 - Tabled Document 84-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Infrastructure Expenditures) No.4, 2010-2011
 - Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy
 - Committee Report 5-16(4), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Human Rights Commission Report
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 24th, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

