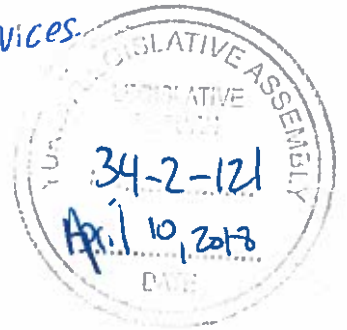


LEGISLATIVE RETURN

SUBMITTED BY: Hon. John Streicker, Minister of Community Services.



- asked the following question during the Oral Question Period at page(s) of Hansard
submitted the following written question - WQ No.
gave notice of the following motion for the production of papers - MPP No.

RE:

OR

This legislative return relates to a matter outstanding from discussion related to: Budget debate on vote 51, department of Community Services.

On March 22, 2018, at page 2216 of Hansard

'The Watson Lake library board had a meeting with the minister last summer, and the board followed that up with a letter dated September 25, 2017. They were requesting an update of the Public Libraries Act and an increase to their funding allowance in order to pay their librarian an appropriate level of pay. They were also prepared to dissolve the board of directors in order for the employees of the society to switch over to YG employee status, if that was the direction that the government preferred. Has the minister followed up with the society, and what was the result?'

The response is as follows:

The attached letter, dated December 12, 2017, speaks to the correspondence between the Watson Lake Library Board and the Minister of Community Services regarding the Public Libraries Act. The Watson Lake Library Board has received an increase in its funding, from \$51,487.35 in 2017/2018 to \$57,555.64 in 2018/2019, an increase of over \$6,000.00.

Handwritten signature of John Streicker over a horizontal line, with the word 'Signature' printed below.

Handwritten date '10-April/2018' over a horizontal line, with the word 'Date' printed below.



Office of the Minister
Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

December 21, 2017

Barbara Millen, Chairperson
Watson Lake Library Board
710 Adela Trail
Watson Lake, Yukon Y0A 1C0

Dear Ms. ^{Barbara}Millen:

Re: Watson Lake Library Board Requests

Thank you for your letter of November 6, 2017 outlining the concerns that your library board have regarding the Watson Lake community library. It was a pleasure meeting with the board in August to discuss the priorities of the Watson Lake Community Library. I truly appreciate the work that both your board and staff do to provide a vital service and space to the residents of Watson Lake.

As you know, the Government of Yukon supports all community library boards' legislated right to hire, supervise, and direct employees as well as to establish pay scales including matching benchmarks for comparable job descriptions within the Yukon government. I recognize that for many years community libraries have not seen an increase in funding and that this may impact your ability to accommodate salary increases while maintaining current operating hours. With this in mind I have asked that your suggestion along with feedback from other communities and the Public Libraries Branch, that community library funding be increased, be brought forward through the current budget cycle discussions. However, I must also acknowledge that through the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel we have identified that over the past decade, government spending has been growing faster than government revenues and as a result we are looking for ways to manage spending increases. This means that there is pressure on the budget process.

Regarding your suggestion to open the *Public Libraries Act*. The Yukon Government is committed to ensuring legislation, is current and relevant to all Yukoners. I am interested in seeing this Act updated and the Yukon Government will take your thoughts into account as we determine legislative priorities.

As you are aware, on these issues, and whenever you need to access information on a program or service, please feel free to contact the Director of Public Libraries, Aimee Ellis, who will provide information and expertise as required. Aimee can be reached at (867)-667-5447 or aimee.ellis@gov.yk.ca.

Thank you again for your letter and taking the time to meet with me earlier this year. I can assure you that the Yukon government is committed to working closely with the Watson Lake Library Board on your priorities for the benefit of your staff, patrons and all community libraries in Yukon.

Sincerely,

John Streicker
Minister of Community Services

