



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 26

2nd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, June 6, 2017 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2017 Spring Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

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Hon. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Deputy Premier Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Economic Development; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Justice
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Pauline Frost	Vuntut Gwitchin	Minister of Health and Social Services; Environment; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Highways and Public Works; the Public Service Commission
Hon. Jeanie Dendys	Mountainview	Minister of Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Women's Directorate

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Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
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Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Liz Hanson	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
Kate White	Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King

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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, June 6, 2017 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Ride for Dad

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to give tribute to the Ride for Dad 2017.

I ask my colleagues in this House to join me in recognizing the Ride for Dad. To the riders and supporters in the gallery, we ride as one for a cause. Yukoners join the Telus motorcycle Ride for Dad to fight prostate cancer. The mission is to raise funds to save men's lives by supporting prostate cancer research and raising public awareness of the disease. Since 2000, Telus Ride for Dad has donated more than \$23 million to Prostate Cancer Fight Foundation, the foundation that supports prostate cancer research and awareness in the communities where the funds are raised.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian men over 50. The success of treatment depends on how early the cancer is detected; therefore, I cannot stress enough the importance of better diagnoses, treatment and prevention to further improve our capacity to deal with this disease. This year in Canada, it's estimated that 4,000 men will die of this disease. On average, Mr. Speaker, one in eight Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime; however, there is good news. The death rate has been declining significantly by almost 3.1 percent per year between 2003 and 2012 — this from the improved testing for prostate cancer and better treatment options.

I encourage men over 40 to talk to their doctor about getting tested since, most of the time, prostate cancer does not initially cause any symptoms, although some of the symptoms are inability to urinate, loss of bladder control and frequent pain in the lower back, hips or upper thighs — just to name a few.

Cancer touches the lives of many Yukoners and the Ride for Dad Yukon is a great way to support our Yukon families fighting prostate cancer. This year's Ride for Dad will be held this upcoming Saturday, June 10. The ride registration and breakfast start at 7:00 a.m. The kickstands-up and parade will start at 11:00 a.m. at the Shipyards Park main parking lot. People are also invited on Friday night for a pre-registration night with a barbecue and motorcycle rodeo.

On a personal note, my son Liam and I will be riding for my father, who was a 25-year survivor of prostate cancer. He

encouraged me to talk to my peers and now my sons to get tested for themselves, their families and their loved ones. It's a manly thing to do.

I would like to conclude by expressing my gratitude and appreciation to all these individuals who are supporting Yukoners living with prostate cancer. Finally, once again, I invite Yukon men to get the facts, know the risks and talk to their doctor about prostate cancer.

Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to the Telus Ride for Dad and specifically Ride for Dad Yukon, which goes above and beyond annually in the effort to raise awareness in the territory for prostate cancer. Fundraising efforts from Ride for Dad have raised over \$23 million since 2000, as we heard, to fight prostate cancer through research and awareness.

Prostate cancer does not always present itself through obvious symptoms. In fact, quite often, no symptoms are present in early stages of prostate cancer.

As early detection leads to the best responses to treatment, and in turn, survival rates, it is encouraged that all men in their 40s get a prostate-specific antigen or PSA test to establish their baseline. The PSA test is a simple blood test that measures the amount of PSA protein in the blood. Higher levels of PSA could indicate the presence of cancer or other prostate conditions. Combining the PSA test with a digital rectal exam, or DRE, can provide your doctor with more information and help to increase the accuracy of these early detection tests.

Not all men develop prostate cancer, but knowing the likelihood that you could at some point is crucial to whether or not you get regular testing done. If you are over 50, have a history of prostate cancer in your family, are overweight or your diet consists of high fat content with little fibre, you may be at higher risk for prostate cancer. Get checked and know your risks, Mr. Speaker.

The Ride for Dad Yukon begins its pre-registration on Friday, June 9, which includes a barbecue and motorcycle games. The Ride for Dad is to follow on Saturday, June 10. A pancake breakfast kicks off the morning from 9:00 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. and the downtown parade begins at 11:00 a.m. There will be a draw for a 2017 Honda Rebel 300 and new participants are entered or you can be entered by raising \$100 in pledges or if you sign up a new participant to be entered.

Today we have in the gallery from Ride for Dad a few people who were able to join us: Gil Bradet, Shirley Milligan, Sean Secord, Mark Beese, Mike Nixon, John Gullison and Lorne Whittaker. We would like to thank all of you for the time and effort that you put into this great cause. I would also like to mention a couple of people who weren't able to make it today: Mike and Julie Thorpe.

So thank you to all of you. Thank you for being here today.

Applause

Speaker: Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Mr. Adel: With the indulgence of yourself and the House, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to recognize Roger from the —

Speaker: Member for Copperbelt North, please sit down. Thank you; I will get to you.

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of the NDP caucus to add our voices to the celebration of the Ride for Dad.

Years ago, prostate cancer wasn't a topic that was openly discussed, and certainly not in this sort of public venue. We didn't discuss testing and diagnostics openly. Men suffered in silence. Thankfully, this has changed, in no small part because of a national movement to literally mobilize the conversation.

The Ride for Dad came about after a chance meeting. Garry Janz was interviewing patients for a docudrama at Kingston's cancer centre. One of them, Charlie Pester, a prostate cancer patient, was losing his battle. Pester confided to Janz that: "If I had been tested earlier, I would not be going home to plan my funeral today." Moved by that comment, Janz, with the help of Byron Smith, chose to help by combining their hobby of motorcycle riding and their goal to raise awareness and funds for prostate cancer.

The first ride was held in Ottawa 17 years ago and raised just over \$20,000. Since then, it has expanded across the country and not only started conversations, raised awareness and raised millions of dollars, but it has also saved lives.

When I think about my time in mining camps, I always think about the miners and the relationships I saw in that group of tough, strong and caring men. They looked out for each other and, never in a way that singled any out or made them look weak, they always had each other's back.

That's how I feel about the Ride for Dad. This beautiful, thunderous event gets people out doing an activity that showcases strength and style. It doesn't single anyone out but offers support and community, and, most importantly, it brings the topic of prostate cancer out into the open where it belongs. It is done in a fun and inclusive way that encourages all people to get out and support the event. It makes us all aware of the need to talk about and test for prostate cancer, and, Mr. Speaker, even the toughest need to get tested.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Adel: My apologies, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to recognize Roger Hanberg again. He is one of the riders with the Gold Wing Road Riders Association and will be riding in the Ride for Dad on Saturday as well — one of my constituents.

Welcome, Roger.

Applause

TRIBUTES

In recognition of the anniversary of D-Day

Mr. Hutton: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government and the Third Party to pay tribute to the 73rd anniversary of D-Day, the Battle of Normandy.

D-Day, June 6, 1944, witnessed the start of Operation Overlord, the major Allied campaign to invade and liberate Europe from Nazi Germany. On that day, 150,000 Allied troops landed on five different beaches along the coast of Normandy in occupied France. Canada played a major role in the battle, which saw 15,000 Canadian troops land on Juno Beach and establish their objective of a beachhead within mere hours.

Much inclement weather and many delays occurred in the lead-up to D-Day, but the Allies showed their resolve and forged on with the invasion. By the end of the day — "the longest day", as it came to be known — several Allied objectives had been achieved that would prove crucial in the battle for northwestern Europe. D-Day would not have been successful if it weren't for the many valuable lessons learned the hard way from the failure of the Dieppe invasion almost two years earlier. The Allies also benefited from critical information gained from the decryption of the German Enigma communication system. The immense planning and preparation that went into the invasion was unprecedented, as was the cooperation demonstrated by the various Allied armed forces that participated in the operation.

Sacrifices made by Canadian troops and the joint Allied forces on D-Day marked the tipping point in the war. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to these soldiers who fought with great courage and sacrificed their lives for the freedom we now enjoy. We salute these ordinary Canadians who made extraordinary sacrifices for future generations of Canadians. The price paid at Juno Beach must not be forgotten, and the price paid during World War II must not be forgotten. The strength, courage and sacrifice of those who defended our way of life must not be forgotten.

Lest we forget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Istchenko: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Normandy, the 73rd D-Day anniversary. Mr. Speaker, normally, we're not sitting in the House on this actual date so I thought it would be important to tribute this day in history.

The Second World War was a defining event in Canadian history, transforming a quiet country on the fringes of global affairs into a critical player in the 20th century's most important struggle. Canada contributed forces to the campaigns of western Europe beyond what might be expected of a small nation of only 11 million people. Between 1939 and 1945, more than one million Canadian men and women served full-time in the Armed Forces, and more than 43,000 were killed.

Despite the bloodshed, the war against Germany and the Axis powers reinvigorated Canada's industrial base, elevated the role of women in the economy, paved the way for Canada's membership in NATO, and left Canadians with a legacy of proud service and sacrifice embodied in names such as Dieppe, Hong Kong, Ortona and Juno Beach.

During World War II, the Battle of Normandy which lasted from June 1944 to August 1944, resulted in the Allied liberation of western Europe from Nazi Germany's control.

Code-named “Operation Overlord”, the battle began on June 6, 1944 — also known as D-Day — when some 156,000 American, British and Canadian forces landed on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France — the Normandy region.

The invasion was one of the largest amphibious military assaults in history and required extensive planning. Prior to D-Day, the Allies conducted a large-scale deception campaign designed to mislead the Germans about the intended invasion target. By late August 1944, all of northern France had been liberated and by the following spring, the Allies had defeated the Germans.

The Normandy landings have been called the “beginning of the end” of the war in Europe. In 1944, General Dwight Eisenhower was appointed the commander of Operation Overlord. In the months and weeks before D-Day, the Allies carried out a massive deception operation intended to make the Germans think the main invasion target was Pas de Calais — the northernmost point between Britain and France — rather than Normandy. By dawn on June 6, thousands of paratroopers and glider troops were already on the ground behind enemy lines, securing bridges and exit roads.

The amphibious invasion began at 6:30 a.m. The British and Canadians overcame light opposition to capture beaches code-named Gold, Juno and Sword, as did the Americans at Utah Beach. US forces faced heavy resistance at Omaha Beach where there were over 2,000 American casualties. However, by day’s end, approximately 156,000 Allied troops had successfully stormed Normandy’s beaches. According to some estimates, more than 4,000 Allied troops lost their lives in the D-Day invasion, with thousands more wounded or missing.

By the end of August 1944, the Allies had reached the Seine River. Paris was liberated, and then the Germans had been removed from northwestern France, effectively concluding the Battle of Normandy. The Normandy invasion began to turn the tide against the Nazis.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud a few years ago when my son Travis Allen Istchenko travelled with other Yukon youth to Normandy for the 70th anniversary of D-Day celebrations to honour and to learn. He was amazed to see that the cemeteries are immaculately maintained by the schoolchildren and they had laid a bundle of yellow roses on each headstone.

As a young Canadian soldier posted in Germany, I had an opportunity to visit Holland and France on many occasions. The veterans’ sacrifices have not been forgotten by the people of Holland and France. Canadian flags and signs thanking Canada can be seen lining the streets today.

In closing, I want to quote from Hansard, Monday, June 6, 1994, by the Honourable Bill Brewster. He was a good MLA. He was from Kluane. He served with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles during World War II and he landed in France on D-Day — and I quote: “I hope we can now take a moment from our busy lives to honour and remember the wartime sacrifices made by Canadians overseas and at home so that we can enjoy peace today.”

Thank you. Lest we forget.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I rise today to recognize Conrad Kirkwood. He is a friend renowned for his hats and volunteerism. I wish you welcome into the House.

Applause

Ms. White: I’m really excited to ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Ben Derochie. He is in the back row. I first met Ben at the Zero Waste Conference where he was trying to change the world, and right now, he is working on getting his master’s degree in sustainable energy policy, so I hope he brings that back to the Yukon. We’re so lucky to have you here. Thank you, Ben.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have eight legislative returns. I’ll describe them just briefly: the answer to a question about school structural safety asked on May 8 by the honourable Member for Takhini-Kopper King; the answer to a question regarding First Nations and temporary teachers asked on May 9 by the honourable Member for Takhini-Kopper King; the answer to a question regarding the number of ELL students in public schools from the honourable Member for Takhini-Kopper King on May 25, 2017; the answer to a question regarding the status of the Auditor General’s report recommendations from the honourable Member for Porter Creek North from May 25, 2017; the answer to a question regarding the upcoming schedule for the Yukon College mobile trades training facility from the honourable Member for Porter Creek North, asked on May 25; the answer to a question regarding the school bus schedule for Grizzly Valley students from the honourable Member for Porter Creek North, again asked on May 25; the answer to a question regarding the Yukon nominee programs from the honourable Member for Takhini-Kopper King on May 25; and lastly, the answer to a question regarding the number of foreign students attending Yukon College, asked on May 25.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling today the response to a question posed by the honourable Member for Kluane on seniors housing in Haines Junction. This dates back to May 24.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I have two documents for tabling today. The first is a letter from two constituents addressed to the Premier regarding Bill No. 5, *Act to Amend the Human Rights Act and the Vital Statistics Act (2017)*.

The second document is an e-mail dated today from a constituent to the Minister of Health and Social Services in

response to a letter regarding her health care coverage issue and a letter that the minister tabled in this House on May 11, 2017.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Mr. Adel: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with communities to create available developed land banks to keep lot prices affordable.

Ms. McLeod: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to improve services provided to patients and visitors in community hospitals by exploring opportunities to provide free public wireless Internet access at the Watson Lake Community Hospital and the Dawson City Community Hospital.

Ms. Hanson: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to strengthen protection against retaliation for whistle-blowers under the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Tourism initiatives

Ms. Van Bibber: Yesterday, we asked the government about the support and the budget that they were providing for Canada 150 community events. We are now 24 days away from Canada Day and there has been little communication about this funding. In a response, the minister said that if someone wanted to access funding they would go through Culture Quest.

I looked at the government's Culture Quest website, which is administered by the Yukon Arts Centre, and there was zero mention of Canada 150. As a result, the government website directs you to a third-party website that is still talking about funding priorities for 2014. How are Yukoners supposed to apply for Canada 150 funding when there is no clear indication or communication by the government on how to do so?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you to the Member for Porter Creek for the question. I did indicate yesterday that the funding would come from Culture Quest, and it is done

through a direct reach-out. Our department is reaching out directly to communities to access the Culture Quest funding.

In terms of the website, we have some really great news and we will be talking about it in our budget around the redevelopment of the website, so we are working on that this year. There is an allocation within the budget to do that, so this year and next year, there will be a redevelopment of the website. I will certainly have my department make the necessary changes, as you have indicated today in the House, to make some corrections and to direct people where they need to go to find the information around Culture Quest.

Thank you so much for the question.

Ms. Van Bibber: Which communities will see events as a result of the \$200,000 identified in the budget for community events? For the \$100,000 identified in the budget for signature events, will each community be given the same amount?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the supplementary question. Again, it will be done through a direct reach-out to the communities, so there will be an equal amount available to all communities in Yukon. That's the way that the program will be set up.

My understanding is that each community would be given access to up to \$10,000. I will, again, get the exact information and bring that information back to you.

In terms of the two projects — these were allocations — Music Yukon's Canada 150 signature event is "Our North: A Pan-Territorial Celebration" — so that was an allocation of \$50,000. Also, there was the National Arts Centre's Canada Scene, which was for \$50,000. These two commitments were made prior to the Liberals taking government — so it was prior to the election. So these were commitments that were made to national projects within Canada. Again, these were commitments made by the previous government.

Ms. Van Bibber: Yesterday, I had asked the minister when we would expect to see the Canada 150 banners, and I was pleased to know they're here. I did get to see them after Question Period, but we are only 24 days away from Canada Day, and I think Yukoners may be expecting to have some of them up by now.

Can the minister explain why the delay in the banners for the 150th birthday celebration? Was it because they were manufactured in a country other than Canada?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the supplementary question. Yes, I was really honoured to be able to bring the member opposite up to our offices to witness the unveiling of the banners. We will be having an official unveiling of them later, either at the end of this week or early next week. These are new tourism banners. Some of them are geared directly toward the Canada 150. They feature six Yukon artists. So it will be really great to have as many members as possible to come and witness the unveiling of these. Either later this week or early next week, we'll be having an event and I'll make sure that everyone is aware of that.

Again, these banners are directly related to our overall tourism branding. So we do them every two years, or some that are really specific to the Canada 150 — they're going out

to the communities this week. We'll start seeing them up next week.

In terms of your question regarding — I'll have to get back to you with a bit more information about where they were manufactured. I do not have that information in front of me right now.

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Hassard: As you know, the Liberal government signed on to the carbon tax scheme back in December. Since then, they've been promising that every single Yukoner will get 100 percent of the money back that they pay as a result of the carbon tax. However, we now know that GST is applied on top of the carbon tax.

A recent report by the Library of Parliament estimates that in BC and Alberta alone, the carbon tax will result in \$250 million in increased taxes. In January and again in April, we asked the government to confirm that they will ensure Yukoners also get this money back, but we have not received an answer yet. Can the government commit today that every single Yukoner will get 100 percent of the extra money they pay as a result of the carbon tax, including the increased amount they pay into the GST?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: As this process continues on, we continue to work with the federal government on the analysis, which is key to those questions that have been asked today and to the future implementation of this carbon-pricing backstop. We are currently working with Canada to conduct a study on the impacts of carbon pricing that may be had on our northern economy, and there are some vulnerable groups out there, which we have certainly talked about.

This economic impact study will be done over the summer. I think that getting into the analysis of impacts to tax or even the overall strategy at this point would be really quite premature to speak to some of those very focused questions at this point.

Part of the federal government's commitment in the pan-Canadian framework, which we have talked about, is that together we will study and recognize unique circumstances in the territories before the backstop is implemented, and certainly we have talked about some sectors that have that sensitivity. The federal government has confirmed, which I am glad to say, that the results of the study will be considered before the backstops are in place. The conversations between Yukon government officials — the Premier and our team are working on that implementation and the federal backstop. Once we see that analysis through the summer and we take into consideration the breadth of it, we will be able to identify exactly how that backstop will work to get that money back to Yukoners.

Mr. Hassard: I think the only thing that was premature here was signing on to this agreement without having the information in place. It appears that not only will Yukoners be paying more for everything as a result of the Premier's carbon tax scheme, but the carbon tax scheme itself will force Yukoners to pay millions more in GST and other taxes.

In BC and Alberta alone, as I mentioned, it's estimated that families will be paying up to \$250 million more in GST as a result of this Liberal carbon tax. The more I learn about the Premier's carbon tax scheme, the more it sounds like a scam to me.

Were the Liberals aware of the fact that Yukoners would also pay more GST when they signed on to the carbon tax? Or did they forget to ask this question as well?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Once again, we're going through a process of analysis on this and I find it very interesting that British Columbia is being used today as the test case for the Leader of the Official Opposition. You have a jurisdiction where actually there is a carbon pricing mechanism in place. It happens to be the jurisdiction with the strongest economy in the country. It happens to be the jurisdiction with the strongest tourism growth in the country, but we leave that for another day.

The reality of where we are — we have a federal strategy that is being implemented across the country. The ink that landed on paper to start this process of engagement on this strategy came from across the aisle. As much as the Leader of the Official Opposition says today that before you signed, you signed — the Official Opposition signed the agreement. With that in mind, we should maybe think this through before we rewrite history on this one.

What we will do is do the analysis, work with the federal government and move forward and ask the tough questions and get great due diligence in place as we put this process in place over the years 2017-18.

Mr. Hassard: Again, all we see out of this Liberal government is pointing fingers and passing the buck.

The Liberals made a big deal during the election campaign that every Yukoner would get all of their money back and now we find out Yukoners will be paying more GST as a result. Every Yukoner is going to see less money at the end of the year as a result of the Premier's carbon tax scheme and the Yukon Liberals' response is to shrug their shoulders and point their fingers. Another tax that will be applied on top of the carbon tax is the territorial fuel tax.

Will the Liberals commit to return to Yukoners all increased territorial revenues from fuel tax that will result from the carbon tax?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Once again, it's tough when you identify something that's factual, which we just did. Certainly the previous Premier, in his work on signing off on the agreement, started this process, but then we're scolded across the way because we're blaming — it's not blame; it's a fact. As we move through this, we are doing the proper analysis. Our team here is working with the federal government to ensure that we stay true to the commitments to Yukoners about making sure that there is a flow through on this carbon pricing. We do want to see responsible efforts when it comes to reducing our emissions, but certainly I understand as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that there are some sectors that just don't have the same set of tools to reduce their carbon footprint.

My friend across the way can put words in our mouths and throw out these ideas but I think we should, to be fair to Yukoners — I think what Yukoners really want after all these years and 14 years of Yukon Party government is that they want us all to work together to come up with a strategy. We're going to work together, we're going to work with government officials and we're going to put a proper strategy in place, as we said we would do during the election.

Question re: Early childhood strategy

Ms. White: The Child Development Centre is a not-for-profit organization that has been serving children and their families from birth to kindergarten for nearly 40 years. They provide a range of therapeutic services to meet the developmental needs of Yukon children with special needs. The CDC provides services in all Yukon communities monthly or bi-monthly and in Whitehorse on a full-time basis. The staff at the centre provides amazing support and programming to children and their families. Unfortunately, the CDC is on a school year schedule and is closed for mid-June to mid-August. We've heard from families about the frustration and the challenges they face come summertime.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister believe that this school year model designed to meet the needs of special needs children and their families nearly 40 years ago is still appropriate?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for that great question. Most certainly, I think looking at some of the antiquated approaches to funding child care programs and support programs for our Yukon children is clearly a priority. We will take under advisement the recommendation and look at the funding envelope and look at ensuring that we provide the best services possible to all students and all children in Yukon and ensure that they have easy access and timely services that are required and that are essential and necessary.

Ms. White: It's important to point out that the Child Development Centre is not a daycare; it's early childhood education. Parents of a child in a full-time program face unsurmountable barriers come summer. Daycares or summer camps and programs are seldom set up for children with special needs or behaviour management issues. Parents must take the summer off work or try to find a full-time special caregiver. For many parents and families, finding appropriate full-time support or summer programming for their child and their special programming needs is impossible. We know of families who had to make the drastic decision to move away from Yukon to find better year-round programming and consistent supports.

Mr. Speaker, parents of children with special needs are looking for support and programming on a year-round basis. Will the minister consult with parents and communities about extending the programming at the Child Development Centre to make it year-round?

Hon. Ms. Frost: At this time, what I can commit to is to work in collaboration with the Child Development Centre and the Department of Education and ensure that we are

providing essential and timely services. As I indicated earlier, it's not something that falls directly on Health and Social Services. We most certainly want to ensure that we take a whole-of-government approach, which perhaps is something that might have been a challenge historically.

Currently, I really do believe as a minister that in order to address a lot of the challenges that we're confronted with in our government, it has to be done in collaboration and in cooperation to best align with the school year, with the programs and with the services that are available, and perhaps expanded services if necessary — granted that services sometimes are limited to rural Yukon and limited in terms of timely response to our children in our rural settings. I want to ensure that we collaborate and cooperate as effectively as we can to address the question posed.

Ms. White: We've often heard from this government about a whole-government approach. It's important to note that funding for the Child Development Centre comes from the Department of Health and Social Services. So it's fine to talk about supporting families and communities, but actions will always speak louder than words.

Every summer, families with children attending the Child Development Centre are trying to deal with a complete end to critical programming for two entire months. Child physiotherapists and speech and language specialists are attached to the CDC and are not able to provide the monitoring, training or one-on-one support they provide the rest of the year. There are no alternatives in Whitehorse and certainly not in the communities, where the gap in service is even longer and larger.

For the family and child preparing to enter kindergarten, this lack of support is a real challenge. Progress made over the preceding 10 months can be lost without the regular reinforcement and support provided by the CDC programming.

Will the minister commit to doing a review of the Child Development Centre programming with a view to making its valuable services available year-round in this calendar year?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Recognizing that the member opposite is absolutely correct — the responsibilities fall on Health and Social Services and I do take that role and responsibility seriously. I will, however, work in collaboration with the Department of Education and with the Child Development Centre, and look at finding a proper solution — most definitely. I'm not suggesting in any way that I'm shirking my responsibilities or diverting to anyone else. I will take that responsibility upon myself and most definitely will look at that program area. If it needs adjustment, then that's what will evolve. In due time, it will happen.

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Kent: On April 25, the Premier said about the carbon tax — and I quote: "There is no such thing as an exemption. There never was an exemption. An exemption was never an option." What a difference a month makes. As it turns out, the Premier was wrong. In fact, we've heard from Ottawa that everything is on the table, including exemptions.

As a result of pressure from the Official Opposition, the Premier has reluctantly said that he might try to get some exemptions for the territory.

Now that the Liberals admit that exemptions are possible and it looks like they are finally ready to stand up for Yukoners, will they negotiate exemptions and what exemptions will they seek?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: You know, I've been waiting to answer this question, because it's quite interesting how history is being rewritten again.

I remember during the campaign how this became such a hot topic. I'll make sure that I get volume two and three if we go through the next two supplementaries. You know what was quite interesting is that the Yukon Chamber of Commerce put together a forum — a debate on this topic. The Yukon Party chose to not send one candidate. This has been the hot topic here — not one of their candidates would show up to speak and debate with us. I had the opportunity to go. They sent their campaign manager. But at that point in time —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Pillai: This must be striking a chord, Mr. Speaker. What was quite interesting is that, during that discussion, the stance of the Yukon Party was quite simple: We're just not going to do anything. They talk about exemption — it wasn't really an exemption. It was: We're just not going to sign on. We're just going to turn a blind eye. We don't have a plan. There is no plan. We're just going walk the other way and this is a bad thing. That was the plan, which they now sort of term as — they now call it an exemption.

What we're actually seeing right now from the federal government is specific sectors where they've come back and they've said, "Hey, these are sensitive sectors." We've seen in the prairies — they talk about agriculture. We've talked about the resource sector here. But certainly, it's quite interesting — the spin and the spin and the spin.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, they had no plan, and they were saying that they were exempt from the whole agreement. That was the stance that day. This is a totally different discussion, but it's interesting how it's all being melded together —

Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Kent: Of course, during the campaign, our plan was to stand up for Yukoners. We don't see that out of the current government. In the Deputy Premier's response, we didn't get any answer on what exemptions they will be seeking and for whom they will be seeking them.

We have heard the Premier muse that the Yukon Liberals are considering having the carbon tax hit placer miners to force them to ensure their camps are now solar-powered. However, we have also heard him say that industries such as the placer mining industry can't switch off diesel, and they may need a special approach because the carbon tax would potentially kill their industry.

So Yukoners are receiving mixed messages here, Mr. Speaker. Will the Liberal government work to get an exemption for the placer mining industry — yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: It is interesting across the way. What I heard is: we stood up for Yukoners. Well, you know what?

Yukoners, the voters, our constituents and their constituents are smart people. If you are going to stand up for somebody, you need to have a plan on how you're going to stand up for somebody. Just saying over and over again, "I'm going to stand up for you" but with no plan — that is not what people want to hear. That's really the fact of the situation. If I'm going to go to a door in Porter Creek South and talk to somebody — or one of my colleagues is going to the door — the first thing they are going to say is: "Are you going to stand up for me? What was your plan?" We still haven't heard a plan. All we heard was, "We're just not going to deal with it." That's the first thing.

The second thing is, once again — let's not misquote the leader of this Legislative Assembly. What was said was that there are some placer miners who are being very progressive in how they work. I think the key was that they were installing some renewable forms of energy in the form of solar. I think they were reducing their costs by about \$800 a month during the season. I think that's a good thing. We look at Gold Corporation, and I think that the member opposite and I would agree that it is a very progressive company. It is the third-largest gold mining company in the world. They are coming in and they're using the same sort of strategy. How do they reduce 15 percent of their emissions by going with renewable energy?

Once again, rewriting history — really interesting when you think back to that forum during the election.

Mr. Kent: I have had the opportunity to ask two questions here today. We didn't receive any answers from the Deputy Premier on which exemptions the government would be seeking. There are no answers for the placer miners on whether they will be included in those exemptions.

Mr. Speaker, regarding this Liberal carbon tax scheme, the Minister of Tourism and Culture previously said — and I quote: "... tourism businesses will pay slightly more for fossil fuels; however this will be offset by rebates." So it seems that the government has at least some of the details of their scheme, but for some reason they haven't provided them to us.

We also know they have so far refused to do an analysis of the impacts of the carbon tax on the tourism sector. The interesting thing is that the minister has essentially stated that there will be no exemption for any business related to tourism. Why are the Liberals picking winners and losers with their carbon tax scheme?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Last year, just ahead of the territorial election, Andrew Coyne — columnist and past editor for the *National Post* — wrote an article, entitled "There's a conservative case for carbon pricing, but not a good one for the alternative". I would like to read a few excerpts from that article.

I am quoting: "Carbon pricing, already a reality in some parts of Canada, will soon be the reality across Canada. The question is: at what point will it become a reality for the Conservative party? Or perhaps better: will the Conservatives please get real?"

"British Columbia has had a carbon tax since 2008. Alberta will have one in place by 2018. Ontario and Quebec

are implementing cap-and-trade regimes. That's 80 percent of the country, by population, where carbon pricing is now law."

"... the official Conservative position favours, as a remedy, regulations limiting emissions by industry (even if they never got around to implementing many of these)."

The party "... favours 'regulation on industry rather than taxes on Canadians,' as if the costs of regulation were not a form of tax, or that industry would not pass on these costs to 'Canadians.'"

"It makes the Conservatives look unserious on an issue that for many voters is an entrance exam. More than that, it is a massive missed opportunity..."

So when it comes to various industries — when a carbon tax comes here to our tourism industry, it has also come in British Columbia and it has had not a negative effect. We are standing up with Yukoners. We are standing up with Canadians —

Speaker: Order, please.

Question re: Carbon tax

Ms. McLeod: Every Yukon family will see increased costs as a result of the Premier's carbon tax scheme and, at the end of the day, we still have to heat our homes and drive to work. We also have to get a lot of our groceries shipped up the highway.

If the Liberals will seek to have certain industries excluded from the carbon tax, why are they not also trying to give a break to hard-working families?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Interesting conversation we're having today — we have committed right from the beginning of this conversation that we would, through the backstop, take the dollars that were reallocated through the strategy and give them back to Yukoners. The conversation today is sort of twisting the words that we have said. The reality is that we made the statement. In the fall, after the analysis has been done and we start to roll out the strategies and processes, if there are ideological differences — that is what this Assembly is for — to have those debates.

We haven't changed our position. We're doing the work that has been needed. We're getting information that continues to come through on what the federal position is on some of these pieces. Certainly we all know, as a territorial government, when a federal government comes and they make these decisions and put them in place, the best thing for us to do is to put a plan in place, which we're not seeing from across the aisle — still no plan. There is lots of criticism, but no plan. I think Yukoners would like to hear that plan — other than to say no. Since we don't have that, we'll continue to do the work. We'll take a stance, which is the right thing to do, and we'll put our strategies in place.

Ms. McLeod: Hard-working families would have deserved an answer to that question.

We know that the carbon tax scheme is going to hit the pocketbooks of Yukon families. Not only that but, thanks to the Yukon Liberals, Yukoners will be hit with a double tax because we'll be paying increased GST as well.

Regarding consultations on the carbon tax, the Premier stated on May 24 that we will have until June 30. That means the government has only 24 days to consult. We have seen zero communication or consultation plan from this government.

What is the government's plan to consult every single Yukoner on the carbon tax scheme that they signed on to?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to talk about the carbon tax — a federal carbon tax that Premier Pasloski signed on to. That's what I will discuss.

We have an example of a carbon tax here in Canada. It is British Columbia. They implemented a price on carbon in 2008. It started at \$10 a tonne and it went up to \$30 a tonne. In a report from Ross Beaty, chairman of Pan American Silver Corp and Alterra Power, Richard Lipsey, professor emeritus of economics at Simon Fraser University, and Stewart Elgie, professor of law and economics at the University of Ottawa — they state: "... B.C.'s policy has been a real environmental and economic success after six years..."

"The result is that taxpayers are coming out ahead. B.C. now has the lowest personal income tax rate in Canada... and one of the lowest corporate rates..."

"... while some had predicted that the tax shift would hurt the province's economy, in fact, B.C.'s GDP has slightly outperformed the rest of Canada's since 2008."

A price on carbon is a solid step in helping our economy to transition away from its dependence on fossil fuels. Not doing so will leave a much larger challenge for our economy in the future. I appreciate that the member opposite is concerned about families. We are too and we will be working with them when we help to rebate the tax that the federal government is planning to levy.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for the primer on the BC tax system. It doesn't help Yukon families, mind you, and we still don't have any answers for Yukon families.

Unfortunately, we're in the eleventh hour. For the past six months, it appears that the Liberals had their heads in the sand. First the Premier said Yukon can't get an exemption to the carbon tax. Then we found out from the federal government that the Premier was wrong. Now there are only 24 days left for consultation. This does not give Yukoners very much time to provide input. Industry associations need an appropriate amount of time to speak with their members and the government has no plan to actually consult every Yukoner.

Does the minister think it's fair to force a new tax on every Yukoner without even consulting with them first?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Sticking to the facts — Premier Pasloski, in his reign, certainly signed on to this agreement that started this.

Number two — exemptions which we spoke to today — quite interesting. I don't know — I can tell you, during the forum, during the election, I was there as a candidate in the election. Nobody from across the way was there or any of their candidates, even though this is the most important issue to them. Certainly I remember their position. Their position

was: “We’re just not going to do anything; we don’t have a plan; we’re just not going to do anything.”

It has been a good run on this one — still no plan. We’re going to continue to respect the hard-working people. The hard-working people of Yukon elected us because they trusted our position on it. We will do what we said we are going to do. We will put the plan in place. We will work with the federal government. We will open up to work with our counterparts if they want to. If they don’t want to, we respect that as well. We’re doing this for Yukoners and that’s who put us here.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members’ business

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3) I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, June 7, 2017. They are Motion No. 79, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, and Motion No. 73, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Mr. Kent: In order to expedite debate on government business, the Official Opposition will not be identifying any private members’ business for Wednesday, June 7, 2017.

Speaker: We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Hutton): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services in Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 201: *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*.

Department of Community Services — continued

Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and welcome back to the officials.

I have a number of questions that we developed previous to debate starting, but I think what I’m going to do is, instead of asking all of those questions, I’ll put some of the ones that I don’t get a chance to ask into a written question and get the minister to provide a written response — or by way of legislative return, hopefully — to those outstanding questions. But what I’m going to do is, just before ceding the floor to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, the critic for the Third Party, I’ll walk through the mandate letter for the Minister of Community Services.

I also wanted to quickly touch on a couple of riding-specific issues before I did that. The first one that I wanted to ask the minister about was with respect to staffing at community libraries — in particular, the Watson Lake library.

The first issue that I wanted to get into was with respect to pay equity for a community librarian. The analysis done by the board of the Watson Lake Community Library suggests that, in comparing the Watson Lake community librarian to a Whitehorse library assistant, there is a discrepancy in the salary of \$21.18 an hour for Watson Lake and \$27.75 per hour for Whitehorse.

There is also a discrepancy in sick pay. In the community, it works out to about four paid days per year, whereas in Whitehorse, it works out to 15 paid days per year. Vacation pay for the community librarian is four percent of the salary, which is approximately six hours per month. In Whitehorse, it is 2.5 days per month. There is no special leave pay and no benefits for the Watson Lake community librarian; however, in Whitehorse there are five days per year to a maximum of 30 days, according to this analysis, for special leave pay and the standard benefit package of dental, prescriptions, and extended health and death benefits.

I am just wondering if the minister can comment on this difference in pay between community librarians and those working in Whitehorse, and what his plans are to address this — to close that gap that exists. Again, this analysis is something that was provided to us by the board of the Watson Lake library.

If the minister has different figures, I would certainly welcome hearing those, but if these are indeed the gaps that exist, what work is the government undertaking to close those gaps?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Community library boards have members who are formally appointed within each community, and they manage the day-to-day activities of their respective community library. The Public Libraries branch, in cooperation with Highways and Public Works and the

Department of Education, provide space, equipment, library materials, hardware, software, training and communications connectivity for community libraries. Through this collaboration, the Government of Yukon regularly reviews the Internet services in our communities and responds to increasing demands.

I will say to the member opposite that, in this budget, we did not seek to increase the amounts going to the community libraries, but I have started to have those conversations with the community libraries about how they are staffed and how that money — what it is relative to the Whitehorse library and those who are under our union staff.

In this budget, it is not being addressed — or it is what it has been over past years — but I am willing to look at it and to have a conversation with the department to try to see what we can do going forward in future years.

I want to be careful, though, when I say this — that we won't raise the money that is paid to staff; rather, we would raise the money that goes to those boards. It is their choice about how that money is allocated beyond that point, but I'm sure we could be working with them.

I think I have also heard it from — maybe it's the Leader of the Third Party. I just recall hearing it a couple of times now and I thank them for their suggestions.

Mr. Kent: The second issue that was brought forward for the community library in Watson Lake is that of youth in community programming. Currently, Watson Lake library has inadequate staff. The computer and Internet resources have been dealt with — that is my understanding — but the library is only given funding for one staff member who cannot keep the library open to the public and simultaneously present, for example, a story time for children. There's an incredibly popular program in Watson Lake called "story time for tots", which has attendance records of over 30 children at a time and was run entirely on a volunteer basis, with craft supplies purchased from fundraising money. My understanding is that this story time is no longer available — and this was after February 20 since the volunteer organizer decided to step down.

In addition, the Watson Lake library is visited by roughly a dozen children aged six to 12 each day after school. While the library is happy that the children are in a safe, warm place after school, the community librarian cannot provide supervision. The presence of these children indicates significant demand for after-school programming, and I know we touched on some of the physical activity programming in and around the Whitehorse area yesterday during debate.

Funding for a permanent, part-time library activity planner is a vital need for the Watson Lake community. I know the minister, just in his previous response, indicated that he was talking to the community libraries, talking about staffing levels and perhaps considering in a future budget increasing the contribution amount to the libraries themselves.

Would he consider increasing it enough, not only to close that wage gap that exists, but also to fund a permanent, part-time library activity planner for the Watson Lake Community

Library and any other community library that would like to see that happen?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: While I'm always happy to have the conversations with our communities and to try to make sure that the services that they wish to provide are supported, my background recently, as I've noted here in the Legislature, is working as a rec programmer at the Marsh Lake Community Centre. There we have a library, but it's not part of the Yukon Public Libraries system. We just voluntarily run it. On occasion, we have had after-school programs, but we wouldn't want to use the library as our after-school program. There may be a real issue here that the member opposite is raising, and I would like to work with the community to try to figure out where the best place is for it. I'm not sure that it's the library. I have no doubt that the library is well-used and that there are great services there. But if what we're looking for is to try to provide programming and activities for our youth, then maybe the right place is a different avenue. Again, I'm slated to go down to Watson Lake in just over a week and I'm happy to try to open up those conversations.

While I appreciate the general notion of the question, I am just noting that specifically that might not be the right way that we try to tackle more after-school programming, but I'm happy to have the conversation with the community.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for that response. I'm happy that he is travelling to Watson Lake in just over a week's time. I'm sure the MLA for Watson Lake is also pleased with the opportunity to have him meet with a number of her community leaders, including the members of the library board. So we'll look forward to hearing back from either the MLA or the minister on progress made with respect to that file.

I mean, I think everyone in here can appreciate the strain on volunteers, particularly in our smaller communities where there are not as many to go around, but the demands are still of course there for them. We want to make sure that our communities are healthy and attractive places for people to live. If the minister doesn't have a response to this or is sort of unaware of the issue, I certainly understand and would welcome the opportunity for him to get back to me with a response at his earliest convenience.

I believe that the Department of Community Services has responsibility for the domestic well program, the municipal well program, and the rural electrification program within their budget lines. One thing that came up to me recently, and it was actually from a former neighbour of mine in Riverdale North, is that they are now required to upgrade the water and sewer lines from the lot line to their home. When those lines were put in with some of the homes in our more established neighbourhoods in Whitehorse and even probably some of the more established communities throughout the territory — they have reached the end of their useful life I think is probably the best way to describe them. Some of these repairs and upgrades are at considerable cost to the homeowners, so I'm just wondering — and again this is a suggestion or perhaps something the minister may have thought about — if the minister would consider looking into potentially a program

similar to the domestic well or rural electrification or municipal well program, where the homeowners could have this essential work done — water and sewer is obviously an essential service — on their own property and then pay back over time through their taxes.

This is just something that has come up to me from a constituent and I would ask the minister to consider that going forward.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is an interesting idea. I know that, for example, whenever there is work that is done on a sewer main or a water delivery line adjacent to properties, there is often a way to work with the property owners at that point.

I honestly had not yet looked into the rural well program to know whether or not it can be expanded to include connections to residential properties.

I will take the time to try to ask the department to look back into the existing legislation and regulations to understand whether it is a possibility. If it is, then I'm happy to investigate through, for example, the Association of Yukon Communities to see whether there is an interest or appetite and we can go from there.

I thank the member for his question. It's an insightful question.

Mr. Kent: Those were the two sort of more detailed and lower-level questions that I wanted to ask the minister.

Now I'll move to the mandate letter that the Premier provided him. The first bullet on the mandate letter as Minister of Community Services was to establish National Aboriginal Day as a statutory Yukon holiday. That has been accomplished.

The second one is to provide municipalities with a predictable level of funding through a five-year funding plan. I'm just interested if the minister can give the House some sense of what work has been accomplished on that action item to date and what his thoughts are on what that level of funding would look like as he moves toward this five-year funding plan.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: On this file, department officials and I have met with the Association of Yukon Communities to discuss with them the comprehensive municipal grant. As I noted here yesterday, I believe, that grant is coming to the — this is the last year of its five-year funding cycle, so it's perfect timing. We had some initial discussions and brainstorming with the Association of Yukon Communities about what sort of things they would and would not like to see on the table.

I met again with President Rogerson and Executive Director Buckway this past weekend at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and we discussed timelines around it. Just this morning, I had a briefing from the department about the timelines. We're looking to have that negotiation leading toward the 2018-19 budget.

There are some other areas I think that we look at as well. If the member opposite wants — for example, we've had discussions around future infrastructure funding and how that might be coming to our communities, so that includes First

Nation governments, municipal governments, et cetera. There are a few ways in which we provide funding, but the main one for our municipalities will be the comprehensive municipal grant.

I can characterize the discussion as healthy and underway and working toward the next budget cycle.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for the answer. We will certainly look forward to how the next year rolls out as we approach the expiration, as you mentioned, of the current funding plan and funding model and see what, if any, changes are contemplated in the next five-year funding plan.

I believe my colleague, the Member for Lake Laberge, asked about funding levels for structural fire protection yesterday. As that's his responsibility, I am just going to skip down to the next one.

I know we had a chance late in the day yesterday to talk a little bit about investments in community infrastructure. Of course, the Premier has asked the minister to develop a longer term plan to support investments in community infrastructure. The minister did a good job yesterday of outlining the different federal funds that we're dealing with — the green, the transit and the other funds — I think there were five or six that he identified yesterday.

I'm not looking for a detailed response here this afternoon — maybe just a commitment from the minister to get back to us on what projects are currently underway, trying to separate for us so we know which ones are from the New Building Canada fund, which ones are from the clean water and wastewater fund, and which ones will be going forward as the federal government makes the decision with respect to the additional infrastructure funds and the streams that they're going to have Canadians apply under. I think that would be helpful, once that longer term plan is done — if we could get a sense for where the different projects fit into these different funding streams that the federal government is proposing.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I certainly can commit to that, Mr. Chair. I will happily do so.

When I looked at the Blues, I saw that I did try to give a bit of a list. What I was noting under that list was the small communities fund. It's a little bit of a challenge as we give these lists. I want to roll it up enough so that I'm not listing out that it's this explicit money for this explicit project that's about to go to a tendering process, because you want to let the competitive process happen and let our industry bid on these things. As a government, we want to provide that information for our colleagues here in the Legislature to give them a sense of what projects we are working towards.

I can give a list, including which ones are within the 2017-18 budget. What I will just note for all members of the Legislature is that we are anticipating shortly — this month, is our hope — that we will hear from the federal government about what the size of the other funding pots look like. Again, they are to roll out in 2018-19, but the size of those funding pots will help us to solidify our thinking around the small communities fund at the same time, because it will give us assurances that we don't need to use that fund beyond a regulatory notion of infrastructure.

Similar to the return that I gave in the Legislature regarding the clean water and waste-water fund, I will do the same to provide on the small communities fund, which is sometimes referred to in other circles as the New Building Canada fund, just to be clear.

Mr. Kent: If the minister is reluctant to provide budget estimates, that's okay. I think we are more concerned with what projects are in there and when you would anticipate them coming out over the course of this longer term plan that is going to be put in place.

I just wanted to touch on bridges quickly. It's more of a policy question for the minister. I know that when I was in Highways and Public Works, I worked at the time with the Minister of Community Services. I may be wrong in these numbers, but I believe that Community Services has responsibility for three bridges in the territory, and Highways and Public Works has responsibility for three dumps. I know there was some discussion about rationalization that was occurring. I think the bridges that CS has responsibility for are at Miles Canyon, the Ross River footbridge and I believe the footbridge in Carcross. I think the dumps are mainly at specific highway camps. Now that Miles Canyon has been shored up and the work is being tendered for Ross River, perhaps the Minister of Highways and Public Works will be a little bit more receptive to taking on responsibility for those bridges as well. I'm just wondering if there has been any discussion on rationalizing the bridge and the dump scenarios so that the departments can get into the line items where they have the expertise.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have not had the conversation with my colleague from Highways and Public Works regarding the pedestrian bridges. We did have some specific conversations when we were seeking to address the repairs to the Ross River bridge, but no discussion about overall roles and responsibilities. I'm happy to have that conversation, although I think we have a good working relationship at the moment about how these issues are being addressed.

With respect to the solid-waste facilities, I think that even though there are some aspects where Highways and Public Works is engaged around those issues, I think we will bring those in as we work on a territory-wide strategy, which was the next mandate bullet — to collaborate on waste management and recycling and other diversion programs that reduce waste and illegal dumping — so if I can just get there for the member opposite.

The work that we're doing there does bring in Highways and Public Works so that it's all happening under an umbrella and, of course, the Association of Yukon Communities. We've had some tremendously productive discussions with the Association of Yukon Communities regarding this file. We recognize that it is a challenging file, that there has been great progress over the years on solid waste, and that there's a lot of ground to go now. I think that has led to our announcements at the Association of Yukon Communities regarding beverage container regulations and designated material regulations to come.

Mr. Kent: Just before we leave the infrastructure line item, I would like to ask a couple of questions about land development within the City of Whitehorse. The minister mentioned yesterday that his primary responsibility on that file is the development of the Whistle Bend subdivision here in Whitehorse.

I just was hoping that the minister could confirm for the House how many lots will be coming out in phase 3. That work is underway, I understand, right now and the lots are expected to come out this fall.

Perhaps we could get an update as well on the pond situation and the contract for that — what the status of the contract is. I know there were some plans to transfer this aspect to the City of Whitehorse. Is Community Services still considering that, or have the minister and his department decided to maintain the status quo where the Yukon government is the primary developer of the land in the Whistle Bend subdivision?

One final question is on the phase 4 for Whistle Bend — just a confirmation of how many lots and when we can expect those to hit the market.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First, regarding lot development, the investment in this year's budget will be toward phase 4, and those lots will come on in 2018. To answer the question about what is coming on in 2017 — just to acknowledge, this will have come from last year's budget, effectively — 55 single-family lots and 20 townhouse lots; 29 townhouse lots should be available through a lottery process earlier this year. I can try to check to see whether that has actually happened.

With respect to 2018 — and so the investment in the 2017-18 budget around land development in Whistle Bend and what we anticipate for lots as a result of this year's budget — it will consist of 132 single-family lots, 14 duplex lots and 40 townhouse lots, so it is a bump up.

The investment this year in phase 3 — and sort of finishing off those 55 single-family lots and 20 townhouse lots — is just shy of \$10 million, and the initial phase of the work on phase 4 will be over \$14 million.

With respect to the Whistle Bend rain garden pumphouse and storm force main, or what some people refer to as the "pond remediation" — the project began in 2016. There were some scheduling delays and construction deficiencies with the work over the winter, and they necessitated the department to adjust the remaining work and how we intended to complete the project in the construction season. The work is ongoing, and officials have let me know that we should anticipate the work being completed this fall — or earlier, if at all possible. Our hope is that by summer, but our intention is by fall. The department will ensure that it is completed in a timely manner.

Mr. Kent: I know the minister jumped ahead there a little bit on the waste management bullet. I have some specific questions on waste management, recycling and other diversion programs that are in the minister's mandate letter.

I think when we talk about solid waste, perhaps the easiest way for me to go through this is just by region so that we don't end up with a whole bunch of questions on the record and scrambling to make sure that the answers are there.

If the minister, with respect to the north region, could give us the status of the Old Crow gasifier as well as the status of the regional agreement with Dawson and any potential upgrades to the Dawson facility with fences and drainage and that type of thing, I'll leave it at that for the north region and then we'll work our way throughout the rest of the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Sorry, I apologize if I missed anything in that.

I had the opportunity to visit the Old Crow incinerator system. My understanding is that it is working well at the moment. Its recent functionality has been over 80 percent as I understand it. We're not anticipating any challenges. There is other infrastructure work going on in that area, but as far as I understand, it is good.

The work with Dawson — the conversation with the community is ongoing and it's a positive relationship. We're working toward a new depot with them. I don't have any flags or concerns that are coming my way at the moment. I have met with mayor and council several times and, while they of course are concerned that this project goes well, it has not been one that they have raised specific concerns with me about.

Mr. Kent: Moving now to the central region, three communities — Ross River, Faro and Carmacks. For Ross River, if the minister could give us a status update on the establishment of a recycling program.

Also with respect to Faro, what are the prospects of a regional agreement with that community?

Carmacks — and this is a specific question the minister may wish to get back to me on at a future date — did they receive the new baler that the community was requesting for their facility?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There is money going toward Ross River this year. I'm just trying to ascertain whether that will — but I believe it might be a two-year project, so I want to be careful that I'm not making a commitment that it's going to happen all the way this year. But I do understand and I did mention yesterday that there was money going toward the recycling depots in Burwash, Ross River and Dawson.

With respect to the balers, I will just have to get back to the member opposite in a moment just to try to understand which communities are receiving or have received them.

Mr. Kent: For the southwest region, Southern Lakes and southeast, I think I'm just looking for some status updates with respect to negotiations on a regional agreement for Haines Junction in the southwest. Is there a regional plan that the minister is considering for Southern Lakes? In the southeast, what's happening with Watson Lake and the regional agreement in that community? Same question, but just for three different regions.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I want to say in terms of how we coordinate regionally is that we have sat down with the Association of Yukon Communities and we're trying to work on a whole-of-Yukon approach. I have not yet had the opportunity to sit down with the Town of Watson Lake. That is coming up. I don't want to jump the gun there. I have had a conversation with Mayor Brown, but we didn't talk about this

topic in particular. I have had several conversations with him, but in the times when we've had those conversations, solid waste hasn't come up. I want to wait before I talk about that, but in general, through the Association of Yukon Communities, we're working to try to see it as a whole-of-Yukon approach.

I did sit down with the local advisory councils briefly. This was one of the topics that they expressed as an item of concern. We just agreed to keep them in the loop, both because they are members of the Association of Yukon Communities — through that avenue — but also directly through our community advisors and our community operations directors.

In Haines Junction, similarly, I had — the mayor gave me a tour of the Haines Junction solid-waste facility. I love it because they're trying to do some innovating stuff around, for example, composting. Tours like that helped us to say that when we look at the comprehensive solutions for the territory, we really will get some horsepower out of our communities because they are coming up with creative solutions that are based on their size and distance from Whitehorse.

Mr. Kent: A quick question with respect to hazardous waste and the contract. Can the minister give us a status update on the contract — when it's set to expire or to be retendered and who is the current contractor under that contract?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: That's an excellent question. Department officials will work to try to get me that information. If I'm able to get it during this session, I will provide it and, if not, I will get back to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for that response. It was just one of the questions that we had.

I'm just going to move quickly to recycling. There were of course changes to the DMR and BCR, which were to come into effect in August 2017. I believe there have been some changes in that date — if the minister could update us on that and give us a status of the consultation — how much he would anticipate further delays or if there are further delays beyond the August 2017 date.

My final two questions on recycling are just status questions. If the minister could give us the status of the recycling fund as well as the status of the diversion credits — if he is able to do that, then we can move on to the next item in his mandate letter.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: With regard to beverage container regulations, I can pass across the press release that we issued, but we announced that the beverage container regulations would come into force in August of this year as was originally designed. We also announced at that time that with respect to designated materials two things would be happening. The Minister of Environment and I made this announcement jointly.

First of all, with respect to electronic waste, we would push the date at which the regulations come into force to February 2018. The rationale for that is that the seasonality of sales is such that this is a better time for our business community to introduce those changes in the regulations.

With respect to tires, we still are hopeful to get to a February 2018 initiation of those regulations. However, we are going back out to talk with our industry and the community at large to make sure that the rates for the tire fees for the designated materials are the right size. So we will have some conversations with them and we're hopeful that it will still come in for February 2018.

You asked about the recycling fund. With respect to the recycling fund, the balance at the end of this past year-end is \$234,000. I think that we understand here that it's an ongoing or cyclical fund, so we didn't adjust it — as far as I understand it; I will just check with officials what's going into it — but we did anticipate that there would be a potential surge, for example, around e-waste as new regulations come into place. So we did allocate some funds to deal with the larger-than-normal volumes and the new volumes that we anticipate through the new regulations.

Mr. Kent: When the minister mentioned the tires and the e-waste coming in February 2018, I just was hoping that he could update the House — of course many local suppliers of tires and equipment that does end up as e-waste bid on government contracts. I just want to make sure that the minister is cognizant of it. Having extra fees for Yukon suppliers or contractors could adversely affect their competitiveness in a tender. If there is a way to work — and perhaps that work is being done with the Minister of Economic Development — to ensure that the tenders are fair across the board no matter where you reside or where your company is. I am hoping to get some clarity from the minister of his plans with respect to public tendering of these types of materials so that our Yukon contractors can compete on an even playing field.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'll try to give an answer in a couple of ways. One of the reasons that we went to delay and went to go back and have conversations regarding tires was exactly for this reason: to ensure as level a playing field as possible. What I will also say is that there has already been work done in a cross-jurisdictional look. The Minister of Environment and I have also been asked that we take a look at Alaska as well to ensure that we're seeing how the marketplace will behave depending on prices. I was pretty impressed — partly due to the Canadian dollar — that prices were rather competitive with Alaska.

With respect to e-waste, that is dealt with slightly differently. One of the ways that we worked, after conversations with the industry — their biggest concern was consumers using online purchases to bypass DMR regulations. What I understand from department officials is that nowadays those holes are virtually being plugged up. There are agreements across jurisdictions that allow these types of charges to be levied regardless of where you are, so that the charges are based on where your IP address is coming from. They should be dealt with that way.

Mr. Chair, I will let you know that currently — I just got a note from department officials that Watson Lake, Teslin, Mount Lorne, Carmacks and Faro have balers. The household hazardous waste contract currently in place is with KBL, and

it is good until February 2018. I just got that twice; it is a very efficient department.

Mr. Kent: Thank you for providing the answers to previous questions here today.

The next aspect of your mandate letter is with respect to staff and social housing. It's a collaborative effort between yourself and the Minister for Yukon Housing Corporation, the Public Service Commission minister, as well as the private sector to look for new models for staff and social housing that promote economic growth in the communities. I think I sat on a similar committee during the last mandate and it's no small task to tackle this particular issue. Rather than a question on that, I'll come back to that later on perhaps in the mandate, once some more work has been accomplished. But one of the comments from me would be to involve the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources as well. I believe they still have land responsibility in communities outside of Whitehorse. If you are having a ministerial or a Cabinet committee with respect to that work, then I think the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources should also be present, just to put a few more things on his plate. I'm sure he's happy to hear that.

The next aspect of your mandate letter is to work with the Minister of Economic Development to identify and work to remove regulatory and service impediments to competitiveness. Have you and the Minister of Economic Development identified any regulatory and service impediments to competitiveness in your work so far? If so, would you be able to identify them here for the House?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, thank you to the member opposite for their suggestion regarding the challenges around increasing affordable housing options in our communities in collaboration with the private sector and those new models for staff and social housing. We completely agree with him. Not only did we note that we want to bring in the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, but we also want to bring in the Minister of Economic Development on that same topic. Unluckily, that's three of us and not four of us. We have started to have those conversations.

Another thing that we are doing — and I'll just note this because I'm quite proud of it — the Department of Community Services was the group that started this. When we go in and talk to a community and we see a range of issues that they are trying to address, we're trying to pull together community teams — teams from various departments that will assist that community in addressing its broad range of issues. In that way, we move toward the one-government approach and a community-by-community approach, which recognizes that although we share many issues in our communities — or challenges, issues and opportunities — we also have very specific details that are different from one community to the next. That approach similarly is bringing folks from Yukon Housing Corporation, folks from Economic Development and, it just depends, folks from Community Services too. I am very supportive of that notion.

Then with respect to working with the Minister of Economic Development to identify and work to remove

regulatory and service impediments to competitiveness — I don't have a great deal to report.

Our initial meetings have just been scoping in nature and brainstorming. There are no things that I can report to this Legislature at this point. There has been ongoing work with the *Securities Transfer Act* in modernizing the rules for transfer of ownership and shares and other security investments. There are some things that are ongoing within each of our departments, but nothing that I can as yet report on the mandate letter.

Mr. Kent: I was trying to figure out where this next issue would fit into the mandate letter, so I think I'm just going to slot it in here just because I wanted to ask the question. Earlier this year, I met with the Pharmacists Association and had a good opportunity, as the Community Services critic, to talk to them about their issues and concerns, and I congratulate the minister on announcing that the consultation on the regulations has begun.

I believe it was a CBC web story — when I was preparing for Community Services debate — and it mentioned that it was the legislation that was being consulted on. If the minister could clarify that it's actually the regulations that are being consulted on and perhaps, just for the record, he could provide us with the date when those consultations will conclude. I know he won't have a firm date — but when he would anticipate the regulations coming into place after the consultations conclude.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is regulations. I confirm that for the member opposite, and I did note the media article and it's not legislation.

But there are a couple things, just in terms of timing. The member opposite asked about when this initial round of consultation would close out. It is in about a month and a half. July 21, 2017 is the closing date on the pharmacists regulations, which are under the *Health Professions Act*.

Following that, there will also need to be work on regulations for pharmacies under the *Pharmacy and Drug Act*. It needed to be somewhat sequential. When we sat down and talked with the pharmacists and had a conversation with them and with the Minister of Health and Social Services, we explained the sequential nature of getting close to finalizing the regulations around pharmacists before we could get to the regulations around pharmacies, because some of them were co-dependent and we needed to see where they landed. It's not 100-percent done before we move on to the next one, but it has to be close enough, as I understand it.

Given that there is a sequential nature to the two sets of regulations that are coming forward, I don't anticipate these until 2018, and some of it is still a work in progress. We're hopeful for early but, as I've said to the pharmacists, it is best that we get them right, not rushed.

I'm looking forward to that feedback. They have been patient to date, and I appreciate that they are working with us as they see that this is starting to move forward. I think I have explained that to them as well, but certainly the member opposite can, in consultation with them, let them know as well.

Mr. Kent: That particular bullet of the mandate letter — which was to work with the Minister of Economic Development to identify and work to remove regulatory and service impediments to competitiveness — I would just encourage the ministers to not only consider the business community and the for-profit sector, but the not-for-profits as well when they are doing that work. There is an awful lot of regulatory — I don't want to say "burden" but maybe I'll say "burden". There is an awful lot of paperwork that is associated often with not-for-profits. I'm sure all members in this House have been involved with a community organization at one time or another where the paperwork is extremely onerous to fill out.

Obviously there are some good reasons for that, but certainly I would ask that, while the ministers are conducting their work on this, to also consider the not for profits and the volunteers in the community there as we have talked about throughout the course of the past couple of days. It is important to consider them and make sure that they can maximize their efforts toward their cause, rather than administrative duties that may arise.

As I said off the top here today, I have quite a few questions that I wanted to ask. We didn't get into the securities stuff today, and I will ask those questions in a written question. We didn't get a chance to touch on the Residential Tenancies Office, but I'm confident my colleague from Takhini-Kopper King will ask some questions where we can get an update on that.

So again, thank you for your time and I thank the officials for the time for me and the Member for Lake Laberge in our dual roles as Community Services critics.

Just the final question with respect to that final bullet in your mandate letter — is for the minister to work with the Minister of Health and Social Services to regulate and fund midwifery to provide a safe and more affordable childbirth option in communities. I know that during this session, there was a tribute done to midwives here in the Legislative Assembly. I'm looking for an update — some sort of status update — from the minister on that work and when we can expect any regulations or the associated changes required for midwifery here in the territory.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, a great suggestion regarding talking with not for profits regarding reducing red tape — I have begun that work. There have been some challenges with some backlogs in the department, and I know that our department officials have been working extremely hard — and my kudos to them in trying to redress the situation. We are committed to reducing the red tape for Yukoners when they access services, and we put resources in place for the registrar of societies to deal with the rigorous legal review that is now required.

There was a change over the past year, I think. It came to their attention that as societies were adjusting their bylaws, there needed to be a legal review, and that just created an instant backlog. That work is ongoing. Currently, as I understand it, the backlog is dealt with, but there still are challenges for societies. I think that throughout, as we go to

enhance the modernization of our departments and move to digitize them — it has been happening across the broader department — I think that will help.

With respect to securities, I am happy to receive those as written questions. As a minister, you get briefed on a lot of things, and that is a very technical field. I am very reliant on department officials, who I have met and spoken with directly, and they are very well-versed on it. When I stand up and speak about it, I would be worried if I misspoke and I just really do prefer to rely on the expertise that we have in the department.

With respect to midwifery, I'll say a few remarks. If the member opposite's question was about when we plan to see this come to fruition — I recall in the Speech from the Throne that it was mentioned that we would try for 2018. It is a lot of work to get that done. I know that both the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Community Services have been working very hard on this file. I have stayed in pretty close contact with the Yukon midwifery association and with the Yukon Medical Association. Just recently, I had a one-and-a-half hour walking meeting with our resident OBGYNs, so work is progressing on that. Our overall goal is to get regulations in by next year. I will reiterate what I said earlier: It is best that we get this right and not done in a hurry, so we are working diligently.

I want to thank the member opposite for all of his questions. I think he is giving the floor over to the Third Party, so I am going to finish my opening remarks from yesterday, because some of the topics I didn't get to in speaking deal with some of the issues that I'm anticipating coming from the member opposite of the Third Party.

Let me just finish talking about Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs division.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: No, but there are some things in there that you will ask.

Professional Licensing and Regulatory Affairs — this group protects the public by regulating the 11 health professions, and professions such as insurance, collection agents, security agents, and real estate professionals. It also regulates charitable gaming, such as raffles and bingos, by Yukon's non-profit groups. It enforces legislation and provides education and dispute resolution. As a competent and impartial regulator of regulated health professions, the branch contributes to the government's people-centred approach to wellness.

Key priorities in the 2017-18 budget focus on the effective regulation of health professions. The branch will modernize existing health profession regulations, including pharmacists and dental hygienists, and continue to address unregulated health professions such as midwifery. The branch will research and explore a new model for administrative regulatory tribunals to assist in implementation of health professions regulations.

An investment of \$360,000 over four years will enable the development of an online licensing system to allow thousands of regulated professionals to submit their licensing

information online. This is one way we are making it easier to do business with government.

Corporate Affairs promotes sound business practices, strengthens investor protection and encourages trade and investment in the territory. Investments of more than \$399,000 in the branch aim to reduce regulatory and service impediments to competitiveness. Reducing red tape for the benefit of all business sectors contributes to our diverse, growing economy.

Already this year, the first phase of the Yukon corporate online registry will be launched. The public can search Yukon's public corporate registries and access documents. Work is underway on the next phase to allow online annual filings and reports.

The Employment Standards and Residential Tenancies Office provides education enforcement of employment standards, including Yukon's fair wage schedule and residential tenancy laws to ensure that employers and employees, and landlords and tenants, understand their rights and obligations.

To make it easier to do business with the government, we are investing \$100,000 in a modern electronic case management system for disputes and investigation files for the Residential Tenancies Office. The Employment Standards office is responsible for statutory holidays, an area that doesn't usually see much change, but as the member opposite noted, I'm proud to say that a top priority for our government this year was to establish National Aboriginal Day as a statutory Yukon holiday and it's an important way to recognize the contributions of First Nations to the Yukon.

The Property Assessment and Taxation branch — I will just put in another plug to say that if you're paying your taxes in person, please come to the main legislative foyer this year, because as the Lynn Building was moved, we moved that payment over here and we're not moving it back. It would cause too much confusion. Feel free to pay online, but if you're paying in person, come on down to the Legislature please.

This branch provides all Yukon taxing authorities with current accurate and equitable property assessments. It establishes the general property tax rates for all areas outside municipalities. To help ease the financial burden for homeowners, the branch administers the Yukon homeowners grant to offset the cost of property taxes. The government has budgeted \$3.8 million in 2017-18 to support this program.

The branch also administers programs like the rural electrification and telephone program and the domestic water well program that ensure all property owners in Yukon have similar access to services, and \$1.4 million in capital funds is allocated to these two programs, which provide long-term, low-interest loans to property owners, enabling them to bring electricity and telecommunications to their properties and to access reliable drinking water. It is one of the ways that government works to improve people's lives.

The budget highlights I've been pleased to share yesterday and today represent the varied essential work of the Department of Community Services. These investments

develop sustainable communities, protect people and property and advance community well-being.

I would like to thank especially the member of the Third Party for allowing me to finish those comments and I look forward to her questions.

Ms. White: The minister may be surprised that I have no questions about his comments, but I do appreciate that he wanted to get them on the record. I would like to thank the officials for being here of course, and for the thorough briefing. I was not the critic of this area previously, although I have always an interest in some of the things, so to see it on a broader perspective has been really important. I have actually just been perusing the website looking at all the legislation that is under Community Services and it is vast. However, two I really wanted to talk about, it turns out, are in Justice. But I could not remember who the minister was when I had to talk about them originally.

I would also like to start by just saying how fantastic it was to be at the Association of Yukon Communities gathering in Faro — but more importantly was just the fact that every employee from Community Services was just so well-known by the community leaders. It was easy to say that was not the first time that they had met or that conversations had happened, and it was impressive to see because conversation flowed so easily between elected members from the different communities and then the Community Services staff. A big congratulations and acknowledgement out to that because I think that's a part that we don't often get to see, because the behind-the-scenes view that you sometimes get to see probably doesn't look like that, so it was really fantastic to see.

Along that same vein, although I have questions about the Residential Tenancies Office, I do really want to acknowledge that seeing the staff at the Whitehorse Connects is big. It is a big deal in having them available, although people don't really know what to do them yet — it is a big deal. The fact that they're going out publicly and they have the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Handbook* for renters is important. Although they don't get a lot of visitors at the Whitehorse Connects, it is really important that they're there. Having that there consistently is going to make a big change I think when people do finally have questions.

It's interesting that one of my favorite topics has become waste management after getting tours of the Whitehorse landfill, which I'm now told is a waste management facility because of how complicated it is. Having visited all the communities in the territory and doing landfill visits or waste management facility visits, there are quite a few questions. For example, prior to the last election, hazardous waste was taken, I believe, from Carmacks, and it was taken to Ross River because it was before it had a manned facility. Some of the questions or concerns we have are that a lot of the Yukon solid-waste facilities seemed to be filling up quicker than expected. Sometimes it's because it might be construction waste or it just might be that people are generating more waste and we can see it on garbage pickup dates in the City of Whitehorse.

My question is: How has the increase of demolition projects — so if we look at the F.H. Collins facility, if we look at the old McDonald Lodge in Dawson City, if we look at the really large number of homes in Faro that are going to be taken down — impacted the lifespan of the facilities in surrounding areas? How is government going to manage where that needs to go and how it can be best disposed of, because if we load all the Faro stuff into Ross River, obviously that facility will reach its maximum. How does the government look at that and how do we address the lifespan? Is it being shortened compared to what we expected? Definitely Whitehorse has changed, so just if the minister can touch on that please.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the questions.

Is the lifespan reduced when we load up more construction and demolition waste? The answer, generally, is yes. I'll try to give some specifics, as I can. I'll try to then focus more on what we are trying to do about that. There are some challenges really specifically with construction and demolition, because building technologies and the way that they move — for example, spray foam and things like that — have made it so that it's harder to separate out materials. The more we can separate, the better we always are. The more we can reuse, the better we are over separation, et cetera — and we move up the chain.

I don't have specific answers regarding how the lifecycle of each of those facilities — what the changes are as a result. One of the ways in which we are trying to approach it, I will state, is that I have had conversations with the Minister of Highways and Public Works. When a contract is let to demolish, what we should be doing first is letting a contract to salvage so that as much material comes out. We are complicated by situations like asbestos and other hazardous materials because you must deal with that first. Safety is paramount. There are some really thorny issues around this challenge, but we are looking for solutions.

The other one I will talk about is to have a whole-of-government approach. When you take a whole-of-Yukon approach, what you will start to see is that — for example, to take the issue of Faro. Their landfill may not be able to take all of the things we are talking about — especially because some of the building era for Faro included a lot of asbestos, so we have a lot of hazardous materials that we need to deal with. Maybe we could coordinate with the Highways and Public Works solid-waste facility just down the road, and that may make a difference to the community of Faro — about how we are able to deal with some of that stuff. We need to think about that as a government as well, because we have buildings within the community of Faro as well, which are going to need to come down at some point.

It does need a coordinated approach because there are okay solutions and there are much better solutions if we have that coordinated approach. I apologize that I am short on specific details for the member opposite, but, as this plan is developed, let me just state clearly that construction and demolition waste is a very critical part of the overall territory-

wide strategy. It is such a large component of the waste stream so it is one that we have to focus on.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that. I appreciate the idea of buildings being opened up to salvage opportunities before they are actually demolished. I think one of the challenges that we're seeing right now is that the reuse economy in the territory is suffering because, with the closure of the Salvation Army — and, to be perfectly honest, I was surprised that they never accessed the diversion credits offered by government because they were diverting waste from the landfill facility — and the closure of the free store at Raven — and we know that the Mount Lorne facility has pressure happened, and Marsh Lake is getting pressure. It's interesting, actually, that people would rather drive \$10 worth of fuel out of town that pay a \$5 tipping fee at the management facility in Whitehorse, which is fascinating. But maybe it's time for a drive and that all works. To be perfectly honest, I would prefer that they took it somewhere other than the woods, so I guess I can take that.

Salvaging that makes a lot of sense. Of course, there is the struggle with a lot of the buildings coming down right now — that they have asbestos.

But the reuse economy and the reuse opportunities have definitely suffered because of the closure of the Salvation Army, the Raven Recycling free store and the free store at the Whitehorse landfill. I can imagine that Mount Lorne is doing quite well at this point with many, many items. What role does government play in that? With fewer places that people have to take those things that can get reused, the more usable items are being taken to the landfill. Is there a role for government to play in that? How does government look at: How are we going to manage these facilities? How are we going to make sure, for example, our waste-diversion target — which we will talk about next. But is there a role in there for the Department of Community Services as far as making the reuse economy possible? Right now, it has kind of ground to a halt.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Even though there are some visible components of the reuse economy that have ground to a halt, I don't think it has ground to a halt. There are lots of aspects — again, these are complicated systems. For example, garage sales are part of the reuse economy, and they've bumped up as a result of the closure of the Salvation Army.

Let me just back up for a second. Any time that someone wishes to come and visit beautiful Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, I am very happy that they come to visit us, whether it is to our — I struggle with not calling them “dumps” anymore, let alone “landfill stations”, let alone “waste-transfer stations”. So I'm kind of old school that way.

I helped to rebuild the Marsh Lake free store three times — twice after it burned down.

Not only — if Whitehorse residents drive out to put something into one of the waste-transfer stations in Mount Lorne or Marsh Lake — are they spending sometimes more in gas than they would be saving in not paying to drop it off, but we then as government have to pay to drive it back. It is kind

of wild. It sort of defies a lot of our economic logic to do that. So yes, we need to address these situations, for sure.

I think that we really want to make sure that when we're talking about this movement of materials, we need to concentrate first and focus on the most hazardous materials — so the household hazardous waste, oil, et cetera. Those ones, as they move around and if they get pushed out from our waste management facilities, often cause environmental degradation. There is just a way bigger cost to everybody, to all future Yukoners. We really need to focus on that, first and foremost.

The way in which we would tackle this is to try to support the private sector toward solutions. We identify that there is an economic sector in reuse, and then the Minister of Economic Development and I sit down and have these conversations. We talk about how that economy is working, and in what ways we can be supportive and enabling as a government.

I will let you know that the day after the Salvation Army made its announcements we were on the phone with other private sector enterprises that might backfill around that. They aren't here yet, but that is work that we would try to support. I don't think we're seeing ourselves necessarily as taking a lead role, but we're not closed to that conversation. I think, first and foremost, that we would try to encourage the private sector to work in partnership with our other communities and look for ways to enhance reuse.

In terms of the spectrum, we want to reduce first, reuse second and recycle third, and then waste is last. I know that members of this Legislature know that, but that is how we should try to focus our attention, so reuse comes higher than the waste streams.

Ms. White: I appreciate the statements there. One of the concerns that I had when travelling to communities was understanding that it was possible for, within a community, a person to create a private landfill. Does that fall within the Department of Community Services?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: My understanding from department officials is that they would have to go through the Department of Environment to be licensed and do whatever other regulatory applications would be required. I didn't know that until you raised that question, but I appreciate the notion. My understanding is that it would fall to the Department of Environment.

Ms. White: I guess I should have added the second part. Does the responsibility of maintenance or oversight for that private landfill fall under the Department of Environment or the Department of Community Services?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The answer to the member opposite's question is yes. The Department of Environment monitors all landfills — ours and any private ones that exist. It is their job to ensure that all regulations are being kept, whether those are water monitoring, et cetera. All of them fall on the Department of Environment to make sure. We must be compliant as well as any private landfills.

Ms. White: I will just let the Minister of Environment know that this is coming her way.

When the original consultation document came out for the beverage container regulations and, of course, the designated material regulations, one of the things that was super fascinating is that we decreased the deposit on a bottle of wine. Wine at that point in time — and I'm going to get the number wrong because I don't drink enough wine to be able to tell you. The point was that it had been the same number for a long period of time, and that was one that, in the consultation document, had been reduced. It was one that the recyclers found quite fascinating because it was one that people were used to paying already, and instead of maintaining it at what was its current level, I believe that, in what is coming out in August, it will be reduced. With the beverage container regulations and the new items that are being added on, there was concern at one point in time — and I went to the meeting that the previous government held with industry and it was broken up into working groups — so the people who sold beverage containers were there.

There were the recyclers; there were also people who had tire shops, electronics shops and all of those things. At that point in time, it was broken down into working groups. They were going to work with the Department of Community Services — and I actually don't know what happened from that. That was probably in the summer of 2016. Did those meetings get off the ground? Did the government get feedback from those organizations?

Then, for what is coming out with the beverage containers — I have it online, but did it make sense to lower wine, compared to what it was before, to what its newer level is?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It's an interesting role to try to stand up and describe what makes sense when it wasn't us who were there at the time. What I'll try to do is give the rationale about why it landed there and give a sense of how we are seeking to proceed so that the members opposite can hold us to account as well. There are regulations now, so that's the way it is.

The notion was to try to simplify the regulations overall so that there were two beverage container sizes that would be coming in and everything would fit into those two categories. I think the threshold to transition from the smaller size to the larger size — I will check this to be sure, but I think it's 750 millilitres. The reason was to simplify it.

Now, one of the notions out there is that there might be a drop. We have had some conversations — I know the Minister of Environment has been alongside of me in some of those conversations. We have talked to some folks out there regarding beverage containers. Where there is already a deposit and a return refund and where there are adjustments to that, we do anticipate that there will be a small drop. It's hard to know exactly what that drop will be. We will be monitoring it. We think that the compliance rates will stay rather high. I don't have exact numbers in front of me, but I know that compliance as in how many beverage containers actually get into the recycling stream — I believe it's over 80 percent, and close to 90 percent, of beverage containers with a refund get recycled. We can anticipate a small drop, but we think,

generally — because the behaviour is established — that it will continue. The reason that people refund isn't just for the dime or the nickel; it's because there's a pattern now where we recognize this has another place where we can put it, and it's a good thing to do environmentally. There are multiple reasons why people recycle where there are refundables involved.

The way we've decided to approach it — when we looked at the beverage container regulations — if we were to try to adjust it, that would mean pushing it back. We thought it was better to move forward than to hesitate. That was a decision that we took as a government. We did something else as well.

I think that, when the member opposite and members of the Official Opposition were there at the Association of Yukon Communities AGM, they may have heard me talk about how we are not only planning to bring in the beverage container regulations and then, within another six months, bring in the designated material regulations, but we let the public know that we would begin consultation almost right away on the next round. These were meant to be steps, not destinations. As steps on a journey, if we do need to adjust going forward in time, we will be monitoring them and seek to make those adjustments so that we can continue to move more products that we consume from the tax-based model with how we deal with recycling to the stewardship model of recycling. That is the general direction that we're trying to head in, so we already began conversations with the Association of Yukon Communities about what might be next in that list. When we talked about the beverage container regulations, we assured them that if we saw a significant drop, we would seek to adjust in order to keep it at a high compliance rate.

Ms. White: I appreciate that angle, but my concern isn't about the behaviour — we have seen crazy things happen in the territory since recycling started. It started through education through Raven Recycling, then it was kids taking it home and families started to recycle. We see people who are able to use their garbage bins on pickup days once every two months because they are able to separate and divert to that level. Behaviour isn't my concern; my concern is that there's a financial implication for the recyclers.

As we know, the beverage container stream is actually what funds a lot of the non-refundable recycling. My concern isn't about whether or not people will still take them in; I am concerned with how this will affect the processors. Until we have a properly developed waste management strategy that actually includes the full cost of diversion and the full cost of recycling — as it stands right now, it's just a patched together situation. Can the minister touch on that issue please?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will try to have another conversation with the member opposite and try to provide some more information. In the next couple of days, I am actually going to have another tour of Raven Recycling.

The deposit difference between what's paid by the user when they purchase and what is refunded is what makes up that amount that goes into the recycling fund, which allows for other materials to be recycled. On the large bottles, I

believe that's going up, not down. I am going to have to check on some numbers to be sure, but I take the point that the member opposite is making. Let me just say that, in principle, we are working to divert more, not less. In the decision to bring in the beverage container regulations, although they were not the ones that we might have designed, we made the decision to bring them in and to keep the process moving forward. Even though it might not be a perfect situation, we deemed it as better than not.

I will try to get some details for the member opposite, and we can have a discussion about how that change is manifesting and what implications it will have for our recyclers out there. Overall, our goal is to divert more waste.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that answer. It was a long time ago that I had to talk about this originally, so I might have the numbers wrong. There was concern raised by the processors that if what was viewed as kind of like the bread and butter of the business in the recycling and if the refundables were affected, that actually, in the long run, could affect it. This is just going back to quite a long time ago.

One of the things that was a really big issue in previous years, and this is the thing — the government may have changed, but the department still exists as well as the overall goal of the department — it might have different political direction, but it still has to meet all those requirements. There was a waste diversion target set a number of years ago that the previous government never came close to hitting to be perfectly honest, and any numbers or really big gains that happened in there was because of the phenomenal work done by the City of Whitehorse and the waste management facility here.

My question is: Is there a new waste diversion target for this current Yukon government? Do we have something that we're aiming for or is it more just aspirational right now?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm going to try to look back to try to see what that target was, but one of the challenges as I understand it was that there wasn't even a baseline measured. How are you going to measure distance until you have a baseline?

We have talked about many issues together with the Association of Yukon Communities around how to create solutions. We have not gotten to the point of discussing specific targets. I think we're still working to get the system unstuck and start to move. We have some good ideas around that and really some progress has been made. Even though there are concerns that linger regarding the beverage container regulations and the designated material regulations, we still believe that this is beginning to move the system in the right direction. We will, as I said — the Minister of Environment and I have been very clear with our community partners that this is a step on a path and that we will continue to move it forward.

I think because it was given to me as a mandate bullet — meaning that it is a priority within the list of platform commitments that were made — we will be working hard on this issue in the coming months and year. If we do get to the point of setting targets, what I can tell you is that we will do it

together as communities coming together and if we do so, I'm happy to make those public of course. You want to. That's the whole point of the target. At this point, we haven't had the conversation, so I can't give the member opposite anything concrete.

Ms. White: I look forward to knowing at one point in time there is a plan in place — that we have things measured and that we have goals that we can talk about and how we need to get there. I look forward to that point.

We had a young man in the gallery earlier who was involved in the organization of the Zero Waste conference that happened — I'm going to guess that it was 2016, but it might have been 2015, because they start to meld together. The one thing that became very clear at that conference is that there are parts of machines in place in other jurisdictions. By that, I mean the extended producer responsibilities — the EPR systems — that are set up, for example, in British Columbia and Alberta. What that does — instead of it being consumer pay, it is industry pay. It is set up, and the British Columbia one — I think there are 54 items on their designated material regulation and a lot of that actually comes through industry. Industry is responsible for those charges, so when someone picks it up, you return it to the place where you purchased it and then it gets sent back to the recyclers at that point.

During the Zero Waste conference, there were people from Alberta and from British Columbia, and they were talking about their systems and how they were put in place and how that all worked out. One thing that was mentioned over and over again was that there was the ability for Yukon to look to both of those jurisdictions and to tack on to that.

The previous government didn't really have an interest in looking south for help. How does this current government feel? Is there an interest in looking toward EPR, because that is probably the way to tackle the situation in the more aggressive form? If the minister could talk about EPR and his feelings about it, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: When I mentioned in my last response about the stewardship model, that is sort of the plain language around extended producer responsibility. Again, I'm going to have to defer some of this to my colleague, the Minister of Environment, because it is through their national meetings — the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, the CCME — where this list gets set.

What I will say is that, if there is a neighbouring jurisdiction that will allow us to go on with their extended producer responsibility, we would be very interested in that. Let me explain why that is not super likely.

When you think about extended producer responsibility, even though we can say, "Oh, the industry is paying for it," ultimately the consumer pays for it, because industry must pass that cost on to the consumer. If you are a jurisdiction like Alberta or British Columbia, and you're setting your rates for extended producer responsibility, you sort of model them over the whole of the province, or you might have regions. If you set those rates, the cost gets more expensive as your region gets further away. The reason is because it costs more to ship those materials back to centres where there is an economy of

scale whereby they can be put into a recycling stream — for example, tires. They are more expensive for us as a jurisdiction, so if a neighbouring jurisdiction were willing to give us their rates, we would probably say, “yes and thank you,” but I’m not sure that’s happening.

What I was trying to say earlier and I will continue to say is that we recognize that we need to move toward that model. When the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment has met and they have produced their list, they have acknowledged within there that there are differences for jurisdictions like the three territories, that they are further away and they have special challenges regarding some of those materials.

We are working to move more toward a stewardship model, which will include extended producer responsibilities. We are very open to it. We are very open to dialogue with neighbouring jurisdictions. We’re not holding our breath for whether they are going to offer us any deals, but we’re happy to have that conversation with them and we will seek solutions for us here in the Yukon about how to be sustainable in an economically and environmentally responsible fashion.

It is a journey, and I think the member opposite noted that, even though there has been this work to reduce waste, the overall volume of waste has gone up. This is not true just for the Yukon; this is true for — well, I think it’s globally true, but certainly true of us as North Americans. We just have more consumption and so we need to find ways to divert ahead of that consumption — reduce, reuse and ultimately, if not, recycle.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that. I do appreciate it. That was one of the conversation topics when we talked about tires and the proposed fees, and people couldn’t understand why they were higher than Alberta or British Columbia, where really they had a lot less distance to go. That was part of the conversation back in the day, and I’m sure it will be part of the conversation on a go-forward basis.

I guess I was pleasantly surprised when the mobile-home park and residential landlord and tenant survey was released. I was surprised because I actually had been looking for it online previously, and I couldn’t figure out where this survey that had been issued last year in June 2016 — why I couldn’t find the results online. It is dated on the report. It says that it was prepared for Community Services by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics in August 2016. That was 10 months ago.

My question is: Why — if the report was done in August 2016 — was it not just released until this last Friday — understanding that this government was elected in November? I imagine it could have come out some time around then if the previous government had been interested. Why did it take 10 months for that survey to be released?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will say that early on, there was a conversation. The department did brief me almost right away about issues regarding mobile homes. So we had conversations — I want to be careful navigating here — including some questions that have been raised in conversations that I had with members opposite. I will look back to try to see when I saw it to give a sense, but I do

believe that I saw it last month — or maybe it was six weeks ago.

At that point, I’ll try to take some responsibility for it. I did work to make it public as soon as it was seen. I think there might have been a little bit of miscommunication between myself and the department. I just maybe wasn’t aware of the survey being there and, given the general duties of a department to brief a minister on many, many topics, maybe it got lost in the mix at some point. However, once I was aware of it and it came to me, I did share it internally to get any feedback from Cabinet, and then I made it public as soon as that had happened.

What I will say, going forward, is to assure the member opposite that it looked like public information; we made it public. I’m not sure if I’m going to be able to track down exactly what the cause was for it not coming out sooner, but I assure the member opposite that it was our intention to be transparent with the information at all times.

Ms. White: I appreciate that answer. My concern is that this was a topic that I have been talking about on the floor of this Legislative Assembly since 2012. I didn’t get very far for the first number of years. It’s important that you know that. Already you, as minister, have agreed that there’s a difference, and that took me four years to get to. I’m grateful for that acknowledgement.

One of my concerns about this survey, though, is that I initially contacted your office in December to try to get a meeting. We actually sat down for the first time in January 2016, and I referenced this survey. I referenced the survey and said that this was a priority, that we needed to look at the issue of mobile-homeowners and protection for mobile-homeowners.

My concern is that if this survey was in the hands of the department in August 2016, had Cabinet, the Premier or the minister been able to see it, would it have been included in your mandate letter? Right now, every time we have been talking — and the Member for Copperbelt South has been going through your mandate letter, and it’s great that you have a letter, but I don’t really care because some of the issues that I think are the biggest and most important ones aren’t included in that letter.

If this report was done in 2016 — which highlights, to the degree that it does, the discrepancy between the power imbalance of mobile-homeowners and of the landowners, why was it only seen six weeks ago? Why wasn’t it seen sooner? I did mention it in our first meeting, because it took me a long time to get to the point where I could — with the help of hundreds of people signing a petition, that survey was put out.

My concern is that, to say now that you only saw it six weeks ago — and I do appreciate that it went online, I appreciate that there was a press release and I appreciate that I can see the results now. I also really appreciate that it’s more than the 40 people the previous minister told me had filled it out. I was a bit concerned by that, because I had put flyers at every mobile home park in Whitehorse to try to get them to fill it out.

Would this have changed your direction? We sat down in January 2011 and I said that this needs to be a priority. I was told that it wasn't a priority for your government at that point. You told me I should sit down with the other members who represent mobile home parks and that I should find common ground and I should come back.

I'm going to right now say that it was my responsibility to write a letter. Our last meeting was probably almost two months ago, and I didn't write the letter. So that was totally my responsibility. Then I did write the letter and I thought we were all going to sign, and you know that two out of three of us did. That is my responsibility and I should have done that sooner, but when I was told it wasn't a priority — and now I get to see the results of the survey and it highlights that power imbalance — that's a concern for me.

I would like to hear anything the minister has to say about that.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'll try to touch on a few points. The first one is that I hope — I will take personal responsibility. The member opposite mentioned the survey to me in our first sit-down meeting. I will apologize because there are many things that are mentioned in meetings. I'm not sure if I always capture all of them. I do think I was briefed on the situation, so I didn't get the survey in my personal possession ahead of, as I say, several weeks ago. So I think it's fair to say that I was well apprised of the situation — as in this is what is going on.

I want to note something about the survey. When the member opposite asked me to stand up the other day and say if there is a difference in mobile homes, I didn't stand up and say that there is a power imbalance. What I stood up to say is that there is a difference in how that rental situation compares to other rental situations. I just want to make that clear.

When I read the survey, and when I look at it and see the results there — what the member opposite sees as this very strong analysis showing a power imbalance, from my perspective shows an indication of who is responding. When I look to see who is responding and it's largely mobile-home renters, pad renters, they have a perspective. When I look to see whether the mobile-homeowners are responding — so there can be a difference there, and I want to be careful that this is part of how this survey will necessarily be reflected. That doesn't mean that the results are right or wrong. It just means that this is the way in which they are shaped.

There was one other point I wanted to try to raise about the mandate letters. Would it have made a difference to seeing those mandate letters? What-ifs are hard to answer without the chance of running back the clock and trying to look. However, I don't think that the survey was intended to be released ahead of the last election. I think I encouraged the member opposite to talk to colleagues of the Official Opposition to understand whether it would have been released before the election.

The mandate letters that we were given by the Premier — whether they make a difference to the member opposite, they certainly make a difference to me, and I think they make a difference to my colleagues who are sitting here. These were things that were identified out of our platform, and we chose

very specific things that we could work on and try to accomplish reasonably early in the mandate and that still showed some ambition.

Because mobile homes were not part of our platform as a Liberal government, how would it become part of a mandate letter, even if the mobile home survey had been released days after we were elected? The information that was in that survey, I believe, was relayed to me fairly by department officials. I trust them. They have been terrific at providing me information. If there was something that was missed — I'm going to apologize to the member opposite. Maybe it was even named and still I missed it, yet when it came to a point when I understood that there was another specific survey with specific results, I did direct the department to make that public.

Where are we on a go-forward basis? There are many things within the department that they carry out on a day-to-day basis that are not in my mandate letters and still they do them. There are many things that fall to each of us as ministers and as members of this Legislature that we will continue to work on.

If the member opposite, a private member on this side of the House or another member of the Official Opposition have concerns about mobile homes, I will do my utmost to try to raise those concerns within our Cabinet to see if there is work that can be done. I'm not trying to shirk away from it because it's not part of a mandate letter, but I will say that the mandate letters are important to me because those are my requirements. The Premier has set them out for me and for my colleagues, and they will be what I seek to achieve as much as possible. I hope that we are successful as ministers — and I hope that not for us as ministers, but rather for us as a territory. We will do our best. Again, I apologize to the member opposite if it was my misstep in releasing the information. There was no intention to withhold information at any point in time.

Chair: Do the members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*.

Ms. White: I welcome everyone back from a fresh-air break, I'm sure.

When the minister just referenced the survey and said that it reflected the disproportionate amount of mobile-homeowners to park owners, I would like to point out that, to the best of my knowledge, there are six park owners in the City of Whitehorse and that one owns two different parks and the other ones are owned individually. The numbers are going to reflect that, and I think that's an important thing to point out.

I spoke about this previously — not with this minister because he wasn't responsible — and I appreciate that the work that the Bureau of Statistics did because it went out online and then they mailed it to every door. That was really important.

The problem I had with this survey — and the issue is that you can't actually see the questions in the results. It was not written in plain English.

It was complicated and it was not easy to understand. To be perfectly honest, I'm surprised that it was filled out as completely as it was, based on the survey itself. I'm going to put it out there that if the minister wants to have a broader conversation about mobile-homeowners, their rights and the challenges that they face, then I'm happy to do that. I'm happy to facilitate the meeting by letting everyone know that it's happening.

My concern is the longer that we wait — since I was elected in 2011, the average rent increase has gone up by just about \$100 per park. So what was once viewed as affordable housing is no longer. I was talking to someone the other day and they said that now their pad rent has officially gone higher than their mortgage payment. The problem I have with that is that this is in perpetuity. It will continue on and that's what I would like to address.

Even though I have the minister here right now and it's not in one-minute sound bites, I'm just going to put out that this is still an issue and I would like to have broader conversations. They don't necessarily have to be on the floor. More than that, I would love to have a conversation with mobile-homeowners themselves and I would like to be involved in the conversation with park owners. I know the last time that the previous minister spoke with the park owners, they said that they would increase it to the maximum every time. But to be perfectly honest, if we look toward Nova Scotia, then that would mean \$7.35 this year and that's different from the \$25 increases that we're seeing.

I guess my question for the minister is: Is there a willingness to have this broader conversation again because they have participated before many times. They've written letters, they've signed petitions, they come to the Legislative Assembly, they've created associations — the association has gone down. They're interested in creating an association again because it worked for condominium owners. Is the minister willing to have a broader conversation with the community — especially the mobile-homeowners themselves — and would he have a willingness to allow myself and the Member for Porter Creek North and the Member for Copperbelt North to be involved in those conversations?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think I knew all along that this would continue to be an issue for the member opposite. I appreciate her passion and dedication to the issue. I also recognize that there are concerns that are shared by other members of this Legislature because they have mobile homes in their ridings.

I hope I'm always open to having conversations with groups of citizens who wish to be better represented with their issues within the department's purview and that includes

mobile homes — and includes both mobile home park owners and the mobile home pad renters. Yes, I am happy to have those conversations. I hope that this has been demonstrated through a willingness to try to address questions and letters and to even advocate a little bit to try to bring together disparate — not disparate, but ranging points of view across parties. I'm not trying to make it a partisan issue. What I would say is that I have been trying to be proactive on the file.

If the member opposite is asking me if I am willing to meet and discuss, the answer is yes. The member opposite is asking whether they — "they" meaning members of the Legislative Assembly who are MLAs in ridings where there are mobile homes — are invited to be part of it? Yes. This is a part of the work that the department should be carrying on at all times.

Ms. White: I apologize — the head-shake that caused the minister to pause wasn't in criticism; it was based on the fact that I hadn't had a minister before who said: "Yes, let's talk about it." I actually had no other members at that point in time who wanted to have the conversation, so when I was asked by the minister to broach the subject with the other members from all sides, I did that. I did that with the best intentions because this is a big issue. When I ask about those conversations, I actually mean in a more formal way. When the minister said that the department continues to do the work, I appreciate that, because they do. This will require a more pointed look. It will be a legislative change because that is what will be needed to change this for mobile-homeowners. When I ask if he's willing to have those conversations, I mean in a more formal fashion. Will there be a consultation? Will mobile-homeowners and park owners be approached? Will a solution be found in that way?

Is the minister interested in having it in a more formal fashion?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am here in a budget debate and trying to answer the questions. While I appreciate that this isn't a one-minute, back-and-forth — the process that I am bound by is that there is a Cabinet Committee on Legislation and, noting as the member opposite does that there are legislative changes that the members opposite may wish to be considered, I am bound by a process. That process would have me unable to answer because I don't have the opportunity yet to turn to the Cabinet Committee on Legislation.

Legislation is a process which takes time, as everyone here knows. I am trying to indicate my willingness to be open to this, but I can't go beyond what is required as the necessary steps. Before I could say that there would be consultation about it, I would have to turn to that committee to ask whether there would be consultation on it.

Ms. White: This is advice to this minister and all ministers: Budget debate is actually the time where we, as opposition members, can talk about any part of the department. It is the only opportunity we have in this way with the officials present. Although I appreciate that maybe that was a pointed direction toward talking about the numbers in the book right now, this is still a part of the budget, this is still a part of the department and this is still important.

Just for clarity's sake — understanding that the minister just said that he has to go to his Cabinet committee to be given permission or direction to have that consultation — will the minister take this issue to the Cabinet committee to say that this is something that he would like to look into, because it's obviously an issue for members of Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I want to support what the member opposite just said. I have not been trying to redirect any of these questions; I was merely trying to state that within this forum, I am not able to get at the question that she posed previously. In no way do I wish to give any indication that I am opposed to questions that are here; I am very open to them. I respect that this is a moment when the opposition gets to ask about a broad range of questions which are pertinent to the budget.

The member wants me to commit, I believe, to raising the question. There are even precursor steps to the Cabinet Committee on Legislation. What I can let the member opposite know is that, based on the results of the survey and based on the letter that I received from the Member of Takhini-Kopper King — and, as matter of fact, the Member for Porter Creek North — I will as a matter of course take this back for a conversation at the Cabinet table. Then once I get some direction, I will use that to follow up and report back. I will do my best to ensure that there is a timely response to the members. I appreciate that from their perspective they have been waiting a long time and I think we have to acknowledge though that if we're talking about a legislative solution, it will not be fast. The argument may then be all the better to initiate it early.

I make the commitment to raise the question. In fact, this morning when I sat down, I put it on the table to say that we should get this on an agenda shortly.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that and I guess I can only hope. I guess I can hope that something will come of it.

It's also a point to know that I don't live in a park. This isn't about me personally. This is about the seniors I talk to who can't afford it. This is about the single parents where it's becoming unaffordable. This is about the 432 mobile-homeowners in my riding and this is about every mobile home in Lobird, in Benchmark and in Baranov, because I've been to all of them. This isn't my issue. I just have the distinct honour of being here trying to reflect that issue. I look forward to the time where I get invited to a press release where we are going to talk about this going out. To everyone in the Cabinet, I hope that this is on your radar because I tell you, I can be persistent. Just ask the Member for Lake Laberge. I'm going to move on right now even though I'm sure I could keep going for a bit.

Before I start on the Residential Tenancies Office, I again want to be really clear that I appreciate the work that is done there and that this is not a criticism of the work that is done in the office. This is a question about the policies, the direction and the ability for that office to do the work that I feel like it was originally intended to do. When I ask these questions, it's not about individual decisions. It's about how that office is

able to do the work that they do and how, in my mind, based on some of the experiences that people have had, that work actually has to go outside of the office.

One of the concerns that I have is — and I have actually one of the letters here from the minister about it — for example, I sent copies of new lease agreements because with the inaction, since January 1 people needed to sign new leases and rental agreements. I did send the minister copies of two separate lease agreements from two separate mobile home parks because I had concerns that they didn't actually meet the laws of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. They didn't fall within the purview of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*.

The response that came back actually identified that indeed there were some clauses that didn't meet the law. Then the letter proceeded to say that, instead of contacting the park to say you're asking people to sign something that isn't legal, the response was that individuals needed to go to the office to make a complaint about their lease and it would be dealt with on a point-by-point basis because the office didn't have the ability to reach out like that. For me, that's a concern, because in one case, that's 280 leases that were being asked to be signed that didn't meet the law. The minister responded, so he knows about the issue. I'm wondering — with his department officials here — if he could explain how it could only be complaint-driven if there's an acknowledgment that the same copy with the same mistakes is being asked to be signed?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'll do my best to respond. I thank the member opposite for the question. We're bound by the act and the way in which the act is written. There are some things that are possible and some things that are not. A hearing, which is a formal thing where the Residential Tenancies Office can act in a quasi-judicial manner, requires that there be a complainant — that's sort of why that was put forward.

There are ways in which we can act in a proactive fashion and where we can work with landlords and tenants to try to help everyone to move forward in an appropriate manner. The letter that was drafted was drafted by department officials, and they were correct, as far as I understand how this works.

I just want to clarify: it wasn't meant to be discouraging, neither was it meant to be a shuffling of responsibility. It was meant to try to be articulate about how we can get to a resolution. The way that would be required under the legislation is that a landlord or tenant would come into the Residential Tenancies Office and register their concern. That is why we encourage them. In the meantime, we also do public information and we do reach out to landlords to talk to them about how these things can and should be done and to assist them in following the legislation so they are compliant.

I appreciate the member opposite does similar work and I too will try to do similar work where we're doing advocacy around these issues, so that the public is better informed, know what their rights are and can achieve them without conflict.

Ms. White: I appreciate what the minister has just said and I am really familiar with the act and have read the regulations. I was involved in that for a long time. I don't

understand how, within that act, it puts the parameters on it that the minister is saying. My concern is that we just said it has to be on a complaint process. I can tell you that mobile-homeowners within that park took their lease to the office and it was identified that those were mistakes. What they were told was: “You’re going to need to sign it, but if they try to enforce it, don’t worry because that’s when we’ll get involved.”

My concern is for people who don’t know those are not following the legislation and not following the law. It says, for example, that you can be evicted in 14 days from a mobile-home park — in one lease. The legislation says it’s a minimum of 12 months. That lease said it was 14 days, so when someone identifies those problems and they take it in — and this is a unique situation — I appreciate that there are maybe only seven times — or I guess in apartment buildings it could be similar — but if a problem has been identified and we know that it is going to be replicated, because it’s a multi-unit situation, why is the office not able to do that reach-out? What part of the legislation says that, when they identify a mistake, that they’re unable to contact the landlord to say, this is a mistake and it needs to be changed?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will take the time to go back to the department and just try to ask them to find the language within the legislation that specifically gets there. I don’t purport to be a legal expert.

I also want to say that, in my experience with the Residential Tenancies Office, this has not been what has happened, where they have said, okay you have to do this, or not act in a way that maybe isn’t providing full information or fair information. It’s hard in the after-effect to understand on a basis where maybe there was a difference in understanding. It has not been my experience that I have found that the Residential Tenancies Office has given improper information, but there can always be misunderstandings.

Let me just right now point one of those out. It is within the act that there can be a 14-day notice to our mobile-homeowners if there is a serious breach by the tenant, or even non-payment of rent. The act says that. I don’t have the act in front of me, so I want to be careful, but this is from department officials as they briefed me just recently on this — I’m reading from it. That is how we can get misunderstandings quickly.

I will go back. When the member opposite asked the specific question, I checked again with department officials here. They reassured me that is the case within the act — that in order for a judgment to be applied effectively by the RTO, it would require a complaint to be lodged. But having asked twice, I will at this point go back to the department and ask them to find the specific place so we can all be clear. If we’re mistaken, then by all means, we will adjust our practices. If the member opposite is mistaken, we can help to make sure it’s clear for all people.

It’s hard, because the question that is being posed and the example that are being given is a little after the fact. When the member opposite first raised that very specific question maybe at a time when I dropped something else in our conversation,

what I said at that point was that the officials who run the Residential Tenancies Office are doing a good job at trying to inform the public, but maybe there are some misunderstandings, and that if any of us as legislators had come across an instance where that problem had occurred, please inform me right away and we would follow up right away.

I reiterate that now. In my conversations with the RTO, there are times when there are misunderstandings. If that is our fault as a department, I will again apologize. It is my experience that they are doing a good job in the instances where I have followed up, and I would just like to help to alleviate where there are misunderstandings — and that’s what I think this is, Mr. Chair.

Ms. White: I am realizing that I’m maybe not making my point. The criticism isn’t about — within that office. It’s not. It’s the concern that, when — I sent the minister two copies of leases highlighting the concerns that I had about clauses that didn’t meet — and I appreciate that he has just reminded me that it does say, under emergency situations, the 14 days. I do appreciate that. The lease that I sent the minister didn’t have that language. It didn’t say “under special circumstances” — it didn’t say that.

The minister did send back a letter that said, yes, these clauses don’t meet what’s required under the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. The concern I have is that, knowing that those leases that people were being asked to sign did not meet those requirements, there still wasn’t the ability — I guess what I’m asking for, Mr. Chair, is that I would like that office to have more ability to do the outreach that they’re able to identify.

I believe at one point, the minister referenced that it’s not the Ombudsman’s office, and it’s not — and I appreciate that. I know it’s not. But the Residential Tenancies Office is able to make binding arbitration. When it was originally set up, my understanding of the intent was that it would be a place for problem-solving. The problem before was that you could only go to small claims court if you had an issue. This was supposed to alleviate that.

I guess what I’m asking then, leaving those examples behind, is: How do we empower the Residential Tenancies Office? Is that going to be a change in legislation, a change in direction? How do we give them the ability to actually address situations that they see coming up or that might affect multiple people, or is it going to have to be on a complaint-by-complaint basis? If we have an apartment building with 30 units, is every tenant going to have to come in and say, “I have concerns with my lease”?

How do we make sure that the Residential Tenancies Office has the ability to address that issue when that issue is brought to light?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all — and I’ll reiterate — I appreciate the point that is being asked by the member opposite. Are there ways in which we can empower the Residential Tenancies Office so it can be more proactive? I’ve stated that I think there are some ways and that the department and I have been in conversation about how we can allow for

more of that. What we're not able to do is go beyond what the legislation gives us the authority to do.

Some of this may come back to earlier conversations that we have had during this Committee of the Whole.

I also just checked with my department, and we would be happy to provide a briefing for members of the opposition — let me say this: MLAs who have mobile homes in their riding, or who wish to represent mobile homes — and maybe they don't need to be an MLA — if we could provide more information as well about what has been happening and what is possible to do and to provide more information in a briefing, I would be happy to get department officials to do that.

The way I characterize this is that there are concerns that have been raised. I and the department appreciate that they have been raised. We will work to try to alleviate those situations as far as we can within the legislation that we have in front of us. I appreciate that the member opposite is raising those concerns.

Ms. White: Now that the office has been open for the last year and a half, are there statistics of people accessing it — how many landlords, how many tenants, what the situation is?

One of the reasons that collecting the information or having that information available would be important — is that office able to reach the people who need them? I'm looking to find out if there has been any statistical collection.

The other part — because I think the work this office does is so important — is: Are they adequately resourced? Are they able to meet the demands? Because they are both inspectors, they oversee, they do the complaint process, they do the telephone calls — they do all those things — are they adequately resourced and have we collected statistics to say what has happened in that office in the last year and a half?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: You were probably wondering whether it was going to be me who stood up.

Yes, statistics are being collected on how often and who is using the office. I have not seen those statistics rolled up. There is no report at this point that I know of, but I will check for the member opposite about when we anticipated doing a rollup to try to have a look and see. I will commit as well at this point that, once information like that is collected, I will make it public as I think it should be public information.

There was one other part to the question. The question was whether it is my opinion that the office is being well-enough resourced. I have talked with department officials about the level of resourcing that is necessary for the office. I am sure that if we resourced all offices, departments and branches more, they could do more but, from the perspective of the workload that is there for that office, it is our opinion that they are being adequately resourced.

Has the department brought back the budget? Let me say this: there was no moment in budget discussions when we as a government decided to cut back on that department; rather, we went with the financing that the department proposed to us on that office. I can keep it as an open question as we move forward. If we see challenges, then I'm sure we could revisit

this question but we haven't adjusted the resourcing of the office during this budget cycle.

Ms. White: I appreciate the answer. I am going to emphasize this and move on: It's not that I don't think the Residential Tenancies Office is doing a good job. It's not that. I just wish that they had the teeth to be able to take that job to the larger scale, based on experiences that I have had with people accessing the services. It's not a criticism. If the legislation needs to change, then I will also put out there that that needs to be looked at. The office has been going for a year and a half and, maybe at the three-year span, we take a look back and see if it has done what we expected.

It looks like the minister may have a response to that.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am going to apologize to the member opposite if I get this wrong. I will work to get a roll-up of the statistics soon. I don't want to say "tomorrow". I have been fielding questions today about whether — I have at all times attempted to be transparent and forthcoming with information, as it is available. It is my belief that it serves democracy broadly when we're better informed — all of us. I don't care what political stripe it is. I just think it makes us all better as a community.

With respect to the teeth — where the teeth exist in legislation — as I have already explained, that is a different path that we have to talk about. Where the teeth can be dealt with by being a proactive department — just as we're sitting here, the department made this offer to try to brief members of the Legislature, in case there were other questions and information. They are being proactive.

I appreciate the member opposite's compliments to the staff, working within the means that they have. The challenge here is sort of like the difference between the RCMP investigating something and then going out and doing the proactive work. On the part of it where there is a charge and where they can direct someone to do something, there needs to be a court or something, there has to be a case that is being dealt with, and that is sort of the nature, as it has been explained to me, about how the office works when it is in its quasi-judicial role.

The proactive part — that doesn't mean that we can't be proactive; it just means that we can't compel. There are rules — we can encourage, but we can't compel is how I understand it. Again, I have noted once already during this session, during Committee of the Whole, that I don't have a legal background, so I will talk with department officials. I will even talk with my colleague, the Minister of Justice, to try to make sure that I am understanding this and representing it fairly in my responses here.

Yes, we can be proactive. Yes, we wish to be proactive. I think the office has been seeking to be proactive. I'm happy to take suggestions if there are ways in which we can do that better or further within reasonable limits. On the part of where it is the legislation, we have to deal with the complaint-driven side of it.

Ms. White: I can assure the minister that I am also not a lawyer, although if he would like a fancy cake baked, or some cooking lessons, I can definitely help with that. That's

right — we have varied experiences in this Legislative Assembly, and it turns out that I can actually read legislation now, because that is now in my skillset.

I appreciate that and I do appreciate the exchange. Again, I have nothing but compliments for the department, because you're working with legislation and direction and all of those things. Again, it's not about pointing out bad things; it's about just trying to figure out how we can make it better, because when people are trying to access those services, that is part of it.

I'm sure the minister knew that this one was coming, because we've had some discussions in Question Period. It's around the minimum wage. In one of his last responses to my question last week, he said he would take it back to the department — the questions about minimum wage and whether a review was going to happen sooner than later. I just wanted to know what the status of that was.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for, I think, offering to bake us some cake — I'm looking forward to that. I'm sure all sides of the House will appreciate that. I have had some of her cake before too. It was, and I'm sure it will be, delicious.

Minimum wage — I believe what I said in this Legislature is that I was working to gather some information through the Bureau of Statistics about the cost of living and what that looks like comparatively across jurisdictions — and in particular, across the north. If we just take a straight comparative of what the minimum wage is in various jurisdictions, it's a little bit difficult to understand one to the next. There are other things that you would want to look at if you're starting to do the full review — for example, the labour market and how it would respond to changes.

We fell short of saying that we would do a review. There's maybe some devil in the details, but what is meant by a review? I continue to work with the department. I met with the Bureau of Statistics recently to inquire about information, that we were seeking to try to gather more information regarding cost of living across this country, to try to see these various minimum wages in comparison. As soon as I have some information, I will do my best to try to share it back with the member opposite, and that is what we continue to work on.

Ms. White: I appreciate the answer. I apologize, because that is definitely what you said — you were going to look at the statistics — because I also pointed out there wasn't enough statistics.

Is there a timeline for the gathering of that information? Has the minister asked that there be a timeline or a deadline so it's not an infinitely ongoing process?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: To respond to the question specifically, I have not asked for a deadline to be there, but I did ask about how much effort would be required on the various pieces of information that were being gathered. I don't have an answer for the member opposite. I'm sorry.

Ms. White: I'll just put it on the record — for more than the second time at least — that I really fundamentally believe that we need to look at that. I was reading an article

earlier today that says inequality is killing us. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and that's a concern.

I appreciate that we don't have that information right now. I am going to put that out that it is still of concern. I look forward to — if the information comes back and it says that's an acceptable number, then it will be up to me to be like, okay, well, now I'm moving on to the fight for 15 — and that's a totally different topic of conversation. So I'll put that out to the department. I thank the officials for their time. I thank the minister for the exchange. It was very pleasant compared to what I've done previously. I look forward to future conversations with the other ministers.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 51?

Hearing none, we will move on to line-by-line debate at page 6-7.

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Are you agreed?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$89,371,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$70,238,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$159,609,000 agreed to

Department of Community Services agreed to

Chair: We will proceed to Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, at page 9-3.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is Vote 53, general debate on Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to first thank the officials who are here today. They have been great support and help in a large department with many moving parts over the last number of months. I know that my colleagues across the way have had the same experience working with these very professional individuals. Stephen Mills and Shirley Abercrombie are here today to help and to start off with a few words on our vision for the EMR department as we move into this year.

Mr. Chair, I rise to present the main budget for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. EMR delivers an important role in regulating the responsible development of our natural resources. It is a diverse department covering the mining, agriculture, oil and gas, land, forestry, and energy sectors.

Our officials in the department showcase their expertise, demonstrate their professionalism and carry out important programs and services that provide benefits to our citizens and to the economic well-being of Yukon.

EMR is critical to our government's commitment to make strategic investments and development policies that build healthy, vibrant, sustainable communities.

Our strong government-to-government relationships with First Nations foster reconciliation and will advance our resource economy in a collaborative and mutually beneficial manner.

Mr. Chair, we want to ensure that our diverse growing economy provides good jobs for Yukoners in an environmentally responsible way. EMR promotes responsible resource development balanced with environmental management and demonstrable benefits for Yukon by: (1) encouraging resource industries to establish strong environmental stewardship and community development programs; and (2) ensuring a strong regulatory monitoring and compliance process without unnecessary duplication of effort.

I would now like to provide a summary of EMR's budget and then go into more detail on many of our programs and their estimates. Before I do, it would be remiss of me to not thank all the people at EMR. Right from our first staff meeting — our all-staff meeting last year, early into the mandate and the help from all of the department — what a phenomenally professional group of people just helping Yukon to move forward. Their support and professionalism has been extremely appreciated — and their time for my questions and patience with me.

The total operation and maintenance budget for Energy, Mines and Resources is estimated at just over \$74.9 million, which represents a \$3.5-million or a four-percent decrease from the previous year. Total capital appropriations are estimated at almost \$4.5 million, which represents a \$628,000-decrease or 12 percent from the previous year's estimate.

Two primary reasons for the capital budget decrease are a budgeted decrease to \$165,000 from \$575,000 from the previous year due to a reduction in the scope of the action plan on oil and gas, and a decrease of five percent from last year's

estimate due to less funds required for the development of land overall.

Total taxes and general revenues are expected to be approximately \$3.3 million, a \$32,000 or one-percent increase from last year's estimate. The increase in revenue is due to the addition of more agreements for sale in the Land Management branch.

Third-party operation and maintenance recoveries are estimated at \$203,000, which is the same as the previous year. Third-party recoveries for each category are expected to total \$10,000 for Land Management, \$2,000 for Agriculture and \$191,000 for Assessment and Abandoned Mines.

Recoveries from Canada total just over \$30 million and comprise the most significant single inflow of funding for Energy, Mines and Resources' operation and maintenance budget. This represents a \$6.5-million or 18-percent decrease from last year. We'll talk further on the changes in work plans. We have had those discussions here during Question Period as well and the fluctuation of those funds.

By far the largest part of the contribution is for the work undertaken by the Assessment and Abandoned Mines branch on type 2 mine sites. Approximately \$29 million in recoveries are for the Assessment and Abandoned Mines type 2 mine sites. Other recoveries from Canada are \$766,000 to the Agriculture branch, primarily for the Canada-Yukon Growing Forward 2 program, and \$950,000 is for the Yukon Geological Survey for the multi-year funding under the targeted investment program strategic investment and northern economic development for geology-related projects.

EMR summary by division — I would now like to give a budget summary of each division in the department before I go into more operational detail.

Corporate Services functions in EMR are budgeted for just over \$3.7 million in O&M, which is an increase of three percent from last year. This increase primarily originates from the increases in salary costs due to the collective agreement.

The Sustainable Resources division has an O&M budget of almost \$10.8 million, which is a \$355,000 or three-percent increase from last year due to increases in salary costs due to the collective agreement.

The Energy, Corporate Policy and Planning and Communications division has a budget of just over \$6.5 million, which is a \$872,000 or 15-percent increase from last year. This increase is largely due to increased rebates for the good energy rebate program, the residential energy-efficiency incentive program and the commercial energy-efficient incentive program.

I commend the good work of the previous government on these great programs. They are highly sought after and we have seen an increase, based on the subscription and securing dollars based on those trends.

The Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Division is budgeted for a decrease of almost \$5 million, or nine percent, from the previous year, to a total estimate of just over \$47 million. This decrease is due primarily to offsets for type 2 mine activities within the Assessment and Abandoned Mines branch. The budget matches the agreed-upon work plan with the federal

government. We have talked about that governance style and that co-management on many of these budget items. For budgeted purposes, the category of Compliance Monitoring and Inspections includes two branches: the Compliance Monitoring and Inspections branch, which has a budget of almost \$6.5 million, and the Yukon Placer Secretariat at \$257,000.

The total O&M budget of just over \$6.7 million for the two agencies represents a one-percent decrease from last year. This decrease is due to changes in staffing and temporary assignments. The capital appropriations are from the Corporate Services and Sustainable Resources divisions, with Sustainable Resources accounting for about 96 percent of that total. Corporate Services is allocated a capital budget of about \$165,000, which is \$410,000, or a 71-percent decrease from last year. The decrease is due to the reduction in scope of the action plan on oil and gas and the completion of the Dome Road realignment.

The capital budget for sustainable resources is decreased by almost \$218,000, or five percent, to \$4.3 million due to changes to the rural land development workplans for this year.

EMR currently has approximately 289 full-time employees. Almost \$31 million is allocated for EMR personnel overall, which is an increase of \$1.2 million, or four percent, from last year. As we have stated, this is an increase due to the collective agreement salary increases.

Government transfers are budgeted at \$6.4 million for changes in the Yukon mineral exploration program and energy rebates, which is an increase of \$898,000, or 16 percent, from last year.

Total revenues for EMR are estimated to be about \$33.9 million, a \$6.5-million decrease from the previous year. This decrease is a result of a required federal funding for assessment in abandoned mines for 2017-18 and, once again, the budget matches the agreed-upon work plan of the federal government.

Taxes and general revenues are expected to increase by about \$32,000 — about a one-percent increase — to \$3.3 million in total. This increase is due to the addition of more agreements for sale in Land Management branch, which we have touched upon.

Over \$30 million in recoveries from the Government of Canada represent close to half of EMR's total \$75-million O&M budget. This year's recovery is decreased by \$6.5 million from last year's amount.

I would like to maybe now focus a bit more on specific operations and outline the upcoming budget for delivery of our program.

Once again, under Corporate Services, O&M is budgeted for \$3.7 million, which is a \$103,000, or three-percent, increase from last year. This increase primarily originates from the collective agreement salary costs.

O&M expenditures for the deputy minister's office have decreased by \$36,000 to \$552,000 due to changes in staff. These expenditures include personnel, office supplies, travel and contracts for First Nation and industry liaison for mine facilitation. O&M expenditures for the Human Resources

branch have decreased by \$23,000, or three percent, mainly due to staff changes.

O&M expenditures for the Finance and Administration branch have increased overall by seven percent to almost \$2.5 million, again primarily as a result of collective agreement increases. Capital expenditures under Information Technology Equipment and Systems have decreased by \$19,000, or 17 percent, to \$90,000. There are two other capital projects that I would also like to mention.

Capital expenditures under the Dome Road realignment project have decreased from \$50,000 to zero, as that has been completed due to completion of the road and access along the Dome Road in Dawson. Capital expenditures for the oil and gas action plan are zero compared to last year's \$369,000, to reflect the reduction in the scope of the plan. We'll talk a bit more about that, I believe, when we start going through some questions.

Sustainable Resources division has an O&M budget of \$10.8 million, which is a \$355,000, or three-percent, increase from last year. This increase is again due to the collective agreement salary costs.

Under Land Management, the branch administers public land under Yukon government jurisdiction, along with developing and administering Crown land policies. During 2016, the Land Management branch processed 75 land applications and 45 land use permits, and it sold 149 development lots. The Land Management branch is currently managing about 2,360 land dispositions, 145 land use permits and 248 unauthorized occupancies. When you spend some time with the individuals in that branch, you certainly see the magnitude of challenges and work that come at them. It just never stops.

As an environmental steward, the Land Management branch has remediated about four expired lease sites across Yukon. In the spring of 2017, the branch worked in partnership with Parks Canada to clean up several dozen abandoned oil drums in northeast Yukon.

The branch has entered into land development protocols with all Yukon municipalities. These protocols enable each community to identify land for future development and enable the creation of community-specific land banks that address future land demand. We've seen the Member for Copperbelt North bring a motion forward today and, of course, I have committed to meeting with the municipalities throughout the summer. Those visits and work will begin, Mr. Chair, as soon as we finish here in the Assembly next week.

Lots continue to be available in communities across Yukon, including Dawson City, Haines Junction, Carmacks, Destruction Bay, Teslin, Faro and Watson Lake. The \$131,000 increase, which brings us to \$3 million for the Land Management branch's O&M budget, is due primarily to the collective agreement salary costs and an additional \$25,000 for land rehabilitation work.

For capital budgeting, the rural land development program has decreased \$38,000 from \$3.7 million last year due to some updated work plans.

At the beginning of fiscal year 2016-17, land held for sale totalled around \$18 million in the portfolio. Amounts appropriated for capital development costs in various Yukon communities for existing or new land development projects totalled about \$3.4 million. Development costs recovered from the sale of land totalled around \$1.2 million and the final balance of land still available is just over \$20 million.

The Land Planning branch manages the safe and orderly development of land within a local area, and is also responsible for coordinating the Yukon government's input for regional land use planning. The \$28,000 increase in O&M expenditures to \$1.5 million for the Land Planning branch is due to changes in staffing and contract reductions. The Land Planning branch is moving forward on several fronts. We have the development of the Tagish local area plan and it's well underway in accordance with the provisions of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation final and self-government agreements.

Mr. Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pillai that the Chair report progress.

Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 201, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2017-18*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following legislative returns were tabled June 6, 2017:

34-2-21

Response to oral question from Ms. White re: school structure safety (McPhee)

34-2-22

Response to oral question from Ms. White re: First Nation and temporary teachers (McPhee)

34-2-23

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. White re: number of ELL students in public schools (McPhee)

34-2-24

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber re: status of the Auditor General's report recommendations (McPhee)

34-2-25

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber re: upcoming schedule for the Yukon College mobile trades training facility (McPhee)

34-2-26

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber re: school bus schedule for Grizzly Valley residents (McPhee)

34-2-27

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. White re: Yukon nominee program number of applicants and processing times (McPhee)

34-2-28

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber re: number of foreign students attending Yukon College (McPhee)

34-2-29

Response to oral question from Mr. Istchenko re: seniors housing (Frost)

The following documents were filed June 6, 2017:

34-2-10

Bill No. 5, *Act to Amend the Human Rights Act and the Vital Statistics Act*, letter re (dated June 5, 2017) from Alex and Sandra Jack-Mirhashem to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier and Brad Cathers, Member for Lake Laberge (Cathers)

34-2-11

Nadja Cooper: False claims, email re (dated June 6, 2017)
from Nadja Cooper to Pauline Frost, Minister of Health and
Social Services (Cathers)