

FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTIETH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

February 22, 2024

The Assembly commenced sitting at 1:32 p.m. with the Honourable Shane Thompson, Speaker, presiding.

Members' Attendance

Present: Member for Dehcho, Member for Frame Lake, Member for Great Slave, Honourable Member for Hay River North, Honourable Member for Hay River South, Honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Honourable Member for Kam Lake, Member for Mackenzie Delta, Member for Monfwi, Honourable Member for Nunakput, Member for Range Lake, Member for Sahtu, Honourable Member for Thebacha, Member for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh, Member for Yellowknife Centre, Member for Yellowknife North.

Absent: Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Honourable Member for Yellowknife South .

Ministers' Statements

17-20(1) The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment made a statement about reaching average \$10 a Day Child Care in the Northwest Territories.

The Member for Yellowknife Centre moved the following motion:

I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kam Lake, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, that the Minister's Statement called Reaching Average \$10- a-day Child Care in the NWT be referred to Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

The motion was CARRIED.

The Member for Range Lake sought and received unanimous consent to proceed to Item 16 on the Orders of the Day, Motions.

Motions

The Speaker resumed debate on Motion 9-20(1).

9-20(1) Motion to Amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires – Increase Board to Six Persons

Moved by the Member for Monfwi:

I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Sahtu, to amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires, by replacing the word “four” with the word “six” in the second clause, such as it reads:

AND FURTHER, that this resolution includes the Commissioner establishing a board composed of six persons appointed by the Commissioner to make the inquiry and to report on the inquiry to the Commissioner.

The Member for Monfwi requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Tu Nedhé-Willideh, Dehcho, Sahtu, Yellowknife Centre, Range Lake, Monfwi, Frame Lake, Great Slave, Mackenzie Delta, Yellowknife North. (10)

Members against: (0)

Members abstaining: Thebacha, Kam Lake, Hay River North, Inuvik Twin Lakes, Hay River South, Nunakput. (6)

The motion to amend Motion 9-20(1) was CARRIED.

9-20(1) Motion to Amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires (As Amended) – Council of Leaders

Moved by the Member for Monfwi:

I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Sahtu, to amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires as Amended, by adding the following clause after the fourth clause:

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner receive recommendations from the Council of Leaders for two persons to be appointed to the Board.

The Member for Monfwi requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Tu Nedhé-Willideh, Dehcho, Sahtu, Yellowknife Centre, Range Lake, Monfwi, Frame Lake, Great Slave, Mackenzie Delta, Yellowknife North. (10)

Members against: (0)

Members abstaining: Thebacha, Kam Lake, Hay River North, Inuvik Twin Lakes, Hay River South, Nunakput. (6)

The motion to amend Motion 9-20(1) as amended was CARRIED.

9-20(1) Motion to Amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires (As Amended) – Reduce Board to Three Persons

Moved by the Member for Frame Lake:

I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Great Slave, to amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishment of a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires as Amended, by replacing the word “six” with “three” in the second clause, such that the clause reads:

“AND FURTHER, that this resolution includes the Commissioner establishing a Board composed of three persons appointed by the Commissioner to make the inquiry and to report on the inquiry to the Commissioner;

AND FURTHER, that the words “two persons” are changed to “one person” in the third, fourth, and fifth clauses, such as the clauses read “for one person to be appointed to the Board”

The motion to amend Motion 9-20(1) as amended was CARRIED.

9-20(1) Motion to Amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires (As Amended) – Draft Inquiry Establishment Order

Moved by the Member for Dehcho:

I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Great Slave, to amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires as Amended, by replacing the words “the inquiry establishment order” with “a draft inquiry establishment order” in the last clause of the motion, such as it reads:

AND FURTHERMORE, that a draft inquiry establishment order be tabled on the first day of the May sitting of this House.

The motion to amend Motion 9-20(1) as amended was CARRIED.

9-20(1) Motion to Amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires (As Amended) – Safe Disclosure

Moved by the Member for Great Slave:

I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Dehcho, to amend Motion 9-20(1): Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires as Amended, by adding the following clause after the fifth clause:

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner recommend to the Board that they establish safe disclosure opportunities for people to share information with.

The motion to amend Motion 9-20(1) as amended was CARRIED.

9-20(1) Establishing a Public Inquiry into the 2023 Wildfires (As Amended)

The Speaker directed that Motion 9-20(1) as amended be distributed as follows:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Dehcho, that this Legislative Assembly resolve that the Commissioner cause an inquiry to be made into the 2023 wildfires pursuant to the *Public Inquiries Act*,

AND FURTHER, that this resolution includes the Commissioner establishing a Board composed of three persons appointed by the Commissioner to make the inquiry and to report on the inquiry to the Commissioner;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner receive recommendations from the Executive Council for one person to be appointed to the Board;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner receive recommendations from the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight for one person to be appointed to the Board;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner receive recommendations from the Council of Leaders for one person to be appointed to the Board;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner recommend to the Board that they establish safe disclosure opportunities for people to share information with the Board;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner ensure the perspectives of all Northwest Territories residents are adequately captured in the public inquiry undertaken by the Board;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Commissioner ask the public inquiry to make comprehensive recommendations into the future management of territorial emergencies by the Government of the Northwest Territories based on its findings;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Inquiry Establishment Order is prepared jointly between the Executive Council and the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight;

AND FURTHERMORE, that a draft Inquiry Establishment Order be tabled on the first day of the May sitting of this House.

The Member for Range Lake requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Tu Nedhé-Willideh, Dehcho, Sahtu, Yellowknife Centre, Range Lake, Monfwi, Frame Lake, Great Slave, Mackenzie Delta, Yellowknife North. (10)

Members against: Thebacha, Kam Lake, Hay River North, Inuvik Twin Lakes, Hay River South, Nunakput. (6)

Members abstaining: (0)

The motion was CARRIED AS AMENDED.

16-20(1) Appointment of Deputy Chairpersons of Committee of the Whole

Moved by the Member for Yellowknife North:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Hay River North, that the Member for Dehcho, Sheryl Yakeleya, and the Member for Sahtu, Daniel McNeely, are hereby chosen to be the deputy chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole.

The motion was CARRIED.

17-20(1) Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Tabled Document 27-20(1)

Moved by the Member for Dehcho:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Yellowknife North, that the that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to Tabled Document 27-20(1) and table it in this House within 120 days.

The Member for Dehcho requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Tu Nedhé-Willideh, Dehcho, Sahtu, Yellowknife Centre, Range Lake, Monfwi, Frame Lake, Great Slave, Mackenzie Delta, Yellowknife North. (10)

Members against: (0)

Members abstaining: Thebacha, Kam Lake, Hay River North, Inuvik Twin Lakes, Hay River South, Nunakput. (6)

The motion was CARRIED.

18-20(1) Appointment of Members to the Northwest Territories Honours Advisory Council

Moved by the Member for Yellowknife Centre:

NOW THEREFORE, I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the following persons be recommended to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories for appointment to the Northwest Territories Honours Advisory Council, effective immediately for a term of three years:

Ms. Jane Arychuk of Yellowknife; and
Ms. Denise McDonald of Inuvik.

The motion was CARRIED.

19-20(1) Appointment of Equal Pay Commissioner

Moved by the Member for Yellowknife Centre:

NOW THEREFORE, I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kam Lake, that Ms. Renée Caron be appointed as the Equal Pay Commissioner in accordance with the *Public Service Act* by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories as recommended by the Legislative Assembly;

AND FURTHER, that the Speaker be authorized to communicate the effective date of the appointment to the Commissioner.

The motion was CARRIED.

Members' Statements

- 87-20(1) The Member for Great Slave made a statement regarding the Russia-Ukraine war.
- 88-20(1) The Member for Sahtu made a statement regarding the 18th anniversary for the Great Bear River Bridge application.
- 89-20(1) The Member for Monfwi made a statement regarding the important role of Indigenous governments.
- 90-20(1) The Member for Dehcho made a statement regarding the impacts of the 2023 wildfire season on Dehcho communities.
- 91-20(1) The Member for Mackenzie Delta made a statement regarding access to dental services in the Mackenzie Delta.
- 92-20(1) The Member for Yellowknife Centre made a statement regarding cost of rheumatoid arthritis services.

Tabling of Documents

- 33-20(1) Follow-up Letter to Oral Question 3-20(1): Implementation of the Recommendations of Strengthening Support for Non-Profit Sector. Tabled by the Premier.
- 34-20(1) Public Government for the People of the North. Tabled by the Member for Monfwi.
- 35-20(1) We Have Always Been Here – The Significance of Dene Knowledge. Tabled by the Member for Monfwi.
- 36-20(1) Correspondence from Gerald Antoine, Dene National Chief, to Commissioner Margaret Thom dated February 13, 2024. Tabled by the Member for Tu Nedhé-Willideh.

First Reading of Bills

- Bill 1: *An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*
Introduced by the Member for Yellowknife Centre.
- In accordance with Rule 8.2(3), the Speaker deemed Bill 1 read for the first time and ready for second reading.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

The Chair, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh reported that the Committee of the Whole considered Tabled Document 28-20(1): Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2023-2024; Tabled Document 29-20(1): Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024; Minister's Statement 4-20(1): 2023 Wildfire Season Review and Planning for the 2024 Season; Minister's Statement 5-20(1): Emergency Management Preparation; and Minister's Statement 17-20(1): Reaching Average \$10 a Day Child Care in the NWT, and reported progress.

The Member for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh, seconded by the Honourable Member for Thebacha, moved concurrence of the report of the Committee of the Whole. The motion was CARRIED.

The Speaker adjourned the House at 5:42 p.m.



Hon. Shane Thompson
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



Glen Rutland
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly