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HANSARD

Monday, March 19, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2018 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. 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
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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, March 19, 2018 — 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 Dickson Outfitters

Hon. Ms. Frost: It is an honour today to rise and pay tribute to David and Teena Dickson, two very remarkable individuals who, with their children, Teah and Thomas, successfully operated a family-run outfitting business concession in the Yukon for many years. Dickson Outfitters is synonymous with integrity, environmental ethics and a long history of providing a rich wilderness experience to their clients. Their entrepreneurial spirit and incredible work ethic is shown in the diversity of work that they do, including expediting for colleagues and industry and delivering an ethical and world-class Yukon experience filled with their stories for visitors about the history that they possess from many years of family operations in Yukon — a deep-rooted history in the Yukon.

Visitors to the Yukon come via Who What Where Tours. The family fully supports the next generation coming into the industry as can be shown today with their children coming into the industry. They wanted to spark the love of land, animals and history, and this led them to creating the Yukon Guide School, where they take out a group of youth and provide a unique on-the-land experience that instills the values of respect and integrity along with a healthy dose of work ethic.

Their work does not stop when the outfitting concession is over. Following in the footsteps of his grandfather Tom Dickson, and his father Dick Dickson, David takes a holistic approach to managing the outfitting concession through predator management. Not only does he operate his own trapline, but he is also the assistant trapper on the neighbouring two Kluane First Nation group traplines. This balanced approach has proven satisfactory to support and enhance a healthy ungulate population.

I know that the Dicksons have promoted this management style to their colleagues in the industry, and it is something that they hold true, based on their practices of local traditional knowledge and ethical practices.

Since 2014, Kluane First Nation has entrusted David and Teena as the outfitters to offer a world-class hunting experience to clients, a special sheep group-guiding opportunity that is auctioned at the Reno Sheep Show by the Wild Sheep Foundation. This limited edition permit hunt is

highly coveted among the world's sheep hunters, and under Dixon Outfitting management, the value and prestige of the permit hunt has continued to grow.

At the 2018 sheep show in January, Teena and David were recognized by the Wild Sheep Foundation and their peers in the industry by being awarded the Frank Golata Outstanding Outfitter Award. This prestigious award recognizes outfitters who have contributed and demonstrated a lifelong commitment to the industry. The award is a tremendous milestone and a true indication of their hard work and success.

These are just some examples of how they contribute to the lives of Yukoners and visitors. Their work embraces conservation values and shows respect for the land and its wildlife.

On behalf of the Yukon government, I would like to recognize not just this award, but your lifetime of contribution to the Yukon. David and Teena have made the outfitting industry and the Yukon a better place. Thank you for your many, many contributions to our society.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I am pleased and proud to rise on behalf of the Official Opposition and the Third Party to recognize my friends, Dave and Teena Dickson of Dickson Outfitters, on winning the Frank Golata Outstanding Outfitter Award.

As an outfitter, Frank Golata showed us the way to the wild peaks and, as a man, the way to love and respect the land and its marvellous creatures. The Frank Golata Outstanding Outfitter Award recognizes a North American outfitter and Wild Sheep Foundation member who outfits primarily for mountain game and whose entire career has exemplified the honour and dignity of the proud profession of guide outfitting.

I wanted to read from Dickson Outfitting's complete website but I don't have time, so I just want highlight some things from the Dickson Outfitters Ltd. website. The first thing it says: It will provide "Your Hunt of a Lifetime", and "100+ years in Yukon." Mr. Speaker, 100-plus years — and that was Thomas Dickson, who first came to the Yukon in 1898 as a member of the North-West Mounted Police. After 12 years of service, he left the North-West Mounted Police and moved to the Kluane Lake area with his wife Louise George, a Tlingit First Nation woman from Haines, Alaska.

Thomas Dickson was renowned as one of the first big-game guides and started taking hunters out on 60-day pack trips in 1902. He was Kluane's first park ranger, helping to define the borders of the national park that we know today. Thomas and Louise raised their 13 children at the north end of Kluane Lake. Five of the Dickson children later owned and operating outfitting concessions of their own throughout the Yukon Territory.

Buck Dickson, the eldest son, bought his father's hunting territory in the early 1940s. When it became necessary to form registered outfitting areas in the Yukon, Buck's area became concession 10 and Dave's dad, Richard Dickson, bought this area from his brother Buck. As Dave says on the website,

Richard built one of the most respectful outfits in the Yukon, which has been carried on by the rest of the family and that's amazing.

I want to read an excerpt from a letter that was written to the Wild Sheep Foundation nominating Dickson Outfitters for this award. It reads: "What has inspired me most to nominate Dave is his vision and efforts for conservation not only for sheep but all wildlife. In a day of social media, glorification and corporatization, Dave has stayed true to his roots. His number one objective is to do what is best for the health and population of the animals."

He goes on to say: "During my hunt I was fortunate enough to be able to sit down with Dave one on one and have several conversations regarding his outlook and philosophies. One of several efforts that really hit home to me was in 2007 when there was a major die off from a harsh winter. Dave rescheduled or cancelled most of his sheep hunts to help the Dall bounce back. For a man like that, it's all about quality and not quantity."

He goes on to say: "Another effort that really struck a chord was his involvement to further help the Kluane Sheep Permit hunt in the Kluane Game Preserve and the importance around this hunt, the sheep and the conservation that needs to happen.

"One aspect Dave stresses to his guides and hunters is harvesting a Ram is to take into account the age and how it may affect them for generations. Several time I heard: 'Leave that 6-8 yr old rams alone' since this is their prime breeding ages."

"For Dave being in the outdoors, living healthy and sharing Yukon's pristine environment with a few fortunate select people from around the world is more than a rewarding career it is something Dave and his family love to do. They all learn from it every time they are out there in the mountains and do not take it for granted but rather feel as fortunate as his clients did when they traveled with him."

Then he finally summarized, after many accolades about his wife Teena and his kids Teah and Thomas and the hard work that they do: It was refreshing, as a conservationist myself and as hunter, I want to say, that there are still people out there like the Dickson family from Dickson Outfitters who put wildlife first.

That is a testimony, which is only one of many.

Mr. Speaker, if you have a chance to watch the video for this, the Wild Sheep Foundation website says it all. I have known Dave and his family for many years. He is a man of few words, and if you look at the video, when he went up to accept the award, he just said "Wow, that was a shocker." He went on to say a few more things — unbelievable. Dave and Teena and the family are very deserving of this award. They are a community-minded business in Kluane. They love and respect the land and all it has to offer.

The Dicksons' business does not end with just guiding. Dave also runs a guide school to prepare young people for a future in guiding. He spends lots of time trapping throughout the winter to ensure that the balance is kept within his concession and beyond to promote sustainable animal

populations. Teena stays involved in TIA and continues to be a great spokesperson for the tourism industry from an outfitting and land-based perspective. This business is a full-time and year-round endeavour. I might add that I always look forward to seeing Dave, Teena and their two kids at the mink ranch during the Champagne poker run as they volunteer to run a checkpoint. Also, quite often, I stop by to chat with them at White River.

Congratulations to you guys and your family on this award. I see them being in business for many years to come. You are in good hands with Teah and Thomas — although I think the focus might change a little bit toward fishing — maybe fly-fishing, actually. Thank you and have fun at the horse roundup.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to ask my colleagues to please welcome to the Legislative Assembly Donna Dickson — sister to David and Teena — their children and their colleagues. I just want to make note that not only is Teena — she has a long-rooted history in Yukon. I know that my family is quite honoured — although we are at both ends of the territory — that our parents are very closely connected, and with Dick Dickson — sharing many stories and passing on traditional practices and all this. We are really honoured. Teena, thank you so much for your contribution to youth in our community for many, many years.

Arctic Winter Games is happening right now, and I know that has nothing to do with the tribute, but your contribution to youth and your advocacy around your guiding school really brings a lot to encourage young people to get involved in the industry.

Thank you so much for contribution and welcome.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: Also in the gallery today — Gavin Nyland is here and Tim Mervyn, who probably wishes he could have his cowboy hat on — I do too, Tim, but that is how we roll in this Legislative Assembly — and Glenna Southwick.

Welcome to the House today.

Applause

Mr. Gallina: I am going to take a quick moment to also recognize Teena. She and I worked together at the 2007 Canada Games, and I wanted to speak to her work ethic. The games are all-consuming, and during the games, when I was still shell-shocked, trying to understand and grasp the amount of work that was required to deliver a national event, here is Teena who introduces herself to me as a full-time employee, running a business, raising a family and still connected to the city, which had loaned Teena on consignment during these

games. It really is a testament to her work ethic and her commitment to her job and the community.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I rise today as the Minister of Justice to file a legislative return, which is the answer to a question asked on March 15 by the Member for Lake Laberge.

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. Gallina: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House supports the Government of Yukon's decision to use the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement* exemptions to their full extent for the 2017-18 fiscal year.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon Liberal government to make funding available to Watson Lake Secondary School in order to provide a stable, permanent surface for their track and field long jump pit to be installed this spring.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to publicly consult with Yukoners and all Canadians on any proposed firearms legislation prior to proceeding with it.

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

THAT this House salute the ingenuity of Dawsonite Kyler Mather and his unidentified friend for building an ice road across the Yukon River in Dawson City for less than \$120,000 and provide reimbursement for their expenses of roughly \$5.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the parties to complete a Peel land use plan based on the recommended plan.

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: Whistle Bend continuing care facility

Ms. McLeod: Regarding Whistle Bend place, the plan was to have 120 beds for continuing care. Then there was going to be a dedicated 12-bed mental health unit, and the rest were going to be set aside for the palliative care unit. However, we have now heard that the government has made the decision to open the facility with only continuing care beds. This means that there will be no mental health unit or palliative care unit. These areas obviously would have been identified needs for our health care system, so we're surprised to hear this.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm whether Whistle Bend place is now going to open with no beds set aside for mental health or palliative care?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to correct the record. The Whistle Bend continuing care facility will open in the fall. We are going to open with 150 beds. The objective is to have the specialized care facilities open as scheduled in 2019-20. Rather than having beds vacant in the Whistle Bend continuing care facility, we will open up all of the beds to alleviate the pressures and allow for the facility to open on time and on schedule and to address some of the shortages in beds.

Ms. McLeod: That's kind of a surprise, because the information provided to the Official Opposition is that 150 beds were opening this fall for extended care.

Will the minister please advise whether or not 150 beds will be open this fall, or 120 beds — as previously announced — with mental health beds and palliative care beds opening in the following year?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm happy to say that we are opening 150 beds to address the shortages that we have had for our aging population. We wanted to ensure that we had 150 beds open, not 120. That means that we will phase in the specialized care in that time frame that we have allotted. So really, I think that's great news for Yukoners.

Ms. McLeod: There seems to be a bit of confusion over these numbers. I would like the minister to confirm that 150 beds will be open and that they will be full of continuing care patients this fall.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I will give the same answer. It appears that the member opposite is not hearing my answer. We are opening 150 beds for the fall, and my objective is that we will address our waiting list. The opposition pressures us constantly to look at meeting the demand and we are doing our best to address that. We are opening up an extra 10 beds at the Thomson Centre. We will phase in the specialized care services at Whistle Bend in the time frame we have committed to.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. Van Bibber: Last week, we asked the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation about the lack of action this government is taking on the wait-list for social and seniors housing in the Yukon. The wait-list has grown from 105 people in July 2016 to 263 currently. When we

asked what specific actions the Liberals had undertaken to reduce this wait-list, the minister responded — and I quote: “We have spent upwards of \$150 million on opening up the Whistle Bend continuing care facility. We have opened up extra beds at the Thomson Centre.”

Does the minister believe that expanding continuing care beds will reduce the wait-list for social and seniors housing? If so, by how much?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am really happy to respond to the question from the Member for Porter Creek North. Whatever approaches we take to alleviate the pressures are good approaches. We work with our partners. We recognize that accessible and affordable housing is an issue for our territory and we are working with our partners and other levels of government to address this issue. As stated in answer to the question that was asked last week, we budgeted over \$40 million to address housing needs, including land development, affordable housing and seniors housing. All of that will help to address affordable housing, not to mention that we are in the process of implementing the housing action plan and putting resources around that.

Ms. Van Bibber: As was just mentioned by the minister, we are investing \$40 million in housing and land development to address Yukon’s housing needs.

We took a look at the price of the new lots that the government announced that it was opening in Whistle Bend. They range in price from \$130,000 to \$210,000. Does the minister believe that selling a \$200,000 vacant lot in Whistle Bend will reduce the wait-list for social and seniors housing. If so, by how much?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is the Department of Community Services that does the land development of Whistle Bend. What I will respond to is that there is a spectrum of housing needs. As we have seen in the past — for example, in 2008 — if we aren’t sure to keep all avenues of that spectrum moving ahead, then it causes backlogs in other areas. In 2008, there was a shortage of lots available here in Whitehorse, and that ended up pushing up housing prices. Those housing prices went up, and that in turn pushed the price of affordable housing for those people who are trying to enter into the market.

It is important to address all aspects, and I’m happy to say that we are investing \$15 million in land development in Whistle Bend and that will be done on a cost recovery basis. I think that there is a lot of demand for those lots.

Ms. Van Bibber: We asked this question last week and didn’t get an answer, so I will ask again and give the minister another chance to provide a response to those 263 Yukoners waiting for social and senior housing.

Can the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation point to one tangible example of something she has done in the last six months to reduce the wait-list, and have these actions actually reduced the wait-list?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I do want to highlight that the Yukon Housing Corporation has aligned itself very nicely with the community. We have worked with the Da Daghay Development Corporation to open up some new facilities. We

are addressing approaches to the housing needs in Yukon. We are focusing our efforts on rural Yukon, as noted in our budget. We aim to meet the demand for social housing and affordable housing. We have increased our investment in rent supplements and are supporting the development of affordable housing options for Yukoners in the private market through our construction loan and grant programs.

Our social housing wait-list has changed monthly and, recently, applicants in Whitehorse — sure, we have seen a higher demand, but we’re also seeing higher demands in Watson Lake and Dawson City. We’re putting our efforts out into rural Yukon. One way that we are addressing increased housing needs is to provide 30 rent supplements over three years to the Da Daghay Development Corporation and to River Bend housing complex. We are looking at addressing affordable housing programs over the years and have also looked at partnerships through continued municipal matching grants and other initiatives like that.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. Hanson: This government talks a lot about their support for elders and seniors, about aging in place with dignity. We have also heard the government’s words about the need for safe and accessible seniors housing. Meanwhile, in the real world, the elevator at Closeleigh Manor is broken down once again. This is not the first time and this is not the only seniors residence where elevators have been out of commission for prolonged periods of time. This is a major challenge for many residents and it raises serious safety concerns.

Closeleigh is a three-storey building with multiple units on each of the second and third floors. Individuals and couples reside in these units and pay their rent to Yukon Housing Corporation. They expect their units to be accessible. Some residents are effectively homebound because the elevators do not work.

Does the minister think it is reasonable that the elevators in Yukon Housing Corporation’s apartment buildings break down with such regularity?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for raising this really great question because obviously it is a concern for this government as well. The elevator that is in Closeleigh Manor is over 30 years old. We recognize that we do need to take some alternative approaches to ensure that we provide services to those who have mobility challenges.

So we are working with the department and working with Highways and Public Works, and we are attempting to address the situation as quickly as we can, but there is also consideration for replacing the elevator so that we can alleviate this in the future.

Ms. Hanson: The elevator at 22 Waterfront is five years old and is out frequently. Over the weekend, I was notified by a family member of an 83-year-old elder who tripped and fell in the stairwell, breaking her ankle while climbing to her third-floor apartment. The ambulance attendants were required to carry the individual down the

stairs from the third floor. This is not the first time they have had to do this. In fact, this was the fourth recent event requiring EMR staff to carry a resident down from the third or second floor in that one building. I don't need to point out how dangerous this is for the individual or for the staff.

This individual will now be required to stay in hospital in acute care until there is safe access to their home, when really, they should be in the comfort of their own home and receiving the necessary support required from home care support workers and nurses.

Does the minister think that it is reasonable for not only seniors and elders to try to safely navigate the stairs to their homes but also home care workers, nurses and ambulance attendants as well?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Yes, I am aware and I do appreciate that there are challenges and that it is a significant challenge to navigate, personally having had first-hand experience with elderly patients myself in my own community and here in the city. I do spend a lot of time in the care facilities and I have spent time at Closeleigh Manor. I have gone out to the communities and to the care facilities and tried to address some of the concerns that are out there, work with the staff and just look at major challenges.

Of course, the elevator and the repairs that are needed will be done as quickly as they can be. We are currently working with a certified technician to get that repaired and resolved. We are looking at some alternative policies so that when we have had seniors with mobility challenges, we have given them an opportunity to move to the ground-floor level where there is easier access and better accessibility, trying to adapt accordingly, given their location. They have a choice also of moving into other residences that allow for that service to be better aligned with their needs. We are working with home care staff as well to ensure that the options are given to them for services and supports.

Ms. Hanson: If only that were the case. So many seniors are denied the opportunity to move.

Other seniors continue to experience unreliable and often non-functioning elevators in Yukon Housing buildings. This leads to unsafe situations for the seniors, creates unnecessary stress for those individuals living in these residences and for family members who are left to cope when emergencies occur. We have heard from family members and they're appalled at these situations.

It is one thing to talk about aging in place, but it is entirely another thing when a senior or elder is unable to access their own home in a safe manner. It is unacceptable for elders and seniors to have to worry about being able to safely exit their homes in an emergency event like a fire. Non-functioning elevators in any seniors residences are unacceptable.

When will this government put in place a contract for elevator maintenance and repair that demands that a reliable and capable contractor be located in Whitehorse so we don't have to wait until people fly in?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I really thank the member opposite for bringing this specific issue to our attention. Building safety

and the safety of our seniors, staff, employees and the public is of the utmost importance to this government — as I'm sure it was in the past.

I will tell the member opposite that in my short time on this portfolio, I've learned that elevator maintenance is a long-standing problem in this territory. It is very difficult to maintain elevators in this territory because of the way elevators are licensed and installed. This is an ongoing problem. I know my colleagues on the far side of the House probably had similar difficulties when they were in office, but that doesn't diminish the fact that this is a very serious issue.

Highways and Public Works has completed a comprehensive five-year capital plan for building maintenance projects. This plan will continue to evolve as emerging needs are identified. That plan will do triage so that when there are issues like the one the member opposite has brought to our attention, we will then turn our attention to it and try to resolve it.

Certainly, there is no way that this government wants our seniors walking up and down steps when they should be taking an elevator. I can assure the member that we will do our utmost to get that elevator fixed as quickly as possible, recognizing how difficult it can be to get proper elevator maintenance staff to Whitehorse.

Question re: Energy supply and demand

Ms. White: In 2015, after years of delay, the previous government adopted an independent power production policy. The policy was widely criticized, mainly because it allowed for larger projects to use LNG — a fossil fuel — as a source of energy, when the whole point of the IPP is to encourage the production of renewable energy.

During the last election, the Liberals promised to remove LNG from the IPP policy. So can the minister tell Yukoners if LNG has been removed from the independent power production policy?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There are two separate streams that are addressing the question from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. First is the collaborative effort that is being undertaken by multiple ministers on the renewal of the energy policy that goes back to, I think, the 2009 energy policy, which is being updated. Our committee is working with Environment, Community Services, Economic Development and a series of technical officials to update the energy policy where that can be addressed.

The second part is that we have publicly stated that we're looking at October or November as our deadline to have our IPP legislation in place — so more along the lines of November, I believe. Certainly, the government officials have committed to me that we'll have that work near the end of the year. So that's the time frame.

We certainly have no interest in bringing LNG into an IPP policy. We're really looking directly at renewables right now. Our communities are undertaking a series of projects. We'll be coming in to share that good news in the Legislative Assembly as we have MOUs signed with almost every one of those communities — as well as funding agreements in place,

which we'll also be sharing with the Legislative Assembly over the next month.

Ms. White: I'm hopeful then that LNG won't be included in that power production policy when it does come forward.

Let me turn to the 2016 Yukon energy resource plan. The plan includes the purchase of a third gas engine at Whitehorse's LNG facility in 2019, and the Energy Corporation plans to invest in a 20-megawatt diesel facility in 2021. Even though the Energy Corporation recognizes that Yukoners ranked environmental protection as the top criteria when considering new energy, there are no new government-led renewable energy generation projects on the horizon.

Does the minister stand by the Yukon Energy Corporation's plan to invest millions in diesel and LNG infrastructures when Yukoners are asking for action on renewable energy?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. It was interesting — just this afternoon, I was reading through the *Renewable Energy — Yukon leading the way* document that was handed out by Yukoners Concerned. It was nice to be able to go through the document from front to back and almost be able to check off every area of interest that we are actually undertaking. We will be coming back to the Legislative Assembly to go through, line by line, and explain how we are addressing that.

Over and above that, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the integrated resource plan, it is narrow to just ask that one question. First of all, there were three separate scenarios depending on load, and there was a series of options that were put in place. What we have done in the interim is to take into consideration that we are trying to align our long-term vision for clean energy in our platform with the IRP. What we have done in the interim is — if anybody drives by Yukon Energy, they will see four separate sea cans. They are two-megawatt sea cans. We have leased capacity in the interim — or rented leased capacity in the interim — as we look at other options that we can use by partnering with community members — projects such as the Haeckel Hill project, or working with Carcross/Tagish First Nation on Montana Mountain. Really, it's giving other people the opportunity to produce clean energy.

Those are a series of items we are taking into consideration. I will add that I was a month into the job when that plan was finished, so there is a lot to discuss about that.

Ms. White: Yukoners are looking for Yukon government-led renewable energy projects. The fact is that we are burning more fossil fuels than ever. This last December, the LNG generators that were sold to Yukoners as backup power were on every single day. LNG is still a part of the IPP policy and Yukon Energy is planning to invest millions more in LNG and diesel capacity.

This Liberal government has shown no interest to invest in renewable energy projects that they are in charge of in the foreseeable future. The words "climate change" did not even appear once in the Premier's budget speech.

How is this government's track record on renewable energy any better than its Yukon Party predecessor?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There is a lot to unpack there but, contrary to what my friend across the way is saying, we are committed to a series of different items. IPP, as was stated in the first question, is a key item. There were a couple of statements made — or a couple of points within those questions — concerning things that the member opposite believes are going to happen or are taken for granted.

What we are doing is taking a look at the IRP, which is a blueprint with three separate scenarios. We are working with our community partners, which is what many Yukoners are saying that they want to see done. We are taking a look at what our short-term and our long-term solutions are. Inevitably there will be some investment in the short-term to ensure that people have their lights on and their homes heated. In the long-term, we are working on a bilateral agreement with the federal government that we are working to bring to fruition where we can look at a long-term strategy that focuses on renewable energy.

Question re: Mental health services

Ms. McLeod: Two weeks ago, I asked the Minister of Education about mental health support in Watson Lake schools, and whether or not communities are receiving the same standard of support as Whitehorse.

In response, the Minister of Health and Social Services got up and provided an answer that was somewhat unrelated to this question, and in that response she said: "The supports that are in Watson Lake right now — I am happy to report that, in the next week, the community of Watson Lake is opening up its mental wellness hub."

I did not see or hear of any government press release announcing the opening of the mental wellness hub last week. Can the minister confirm whether or not the mental wellness hub opened in Watson Lake last week?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am happy to say that the focus of the department is really to look at mental wellness and substance abuse programs in our communities. The mental wellness hub really aligns with that. We are looking at innovative initiatives in our communities — Watson Lake being one. We have aligned to the needs of Watson Lake based on what we were hearing from the community — feedback from the community. We look at prevention and education. We look at counselling services and child, youth and family services.

I was happy to respond to the question that was asked of the Minister of Education and to provide further background with respect to the work that we are doing in the communities. We did say that we would open up the facility this past week. That did not happen due to scheduling. This Friday, we are going to open up the facility on a formal basis.

Ms. McLeod: I have looked at the Health and Social Services website and was not able to find anything related to the mental wellness hub in Watson Lake or anywhere else.

Can the minister tell us how local residents can get information and how they will be notified about the mental wellness hub and the services that they can access through it?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am happy to provide the member opposite with the graph again. I believe it was provided previously but we can provide further information.

If you go on the Health and Social Services website, you will find some information on there. I will be happy to respond directly. We have some contact information in Watson Lake. There is a facility in Watson Lake that has staff and is open to the public. Obviously, we are there to provide support and to provide appropriate programs and services. The member opposite is welcome to attend the opening of this new hub facility on Friday, March 23.

Ms. McLeod: That is great, Mr. Speaker. That's just great. I would hope that the people who are expected to use the services would know what those services are and would know how to find information on those services in order to access them.

Again, will the minister tell us how this information is going to get out to those people who are looking forward to these services? Further, how many new mental health positions is this going to bring to the community of Watson Lake?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm happy to respond to the question. We do our utmost to provide transparent and open dialogue with our community members. I have been to Watson Lake a few times — I have worked with the community. I have worked with the Liard First Nation and the Town of Watson Lake. We will continue our best efforts there to provide the timely services that are needed — specialized services.

In Watson Lake, we have social workers; we will have two mental health wellness counsellors, a clinical counsellor and a mental health nurse. We will work in collaboration with our health centre in Watson Lake. We will work in collaboration with our services in Whitehorse. It is very easy to get the dialogue out to the community. If there is input that is further needed from the member opposite, we might be able to perhaps branch out further. I would be happy and open to some of the concerns that are being raised — so really open to that feedback if necessary on what we could do better because we are always open to that.

Our aim and desire is to provide as open and transparent services as possible. If it is not getting out there, please let us know and we will do our best to address the concerns.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. Van Bibber: Last week, in response to a question about how much funding is allocated for affordable housing in the communities, the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation said — and I quote: “On the question with respect to affordable housing, we have identified significant resources in the budget. I would be happy for us to go through that when we have direct discussions on the mains. Currently, as I indicated, we have \$40 million allocated overall in the budget.”

Mr. Speaker, page 1 of the budget highlights indicates there is only \$6 million set aside in this year's budget for affordable housing.

Could the minister clarify how much money is actually set aside for this year's budget for affordable housing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, taking part of the quote — I will continue — and this is in all of our binders that we have budgeted over \$40 million this year to address housing needs, including land development, affordable housing and seniors housing. So we do recognize that accessible and affordable housing is an issue in the territory and we are working with our partners and other levels of government to address this. In the coming weeks, we will even have more details about projects and initiatives that will be relieving housing pressures in the Yukon.

Ms. Van Bibber: If the \$40 million is for all of the affordable housing, can the member opposite tell me how many are for affordable housing for low-income Yukoners and seniors?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So again, \$40 million is in this year's budget to address housing needs, including land development, affordable housing and seniors housing. Again, the breakdown that our Minister of Health and Social Services and Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation was speaking about is for Committee of the Whole. We would be happy to go through the line items as we take over that \$40 million figure into those different pockets, which — we'll state again for the record — are for addressing housing needs, including land development, affordable housing and seniors housing.

Ms. Van Bibber: I don't think that answered the question — it's still very vague — \$40 million is a lot to cover all of those units. We had \$6.6 million assigned to one of the Challenge housing projects and we're still looking for a cost estimate for affordable housing units.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I didn't hear a question at that third supplementary; I heard a statement. Again, we are happy to take that \$40 million and dive down to it in each department and we hope the members opposite will use the opportunity during Committee of the Whole to get those line items out. We are happy to discuss the \$40 million that we have addressed to the different areas. It is just that, in a minute and 30 seconds, you don't have an awful lot of time to go into all of the line items for such a big project such as a \$40 million line item, including housing needs, land development, affordable housing and seniors housing. There is not enough time to go through all of that stuff in Question Period.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 18: Order of Yukon Act — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 18, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 18, entitled *Order of Yukon Act*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 18, entitled *Order of Yukon Act*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm very pleased to rise today to introduce second reading for the *Order of Yukon Act*. I believe that we can all agree that Yukoners are a remarkable group of people. Each of us in this Legislature has witnessed how the privilege of knowing — or have heard of someone who has done something remarkable that has, in some way, enriched all of our lives. That is why in January at the Commissioner's New Year's Levee I made the announcement that we will be tabling legislation to create the Order of Yukon. It is absolutely a privilege to speak to that legislation's second reading today.

This framework will support the Order of Yukon program, which seeks to recognize all of these Yukoners who have made our territory so unique, those whose inner compass has guided them to a place that elevates all of us, the ones who seldom look at the self first and actually look at it secondarily. This speaks to the first of three principles that have guided the creation of this legislation and that is high achievement. The establishment of the order is a means for us to formally recognize those deserving individuals. It's a tangible and lasting expression of gratitude and thanks. These contributions may be found in the areas from sports to First Nation governance, environmental stewardship, the arts, heritage and cultural development, business and volunteerism or the support of our seniors or our youth. The list is absolutely endless.

Before I discuss the structure and the functioning of the order, I do want to take time to acknowledge the former Commissioner Doug Phillips. In one of our first meetings that I had as Premier, he made an impassioned case for the creation of the Order of Yukon.

He recognized that the territory was in need of an honour that ranks in the order of precedence alongside the orders of others provinces and territories. Without his advocacy to both this government and the previous one, I would not be speaking about this legislation here today. One of the elements of building the Order of Yukon was receiving input from Yukoners.

At this point, I do want to acknowledge the work of the previous government on engaging Yukoners on their views of the order. During that process, 237 individuals offered feedback during an online engagement process in which they indicated that they wanted to see a high standard of achievement recognized. They also expressed support for the creation of an order that is non-political, with a preference toward excluding elected officials from receiving the order while they hold office. That is the basis for the second key principle used in the development of this legislation. None of the MLAs in the Legislature today, for example, are eligible — nor are elected First Nation chiefs, councillors of First Nations or municipalities, mayors or judges — as long as they are in office.

We carried out this apolitical and non-partisan thinking into how we approached the framework for the advisory council, which will be established to review nominations and make appointment recommendations. One of the first steps was to meet with the Council of Yukon First Nations to seek their advice on how to offer their guidance in selecting a First Nation representative on the council. In addition to the First Nation representative, the council will be made up of Yukon's Senior Judge, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the president of Yukon College, the Cabinet secretary, and up to two appointees from the Commissioner's Office. Of all the provinces and territories, ours will be the only order whose advisory council explicitly reserves a seat for indigenous representation. I believe this reflects our unique relationship with First Nations.

The Commissioner who is in office will be the chancellor of the order and will automatically become a member for life. The administration of the order, meanwhile, will be the responsibility of the Commissioner's Office. They will be named secretary of the order and will manage all operations including communications, managing applications, calls for nominations, supporting the chancellor and the advisory council, and making arrangements for the ceremonies. Should this bill receive assent, the Executive Council Office will work with the Commissioner's Office to establish operational and program details, which include community outreach efforts, an application package and nomination guidelines as well.

There will be two classes of membership for the Order of Yukon: regular and honorary. Regular membership will be open to long-term Yukoners who are Canadian citizens, and the honorary memberships will be non-Yukoners — or even non-Canadian citizens — who have nonetheless made a significant contribution to our territory. Membership in the Order of Yukon will mean that the individual is part of an exclusive group. There will be a limit on the number of people who will become members each year. For regular members, up to 10 people will become members in the first two years, with up to three each year after that. Honorary membership will be limited to one per year. Those who are inducted into the order will be members for life.

Much of what we are doing here is consistent with other provinces and territories and their orders. This was our third guiding principle, Mr. Speaker, and it is reflected in the structure of the act and the membership limits that I have outlined.

We want the Order of Yukon to be of a standard that equals similar awards across the country. In Canada, the order of precedence lays out the hierarchy of honours, awards and decorations, and we want to do everything possible to make sure that the Order of Yukon joins the 10 provincial orders that are currently included.

Although the individuals in our territory who have done so much to push us forward and to enrich everyone's quality of life have never done so to receive recognition, we — each of us in this Legislative Assembly, and each successive generation here in Yukon — all stand upon their shoulders.

We can see and acknowledge the change that they have brought, and we must take these steps together to applaud them on a level that is consistent with other provincial and territorial orders.

Imagine if we had been able to recognize Elijah Smith or Martha Black with an Order of Yukon in their lifetimes — two of the many who have shaped our territory. It is my hope that soon we will be able to do so for those who follow in their footsteps.

We are the last jurisdiction in Canada to create such an honour. It has been a long time coming, but I am very eager for us to begin this debate, and I invite all members here today to join me in recognizing the value of this effort and of those of our territory who have done so much for our benefit.

I do want to conclude by again thanking government officials and caucus, and others who have looked at all the other jurisdictions in Canada to make sure that we use best practices right across Canada for this process. It is interesting to note that in most other jurisdictions, either through the advisory council makeup or through the decision on appointment of the order, Cabinet or Premier is pretty much a standard of the recognition. In certain jurisdictions, like British Columbia, two persons are appointed by Cabinet; in Saskatchewan, five people are appointed by the Premier; and in Manitoba, up to six persons are appointed by Cabinet. In a lot of different jurisdictions, the advisory councils recommend to the Premier or to Cabinet. We have decided that we want to make this as non-partisan as possible, because to have a council through the Commissioner making these recommendations, to us, is the smartest thing to do, because it takes partisan politics out of the situation and we can focus more on the good work of the individual Yukoners who will be proud to be called to the Order of Yukon.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for my ability to speak to second reading and open the floor to comments from the opposition.

Mr. Kent: I would like to thank the Premier for bringing the *Order of Yukon Act* forward, and the Official Opposition is in support of this.

I too would like to take this opportunity to thank former Commissioner Phillips and former Premier Pasloski for the work that they both put into moving this forward in their respective positions.

I'm not going to spend a lot of time here today, but I do look forward to seeing the act move through this Legislature and be voted on in due course.

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party, I rise to say that we're pleased to see the establishment of the Order of Yukon. I do know that former Commissioner Phillips had made it clear that he saw this as a priority. To see recognition of Yukoners in a manner that is commensurate with what we see across the country with the Lieutenant Governors' orders — looking back, we can see that it has been just less than 40 years since Alberta put in place the Order of Alberta in 1979. Subsequently, across the country, Lieutenant

Governors have the opportunity, as our Commissioner will now have, to provide a profile and a recognition to Yukon's citizens — as well as to those who may wish they were citizens but aren't, but who have contributed in some way — whose excellence has left a lasting legacy in our territory and in Canada. The focus on the non-partisan nature of the Order of Yukon is also to be commended.

We anticipate that, over time, the recipients of the Order of Yukon will form a collective mosaic of Yukon's finest citizens, whose contributions have shaped and will continue to shape Yukon's history and our place in Canada. These citizens will come from all walks of life, as the Premier has outlined, and from all sectors — from community leadership, the arts, business and industry, the volunteer sector, professional and research sectors, to name a few. What they will hold in common is their service with distinction and excellence in whatever their field of endeavour is, in a manner that benefits Yukon and/or brings credit or honour to our territory.

We can think of nothing more befitting than that in order to see those achievements and the honour that we share collectively through the recognition of these individuals through the Order of Yukon. It is a very important step. We also look forward to — as the order is established — the development of the insignia that will be something special to signify who those recipients are. It's my understanding that this insignia is still under development.

As I said when we were doing the briefing, I think that the only comment is that it would be slightly maybe off the wall that if you look at the initials, it's OY. If you have ever gone to an Australian football or rugby game, it's "oi, oi, oi". I just want to avoid that one. All in all, we're pleased to see the establishment of the Order of Yukon.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I am very happy to rise today to discuss the *Order of Yukon Act* that the Premier has brought forward.

As has been noted, the bill will create the Order of Yukon, which will recognize those individuals who have demonstrated excellence and achievement and who have made outstanding contributions to the social, cultural and economic well-being of the Yukon and its residents. I'm really happy to hear the support from the Official Opposition and the Third Party today in their comments.

This should be a very easy bill to pass in this House.

It will be the highest honour of our territory, and I believe it is important to create such an honour. In fact, I believe this level of recognition is very long overdue, as we have heard here today from the other speakers.

I am a born and raised Yukoner, and I'm proud to call the territory my home. I have seen a lot of change over the years, but the Yukon has always been — and continues to be — a very special place. Its natural beauty is well known and well documented and continues to inspire. Its natural resources are abundant and attractive and continue to be discovered. Its history is world renowned and culturally diverse and continues to be written.

But what really makes Yukon special is its people, who continue to be our most sacred resource. The people of this land — whether they are newcomers, lifelong or have ancient ties to the land — make our Yukon unique. There are so many people who have contributed to the rich fabric of the Yukon — from chiefs to elders, teachers to mentors, visionaries to leaders, trappers and hunters, fishers and farmers, prospectors, poets, pioneers, pilots, painters, performers and, yes, even politicians.

I think about significant people who have passed on now, like the architects — and they have already been mentioned here today, but I will mention them again — of self-governance: Elijah Smith, Harry Allen and, most recently, Mike Smith. Storytellers and cultural teachers like Annie Ned and Angela Sidney, and my own mother, Thelma Norby, who was an amazing woman, a pioneer on so many fronts — from business development to just deep kindness shown in so many ways. She was always there to help everyone in need. She started the very first hot lunch program in the Yukon schools because it was needed and it made a difference, and it was deserving of recognition. Of course, my uncle John Edzerza, who served Yukoners for many years — he is the reason we have schools like the Individual Learning Centre and a land-based healing facility at Jackson Lake. All of these people were deserving of the Order of Yukon. There are so many colourful characters in our Yukon Territory that paint the picture of Yukon as we see it today. That is why this bill is important. It acknowledges the fact that what really makes Yukon a magical and inspiring place is the people who have devoted their lives to it, the people who have invested their passion and shared their love of this place with all Yukoners for the benefits of all Yukoners. It is time that we recognize the contribution of these amazing people and honour their role in the history of our territory.

I wish my parents and grandparents were alive to see the Order of Yukon being created, and I believe they would be proud to see us bringing this forward to honour those who have made the Yukon what it is today. It will also allow us to honour those who will contribute to Yukon in the future, as we continue to tell our remarkable story. We owe a great deal of thanks to these people. The Order of Yukon will allow us to express our gratitude to Yukoners while they are still with us.

I thank the Premier for introducing this bill, and I too acknowledge our former Commissioner Phillips for making this a priority and bringing it forward to us. I'm so happy to offer my support today.

Mr. Gallina: I would also like to thank the Official Opposition and Third Party for expressing their support of this bill and the Premier for introducing it to members here in the House today.

I'm pleased to rise in the House today as we enter second reading of Bill No. 18, *Order of Yukon Act*. I'm not going to take too much time. I have a personal story that I wanted to share. I wanted to bring some relevance to constituents to whom I have talked about this.

Before I speak about the bill before the House today, I wanted to touch briefly on the process for bills because, when I'm talking with constituents about legislative proceedings, often it's difficult to relate to how the proceedings of this House impact them as Yukoners.

Beginning in grade 5, Yukon students are taught about government processes, including the key roles within provincial, territorial and federal governments, the responsibilities of the various levels of governments, government decision-making, structures and forms of rule, among other topics. The democratic process of government is an important area for Yukon students to explore. This includes how matters of importance to citizens may be introduced, debated and finalized as bills here in the House.

In this case, with the *Order of Yukon Act*, there is a significant amount of relevance to Yukoners. A bill follows a series of steps on the way to becoming a new piece of legislation. The first step in the process of legislating the Order of Yukon took place on March 5, 2018 when Bill No. 18 was introduced, or tabled in this House, by the Hon. Premier. Today, we move on to the second step in this process, which is to debate the bill before second reading. Once second reading has passed, the bill will be deferred to Committee of the Whole on second reading before it returns to the House for a final vote on third reading. A bill that passes third reading then goes to the Commissioner for royal assent. Once royal assent is given, the bill is determined to be fully passed and then may be referred to as an act or statute. The Order of Yukon is the bill that is up for debate today, and key elements of the order will be outlined for the benefit of Yukoners.

Yukon is the only Canadian jurisdiction currently without an order. Public engagement with Yukoners revealed that they want a mix of quality and quantity in assigning awards to outstanding Yukoners. The Order of Yukon will be the highest honour in the territory. It is a new Commissioner's award that will recognize contributions by Yukoners in areas such as sport development, art, business and academics, as well as through acts of bravery. Once Bill No. 18 passes royal assent, the Order of Yukon will be one of three awards given out by Yukon's Commissioner — the other awards being the Commissioner's Award for Bravery and the Commissioner's Outstanding Youth Achievement Award. The award will be administered through the Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner will be the chancellor and the secretary of the order and, as the Premier had spoken to earlier, an advisory council will be established pursuant to the provisions of the act.

I know first-hand how impactful and important awards of this nature are to Yukoners. On a winter's night in 2004, the unimaginable had happened. I awoke to an orange glow that had filled my bedroom, and I quickly came to realize that the house across the street from me in Porter Creek was ablaze. I ventured outside to talk with residents who had gathered in front of the house, and together we watched first responders work diligently to quell the flames and control this devastating situation.

In talking with folks, I soon came to understand that the house had caught fire from a cigarette that had not been properly extinguished. I also learned that residents with young children had escaped unharmed, but only after being notified by the valiant efforts of one neighbour who alerted the family to the fire and helped them all exit the house. The hero was Larry Tupper, and he was recognized for his efforts with a bravery award, presented to him by the Commissioner of Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, I do understand that the Order of Yukon will not be replacing the Commissioner's Award for Bravery; however, the connection I want to make with this story is one of pride and community. Larry and his wife primarily kept to themselves and lived a quiet and simple life. However, after Larry received this award, I began to notice over time that he was interacting more with neighbours than he had in the past. In finding my time to talk with Larry, I discovered that he was proud to be recognized for his efforts. Of course, being recognized was not the motivation for his actions to help a family but, as a result of being praised by the Commissioner, Larry's pride in himself, his neighbourhood and the greater community had grown, and this was evident.

It is this pride that I speak of that I know the Order of Yukon will foster in Yukoners. Whether it is from achieving greatness in sports or First Nation government, environmental stewardship, arts, heritage, culture, development, business, volunteerism, or the support of seniors and youth, Yukoners will benefit from being formally recognized for their significant contributions to the territory. On behalf of Yukoners, I look forward to this bill receiving royal assent.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard on second reading of Bill No. 18?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I thank all of my colleagues today for their comments and anecdotes as we look to join the rest of Canada with this level of award to deserving Yukoners.

I thank the Leader of the Third Party for recognizing the non-partisan nature of this application. Again, in that vein, we did take a look at every jurisdiction to try to not reinvent the wheel when it comes to how this legislation is crafted and how we put people on the advisory council. As we looked at every jurisdiction, something interesting showed up. In those jurisdictions where there was no representation as far as the decision to appoint people to the order, we saw a large representation of Cabinet deciding upon memberships to the advisory council. For example, Alberta is one of those jurisdictions where the decision to appoint to the order is given by recommendations to the chancellor, but when you take a look at how the council is made up, the council consists of six people who are appointed by Cabinet. In Saskatchewan, the premier made the decisions for approval. In Quebec, as well, the advisory council makes recommendations to the premier. New Brunswick is an example of where it is not the premier, but recommendations go to Cabinet. If you take a

look at the advisory committee in that particular jurisdiction, three to five persons are appointed by the Cabinet.

There were two things that we really wanted to do here. We wanted to make sure — because we do have almost half of the self-governing First Nations in Canada — that representation is there through the CYFN. We are happy to give thanks to Grand Chief Johnston and the folks over at CYFN for their participation.

Also, the fact that we have tried to make this as non-partisan as possible is a really important piece. To the story just read into Hansard about Larry — it is all about Larry, not about what Larry's politics are. I was just taking a look — I am glad that we made a lot of comments about former Yukoners and nobody really hedged any bets here today about living Yukoners who they think should be on the Order of Yukon magnitude, but I take a look at names like Bill Bowie — who has passed away in Dawson — or Steve Cardiff or Dave Layzell, three individuals who had their own partisan politics. The way that we have decided to move forward on this particular legislation, what will not be considered is political background, and what will be considered is the good work done by good individuals.

I am really proud of that and I just want to make a comment — there have been a lot of conversations in the briefings on this about how we came to the determination that we would start with 10 individuals for the first two years. I could pick 20 Klondikers who are deserving of this award right now. By being the last jurisdiction in Canada to join this rank of order, we really believe it is important to populate the order with up to 20 individuals based upon the discretion of the council. Again, it is up to 20 in those first two years, so 10 in the first year, 10 in the next year. It doesn't have to be 10 both years. The council has the flexibility once it gets established. I am willing to bet dollars to donuts that, through the involvement of Yukoners putting names forward for this order, they will have a hard time not picking 10 names in the first year and 10 names in the second year.

I do appreciate the comments from the opposition and it looks like this particular piece of legislation will hopefully have little problem moving through to assent. It will be interesting that our Commissioner, when she does come in and assent to this bill, will be the first recipient of this Order of Yukon. It will be an historic day, and I am looking forward to being here and all of us be part of history as we move forward.

Thank you again to my colleagues, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yeas, nil nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for second reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: We will take a 15-minute break.

Recess

Chair: I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill No. 206: *First Appropriation Act 2018-19* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Department of Highways and Public Works

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to take a moment to introduce my officials this afternoon. We have with us Mr. Paul Murchison who works for our Transportation branch and also Mr. Jaime Pitfield, our deputy minister. I don't think he has appeared in the House yet. Welcome, gentlemen.

In keeping with our approach over the last little while, I'm going to keep my initial comments relatively brief. We want to make sure we give enough time for questions, so I have few remarks to make.

I'm pleased to present to you this afternoon the Department of Highways and Public Works 2018-19 budget. Before I get into the good work this budget supports, I would like to talk about the department a bit. Highways and Public Works is a large department spread out over our vast territory. In many communities, the Highways and Public Works staff runs three family generations deep. They are, without exaggeration, Yukoners working for Yukon around the clock.

We enable our client departments to make better procurement and purchasing choices that support our local businesses and Yukon's economy. The government's departments rely on our services that provide asset management, not only for building roads and ICT infrastructure, but also for fleet vehicles, the Queen's Printer and the mailroom. Of course, we also provide and maintain the critical infrastructure that all Yukoners rely on — information technology that enables the government to function.

Building infrastructure for our roads, bridges, airports, and buildings is our main business and we do this so that government can run effectively and efficiently. We do this so Yukoners can get around and so our society can function. Our challenges are doing all this with limited resources and a limited construction season together with a harsh climate — a harsher climate than many southern jurisdictions face. With a dedicated staff of more than 800 people spread across four divisions, we are currently doing that important work to the best degree possible — many times with aged equipment. Someday, ask me about "old fireball".

We need to invest in new equipment in order to enable our crews to keep our transportation routes safe and operational. Aging and outdated building and technology infrastructure is another challenge for the department as we work to prioritize capital projects and upgrades. You heard about that earlier today in the House with elevators for example. We do this to better serve Yukoners and reduce energy costs as part of our commitment to Yukon's climate change strategy. My department operates and maintains more than 540 government buildings worth in excess of \$1.6 billion. Each year, we also design and build new facilities to help meet the growing program needs of our client departments so they can better serve the needs of Yukoners in a growing and maturing territory.

We are also focused on reducing energy use in our buildings through energy retrofits and energy-efficient new construction. These investments pay back quickly through cost savings while also helping to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Highways and Public Works was a participant in the climate change audit Public Accounts hearing and we were able to highlight our work in addressing climate change and mitigating the government's greenhouse gas emissions that arise from transportation and building operations. We are also

working to improve government procurement so our spending supports the delivery of public services and boosts economic benefits to all Yukoners.

We have heard from our local contractors that seasonally dependant large construction projects were tendered too late to adequately prepare bids. We have listened to these concerns and, this year, we are putting out more tenders earlier so Yukon businesses will have more time to plan and deliver on projects.

To develop more skills locally and to generate local employment from government contracts, we have added the northern knowledge and experience clause to our contracts. This clause recognizes the value added when contractors have a demonstrated foundation of experience working in the Yukon environment.

To make sure that our First Nations are included, we have added the First Nation participation clause so that local benefits are considered ahead of time by our local vendors in a way that meets both their needs and the First Nation community's needs.

On the information management front, this department provides leadership across government for how we collectively manage information and how we can be more open and transparent while protecting the most sensitive of our citizens' private information.

Highways and Public Works also operates and maintains all of the information and technology equipment that connect government departments with each other and with the public. Modernizing and repairing antiquated information technology systems does cost money; however, it also saves us money in the long run. Highways and Public Works is committed to supporting departments and fulfilling their program needs through e-services. Making services accessible online helps us create sustainable communities, lessening the gap between Whitehorse and other Yukon communities. Dollars and effort invested in this by all government departments consistently yield a very strong return on investment in ways that generate positive impacts for Yukoners through improved and efficient services internally.

Our Property Management division is carrying out a service improvement action plan that is closely tied to the department's broader goals of innovation and continuous improvement. This plan is also linked to implementing many of the recommendations of the Auditor General, such as completing building condition assessments and developing a radon guideline for testing and remediation. Property Management is now producing an annual report and a 2017-18 report will be released in the coming months. This will help us report on progress and focus on improvements, and I look forward to reporting on these outcomes, Mr. Chair.

The Energy unit completed energy audits in 10 of the highest energy-consuming buildings to identify numerous conservation methods. Additionally, they compiled a comprehensive list of ways to increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas, while at the same time saving money in operational costs.

Yukon is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and infrastructure can be impacted by the thawing of ice-rich permafrost. For that reason, Highways and Public Works is completing a comprehensive program of assessing 102 of its 540 buildings that are located in permafrost zones. We need to develop a detailed mitigation and monitoring plan to ensure we are dealing with issues as effectively as we can.

In the transportation realm, Transportation Maintenance's business modernization initiative, now in its fifth year, also supports this critically important continuous improvement mandate.

That is an overview of the department as it stands. Mr. Chair, the challenges my team faces are extreme. This budget reflects the need to meet those challenges.

The Highways and Public Works budget provides \$17.7 million — almost \$18 million — for capital, building and maintenance projects, \$91 million for transportation and more than \$5 million for information and communications technology.

Now I'll take my seat and let the members opposite have their say to get into this budget discussion.

Mr. Hassard: I too would like to thank the officials for being here today to assist the minister. Mr. Pitfield — the last time he was here was on this side of the House, getting grilled by the Public Accounts Committee. I'm sure it will be a little different experience today — and Mr. Murchison, of course, who has been here on more than one occasion.

In the minister's opening remarks, he talked about contracts being valued added and a First Nation clause in contracts, so I have a question right off the hop on that. I have spoken to a First Nation contractor in Carcross, who was second on a contract last fall — a \$75,000-contract that he lost by \$500 — so I'm curious how that aligns with the minister's idea of value added and the First Nation clause in contracting.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I want to recognize, of course, that my colleague across the floor is absolutely right — Mr. Pitfield has been in the House before — so thank you for that correction.

The member opposite has brought up the contract worth about \$75,000. I have spoken to the individual myself as well. It is a case of an open procurement process that was price-driven and not value-driven in this case. In that circumstance, we had to take the lowest bid. The company that won has worked in the territory for a long time. I have spoken to the individual about his frustrations with this type of thing, but it was an open process. He did bid on the contract and he lost by \$500, which is heart-wrenching for any contractor who comes so close, but in a price-driven contract, as the member opposite knows, you take the lowest bid — you can't play favourites in that case. In this case, that company did lose that contract; however, going forward, we are going to be adding more and more value-driven contracts, as we can. They won't work in every situation; they will work where they make sense to do that. We will use them and we're going to try to use them a lot more liberally than in the past.

Mr. Hassard: Would the minister be able to provide this House with some sort of criteria or some sort of

understanding on when or how those value-added contracts may be used?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can tell the member opposite that our procurement improvement policy is going to be tabled shortly. We will be getting into a lot more detail in the next few weeks. As a technique, value-driven contracts are getting us really good value and really good results through the procurement process. We are finding that it is getting us value and is being well-received by the contracting community. I am sure it will become a main plank in our procurement process going forward.

Mr. Hassard: I guess it would be nice if, when we are debating the Highways and Public Works budget, we could have that information — at least while we debated it and not sometime in the future.

I am curious to know who the minister may have consulted with when coming up with the criteria on when or how to use value-added contracts?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can assure the member opposite that this is a work in progress. I know the departmental staff meets with industry on a regular basis. We had our industry conference where we gathered and had a lot of touch points with industry there. We took a lot of material and information out of that.

We're also currently consulting with First Nations and have our procurement policy before them for feedback right now. My deputy met with the Contractors Association last week as well. This is an ongoing part of our whole thing, which is one of the reasons why we haven't brought the policy before you, Mr. Chair. We have committed to implementing the recommendations of the Procurement Advisory Panel report and we've done that. That work is in progress as we speak. Part of that implementation is getting a procurement advisory committee together that will help advise government. We're in the process of getting that struck. That will also provide a point of contact where we can consult with industry. That is coming and as soon as that work is done, we will bring something before my colleagues and this House to have a discussion about it in further detail. That work is coming.

Mr. Hassard: I'm curious if the minister would be able to give us some sort of timeline. I'm not asking for a specific date, like July 9, but just a general timeline. Is this something that he sees coming into play in July or next June — just a rough idea at least?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm more than happy to provide the member opposite with a rough timeline. I have done that. We have committed to having the Procurement Advisory Panel's recommendations implemented by the end of 2018.

Mr. Hassard: I'm wondering if the minister can give us some examples of contracts that he may see being value added or with the First Nation clause, such as Highways and Public Works did with the Nares River bridge. Are there other examples? Would the Nisutlin bridge possibly be an example of this?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Yes, my plan is to work with the community of Teslin and the First Nation of Teslin on an

arrangement similar to the one we struck with the Nares River bridge when we move forward with the Nisutlin River bridge.

Mr. Hassard: Since we're on the Nisutlin bridge topic, would the minister be able to provide us with an update on talks that have taken place with the Teslin Tlingit Council? Are there any community consultation meetings that are going to take place in the near future? In general, where are we with that project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm glad the member opposite brought up bridges because we're doing our best to outline steps forward to improve our bridge infrastructure throughout the territory. We have a bridge and culvert management system in place and it's used to determine bridge rehabilitation or replacement needs, and helps us identify investment requirements and priorities.

Aging bridges represent weak links in the transportation system, so the department seeks to ensure that Yukon bridges can handle heavier trucks and bulk hauls in both directions for industry and to resupply shippers. Many Yukon bridges were built in the 1950s and 1960s — as the member opposite I am sure is aware — and are at an age where major rehabilitation or replacement is required to maintain the crossings so the highway network can handle modern loads and traffic. We have huge trucks contemplating coming north, and the bridges represent choke points on our highways and road systems.

This year, project work is directed toward the programs for both bridge strengthening and bridge replacement territory-wide. The Nares River bridge — the wooden Nares River bridge in Carcross — was built in 1970, and it will be replaced with a concrete and steel bridge, which will provide greater structural integrity and meet the current needs and future traffic demands. The Nares River bridge procurement process is a great example of the Yukon government's commitment to work with First Nations to increase their participation in the economy and to promote economic development benefiting First Nations and all Yukoners. This procurement contained requirements for a First Nation participation plan that includes employment, training and subcontracting, which is a first for bridge construction contracting by this government. The Yukon asset construction agreement required under the *Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement* will provide tangible benefits to the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. Funds allocated for this bridge replacement this year are \$7 million, with a total cost of \$13.5 million. Construction will begin this spring and is expected to be complete in two years. The new bridge will be constructed beside the existing bridge allowing the old bridge to remain open during construction.

The Fox Creek bridge is another one. It is located 50 kilometres outside of Whitehorse on the north Klondike Highway and was built in 1965 as a concrete bridge to replace a steel and beam bridge that was washed away in 1961. We are allocating \$3.6 million to replace this asset with a new, reinforced concrete bridge with steel girders. Prior to construction, a detour bridge will be built parallel to the existing location so that the current bridge can then be

decommissioned. The total for completion of this bridge is \$5.5 million.

I will say, as far as Teslin goes, that — that is sort of an overview of our bridge projects this year — I have met with the chief and council. My department met two weeks ago. We have had about 12 meetings over the last two years on this project, and we are very hopeful that we will go forward together once we reach an agreement on how to proceed with that very large and very important construction project.

Mr. Hassard: I don't think that really answered the question. I was curious about where we are at — or where the government is at or where the Department of Highways and Public Works is at — in negotiations with Teslin Tlingit Council. When does Highways and Public Works plan on having community consultation meetings with the community at large? One more question on that is: Where do I find the Nisutlin River bridge in the five-year capital plan? I know that it has been a project that was a priority. It has been put off a couple of times, but now I don't seem to see it anywhere on the list. Can the minister tell us that as well when he is up?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am really, really happy. I am gladdened by the good member opposite's optimism and confidence in this government. We have just completed Nares — an agreement with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation late last fall. It is remarkable. My officials put an awful lot of work — meetings, time and energy — as did the Carcross/Tagish First Nation into that agreement, and it took some doing. We got there, and this project is going ahead this year. It is tremendous. Now, with that template in place — that process to go forward and the successful completion of those very frank, candid and hard discussions — we got to a place and we're moving forward with that job.

Now, we are turning our attention to the bridge in my good friend's backyard, and we're going to try to get an agreement there. We're in a very preliminary stage of that project. We have about \$750,000 in the budget this year for work on the Nisutlin bridge. We have about \$500,000 for bridge repairs. They are needed because that bridge has to be maintained. That work has started and it will continue throughout this year — about a half-million dollars to keep it operational.

Then we have about \$250,000 in there for design work. As I have said previously — and I'm sorry the member opposite didn't pick up the answer — we are working with the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Teslin community on an ongoing basis to make sure that the bridge — the design that we decide on, and the process that we actually hit on in the end — meets their needs as well as ours.

Mr. Hassard: I think the minister thinks that we're in Question Period, so we're allowed to just keep asking the questions until we get an answer, so avoiding the question maybe isn't the greatest strategy.

Again, I asked where the minister and where Highways and Public Works are at with Teslin Tlingit Council. I asked what meetings have taken place — or are being planned in the near future or maybe in the long-term future — with the community at large in Teslin, not Carcross — for the Nisutlin

River bridge. Where do I find it in the five-year capital plan? Is this bridge now not going to be done in the next five years? Maybe the minister could enlighten us a little.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for his questions. I am more than happy to talk about this all afternoon. I am sure that is exactly what we will be doing.

We are working to complete an options study for the bridge. As I said, it is very early days. We finished the preliminary work on the Nares River bridge, which we are now going to execute. Now we are shifting our focus to Nisutlin. These are very early days. We are working with the community of Teslin. My officials met two weeks ago. We have had more than 12 meetings over the last two years and we are meeting again next week. The meetings are ongoing to reach an agreement with the community. We want to find out through the options study what is affordable and doable, and then, once we have that, we will put it in the five-year capital plan.

We are going to work with the First Nation and the community to set parameters, to get an agreement in place for a value-driven contract with their agreement and their participation. We want — as was the case in Carcross — to make sure that the First Nation in Teslin has an opportunity and tangible benefits flowing from the project in their traditional territory.

Mr. Hassard: I'm curious. The minister said that the department is working with the First Nation and they are also working with the community. I'm curious if that meeting next week is with the community at large or with the First Nation, or is that a meeting with the municipal government? Who is being invited to that meeting next week?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The meeting next week is with the First Nation.

Mr. Hassard: Back to my original question, or one of my original questions — when does the department plan on meeting with the community at large in Teslin regarding the Nisutlin River bridge?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have been informed by my officials that a project steering committee is being struck for the project that includes the Village of Teslin and the Teslin Tlingit Council and it will be meeting sometime in the near future. But as I said, it's the very, very preliminary stages in this project and, as the project progresses, those meetings will have — there will be more meat on the bone and more things to discuss, but right now, it's very, very preliminary at this stage.

Mr. Hassard: It's interesting for the minister to say that it's very preliminary, because I know that Mr. Murchison has been to Teslin several times — more than just the near past. It has been several years, and Highways and Public Works had met with the community at large, not just the First Nation and not just the municipal government, but with the community at large. There were open houses, public meetings where many things were discussed and many options were put on the table. This isn't something that is just beginning. This is something that has been ongoing for quite some time.

I'm curious if the minister can tell us if that steering committee is going to have anyone from the private sector or any of the local businesses — will they be on that steering committee or will it just be the municipal government and the First Nation government?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We're reviewing the terms of reference for this committee. It will be the Village of Teslin and the TTC for sure. As soon as we pin down the terms of reference, we will make a decision on private sector and citizen involvement as well.

Mr. Hassard: I certainly hope that there is some consideration given to that because, as the minister knows — or I'm sure he has heard on more than one occasion — the community of Teslin, the First Nation, the municipal government, and the community at large work very well together. We've been very successful — I should say the municipality, the community, has been very successful — over the past few years of ensuring that contracts done in the community provide the absolute maximum to the community that is possible. We look forward to having good input from the entire community on those meetings, moving forward.

The one final question that still has yet to be answered by the minister is: Where do we find in the five-year capital plan the Nisutlin bridge?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We keep referring to a five-year capital plan, and I'm very glad to be speaking to the five-year capital plan that we have. It's the very first time we have had a five-year capital plan in this government. The members opposite can probe and ask questions about it. The fact is this project is not yet at the stage where it appears on the five-year capital plan — the first five-year capital plan this government has pulled together. This move into this field is a first for the Government of Yukon. It is widely regarded by the contracting community which is seeing the change and the efforts we're making to bring more clarity to the budgeting process of the government — and giving some indication of where this government is going into the future.

They will point to all sorts of things that are not in it, but there is an awful lot of stuff in that capital plan and the contracting community is very happy to have that clarity for what we are doing in the next five years. As projects move into a more tangible process, as they come into clearer focus, as Cabinet and our caucus sits down and approves and gets the money and they get to know what is coming, they will move on to the capital plan. Then we will start discussing those further and more clarity will be brought to that whole process.

But at the moment, the member opposite is right. This project is not in the five-year capital plan. It is our intention to proceed with this project — we're working very closely with the community to bring it to fruition. Once the tangible details of this project come into clear focus for this government and we have an idea of what the cost will be and where the money is coming from, it will move on to our capital plan, and then the contracting community will have a much clearer idea of where it is. Right now, we have money for repair and maintenance in the budget, and we'll continue keeping this

structure in working order until we actually sit down and start the hard work of replacing it.

Mr. Hassard: When we first heard about this government coming out with a five-year capital plan, I said, "Hey, that's great." I have said that on more than one occasion, and I would continue to say it if it had any meat to it, I guess.

The minister can stand here and say, "Oh boy, everybody is happy to see a five-year capital plan." Yes, they sure would be, if there was something in it. A five-year capital plan that projects come and go off of — well, we might add a project here and we might take that one away, and there is no dollar amount attached to a single item in the five-year capital plan. I would really like to know who the minister has talked to. He has stood here and said that industry is so happy to see this. I speak to industry on a daily basis too, and I have not found one single person in industry who said, "Wow, now that I have looked at that five-year capital plan, I can plan for the future," because, to be honest, there is nothing. There is a list of projects that may or may not happen.

I am curious if the minister can explain to me how a list of projects that may or may not happen can create certainty with the business community here in the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: My good friend on the bench opposite and I are going to go back and forth on this a little bit, I think.

There was no five-year capital plan. Now there is a five-year capital plan: air tanker base, airport maintenance facility and air terminal building in Dawson; Kluane Lake School in Burwash Landing; Christ the King Elementary School in Whitehorse; Drury Creek living quarters; F.H. Collins Secondary School site work; French first language school in Whitehorse; girls' group home replacement in Whitehorse; the grader station in Carmacks; group homes building replacement in Whitehorse; health centre in Old Crow; Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse; Housing First project in Whitehorse; Macaulay Lodge demolition; and morgue and coroner's office in Whitehorse. We'll go on: scalable generic health centre design; scalable generic school designs; seniors housing in Carmacks; social and affordable housing projects, various across the territory; a staff housing triplex in Watson Lake; living quarters, Stewart Crossing; Whistle Bend continuing care, Whitehorse; and Yukon Archives vault expansion in Whitehorse. Those are the capital categories for real property. I could go on to transportation; I could go on to community and First Nation infrastructure. I could go on, Mr. Chair, but maybe that list is not enough.

We saw that in the past. We saw budgets come out — capital budgets of \$320 million landed on peoples' desks and created all sorts of expectations, and then they weren't delivered. The government delivered \$220 million of the \$320 million promised at this time in previous years, and the contractors were left — \$100 million left on the table. They were frustrated by that, so we have taken steps to change that. We have a new capital plan; we have a capital budget, an envelope of \$280 million, that is guaranteed for the next five years. People know what is coming. We have a five-year

capital plan with projects and dates and a commitment that we are going to go through with these things and actually build them.

Sometimes they may move forward; sometimes they will hopefully not slip, but they could — things happen. This is a living, breathing document, but it gives the contracting community some ease that we are actually going to deliver — between 2018 and 2023 — social and affordable housing projects throughout Yukon, and people will know what that is.

This is a step forward. It is the first year of this thing. It is new and we are trying to build understanding with this, so this is a list of contracts in our capital plan that Yukoners can say, “Hey, they are actually going to follow through on this. They have \$280 million over the next five years. That is a spendable number, and we can see what they are going to do,” and that brings some clarity to the budgeting process.

I am sure that next year there will be even more projects and even more confidence that we are going to do what we said we did in this budget, and not lapse hundreds and tens of millions of dollars that were promised and not executed.

Mr. Hassard: I will use the example that the minister has just used. He said that in 2018 to 2023, there is going to be money spent on social housing. Can the minister explain to me or to this Legislature what that does for the stick builders in the Yukon? What can they take to the bank from that? What can they tell their employees — that this five-year capital plan is creating certainty for them?

Does the minister really believe that, if Ketz Construction has a meeting with their employees and says, “There is going to be some social housing money spent; we don’t know how much, but it is going to happen somewhere between 2018 and 2023”, that this provides certainty for their employees and their employees’ families?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: What the contracting community can do — if you are in the home-building business and you are interested in building social housing or — I think what I said was “affordable housing projects” for the Yukon Housing Corporation. They will know that there are going to be projects let every year starting this year and going forward. If you were to invest in your workforce and in training them, you have five years’ worth of work here. They committed in writing to doing it; that is fine. There is that.

You can also go and see that the health centre in Old Crow is slotted for 2021. “Holy smokes, I want that contract. It is coming in 2021. I can see it here in black and white. I am going to start to pull together a team to actually bid on that thing and see how I can get there.” It does provide that certainty to people that we have a plan going forward where the money is going to be spent and when it is going to be spent.

Let’s get serious, Mr. Chair. A project that is coming down in 2021 — in terms of putting down hard numbers, the member opposite knows that we have an idea of how much. We have generic health care facility planning that we are doing and that type of thing. That will influence how much these facilities cost.

As far as an actual dollar figure goes for these things, that is a prognostication well into the future. We know the ballpark of how much it is. We don’t want to start putting out hard numbers for some of these projects far in the future. It’s just too far ahead.

Contractors can take a look at this document and say: “Look at that. They are actually doing a health centre in Old Crow. They are planning it for 2021. How do we get in on that? How do we actually plan to build it? What do we need to do to bid on that job?” They can see it and start that process. That gives them a new tool — a tool that they haven’t seen before — to get the job done.

Mr. Hassard: I am not sure if the minister heard my question or not, but I was curious as to who he thought would be able to go to their staff and say: “Hey, look. You should buy a new house or you should look at buying that new pickup because there is work here. There is work for this affordable housing from 2018 to 2023.” But there is absolutely no certainty to it because it could move. It could get bumped. It might move down the road, and there are absolutely no numbers attached to it. Is it \$200,000 worth of work? Is it a duplex? To say that industry is getting certainty out of this five-year capital plan, Mr. Chair, I think is certainly not the case.

If you don’t have some idea of what that work is going to consist of, to say that there is going to be a job sometime in the next five years without saying what that job might consist of is rather pointless, I think. I’m not saying that the minister has to stand here and say that this project is going to be worth \$2.31 million, but there has to be some type of number somewhere. They have talked about evidence-based decision-making, doing a better job of budgeting. How can you do a better job of budgeting if you don’t have any numbers? How is industry supposed to plan for the future if they don’t have any numbers?

I have said from the beginning that I think a five-year capital plan is a great idea, so don’t get me wrong. But a five-year capital plan with no meat on the bones is a five-year capital concept. That’s not creating any certainty for industry.

So again, can the minister tell us who in the industry world out there is jumping up and down, thanking the government for this five-year capital concept?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I take issue with the assertion by the member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition, that there is no money here. There is money here. Everybody can see it. It’s in black and white. We have a five-year capital plan that goes through this.

In 2018-19 the government has committed to spending \$280,143,000 on capital gross expenditures; in 2019-20, \$288,309,000; in 2020-21, \$293,375,000; in 2021-22, \$287,695,000; and in 2022-23, \$263,463,000 — real dollars.

In every year, there are: real property buildings, \$88 million; transportation infrastructure, \$65 million; community and First Nation infrastructure, \$41 million; land development, \$17 million — every year for the next five years. If you are a land developer, you can say: “Look, they’re spending \$17 million a year for the next five years. They’ve

committed to that. I can actually go out and buy a dozer and start to build equipment.”

There are other projects: \$16 million, \$38 million, \$34 million, \$4 million in 2021, \$2 million in 2022-23; information tech, \$14 million across the board for the next five years — a commitment that the tech industry can look at. They are actually spending \$14 million a year for the next five years. That’s a commitment — a five-year capital commitment — with numbers over the next five years. You can go in and say: “These are the projects that they’re actually going to do.”

Then you go into loans programs — \$12 million all the way through for five years, capital transfers of \$8 million, \$11 million. Those are hard numbers. They are in our five-year capital plan. They provide that certainty to industry and to all manner of Yukoners that we’re going to follow through with the work we’ve committed to. It’s budgeted. We have a plan. We’re going to stick to the five-year capital plan. That’s what it is all about. I thank the member opposite for the question.

Mr. Hassard: Let me put it to the minister this way then — I’ll just pick a project here in the five-year capital plan. Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse — work in 2021-22 and 2022-23 with no number attached to it.

My question to the minister was: How does this instill certainty in industry here in the Yukon? Yes, great — here it is 2021-22, 2022-23. What is it? Are they going to paint the outside? Are they going to put new windows in? Are they building a new school? Whom are you providing certainty to?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Real property, buildings — \$88 million, \$69 million, \$71 million, \$74 million, \$43 million. If you are into property development, if you are into building buildings, houses, apartment blocks or whatever, you can look at this and say: “Holy smokes, they are building — Yukon Housing Corporation. Part of that is \$88 million a year. I am going to invest in that.” This is a difference. It is a change in direction. In the past, what we had was: “Here you go — \$320 million in capital spending and then, by the end of the year, we have delivered \$197 million or hundreds of millions of dollars in lapses and no idea where we’re going into the future. The fog of the future is lying overtop of the future financial plans of the government. We had no idea from year to year as we went from \$320 million to \$280 million to \$260 million to \$240 million, back up here — lapse, lapse, lapse, again and again and again. I think \$40 million was the lowest lapse year we had in the past.

We’re trying to move away from lapses — to spend what we plan to do. We have envelopes of money now that allow us the flexibility to actually spend what we said we would spend. That is another change in our budgeting processes. We put projects in capital envelopes, like we did with the tech envelopes, and in that way we can actually have some flexibility. If a project doesn’t go ahead, we can shift gears to move up one of the other projects that we said we would do and get it done. We went from having no path forward to a five-year capital plan that lays out numbers in all sorts of

different categories, with detail about what projects we are looking at doing on the other pages.

Christ the King Elementary School is slotted in for 2021. If you want to bid on that, you can say, “Look, you have money in real property — \$88 million that is going to come out of that thing in that year.” That is how it works.

Mr. Hassard: The minister can stand here all day long and talk about what a terrible job the previous government did and how this new government is doing a way better job, but, at the end of the day, we are no further ahead. He talked about the fog — I’m afraid, Mr. Chair, that I know the only place where there is any fog here is across the way.

I asked a very simple question: What is happening with Holy Family School? Who is getting certainty out of seeing this in the five-year capital plan? Is it a painter, is it a floor layer, or is it a window manufacturer? What good is this nice, blue square on this page if no one has any idea who is going to get any work or what kind of work may come from it?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: To clarify, I am really not trying to judge my forebears and predecessors in this job. It is not an easy job. I know they did their best. There was a different model in place and there were lapses. I am really not judging; I am just trying to give a picture of what happened in the past.

Going forward, we want to try to avoid lapsing money. We want to get as much money into Yukoners hands as we possibly can, so we are taking steps to do that. We have got our five-year capital plan that we have put in place. The members opposite don’t like it, and I am sorry for that, but it is the process that we are using to go forward.

We are putting in as much information as we can, and I am sure that the member opposite can start to focus on things that are years down the road. We have a budget right now in 2017-18 with a lot of projects in it that we are planning on executing this year, and I am more than happy to talk in concrete terms about those projects. They are the ones that are in the chamber — they are moving forward.

I can continue to talk about future projects. I am sure that when we get to get to Education, you can ask about — well, we have been to Education, but we can come back to Education and start doing some work on some of the projects in their budget. I am more than happy to talk about the contracts in my budget and the ones that are happening this year. I have a lot more information about them

Mr. Hassard: I hope I didn’t miss a day because I don’t think we have been into Education, but I could be wrong.

I have said — and I will say it again — I like the idea of a five-year capital plan, so the minister doesn’t need to talk about the fact that we don’t like a five-year capital plan. I have said on more than one occasion that we like the idea of a five-year capital plan; however, it says right here, in English, that they plan to build the following projects over the next five years to meet Yukon’s needs for social programs, schools and transportation infrastructure. That is just on the page that was randomly chosen. If we go down that page: Holy Family Elementary School, Whitehorse, 2021-22, 2022-23.

“We plan to build the following projects.” Does that mean you plan to build a new Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse? If you are saying yes, then yes, that creates some certainty for industry. They know that, hey, there is going to be a school built in 2021-22, 2022-23. They might not necessarily know if it is going to be a \$12-million school or a \$50-million school, but they know that there is going to be a school built. But the minister can’t tell us if there is going to be a school built, if there are going to be new windows put in that school, if it is going to get a new paint job or if it is going to get a new door on the principal’s office. What kind of certainty does that pass to industry here in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I will start on a point of common ground and let’s move forward from there. The member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition, likes the idea of a five-year plan. On that we are agreed. I like the idea of a five-year plan too, which is why we executed on one, and we now have one in front of us. The member opposite doesn’t like our five-year capital plan and I think it’s just fine. It is a commitment we made and executed and actually got the job done. He doesn’t like it — all right, let’s move on from there. I guess he is offering ways to fix it. He wants to put numbers to that. I am saying that we have numbers and we disagree on that point.

As far as Holy Family goes, the commitment in here to Holy Family School, Whitehorse, Education — not Holy Family building maintenance, it is Holy Family School. There is a plan here to build a school, and we are working toward a generic design for our schools to help save money. That is part of our five-year capital plan too. We are working on building schools and they are in our five-year capital plan.

Mr. Hassard: Wasn’t that simple? After all that, the minister says that we are building a new school for Holy Family School in Whitehorse in 2021-22, 2022-23.

I will go up the page and touch on something that falls under the minister’s department. Maybe it won’t take so long to get some answers on this one. Airport maintenance facility and air terminal building in Dawson City — we know in the briefing from department officials how much was being spent this year. Can the minister give us an idea of how much we have going forward for 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 in the five-year capital plan?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I believe that the member opposite is asking for information on the Dawson City Airport project. We are currently combing through our materials to find that number. I do know that we’re spending in the neighbourhood of about \$7 million on a maintenance facility this year, and then moving forward with the paving construction project next year.

Mr. Hassard: As I said in my first question regarding the Dawson City air terminal building and maintenance facility, we know from the briefing how much is being spent this year and the breakdown on it. I believe it was \$7.3 million or \$7.4 million on the maintenance building. The answer I’m looking for is the breakdown over the next three years after that.

If the minister doesn’t have that information at his fingertips or if the officials aren’t able to comb it out — if we could maybe get a legislative return on those numbers please?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I will endeavour to get a more comprehensive answer for the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Hassard: Just one final question on that one: I wonder if the minister could tell us if the scope of work over the next few years on the Dawson runway has changed or if it’s still to move ahead as originally planned.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for the question. We are currently in the throes of doing a number of air system studies. That’s going to pull together all of the needs of the three major airports and some of the other ones as well.

As far as Dawson is concerned right now, we are committed to doing the air maintenance facility — the storage shed for the maintenance equipment. We’re going to pave the runway and then we’re looking at options to see what’s involved going forward with Nav Canada, Transport Canada and working out all the details that will be required in that area going forward.

Mr. Hassard: Can the minister confirm or not confirm whether the possibility of moving the highway and moving the airport over to that side — is that one of the things that is still being considered with regard to the Dawson runway?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: No, I can’t confirm that at this time Mr. Chair. We are looking at a number of options with regard to modernizing and improving the Dawson City Airport and I don’t have an answer for the member opposite at this time.

Mr. Hassard: I guess I’m curious why it would be in the five-year capital plan then if they don’t have any idea what’s happening with it, I guess.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: At this point, as I have said, we’re doing the maintenance shed, we’re committed to doing the paving project and then we will have to look at how to proceed with the project as we go forward from there.

Mr. Hassard: Again, how does this bring certainty to anyone in industry, whether it is the aviation industry or the paving industry or the dirt-movers in general? We have it here in the five-year capital plan saying that it’s happening over the next three years from 2019-20 to the end of 2021-22, but what certainty is there? If you don’t know what you’re going to do, how can you say that it’s going to happen? I mean, if you decide that you have to move the runway 10 miles farther out of town and then it has to go through YESAA and you might have to buy land — I mean that could take three years in itself. What’s the point of having three years in your five-year capital plan with a project where it seems like you have no idea what you’re doing with that project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Again, I take issue with the member’s assertion that we don’t know what we’re doing. That is incorrect.

What we have is a commitment to pave the runway and get the proper maintenance and equipment in place to maintain that facility going forward, making sure it’s safe and accessible. Transport Canada has many requirements for such

facilities, as the member opposite knows full well. We're looking at those options and finding a way to meet Transport Canada's commitments and needs going forward over the next four years, and we'll do that as those needs are identified to us. We're looking at our options; we're committed to this project.

With an envelope system, we have that ability. We know how much money we have in the transportation envelope to spend on these projects, and that gives us a commitment of money that we can actually spend to get the job done. As we go forward, we will prioritize and make sure the needs of these specific projects are dealt with to expedite the projects and make sure the money stays here in the territory and benefits locals to the fullest extent possible.

Mr. Hassard: I'm curious how the minister can stand here and tell us that they're going to maximize the dollars staying in the Yukon, maximize Yukon contractors and we're going to spend that money in those three years from 2019-20 to 2021-22, but he has no idea how the project is going to proceed. He doesn't know if they're going to move the runway — if it's going to be somewhere else — or if they're just going to pave the existing runway.

I ask again: How does that create certainty for anyone in industry here in the Yukon? Like I said, anywhere from the aviation industry to the paving industry to the dirt-moving industry — how does he see this?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The commitment this year is to build a maintenance facility in preparation for paving the runway. The commitment next year is to actually get the runway paved. The commitment after that is — while all that work is happening, the whole operation of the airport will come into clear focus, so future years' plans will then come into clear focus.

I understand the member opposite is digging for information. As I said, we are in the middle of an air system study that's going to delve into a lot of these issues. As we make this information available, there will be a lot more clarity to the members opposite and to the Yukon public as to what the newly refurbished and paved Dawson City runway looks like.

Mr. Hassard: I'm curious, if the minister is going to stand here today and commit to paving the Dawson City runway next year — I'm pretty sure that's what I just heard him say — and that is going to provide clarity moving forward for the rest of the Dawson runway. He is going to do that before he even knows if the runway is moving.

Is the minister saying that he is going to pave it next year and then possibly move it somewhere else the following year or two years later? If we could maybe get a little bit of clarification there please, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We are building a maintenance facility this year — \$7 million — we are going to be paving the runway next year. There are plans to lay asphalt next year. We are buying equipment to maintain and to service this runway in the out-years and make sure that it is going forward. As our plans are finished and going forward, as far as

future needs are concerned, we will make them known to the people of the territory.

Mr. Hassard: Evidence-based decision-making, I guess.

I'm curious if the minister can give us an idea of what the budget is for next year for the paving. A follow-up to that is: Would the minister be able to give us some indication on the O&M costs? I am assuming that the O&M costs are going to go up with paving. Maybe I'm wrong — maybe those O&M costs will go down — but if the minister could maybe give us an idea of how the O&M costs will be reflected after the paving?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I did commit to the member opposite to get a more fulsome answer on the costs of the actual paving job, but my officials have given me a number in the neighbourhood of about \$6.5 million to do the paving. That is the information we have today. Is that correct? So that is the initial estimate that we have right now. As far as the O&M costs, I believe that the number that I have been told about the O&M costs of maintaining a paved runway is about \$500,000 a year, in addition to the current — so it is a \$500,000-addition to the O&M going forward.

Chair: 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.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Mr. Hassard: When we left, we were talking about Dawson City Airport, and the minister talked about roughly \$7 million being spent on the maintenance building. In the budget document, we see \$9.8 million for this year to redesign Dawson City Airport runway and build a new maintenance facility. Can the minister give us an indication of what the rest of that \$9.8 million is going to be spent on this year?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: It is just north of \$7 million for the facility. There's the maintenance shed, and then we have somewhere around \$2 million — plus or minus — for design and engineering.

Mr. Hassard: North of \$2 million for design and engineering of what?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: There is utilities construction — about \$1 million there. That includes utilities work required for this project. There is also redevelopment management and engineering and design for the airport upgrades, and that totals about \$2 million. A lot of utilities work has to be done there, as well as the redevelopment and engineering design work.

Mr. Hassard: Maybe we will wait for the information from the department that has been promised, and maybe that

will answer some of our questions. We will try moving on a little bit.

Mr. Chair, as you well know, the community of Mayo is seeing quite an influx of activity. I know that we asked last year about what kind of money may be going into the Mayo Airport for upgrades. With all of the mining activity, obviously there is a very real potential for scheduled flight services into Mayo. I don't see anything in the five-year capital plan or this year's capital for improvements to the Mayo Airport. I'm curious if the minister could give us some insight into what may be transpiring in terms of the Mayo Airport.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We're investing around \$13 million in our community airports this year — airport projects across the territory. It's a lot of money. Airports are important to our territory, of course. There is work going on in Whitehorse and in Dawson and also in Mayo. We have about \$750,000 going into maintenance work at the Mayo Airport this year.

Mr. Hassard: So the \$750,000 in maintenance work that the minister talks about — will that upgrade the Mayo air terminal building to make it capable of accepting scheduled flight service into Mayo?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The work that is currently contemplated for Mayo is for apron expansion and lighting, dust suppressant, engineering and design for the runway and runway repair. That is the work that is going on this year.

The member opposite has touched on the scheduled charter service or scheduled service to Mayo. We have seen a lot of activity happening up in that area in the last little while. We have had conversations with some of the air carriers about what is happening at Mayo. I don't have a clear picture yet of what the plans are for the airlines going into Mayo.

I know the member opposite did the work a couple of years ago to do a scheduled service into Mayo, and I am not really sure what happened with that at the time. We are talking with the airlines about such a service. Once they make a decision about what is going on, we will do what is necessary. We will work with them to get that work done.

Mr. Hassard: I am assuming that the department didn't throw that information away after the work was done, so I would certainly hope that the minister would be able to find that.

Could the minister answer the question regarding whether or not this \$750,000 that he talked about will lead to the air terminal building being able to accept scheduled flight service?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am informed by my officials that this is the first step in achieving certification for the Mayo runway. In April, Transport Canada will be inspecting the airport and, pending approval, we can start working with the airlines for such a flight. But I haven't received a yea or nay about whether they are actually going to go forward with that. We are doing some work that is the first step in this certification. In April, we will have more clarity from Transport Canada.

Mr. Hassard: The minister has talked about \$13 million this year for aerodromes throughout the Yukon

and the importance of them. We see \$9.8 million in Dawson and \$750,000 in Mayo. Could we possibly find out where the rest of that \$13 million is being spent?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We have \$4 million for Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport — doing airport lease lots and airport projects. We have \$2.3 million for the Dawson City Airport redevelopment, which we went through just now. That is for the utilities, et cetera. We have stuff on environmental remediation projects. We have a whole list of stuff here as well: Old Crow is \$977,000; Mayo, as I said, is \$760,000; Watson Lake, \$750,000; Faro, \$650,000; Carmacks, \$550,000; Ross River, almost \$500,000; Beaver Creek, \$400,000; for the Dawson aerodrome, excluding the redevelopment, there is still \$418,000; Carcross gets \$333,000; Pelly is \$250,000; Cousins gets \$200,000; Burwash is \$200,000; Haines Junction is getting about \$100,000; Hyland is getting about \$25,000; Mule Creek, \$25,000; Twin Creeks, about \$25,000; McQuesten is getting about \$5,000; and Yukon-wide aerodromes are getting about another \$500,000.

There is a lot of money going to our airport system this year, just reflecting the importance of that industry to the territory.

Mr. Hassard: I know the minister went through that list fairly quickly and hopefully we can get it from Hansard. From my quick calculations, that sounds like considerably more than \$13 million. Could the minister explain the difference?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I agree with the member opposite, Mr. Chair. It sounds like an extraordinary amount of money and it is. It is about \$13-million worth. That is the figure. That is what we're planning on spending. That's the money in the budget.

Mr. Hassard: I didn't say anything about it being an extraordinary amount of money.

The minister said: \$9.8 million for Dawson, \$750,000 for Mayo, \$4 million for Whitehorse, \$977,000 for Old Crow, Faro was \$650,000 — and I stopped writing then because I knew that I could get it from Hansard. But \$9.8 million, plus the \$4 million — already we're over \$13 million. I'm not sure if that's Liberal math that the minister is talking about or what, but it certainly doesn't appear to be \$13 million to me. Maybe the minister could clarify that again.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: To the member's point, we have gone over the numbers. In fact, this year, this government is going to be spending more than \$33 million on airports across the territory in capital expenses — facilities, equipment, runways and ramps. It's the whole package.

The \$12 million of spending that I outlined to you on community airports is part of that figure, but there is a lot more going on. That was community airport capital stuff. That's for runways and lot improvements, but the total spending on airports across the territory is a whopping \$33.8 million approximately.

Mr. Hassard: So if I go to page 14-11 in the budget document, it says: Aviation/Yukon Airports — Various

Airports Projects — \$12.997 million. Could the minister explain to us where we find the other \$20.8 million?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would be happy to provide a breakdown. We're working off of two different documents. I have the departmental granular stuff; the member is working on the public budget documents. I would be more than happy to provide a breakdown for the members opposite to show them where they are in the budget documents.

Mr. Hassard: I am curious: Is the minister working off a different budget from the rest of us? How can the minister have a different document with different numbers than the Premier provided to the rest of the members of this Legislature as well as to the Yukon public?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: There is one budget to rule them all. That budget is the document that we are working off of together.

To clarify, I have said to the member opposite that we will provide an itemized list, or a list that will show the members the total spending on airports, pulling from all of the disparate line items in the budget document there. To make it easier to pull from buildings maintenance and some equipment maintenance that are in other parts of the budget, it will show a fulsome picture of what the total spending on airports is. The total spending, as I said, is a little bit more than \$33 million. That is for facilities, equipment, runways, ramps, buildings, equipment and transportation stuff. As the member opposite knows full well from doing this job for some many years, there are line items in all sorts of different categories within Highways and Public Works that relate to airports. We will endeavour to get that information to the member opposite so that he has a more fulsome picture. It takes some of the work away from poring through the document that the member has and pulling it from different line items.

Mr. Hassard: It is not a matter of pulling from different line items. We have no idea how many other items there are in this budget that the minister could maybe provide us with a breakdown on — where we have no idea what it is or where it is.

I guess it begs the question of the point of going through this process. Do we have to ask on every line item? I guess I can do that. Transportation facilities and equipment went from \$7.8 million to \$31.364 million. Could the minister provide us with a breakdown of that line item please?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Could I have the question repeated? I would be happy to answer it for him.

Mr. Hassard: Transportation facilities and equipment — \$31.364 million. Would the minister be able to give us some clarification on what that \$31.364 million covers? In current-year budgets, we see \$7.8 million and \$5.8 million, so obviously there is some change there. Maybe that will answer some of the questions.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: For major upgrades, we are talking about \$17.1 million. That includes: \$7.9 million for the Carmacks grader station; \$1.5 million for the Stewart Crossing living quarters replacement; \$7.4 million for the Dawson airport maintenance facility; \$100,000 for the Drury

Creek living quarters replacement; \$120,000 for special-waste storage sheds; \$20,000 for the Faro aerodrome maintenance garage renovations.

Under major upgrades continued, we have \$35,000 for electrical pedestal installation ground service equipment parking; we have \$10,000 for security walls at CARS; we have camp facility maintenance of \$165,000; we have operational support equipment of \$13,561,000, which includes operational support equipment that includes a bridge at the airport of \$1.8 million; we have the air terminal building baggage-handling system upgrade, \$1.5 million; we have Canadian Air Transport Security Authority hold baggage screening recapitalization program of \$1.5 million; we have a 22-foot cradle boom sweeper for \$1.3 million; we have a self-propelled snow blower for \$1.1 million; we have a tow-behind sweeper for Whitehorse at almost \$1 million; we have a single-axle dump truck 19-foot reversible plow for Dawson, \$500,000; we have a runway sweeper for Watson Lake, \$495,000; we have a tow-behind sweeper in Dawson for almost \$500,000; we have a tow-behind sweeper for Watson Lake of almost \$500,000; we have a loader-mount snow blower for Dawson at \$440,000; we have a loader-mount snow blower for Faro at \$440,000; we have a loader-mount snow blower at Mayo for \$440,000; we have a loader, a 936 size, for Mayo at \$260,000; we have a single-axle dump truck with 19-foot reversible plow for Mayo at almost \$250,000; we have a tractor and mower for Mayo at \$185,000; we have a Ramp Hog — it is a great thing — in Mayo for \$50,000; we have bridge upgrades and repairs of \$50,000; we have a paint machine for \$50,000; we have an extended-cab pickup for Dawson at \$45,000; we have ARF equipment at \$35,000; we have a stainless-steel sander to fit a single-axle dump truck in Mayo for \$35,000; we have airside maintenance equipment for \$20,000; we have CARS program equipment for \$10,000.

In operational support continued, we have: silent witness replacement for the Dawson division fleet of \$315,000; we have forklifts at \$100,000; we have stainless-steel sanders at \$75,000; we have purchased water pumps and trailers for \$75,000; we have an attachment for road equipment improved versatility, \$55,000; purchased for sweepers, \$55,000; purchased shop tools and equipment, \$50,000; we want to purchase a generator 7.5-kilowatt glacial control for \$27,000; there are traffic lights for \$25,000 and plate packers for \$20,000; we have storage containers for \$20,000, pressure washers for \$10,000, weigh-stations operations equipment for \$80,000, and motor vehicle operations equipment for \$80,000; we have Whitehorse weigh-stations operations equipment for \$60,000, and Haines Junction weigh-station equipment and Cassiar for \$20,000; we have miscellaneous projects for \$180,000 — and this has to do with a lot of ferry equipment. There are generators for Blanchard at \$75,000 and upgrades at various camps for \$25,000. We will buy some life jackets for the Pelly barge and a life raft, which is less than \$10,000. We have environmental mitigation of \$275,000, and various electrical equipment is \$150,000.

That just about does it. I think that is a pretty fulsome list.

Mr. Hassard: I certainly appreciate that fairly fulsome list.

During the briefing we had also asked for a very similar breakdown on the \$17,175,000 listed under bridges, numbered highways and secondary roads. I won't ask the minister — if he wants to and he has that information, he could certainly provide it to the Legislature — or if we would be able to receive that information, which we were told in the briefing we would get.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have the level of detail that the member opposite requires. Under bridges and numbered highways, I have \$17 million. The Nares bridge is about \$7 million this year; we have \$3.5 million for secondary roads, Fox Creek bridge replacement; we have \$3.5 million for bridge replacement rehabilitation all over the territory; we have \$1.8 million for bridge and culvert inspections; we have a half-million dollars for secondary road and bridge rehabilitation.

That is basically where we are at.

Mr. Hassard: I appreciate that information, but I think it's unfortunate that we have to go about this process to get it. We had asked for it and we had hoped to get it to begin with. At any rate, we have it now, so I appreciate the information.

We know from the CBC, through ATIPP-obtained documents, that the Yukon government was attempting to work with the federal government to obtain money for the north Klondike Highway to the tune of \$121 million. Could the minister give us an update on where that project may be?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As was indicated in that media report, the applications have been made to Ottawa. We haven't heard back yet from Ottawa; we haven't heard a decision yet on those applications. That was one of a few applications that we made to those funds.

Mr. Hassard: Would the minister be able to provide information on what the other applications were to the federal government?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We have totals. As the member indicated, there is: \$121 million for the Klondike Highway; \$116 million for the Alaska Highway; \$64 million for the Campbell Highway, for Ross River to Faro; \$39 million for the Campbell Highway, kilometre 114 to kilometre 232; we have safety, \$41 million; ITS, \$9 million. For airports, we're asking for about \$70 million. There's a lot of money in these funds.

Mr. Hassard: I'm wondering if the minister has any idea on timelines as to when the federal government will get back to the Yukon government in regard to these funding applications.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The national trade corridors fund is about \$2 billion over 11 years, from 2018 to 2028-29. Of this, \$400 million will be allocated specifically to territorial projects. That's money shared by all three northern territories.

We submitted applications for the seven projects. The total request was for about \$470 million. We chose the projects based on existing needs within our transportation network and the corridors fund evaluation criteria. We have

no idea when Ottawa is going to make a decision on those funds.

Mr. Hassard: To continue on with the Klondike Highway, we see that the 2017-18 forecast was just north of \$1.2 million. This year, the line item shows \$10,000. I'm wondering if the minister could tell this House what kind of work the government plans on doing to the Klondike Highway for \$10,000.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm more than happy to provide detail on this \$10,000 expenditure. It is for intersection improvements from kilometre 104 to kilometre 109. It includes reviewing intersections in the Carcross area to determine and prioritize future intersection improvements. This work builds on previously completed highway functional planning for the Klondike Highway.

Mr. Hassard: I'm wondering if the minister could update the House on any talks that have happened between the Yukon government and the Government of the United States in terms of Shakwak funding. Have there been any lobbying efforts? What kind of lobbying efforts have taken place in the recent past in regard to securing Shakwak funding?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The Alaska Highway is an international corridor. It is an international road. We were very lucky to receive support from Washington to maintain that road for many, many years. As the member opposite knows, a few years ago, that money ran out and we have been running on the remainder since that point.

Since coming into office, the Premier has been to Washington. He has written his federal counterparts in the States; I have written my federal counterparts in Alaska. I have spoken to the US Consul General. I spoke to federal Minister Garneau in Ottawa in February and raised this issue as one of three of grave importance to the territory, and I also expressed this to Canada. We have done our work lobbying for this money.

As the member knows, it is up to American lawmakers to see the significance of this corridor to Alaska to help us fund it, because it is beyond the means of this government to do that.

Mr. Hassard: I'm not sure if the minister completely understands how it works, but the Yukon government pays for the maintenance on that section of highway and we receive money from the United States to pay for upgrades. The money isn't gone. We still have \$2 million left. That's in this year's budget, so it hasn't been gone for a few years, as the minister said.

In the talks that the minister has had with counterparts in Alaska, or the talks that the Premier has had in Washington, has there been any indication that the United States government is willing to provide future funding for the Shakwak project? If not, has the Government of Yukon or the Premier explained to the United States government about the cost of this road and that it is essentially used by Alaskans or residents of the United States, once you get past Beaver Creek, more so than Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Just for the record, the members opposite — the members from the Official Opposition and

from the Third Party — are absolutely right. There is \$2 million in this budget for Shakwak, but that is old money. The funding for Shakwak ran out in the last transportation bill in the midst of the Obama administration. That money was in the bank; we have been drawing it down ever since. There has been no new money; the money is gone. We have been drawing it down and, through the good work of the Department of Highways and Public Works on reconstruction, we have managed to stretch that money out through getting the most value we can from it — tendering it well and maintaining the projects well.

It has lasted us a lot longer than most people thought it would. We have another \$2 million this year and, maybe if we are lucky, we will get \$50,000 or \$100,000 next year. The money is out; we are not getting any more. It is not coming; it is gone. We have been drawing down the bank account ever since the last transportation bill in the Obama administration.

To answer the member's questions, yes, we have lobbied, and we will continue to lobby the federal governments — both Ottawa and Washington — to stress the importance of this strategic highway to Alaska. Have Alaska and Washington got the message? There is no new money for that road system in any federal or state budget.

Mr. Hassard: I am just curious then about this \$400 million that the minister talked about — the request from the federal government. Would any of that money potentially be used on the Shakwak?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Yes, one of the applications is for \$116 million for the Alaska Highway, which includes permafrost remediation, so that money is there. It is much broader than just the north highway, but that funding — if it is approved — could help with that effort.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the Official Opposition giving the Third Party an opportunity. Maybe we can actually get into some back-and-forth discussion and then trade off with each other.

I would like to come back and ask the minister — during the budget briefing, we asked officials, as we have with all departments, for a copy of the organization chart indicating the total number of FTEs, as well as an identification of the number of communications staff for that department. I understand that the minister says there are more than 800 positions spread out over four divisions. My point is that, as Members of the Legislative Assembly, we're being asked to review and vote on a budget with a cumulative total of \$255,017,000. It seems unacceptable to ask anybody to give a blanket approval to that.

When I go to the website, I cannot find — as the minister outlined when he did this long recitation of various projects in the current budget. We get a rollop of \$17 million here, \$12 million here, \$31 million there — that's not responsible. That's not what we heard from the Premier, the Finance minister — that we would be getting more information, open and transparent, and that we would know what we were being asked to comment on.

My colleague from Pelly-Nisutlin was asking questions, and it's quite reasonable to ask: What is this? How is it being forecast? We don't have that information, Mr. Chair.

I don't think that it's humorous when the minister sort of indicates that he will just rattle them all off and we should be satisfied with that. That's not the due deliberation that I expect to engage in with this minister. It's a \$255-million budget. If we're going to engage in a discussion about the merits of a major project or a minor project, or whatever is being put out there, we should have that information when we walk into this room so that we can have an informed debate; otherwise, it's just like going back to what at least two of us on this side of the room were subjected to for six years. That's not what we heard this government campaign on. It said that it was going to do business differently. I take the Minister of Finance at his word that we will have performance plans with accountability provisions in them and that they will set out what each department is going to do, how it's going to do it, and what its performance outcomes and measures will be — what the metrics will be.

None of that is in here; none of it is on the website. I accept that's under development, but in the meantime, Mr. Chair, I expect, as a member of the opposition and as a member of this Legislative Assembly being asked to vote on \$255 million-plus in this budget alone, to have more information that just simply a rollop.

I do want and I do expect to receive — I'm hoping the minister will confirm that members of the opposition will get them, as we were told we would — the organizational charts. I'm telling all ministers that it should be, at a minimum, what you give us. How are your departments and agencies organized to deliver on what you say, in the broad rollups — the goals and objectives that you set out in each of your divisions?

How are you organized to achieve that, and then how do you break that down in terms of showing citizens of the territory — members of this Assembly — how you are using those resources to achieve those broad rollup objectives that you have at the top of each of the pages of this budget document?

So I'll ask that question first, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I want to welcome the Leader of the Third Party into this debate formally. I appreciate it, and I am more than happy to provide any information in context and detail that the member opposite demands. That is the job here; that is why we are here this afternoon. I take her point to heart; I absolutely do. This is important. To my mind, I have been looking at these budget documents for almost 30 years, and I see — in terms of the actual tangible documents that have been distributed — very little change from past practice, and we are working to provide, to change that. It is not here yet; we will get there. I have no doubt — as the Finance minister has indicated — that we will make improvements on an annual basis to get to a better place. Right now, in this House, I am more than happy to answer the member's questions — whatever she wants in terms of detail on any of

the line items in our \$200 million-plus budget in Highways and Public Works.

The organization charts — the Leader of the Third Party did make that request of officials during the budget lock-up and briefing. We have committed to getting those documents to the Leader of the Third Party. We are more than happy to do that.

The question about communications people is an outlier. I am not sure why they are looking at communications, but I am more than happy to provide that. I know that the communications staff of this government — throughout government — provide a very useful service. I was once a member of that cadre of people. I think they do an excellent job. The public and some politicians like to focus on communications as some sort of vestigial tail. I hope that is not the member opposite's opinion or reason for breaking out the communications staff.

I think communicating with the public and communications within government is a very important service, and I know how hard the departmental staff do to provide information to members of the opposition, to the public and to us, on a daily basis. It is a very essential service and one that I highly value.

Ms. Hanson: I will remind the minister that we are dealing with the Westminster parliamentary system. It is not the officials who are on the floor here today — it is the minister. He is accountable and responsible for everything here, so when I ask for information, I am looking to the minister and I am looking for him to set the direction of what he expects to be made available to the Members of the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the citizens of the Yukon.

So when I ask the question with respect to communications, I do that based on my experience. I worked for 30 years with the federal government. In the last number of years, I have seen the transition from communications — which is about communicating what the functions of government were and how they were being done — to being spin doctors for the government of the day.

We have asked the question consistently over the last couple of years, across budget briefings: Can you tell us about the number of communications staff? You can look this up, Mr. Chair; you can look at the increase in communications staff across government. It is not unique to the territorial government; it has happened in the federal government and, I would daresay, in provincial governments.

It is just a matter of interest to track the growth of a particular function and then, at some point, ministers will be accountable for — and at what cost do we focus on telling Yukoners how good things are, as opposed to showing them or, if it comes to a trade-off of services as we have heard already alluded to by the Minister of Finance, we may have to make choices — then I will be pressing each one of the ministers as to why they would maintain certain functions over other functions.

It's a matter of information when it comes to the number of communications staff, because we have seen a transition — those of us who have been in government for many, many

years. Those of us who have prepared budgets for many years understand what I'm talking about.

The minister made reference earlier to what he called “set-aside clauses”, I believe, with respect to ensuring opportunities for First Nation businesses and development corporations, in terms of accessing — particularly when we look at a budget like Highways and Public Works, which has many opportunities, potentially, with capital projects.

My question for the minister is simple: Has the territorial government adopted something similar to the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Businesses that has been in place for many years with the federal government? Is there a procurement strategy with respect to aboriginal businesses with the territorial government, other than the YACA provisions of the final agreements?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I will let the Leader of the Third Party know that my good colleague, the Minister of Economic Development, is more than happy to talk about some of the initiatives they are doing for procurement with First Nations and working with development corporations — making sure we follow chapter 22 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

I can provide more information from the point of view of Highways and Public Works in procurement, but I do want to roll back a few minutes to “spin doctors” and the disparaging characterization of government communications people — be it here or in provinces or the federal government — of spin doctors and spinning stuff. I know that, here in Highways and Public Works, we have four communications professionals for a department that is of massive size. They do their job professionally with an eye to providing good, solid, factual information to me and the people of the territory on a daily basis — and to within government. They work exceedingly hard.

I had a reporter the other day commenting — because one of our communications professionals was actually providing information at 9:00 p.m. and trying to get back to meet a reporter's deadline. They are very professional, and I really take issue with any effort to paint the professional civil service and the people working within it as “spin doctors” in the communications room. I don't like that.

I will leave it at that, Mr. Chair, but I do know that we have four professional communications staff in the Department of Highways and Public Works. I will get the organizational chart for the Leader of the Third Party.

Ms. Hanson: I do look forward to getting the organizational chart. I think the minister has misconstrued and misrepresented what I said. I am talking about the communications function — and I said it clearly, Mr. Chair. I am talking about his responsibility as minister and it is how ministers use their staff.

In my experience — and I will speak only from my experience — one of the big life decisions for me was when I started being asked to speak on behalf of a previous federal government when a minister wasn't available, to use language around partisan language — language that spoke about my new government — representing the minister, and I don't think we use public servants that way. Communications

people were forced to do that. I know many communications people in the federal system quit as a result of that kind of use of the professional public service. We hire them because they have the qualifications and they are non-partisan. They are professional public servants. I hold that very dear, Mr. Chair, and I do not accept the minister suggesting that I do not.

I asked the minister — aside from the YACA provisions — what policies the Yukon government has. The minister is responsible for procurement. I have heard this many times — the minister is responsible for procurement. Does the Yukon government have anything analogous to the procurement strategy for aboriginal businesses?

I will give you an example, Mr. Chair, as to why this is relevant. Several years ago, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, as part of its involvement with the Faro mine remediation project, put out a request for proposal. There were a number of submissions. Ultimately, it was given to what was called a large Canadian company. It turned out to be a multinational based out of California called Parsons.

Now, a number of aboriginal businesses had worked together to get that contract, because it would have benefited many, many Yukoners and many aboriginal businesses and development corporations in this territory — not corporations that are covered necessarily under chapter 22 because, if we look at who the affected First Nations are, a lot of them are non-settled First Nations.

What we saw as a result of the fact that we didn't have an aboriginal procurement strategy was that Parsons published on their website that the attainment of this Faro contract was giving them the advantage in the northern remediation business — and guess who has the Giant Mine?

I ask this question for a reason, because I'm wondering whether or not, given the fact that not all Yukon First Nations have First Nation final agreements — have chapter 22 provisions — is there work around an aboriginal procurement strategy? Simple.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Do we have an aboriginal procurement policy? Not yet. So in answer to member opposite's question, no, we don't — but the Government of Yukon is committed to reducing barriers to First Nations and local businesses securing government contracts. We will go above and beyond the procurement panel recommendations by incorporating Yukon First Nation governments' perspectives and aligning with recently approved trade agreements. To help us reach these goals, we will create a new procurement policy in collaboration with industry and First Nations — and that work is ongoing, as we speak.

We have developed and published standard clauses for value-based procurements for First Nation capacity building, including northern experience and northern knowledge. We rolled out one such contract recently down in Carcross with the Nares bridge contract. We were working very closely with — not as a YACA absolutely, but we are working very closely with First Nations to improve the way we buy goods and services inside this government. We are working at the Yukon Forum and we are working directly with First Nations and First Nation chiefs and development corporations. My

colleague, the Minister for Economic Development, will be more than happy to speak in detail during his budget discussions on some of the work we're doing on that front in more detail.

Ms. Hanson: Can the minister tell this House whether he's familiar with and has read the infrastructure needs assessment for the Dawson City Airport, the final report? This is a 10-year capital plan and planning report, 2013 to 2023, dated October 2013.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have read that, and I have read many other airport studies, besides. That was one that I did read.

Ms. Hanson: That will make our conversation more interesting. Can the minister tell this House what the 2018-19 maintenance budget for the Dawson City Airport is?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The operation and maintenance budget for the Dawson City Airport, according to my officials, is roughly \$450,000 currently.

Ms. Hanson: What is the maintenance budget for the Watson Lake Airport?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We don't have that level of detail at the moment. I will get back to the member opposite with that specific number for the Watson Lake Airport.

Ms. Hanson: The minister will remember that, when he read that report on the 2013-23 plan with respect to paving the Dawson City Airport, in 2013-14, the maintenance budget for the Dawson City Airport — with an unpaved runway — was \$257,000. It was a very extensive team who worked on that, as the minister will recall, from all broad sectors — many people from the Aviation branch of the Yukon government, plus others. They were looking at a diverse range of issues associated with the whole of the Dawson airport improvement project. The estimated maintenance cost with a paved runway of comparable size and scale, they thought, was Watson Lake, so it went from \$257,000 to \$575,000.

What is the forecast estimate, because it didn't sound to me that the 2.25 — or whatever it is, the multiplier factor — was applied? We can go back into how they came with that in their study in terms of additional costs, moving from unpaved to paved.

The minister said he is going to provide that level of detail, but does the minister agree that those factors are still consistent today — that we are looking at a 2- to 2.25-factor increase to go from unpaved to paved?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The information that I have just had put before me suggests that the estimated O&M costs of operating Dawson with a paved runway is about \$1.2 million per year, which is an increase of \$700,000 a year over the current budget of approximately \$500,000 or \$450,000. We can get more specific numbers, I guess, but that is the ballpark that we have.

The member opposite still wants the information for Watson Lake, which I will provide.

Ms. Hanson: Transport Canada, I'm told, applies differing standards for gravel and paved runways — this is out of the report — as it relates to surface contaminants. From reading that report, it sounds like surface contaminants could

be many different things. It says that gravel runways with packed snow have a superior aircraft braking action to that of a paved runway, with only minor snow contamination. At present, Yukon Highways and Public Works provides additional winter maintenance resources necessary for the airport's runway on a priority basis, which is kind of cool, given that this is not what we were told in Ross River — that airports take priority over highways. I would be interested to hear if that is true of all airports.

However, if the runway were paved, Yukon's Aviation branch would need to acquire dedicated airport maintenance equipment and vehicles, undertake additional training, retain seasonal winter maintenance staff, and procure and store chemicals with de-icing agents. In those additional O&M amounts, what additional capital costs are identified with respect to those additional costs that would be required for maintaining — over and above what Highways and Public Works does now for an unpaved runway?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I believe the member opposite was asking for the capital costs of this enterprise. At the moment, we have the Dawson City Airport maintenance facility as one of those pieces.

There is a lot of other equipment. In my long list, there was the single-axle dump truck with 19-foot reversible plow, the tow-behind sweeper for Dawson, and the loader-mount snow blower for Dawson. All of those pieces were part of this infrastructure that we'll need for the paved runway. That comes out to, I think, a total of about \$8.6 million — I think, if I've got the math right — but we can provide some of that detail when we get back to the member opposite about the operations costs.

Mr. Chair, seeing that the time is now 5:26 p.m., I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Mostyn that the Chair report progress on Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

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. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*, 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 5:29 p.m.

The following legislative return was tabled March 19, 2018:

34-2-108

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Cathers related to general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 206, *First Appropriation Act 2018-19* (McPhee)