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**The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.**  
(Mackenzie Delta)

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**Hon. Diane Archie**

(Inuvik Boot Lake)  
*Deputy Premier*  
*Minister of Infrastructure*  
*Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation*

**Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge**  
(Deh Cho)

**Ms. Caitlin Cleveland**  
(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Paulie Chinna**  
(Sahtu)

*Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs*  
*Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation*  
*Minister responsible for Homelessness*  
*Minister responsible for Youth*  
*Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board*

**Hon. Caroline Cochrane**  
(Range Lake)

*Premier*  
*Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs*  
*Minister responsible for the COVID-19 Coordinating Secretariat*

**Hon. Julie Green**

(Yellowknife Centre)  
*Minister of Health and Social Services*  
*Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities*  
*Minister responsible for Seniors*

**Mr. Jackie Jacobson**  
(Nunakput)

**Mr. Rylund Johnson**  
(Yellowknife North)

**Mr. Jackson Lafferty**  
(Monfwi)

**Ms. Frieda Martselos**  
(Thebacha)

**Ms. Katrina Nokleby**  
(Great Slave)

**Mr. Steve Norn**  
(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

**Mr. Kevin O'Reilly**  
(Frame Lake)

**Ms. Lesa Semmler**  
(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Rocky Simpson**  
(Hay River South)

**Hon. R.J. Simpson**  
(Hay River North)  
*Government House Leader*  
*Minister of Education, Culture & Employment*  
*Minister of Justice*

**Hon. Shane Thompson**  
(Nahendeh)

*Minister of Environment and Natural Resources*  
*Minister of Lands*  
*Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**Hon. Caroline Wawzonek**  
(Yellowknife South)

*Minister of Finance*  
*Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, including responsibility for the Business Development and Investment Corporation*  
*Minister responsible for the Status of Women*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PRAYER</b> .....	<b>2083</b>
<b>MINISTERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2083</b>
116-19(2) – Pink Shirt Day (R.J. Simpson) .....	2083
117-19(2) – Youth Mental Health Supports (Green) .....	2083
<b>MEMBERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2085</b>
Addictions (R. Simpson) .....	2085
Alcohol Addiction (Bonnetrouge) .....	2085
Mental Health (Norn) .....	2085
Mental Health and Addictions (Cleveland) .....	2086
Aftercare (Martselos) .....	2086
Mental Health and Addictions (Nokleby) .....	2087
Managed Alcohol Program (Johnson) .....	2087
Public Health Trends (O'Reilly) .....	2088
Anti-Bullying Cooperation (Jacobson) .....	2088
Germaine Arnaktauyok, Recipient of Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts (Green) .....	2089
Eulogy for Claude Fontaine (Thompson) .....	2089
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>2090</b>
<b>TABLING OF DOCUMENTS</b> .....	<b>2099</b>
<b>CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS</b> .....	<b>2100</b>
<b>REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE</b> .....	<b>2118</b>
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b> .....	<b>2119</b>



**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, February 24, 2021****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. Norn, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.):** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 116-19(2):  
PINK SHIRT DAY

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all share in the responsibility of ensuring that our schools and communities are safe spaces. Today, we take a moment to pause and reflect on how each of us contributes to safe spaces where bullying is prevented whenever possible and quickly addressed when it occurs.

In 2007, Nova Scotia teenagers David Shepherd and Travis Price organized a protest after a male grade 9 student in their school was harassed for wearing a pink shirt. The next morning, these two youths brought pink shirts to hand out to all male students. Their school was full of kids in pink that day, and 14 years later, Pink Shirt Day has become a global call to action as schools and workplaces are flooded with pink in solidarity against bullying. The national theme for 2021 is Lift Each Other Up, and I am happy to see so much pink around the House today, as we stand together on Pink Shirt Day.

As I am sure all Members of this House are aware, bullying can occur to anyone of any age at any time. It occurs when aggressive and repeated behaviours happen between one or more people in a real or perceived power imbalance. This imbalance can be based on a range of factors from size, age, or ethnicity to religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. No one, from any walk of life, is immune to becoming a bully or being bullied. This behaviour has negative impacts on individuals, families, and communities. It causes fear, emotional harm, and physical, psychological, and social distress. We must support victims of bullying and

ensure we provide education and formative consequences to bullies so they can learn the harm in their actions and repair relationships.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has Safe School Regulations that establish a Territorial Code of Conduct and ensure all schools have a Safe School Plan. These plans ensure students from Junior Kindergarten to grade 12 take healthy relationship programming and require schools to address instances of bullying in accordance with the regulations. A Safe School Plan ensures there are structured mechanisms in place for keeping students and staff physically, emotionally, and mentally safe.

Last year, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment released the Guidelines for Ensuring LGBTQ2S+ Equity, Safety and Inclusion in Northwest Territories Schools. We continue to support schools in upholding these guidelines and in the development of their gender sexuality alliances through our partnership with the Yellowknife Rainbow Youth Coalition.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Territories schools should be safe and caring environments for the entire school community. We must continue our vigilance to ensure our schools are safe spaces where people respect each other's differences and recognize each other's similarities. When we see bullying, we need to speak up, and if we bully others, we must reflect on our actions and seek ways to do better. Let's lift each other up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 117-19(2):  
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today on Pink Shirt Day, we come together to commit to creating safe spaces for each other and for our youth, places where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected us all in significant ways and has highlighted the importance of supporting one another and advocating for those who need help and for youth in particular. We know that the harms

associated with bullying can have devastating and long-lasting impacts on individuals, families, and communities. Having accessible mental health services is critical to support both victims and people who use bullying to heal from the wounds this behaviour inflicts.

Mr. Speaker, over the last three years, the Department of Health and Social Services has worked closely with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment on the phased establishment of child and youth care counsellors in NWT schools and communities. This approach was informed through engagement with NWT youth who told us they wanted access to confidential and flexible mental health services. The GNWT is currently in phase 3 of a four-year implementation plan. I am pleased to report that staffing these positions is going well. A total of 33 out of 39 child and youth care counsellor positions have been successfully filled throughout the NWT, along with five clinical supervisor positions. The child and youth care counsellor initiative, in combination with our work to eliminate wait times and establish same-day access for counselling supports, has greatly improved access to services for all NWT residents when they need it most.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard from Northerners about the need to provide a variety of options when it comes to mental wellness supports. One of the ways we are expanding options is through the implementation of e-mental health options such as the Strongest Families Institute. A year ago, the GNWT partnered with Bell Let's Talk and NorthwesTel to have the Strongest Families Institute provide telephone-based support for children and families experiencing mild to moderate anxiety, depression, and behavioural concerns. So far, we have seen a positive response to this service, and I would like to share some testimonials we received from parents. A parent of a 12-year-old said, "The coaching was instrumental in teaching me the skills and techniques I needed to feel more in control of my situation, build a stronger relationship with my son, and feel hope for the future." A parent of an 11-year-old had the following to say, "My coach with Strongest Families was super helpful, understanding, and supportive. She helped me to see and understand parenting on so many levels. The skills and strategies put in place are effective and are definitely worth learning."

While the pandemic has produced innovation in the area of virtual care, government recognizes that these types of services may not be easily accessible by all. As a result, staff across the territory are working to ensure that creative solutions are in place to support children and families who may not have access to a phone in their home. Some of these solutions include making space available within health centres, dropping off

packages with information and resources at people's homes, and making use of community partners to ensure information about the availability of services is shared.

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority now has a child and youth mental health coordinator who is leading the way with several key initiatives that will improve our approach to caring for children and youth with mental health needs. Some of these initiatives include:

- working with the Stanton Territorial Pediatric In-Patient Unit to develop in-patient psychiatric admission processes and programing;
- working with the Stanton team to build care pathways, therapeutic resources, after-care, and staff capacity;
- supporting health centre staff across the territory with mental health system navigation and building their skill sets to care for children and youth in need of mental health services; and finally
- leading the implementation of the Northwest Territories partnership with the Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto to improve access to specialized child psychiatric services across NWT regions and communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services is also working with schools to support the delivery of the Talking About Mental Illness program, called TAMI for short. TAMI is a school-based program focused on increasing awareness and reducing stigma about mental illness. Programs such as these increase comfort talking about mental health and help to increase the likelihood that youth will access help if they need support. Additionally, children and youth can also access the NWT Help Line and the Kids Help Phone, both available 24/7 for free, confidential support.

Mr. Speaker, there is no single approach that will work for everyone when it comes to addressing youth mental health, but by providing a variety of options, we ensure that we are better positioned to support youth when they need it most. I urge each of us, on this Pink Shirt Day, to take the time to consider how we can support and lift each other up. Remember, a little kindness and compassion can go a long way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

## Members' Statements

### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ADDICTIONS

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I speak about addictions and mental health. I was going to start by citing statistics. However, we need to hear real-life situations if we want to really understand the issues and develop workable and respectful solutions.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about Jane, a fictional name of a young Aboriginal lady who was raised in a loving and caring family. At the young age of 16, she lost her way and began to hang around with others who found themselves in a similar situation. Drugs and alcohol appeared to be the solution to dull the pain of not fitting in to societal norms or the constant pressure from family to do well in school. Although she was strong academically, Jane never completed high school but went on to work for minimum wage in the retail sector. Jane did settle down some in her early 20's, had children with a man she soon left due to an abusive and toxic relationship. She again turned to drugs and alcohol to numb the pain. This time she could not break the cycle of addiction. It was fortunate that her family stood by her and took custody of the children. Jane does see her children from time to time, but continues in another abusive relationship. If nothing is done to change it, she will be found dead at the hands of the person she is with.

Mr. Speaker, another person, I will call him Richard, recently finished high school. During his time in high school, he was bullied, turned to drugs, and became somewhat of a loner. Richard lives in a single-parent home where his addiction became drugs and gaming. He basically locks himself in his room and only associates with those who are also lost in a system that is not meant to inspire those who are not adhering to societal norms. Richard and his friends, some of whom are aging out of foster care, will most likely find themselves in the street, homeless, without support, and potentially end up as a statistic. Richard's parent is concerned that there are a number of at-risk-youth who are living in situations that provide them only one path, and that path is addictions, living with unchecked mental health issues and homelessness.

Mr. Speaker, Jane and Richard are only two of the many youth between the ages of 18 and 25 in similar situations. They and many others need this government's immediate support before we are asked to cover their funeral costs. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ALCOHOL ADDICTION

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Alcoholism is one of the most common addictions in the Northwest Territories. Alcohol can be found from many sources. Where there is a will, there is a way, so the saying goes. The social acceptance of drinking can often lead to denial, and if left untreated, can have severe consequences.

Mr. Speaker, alcohol is one of the leading causes for family breakdowns that hurt not only the adults involved but also the children. Alcoholism has seen many good men make decisions that lead them to destruction and jail and, sadly, even death.

Mr. Speaker, many youth and young men across our territory have fallen to peer pressure and have taken up the bottle, and sadly, there goes any hope we had of grooming the young to be the next leaders of our communities. We feel as though we are losing the battle to combat alcohol and alcoholism in our communities. There are too many forces working against us. The well-intentions of a few community members, the very community members that may, in time, face burnout and fatigue. We have to be mindful of the fact that alcoholism-related diseases are stressing out our already stretched healthcare system.

Mr. Speaker, there are many ways this government can assist communities to address the ongoing problems with alcoholism. This government has the resources to assist the communities in addressing this addiction. I will have questions for the Minister of Health at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I just want to acknowledge Pink Shirt Day. I'm glad to see we're all wearing pink today and talk about mental health a little bit. I want to say that kindness, love, and support must shine through to fight these issues. I just heard a couple of my colleagues talk about crime and whatnot, so I'm going to segue into that.

Mr. Speaker, I last spoke about the Affirmative Action Policy and the hiring practices in November. At the time, I spoke of policy shortfalls, specifically Ministerial appointments, GNWT hiring practices. Today, I'd like to talk about individuals with criminal records and how they need to be given consideration when being hired. Many of us in this room are aware there are very high crime rates in

the NWT, and it's even more magnified in our smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, in my time working in the diamond mines, I was involved in community work, public relations, and worked with Indigenous governments. I worked closely with HR personnel promoting the product and actively seeking out any potential people interested in working at the time. One common barrier that we saw is that many of the interested candidates had criminal records.

Mr. Speaker, many industries that work in the North now know that our small population limits the available talent. As such, many skilled workers come from south of the border. One common-sense approach I observed was individuals who had a criminal record were assessed on a case-by-case basis by an HR team. These teams use their discretion before we had to make sure that there were no serious crimes against the person or serious property crimes.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes, we had to work with individuals who worked in smaller communities to help them get pardons for past offences. It should not be a barrier if one wants to work in the public service. I do support firm rules, though, when it comes to working with our vulnerable populations, and I don't expect that we stray from that. I fully support anyone who has paid their debts to society who are genuinely trying to make strides to better themselves. Everyone deserves a second chance. Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker, and I will have questions for the Minister of Finance at the appropriate time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, today marks 30 years since an impaired driver collided with my husband's family. His brother Michael was seriously injured and medevaced to Edmonton. That's 30 years since doctors prepared my in-laws for the worst: first, that Michael would not make it through the night; then the week; and then, that he would never walk or talk again. This community rallied behind their family for an entire year while Michael recovered in the Edmonton Children's Hospital. He made it through the night, the week, defied the odds, and started over at five years, one month, and 28 days old. The North wrapped itself around my in-laws as it does to support victims and survivors. That day, Michael, having never touched drugs or alcohol, was the victim of addiction.

There are two other victims in this tragedy. The vehicle that hit their family had both a passenger

and a driver. They, too, are victims of addiction and trauma, but they did not receive the same wraparound care required to heal. Faceless victims struggle every day through mental health and addiction in our vast territory with limited community, regional, or capital-based support services. If NWT mental health and addiction rates match the number of breast cancer patients, we would call this an emergency. If the NWT COVID deaths matched the people we lose to mental health and addiction annually, we would call this an emergency. An emergency is defined as unexpected, and we are not in an unexpected place. We are at a time of intense difficulty, Mr. Speaker, and that is called a crisis.

Michael's journey led to change. He inspired the NWT's Students Against Drinking and Driving chapter. Students rallied to create awareness, and Michael's peers were change-makers who lobbied this GNWT for impaired driving legislative changes. The fight against impaired driving doesn't rest on planning a drive home, and the ring is not solely the driver's seat. The fight against impaired driving is equally routed in how we proactively heal our territory.

Michael was a victim with an entire community supporting his recovery, but victims of mental health and addiction who fall into the faceless cycles that weave through our territory need clear paths to gain sobriety and then stay sober with the same wraparound care we afford to those with physical injuries. Some fight a silent battle while others fight a violent battle, and sadly, some lose this battle. If we are not outraged, Mr. Speaker, we are not paying attention.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AFTERCARE

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For my Member's statement today, I will be joining my colleagues on the topic of addictions and mental health. Specifically, I will be focusing on the after-care component of addictions services. In a Member's statement last March, I spoke about the need for more after-care services to be made available locally to the people of the NWT. That's because there is currently an inefficient amount of after-care services being offered to NWT residents upon their return home from treatment centres in the south.

Mr. Speaker, when individuals return to their home communities from addictions treatment, it can be extremely challenging for some people to readjust to normal, everyday life. With the structure and routine of treatment suddenly gone, when they

return home, people can easily slip back into their addictions if sufficient after-care services are not available. That's simply the nature and cycle of people struggling with addiction and is a gap that we, as a government, must fill and address.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, on October 27, 2020, during question period, I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services about expanding after-care services in the NWT. Specifically, I suggested the idea to build an after-care facility in three different regions of the Northwest Territories: one in the South Slave region, one in the central region, and one in the Beaufort-Delta region. As I stated, this type of addictions service is sorely needed across all regions of the NWT. Therefore, I strongly suggest that our government work to improve this lacking component of addictions services. I know that all NWT residents would greatly benefit from improvements in this area.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, my hope is that this government will not only hear my concerns about after-care services but will, more importantly, work to address these concerns during the life of the 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly. I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, residents across the territory are wearing pink shirts in support of the national anti-bullying campaign. Pink Shirt Day has its origins in an incident when a child wore a pink shirt to school and was bullied for the colour of his shirt. It is reported that one in five children experience bullying, but it is likely that number is much higher. Bullying exists in many forms, including racism and discrimination, and can often lead to mental health and addiction issues. In some cases, when bullying is severe, it may lead to suicide and death. We must combat the effects of bullying by treating each other with empathy, kindness, and compassion. If you or your loved ones are experiencing or have experienced bullying, I urge you to seek out the supports that are available to you.

In the North, statistics show we are a population prone to addiction and mental health issues. The root of addiction has been closely linked to childhood trauma and abuse and, in particular, residential school impacts, when it comes to Indigenous populations. This has created a systemic cycle of addiction and mental health issues. People looking to escape from pain will

often turn to substance abuse as a form of self-medication.

There are four components to a successful rehabilitation: counselling, detoxification, treatment, and recovery. Once an individual suffering from addictions receives counselling, they have taken the first step to reclaiming their life. Counsellors will help people to understand the steps required and prepare them for entering medical detoxification, or detox, when they are ready. A person cannot travel south nor enter a treatment program unless they are sober.

In a treatment facility, patients move forward in their progress working through the trauma and learning new coping skills. However, the journey doesn't end with treatment. Once a sober person emerges from a facility, they will need ongoing support, culturally appropriate after-care. On-the-land-based programs, trauma counselling, sober living facilities, online and social media supports, and sober event programming are all key components towards establishing a healthy support network for Northwest Territories recovering from addiction and mental health issues. Additionally, teaching life skills so people can re-enter society and contribute is equally important as self-worth is a key component of maintaining sobriety.

Currently, people are experiencing isolation like they have never seen before. This isolation is leading to an increase in the consumption of alcohol and cannabis, as well as exacerbating ongoing mental health issues. When our population is not healthy, nothing in our territory can prosper. It is time for us to ensure that we can revive our vulnerable residents with a full-scale rehabilitation program that accounts for all steps on the road to recovery and removes them from the cycle of rehab and relapse that is becoming far too normalized in the North. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MANAGED ALCOHOL PROGRAM

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we hold people to a standard of complete sobriety and perfection, we are setting them up for failure, but also ourselves. As a society, if we keep with the mentality that pure sobriety is the only option, people give up too easily, and the scope of our addictions makes the problem hopeless. Harm reduction allows people to celebrate little ways, and thus, it is better feedback for continuing empathy from all of us. I want to quote the Minister of Health when she was a Regular MLA, "Not everyone wants to be sober. There are people who are

perfectly content not to be sober for the rest of their lives. I think we also have to recognize that we have people who have alcoholism as a chronic health issue, not as a moral failing, but as a health issue."

Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more. I have said it before in this House, but it bears repeating: alcohol is not the cause of addiction; trauma is. During COVID-19, when we were faced with the choice of having to risk people going through withdrawal while also self-isolating due to COVID-19, we provided alcohol to many of those residents to mitigate having to deal with two public health crises at the same time. Much of that work expedited our path to managed alcohol programs. However, as these programs emerged, they were not fully funded or true managed alcohol programs, simply programs to mitigate withdrawal. A true managed alcohol program requires medical professionals and social workers providing supervised consumption and wraparound services.

Recently, I toured the new Arnica facility and saw the work they are doing there to establish their managed alcohol program. They are one of several organizations looking to take on and expand this work in the last year. However, Mr. Speaker, my concern is that much of this funding is COVID relief funding. I want to see permanent funding for managed alcohol programs and wraparound services be a legacy of this pandemic. Many of us recognize that an integrated service delivery model is how we make progress here. Data from jurisdictions across North America make it clear that, when it comes to our most vulnerable, we must look beyond housing-first and have a combined approach that tackles housing, mental health, and addictions. However, implementing such a vision is no small task.

We have made strides in incorporating managed alcohol programs and housing-first models over the last year, but if we hit 75 percent vaccination rates, we can't lose the progress that we have made just because one public health crisis is over while another rages on. I will have questions for the Minister of Health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PUBLIC HEALTH TRENDS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. The recent release of the Health and Social Services System 2019-2020 Annual Report paints a picture of many major health conditions and trends for the Northwest Territories. There are some positive outcomes shown, including a decrease in

potentially avoidable mortality due to preventable causes, as well as those due to treatable causes; a decrease in the rate of children in permanent care; a decrease in the proportion of mental health hospitalizations due to alcohol or drugs; and a decrease in workplace safety claims.

However, the overall health of our residents is still not improving in a number of significant areas, including mental health hospitalizations remain at twice the western Canada average, with four in 10 related to substance abuse, about four times the national average; and one-third of NWT residents smoke, three in 10 drink heavily, and four in 10 are considered obese. Client satisfaction with Health and Social Services systems has also fallen below 90 percent for the first time since measurements started in 2004.

Against this backdrop, Health and Social Services recently released a further report examining potential social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report tracks indicators related to child maltreatment, mental health and addictions, alcohol-related harm, and family violence. It's also a good check-in regarding what's happening with people during a pandemic.

Taken as a whole, though, the annual and the pandemic reports describe a Health and Social Services system hard pressed to respond, let alone improve, the overall well-being of our residents. While this year's budget promises a \$75-million increase in funding for healthy communities and citizens' programs, we just don't seem to be making significant overall progress. I'll have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services on the way forward for improving wellness and health of our residents. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ANTI-BULLYING COOPERATION

**MR. JACOBSON:** Today is Pink Shirt Day. It's a day that we make all aware of the problems that are caused by bullying, and working together, we could put an end to it. Each day, we see bullying in our communities, in our workplaces, the schools, and online. We can't judge people, but they should think before they hit "send." This impacts on our youth who are seeing this on Facebook and across social media. Today, I stand here to say enough is enough. As individuals and as leaders across our territory and across our ridings that we represent, we have to stand up and work together to end bullying for our youth and for everybody to work together.

Bullying has serious impacts on our people, especially on our youth. I am afraid that our youth, who are often going through difficult times, suffer more that are bullied. That can contribute to mental health and alcohol and drugs and substance abuse. I am asking all Members of this Assembly today to join me and stand up against bullying. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
GERMAINE ARNAKTAUYOK, RECIPIENT OF  
GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARD IN VISUAL  
AND MEDIA ARTS

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to salute my constituent Germaine Arnaktauyok on the occasion of her national recognition with the highly prestigious Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. Germaine Arnaktauyok is one of only eight recipients of the 2021 award organized by the Canada Council for the Arts to celebrate the exceptional careers of Canadian artists. As the Governor General's award citation says, "Germaine Arnaktauyok's contribution to Canadian art is significant. She has been a serious artist for over 60 years and has continued to explore and develop artistically and professionally. She has charted her own course and created her own unique visual language, and her lifelong interest in her own unique Inuit culture has been an inspiration to many younger artists."

Born in the Igloolik area in the 1940s, Ms. Arnaktauyok began life drawing from her visionary world whenever materials became available. She studied fine arts at the University of Manitoba, commercial art and fine craft at Algonquin College, as well as print-making at Arctic College in Nunavut.

In her work, Ms. Arnaktauyok focuses primarily on Inuit myths, stories, and feminist narratives centred on birth and motherhood. She has illustrated and written several books, including illustrating the recently published "Takannaaluk" released in spring 2018. Her silk screen design, "The Drummer," was chosen by the Royal Canadian Mint for the two-dollar coin to mark the birth of Nunavut in 1999. Her professional career has included the production of lithographs, etchings, and serigraphs that illustrate Inuit myths and traditional ways of life. Her artwork is held in a variety of museums, including the National Gallery of Canada and the British Museum.

Please join me in saluting the life and work of Germaine Arnaktauyok and her recent distinction

through this prestigious national award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EULOGY FOR CLAUDE FONTAINE

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Claude Fontaine was born on October 13, 1963. His parents, Gerard and Therese Fontaine, and their six children welcomed Claude into a loving and caring home. Claude and his seven siblings were raised on their family farm in Prud'homme, Saskatchewan. It was there they all learned the value of hard work and the importance of family.

One of Claude's many special gifts was his ability to make deep and lasting connections with people from all walks of life. It would not be uncommon for Claude to meet somebody for the first time and, in a conversation, quickly discover an extended family connection, a friend of a friend, or a common event or place where paths may have crossed at one point. Conversation with Claude was not short, but when having a conversation with Claude, you would not be looking at your watch or your phone to check the time. You would not even be thinking about the time. What would feel like 15 minutes would end up being an hour or sometimes longer.

Claude was trained as a machinist, mechanic, truck driver, and later a welder. He worked on the railroad line, fixing equipment and keeping supplies moving. He drove transport trucks across Canada and the US, moving goods to people. He liked to talk about his travels in his 18-wheeler with friends and family.

Claude decided to settle in Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories. He said he knew he was home when he had first laid his eyes on the Mackenzie River. Claude found an instant and profound connection to his new home. At the same time Claude chose to live in Fort Simpson, Fort Simpson also chose Claude as one of their own. He quickly became a beloved local who everybody knew as "Froggy" or "Frenchy." Through his many skills, Claude became a valuable addition to the community, and he developed his family-like relationship with so many people.

Around 2006, Claude met Lisa, a single working mom. Claude became a regular presence in Lisa's life and her son, Tristen's, who was about nine years old at the time. Claude would describe Lisa as his soulmate, the one true love of his life. Claude

and Lisa were blessed with their boys, Kaleb and Kole. It was a great game-changer for Claude. At 65, he was not expecting to fall in love, let alone start a family.

Claude found peace and serenity in nature, and he felt his strongest connection to nature when he was in the Nahendeh. Known by the Dene as the land and water of the people, Claude explained to his family in the South that the forest, lakes, rivers, mountains, and animals of the North were much like his church. This is where he felt most connected to God or, as he would say, "the Big Guy."

Mr. Speaker, the family would like to thank the community of Fort Simpson for all their supports during this difficult time. He will be sadly missed but never forgotten. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and the community. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 578-19(2): MENTAL HEALTH

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Just to refer back to my Member's statement on hiring practices in the GNWT, I had a question for the Minister of Finance. First question: can the Minister provide us with any statistics on the number of individuals in the NWT who are screened out because of a criminal record? Marsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT does not prohibit the hiring of any individual with an unrelated criminal conviction, and as such, there are no people who are screened out simply on that basis. Thank you.

**MR. NORN:** Thank you for that. My next question is: has the Minister's department ever looked into an assessment process for applicants with criminal records?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Yes, there is an assessment process that does exist. There is, in the event that a criminal record has what we call a bona fide connection to the position of employment. In other words, if there is a legitimate connected reason why having a criminal record would prevent someone, for safety reasons, to perform the

conduct of their duties, there is a process by which, once they are being offered the position, they could be asked to go and get their criminal record checked and bring that back. There is a process for how that would be evaluated, including potentially by a deputy minister who would be able to evaluate whether or not it is, in fact, connected to their employment.

**MR. NORN:** Can the Minister advise what barriers people with criminal records face when seeking government employment and how can they overcome these barriers?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Again, there isn't intentionally a barrier. There shouldn't be a barrier, again, acknowledging that there may be positions where not having a criminal record is directly connected to the performance of that duty. That said, someone who may see that advertised certainly wouldn't necessarily want to apply if they have a criminal record, and they may not be in a position themselves to make the evaluation of whether that connection is there or not. People may well feel shame around having a criminal record. I very much want to emphasize that people can get criminal record suspensions, and that often is a tool that is not adequately used by many who have past criminal records for something. For what that's worth, I would certainly encourage people firstly to be familiar with the policy that we do have so that they don't see it as a barrier, but also to avail themselves of the process with the federal government around seeking what was formerly known as a pardon and now known as a criminal record suspension.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

#### QUESTION 579-19(2): MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SUPPORTS

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to addictions and mental health, the victims are often forgotten. My questions today will be for the Minister of Justice. I would ask the Minister of Justice what role the Department of Justice plays in ensuring those with addictions and mental health issues are supported by the justice system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of Justice.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Most of those supports are offered in the corrections system, seeing as how that is how Justice usually interacts with people who need those supports. There are psychologists in the North Slave and the South Slave, and there are counsellors in all of the facilities. There are

traditional healing programs at the South Slave; it especially has a lot of programs like that. There is an Indigenous pre-treatment healing program, which is made in the North. We hope to roll that out to other areas, as well. There is a Northern Sessions program, which offers treatment; I wouldn't say treatment, but mental health and behavioural supports in a northern context. There are a number of these different programs. There are substance abuse management programs offered in all of the facilities. There are programs to help inmates cope with violence and domestic violence. There is a wide variety of supports. One of the big issues is that some people are in for 20 days and out, some people are in for a few months and out, and it's hard to really provide the support that is needed in that context. Thank you.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** I would ask the Minister: what legislative supports are in place to assist those who are in abusive relationships and in immediate personal harm or harm to their children?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Emergency protection orders are temporary court orders up to 90 days, and they are available under the Protection Against Family Violence Act. Of course, there has been a report highlighting some of the deficiencies, and so Justice is working with its partners to identify ways to fix those. It's not a perfect solution, obviously. There are communities with no RCMP, and so a piece of paper doesn't feel like it makes you very safe. It's not a perfect fix, but that is what is in place.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** I've had constituents who have family members with addictions and mental health issues and who are concerned with the wellness of their children. When I say "children," I'm talking about adult children, as well. They are concerned that the system is not offering the timely personal protection needed, and often, it is unclear as to how or who to contact. Can the Minister tell me, with the Department of Justice, what information and contacts are available and where can that information be found?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Of course, the department of health offers a lot of support through counselling services, and you can always contact those providers in communities. As far as Justice, there is the NWT Victims Services program. What Justice does is provide funding to 11 community-based groups who are situated across the territory, and they provide services to victims. It could just be emotional support, direction on how to navigate the system, what to do, where to go, where they might find a safe place, things like that, and that contact information can be found on the Justice website.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the RCMP are called in to address a matter related to mental health or addictions, what supports are the RCMP provided, and does it include training in dealing with addictions and mental health as well as a mental health support worker on-site? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** In the territory, I know that RCMP officers undergo trauma-informed training and cultural awareness training. Right now, if they respond to an issue where there is a mental health issue, which is quite frequent, there is not a mental health specialist who accompanies them. Frankly, there are just not the resources for that, at this point, but those are the kinds of things that we need to look at. I'm happy to have those conversations with the department of health and see what options are available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

QUESTION 580-19(2):  
ADDICTIONS RECOVERY

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister share with the House the expectations of the addictions recovery survey being done? What outcomes are expected from this survey? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we hope to get from the addictions survey is to learn about what is working with the addictions recovery services that we currently offer at the Department of Health and Social Services and what changes would make those services more effective. We are particularly interested in hearing from people who have lived experience, who have actually used these services themselves or who have close family members who have done that. That survey is available online, and hard copies are available at health centres and other places where mental health services and addiction services are provided. I want to say that, with just one week of the survey being available, we've had more than 300 responses, so there is obviously a lot of interest in this area. We encourage everyone who has an interest in this area to complete the survey by the end of March.

What will happen with the survey results is that they will inform next steps around the need for a territorial alcohol strategy and answer some of the questions of the day, such as whether we need transitional housing for people leaving treatment and whether we need an in-territory treatment facility. Thank you.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** After-care is a crucial component of recovery. The NWT is lacking in this area of service. Will the Minister consider investing in three after-care facilities that are connected to the mental health workers within Health and Social Services?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** We are interested in working across departments with the NWT Housing Corporation, the Department of Justice, and Education, Culture and Employment to talk about what kind of supports in transitional housing we can put in place. At this point, we don't have any firm plans to construct the facilities that the Member for Thebacha is talking about, but staff is in place to connect people exiting treatment with counselling and other supports that they require.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Addressing the mental health and after-care component is important for all people in recovery. Would the Minister consider walk-in clinics with mental health staff readily available for the public?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** In our most recent Mental Wellness and Addictions Recovery Action Plan, we talked about the reform that we were planning to undertake in the Community Counselling Program, which is now largely complete. What we have taken on is a methodology called "stepped care." How this works is people are seen in person, often on the same day. There is no wait list. There are no appointments necessary. It is, in fact, possible to walk into one of the 19 Community Counselling Program offices across the NWT and see a counsellor right away, with no wait times and same-day appointment availability. In those other communities which do not have community counsellors, telephone, virtual, and in-person, from time to time, counselling is available. What this new methodology allows us to do is to see people right away and decide whether their care needs to be stepped up or stepped down. That's why it's called stepped care.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have no problem with the out-of-territory treatment. The teams that deal with mental health and addictions problems are not available here. We don't have the qualifications for that. Yellowknife might be able to have that, but anonymity is very important to uphold. Therefore, would the Minister consider pursuing after-care facilities as a priority within the life of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** After-care is a priority of this government. The focus at this point is on people rather than facilities. Our goal is to reach as many people as possible and give them the widest variety

of choices for the kind of support they need for their own mental wellness. At this point, as I mentioned earlier, we don't have specific plans to build after-care facilities, but there is a working group that is looking at that possibility. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 581-19(2):  
ALCOHOL ADDICTION

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Masi, Mr. Speaker. Following up to my Member's statement regarding the problems of alcoholism in our communities, this is also affecting many of our youth and young men. Can the Minister commit to an alcohol education or alcohol awareness program in our schools, including Aurora campuses? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no question, as the Member says, that alcohol is a great hardship for many of our residents and in many of our communities. With respect to an education program, that is something that would be led by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, and we would certainly be interested in working with them if they wanted to develop a curriculum on this topic.

What we do offer now is an awareness program called My Voice, My Choice. That's been around for a number of years, and it's now being revamped and will be relaunched later in this calendar year. The campaign is going to focus on six key areas, and they include things such as looking after our land, sexual health, suicide, healthy relationships, healthy coping skills, mental health, and substance use. It covers many of the areas that the Member is concerned about. As I say, this is currently in the redevelopment stage, but it is expected to be ready for use by schools, if they wish, and Aurora College, if they wish, by the next semester. Thank you.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi to the Minister for that answer. I wouldn't even give them a choice. Force it upon them. Mr. Speaker, one of the priorities of the department is to focus on mental health and addictions by ensuring that services are delivered locally with culturally appropriate methods. Can the Minister provide an update as to actions taken by the department related to this priority?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you for that question. Our primary focus in this area is on-the-land healing program. This is a community-based program where Indigenous government organizations apply

to the department to obtain funding in order to deliver their own culturally relevant land-based mental health and addictions programming.

This fund is very flexible. It can be used to attract people to treatment. It can be used for family treatment. It can be used for after-care. It can be used for treatment itself. This is a community-based program, and it puts communities in charge of what this program is about and makes sure that it reflects the values of the people whose community it is.

There are also two new funds that the government is coming out with that are community-based. One is suicide prevention, and that was just launched about 10 days ago. There has been quite a bit of interest in applications for suicide prevention. The other community-based program is peer support. This is for addictions after-care, and it provides funding to support people who want to set up AA groups or Wellbriety groups. It would give them money for a place to rent and some refreshments and that kind of thing. We have three and, particularly, on-the-land programming, which is based on community-driven mental health support.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi to the Minister for providing all the services related to addictions. I look forward to those funding sources. One of the key positions missing in our communities is an alcohol and drug counsellor. Most alcoholics need someone they can confide in, someone they can trust, someone that they know. Can the Minister commit to providing our communities with an alcohol and drug counsellor position run by a non-government organization?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The Department of Health and Social Services and, more particularly, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority, Tlicho Community Services Agency, and Hay River Health and Social Services Authority are the operational arm that provide these services. Non-government organizations are pretty thin on the ground outside of the major centres. That's why the government is delivering this.

The Community Counselling Program, which I spoke about earlier, is available to NWT residents of all ages on all topics. There is a mental health and addictions worker located in Fort Providence as well as a child and youth care counsellor. There is a community wellness worker position that is currently vacant, but the standard offering in Fort Providence is to have these three wellness workers working with local individuals to provide them with the help they need.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi to the Minister for that. Can the Minister commit to the training of our local people to be alcohol and drug counsellors? Mahsi.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** This is an area the department is very interested in. For the last two years, the department has provided support to the Dene Wellness Warriors, who have been working in partnership with the Rhodes Wellness College to deliver the Northern Indigenous Counselling Program, and it's my understanding that the first graduates of this program will be coming out next year. We see a unique opportunity here to hire these NWT residents who have this specialized counselling training and to bring them into our communities in the different roles that we have available there. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

QUESTION 582-19(2):  
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are also for the Minister of Health and Social Services. We know that when it comes to people seeking help, even one day of delay to accessing services can lead to an addict changing their mind. Prior to attending out-of-territory treatment, what options are available for people seeking medical detox, particularly after hours or on weekends when just getting a referral from a doctor is not generally possible? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's important to note that, in this area, the vast majority of individuals do not need medical detox prior to beginning treatment. When they do require detox, there are several options: one is to detox at the treatment location or with the facility that's related to the treatment location. Another option is to detox in the Northwest Territories, either through a local health centre or through the hospital with the support of a case manager who would be assisting that person in the treatment application, facility-based treatment.

Mr. Speaker, we do not have a one-day turnaround in this area. I recognize that timing is of the essence. The fact is that we need to apply to the treatment centre, ensure they have space, arrange for medical travel, and then have the person travel down there. This is generally not accomplished overnight. Thank you.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** That's kind of exactly my point. It doesn't happen in the window of time that it needs

to in order to get at addicts when they are actually willing to seek help. I would like to see some commitment from the Minister on how she's going to address that delay and that issue. Moving on, it's my understanding that the on-the-land fund is valued at approximately \$1.8 million annually. How long has this fund been available, and how much has it been accessed annually?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The Member is correct. The On-the-Land Healing Fund is now worth \$1.8 million. It's been in place since 2014-2015 fiscal year, and the average annual uptake is in the 90 to 100 percent range.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** That's great news. I'm glad to hear that people are accessing that funding. Moving on to another fund, the community's suicide prevention fund, how long would this fund be made available, and could the Minister provide us with the summary of who has been applying for this fund? I'm not asking for any specific details, just a high-level summary.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The suicide prevention fund is part of a shared health priorities agreement with the federal government. We're now in year four of a 10-year agreement. The funding is secure for the next six years at a minimum. Since the fund was announced about 10 days ago, there has been a lot of interest expressed. One proposal is in hand. More are anticipated by the end of this month. What we are doing because timing is very short here is that, where possible, we are giving the money this year to provide programming by the end of the fiscal year. Then if that is not possible, then we are supporting people to make applications right at the beginning of April so that they have a whole year to spend the money in the next fiscal year.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell us whether or not the funds in the communities as suicide prevention fund are generally under or over prescribed and, if so, how can we build capacity in our communities making use of these if you funds such that down the line we see less of a need for this type of funding? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The suicide prevention fund is brand new as of 10 days ago. We have, in the department, a consultant who is responsible for providing support to communities to make applications to this fund and also to the On-the-Land Healing Fund. The person in this position has the following tasks: development of proposals; makes recommendations on potential contractors who may be able to assist in programming; and make linkages to larger Health and Social Services

system where required. There is someone there who is in an active supporting role. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 583-19(2):  
MANAGED ALCOHOL PROGRAM

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated in my statement, during the course of the pandemic, we established a couple of managed alcohol programs, and they varied to an extent. Some were simply just delivering alcohol to people to prevent withdrawals, whereas, for example, the Arnica has established a much more elaborate managed alcohol program. My question for the Minister of Health and Social Services is: given the kind of necessity of setting up these programs during COVID-19, what are the plans for the programs that have been established going forward post-pandemic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to take a moment to thank the MLA for researching my previous statements in this area when I was a Regular Member. I stand by my statements about the need for harm reduction and that addictions are not a moral failing; they're a health issue. Having said that, I am in support of managed alcohol programs. He referenced the fact that they were offered during the pandemic. That's the case. It was trying not to double the problem so that you had both people who were isolated because of the pandemic and then also in alcohol withdrawal.

At this point, alcohol is currently only being offered at the Spruce Bough, which is the new name for the Arnica Inn, and at the Aspen Apartments. Having said that, the Aspen program is not really a program. If someone is waiting for COVID test results or who needs isolation while they are recovering from COVID, they would be at the Aspen. If they needed a managed alcohol program, they would be provided one at that time. We do have a mandate priority as a department to establish a managed alcohol program in the territory, and we are currently exploring options to make that a reality. Thank you.

**MR. JOHNSON:** My point is that I don't want to lose the progress that has been made, and I know there are some questions about whether the Spruce Bough or the Aspen Apartments as physical infrastructure will continue to exist, but I would like to see the program model that is started there continue. I believe already some expertise has

been developed. My question is: given that we've started some of this work already, has the department started to collect any data, and has it used any of this work that kind of organically started during COVID-19 to inform delivery of office?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The answer to the Member's question is: yes, the department is working with all locations where alcohol has been and is continuing to be provided during the pandemic. Together, lessons learned to inform the ongoing approach. That's not only the Yellowknife locations. There was also a managed alcohol program offered in Inuvik during the lockdown. The information is being gathered by interviews with providers, with users, and they have the classic questions of what worked, what didn't work, and what could we do better to create a formal managed alcohol program. We anticipate that this information will be analyzed and available in the spring of this year.

**MR. JOHNSON:** I'm very happy to hear that work is being done, and I look forward to seeing that information once it's analyzed. My main concern here is that a lot of the funding that established these programs was COVID relief funding. It's not necessarily money that has been budgeting and is found in the operations budget for Health and Social Services. Specifically, I know the Arnica program, they're hiring a manager to run this program. They are looking at best practices. However, their funding right now is COVID relief funding. My question for the Minister of Health and Social Services is: can I get a commitment that that program funding, regardless of the infrastructure and the larger COVID questions, for the managed alcohol program can continue past COVID-19?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** We recognize the value of the program at the Spruce Bough. It manages two best practices together, which is the managed alcohol program, dealing with addiction and homelessness at the same time. The department has renewed its funding with the Spruce Bough until the end of September 2021. The idea is that in the next six or seven months the department will work with the Yellowknife Women's Society to explore options for continuing this program once the pandemic funding expires.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to try to remember that the Arnica is now called the Spruce Bough. I thank the Minister for continually getting that correct. My last question is that the overall goal in this is to reduce hospitalizations due to alcoholism, which is what managed alcohol programs are proven to do, but can the Minister speak to how we are going to track the effect of these programs on actually reducing

hospitalizations? Can you speak to the data we are hoping to collect there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** There is kind of a two-part answer here. The specific commitment is to reduce the number of hospitalizations resulting primarily from alcohol use. That is something that is collected by the hospital and healthcare system, and that is ongoing. With respect to the Spruce Bough, the department is working with them to develop reporting and data-monitoring tools that could talk to us in more detail about the kind of services that have been provided connected to the outcomes of those services, so how those two things connect. This information is being collected now, and it will continue to be collected during the life of this program, which is at least until the end of September. The test here is whether this program has been effective. We like evidence-based decision making, so we are looking for the evidence that shows us that this program is helpful and worth continuing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

#### QUESTION 584-19(2): COMMUNITY WELLNESS PLANS

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Every community has worked with Health and Social Services to create community wellness plans that are available on their department website. These plans not only identify the strengths of communities but also identify service gaps that communities feel exist. What role does the department play to ensure that, once a priority is set by the community, the community has the resources to achieve these goals? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department employs three regional community development and wellness planners who work with communities throughout the year to support actions and priorities under those wellness plans the Member mentioned. Their level of involvement is really community-driven. It can be very involved to not involved, depending on what the community wants and needs. There are annual allotments of funding to communities to realize their community wellness plans, and this funding is provided through flexible multi-year agreements. It's possible to carry over funds and move money around between fiscal years to meet the goals that they have set for themselves in their wellness plan. The fact they have a wellness plan and funding through that does not preclude them from applying for other pots of

money, such as the anti-poverty fund and the NWT on-the-land collaborative. Those are some specific ways in which they are supported. The other thing is that community wellness plans provide a wealth of information to the department for planning services and programs in the future, so, for example, I know that we have staff now going through those plans in some detail to help us with the run-up to an elders' strategy. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** The plans as they stand right now online, they do not have actions or targets associated with them, so I am wondering if the Department of Health and Social Services and the specific positions that the Minister identified are working with the communities to establish any types of target for actions to go with those plans so that they have something to measure against and can identify when they would like to achieve certain parts of the plan and how.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** It's my understanding that, in fact, these wellness workers do work with communities on actions and priorities with the community and then set up with supports needed to realize them. I realize that information may not be available online, but this is an ongoing and iterative program of supporting communities to realize their own goals that they have set in their wellness plans.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** One of the things that we heard identified by the Minister today was that 19 communities have access to community-based community counsellors. If a community decides, as part of achieving their action plan and to achieve their goals, that they would like to see a resident counsellor, is that something that they can work with this person to achieve? Is it something that they can work with the Department of Health and Social Services to achieve? Is there room within the Health and Social Services budget to provide additional resources to the community outside of the Anti-Poverty Fund, outside of the anti-suicide fund to be able to provide additional resources to the community?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** These are separate programs. The wellness is funded by the federal government. The community counselling program is funded by the territorial government. That does not mean they do not work together, but they are funded in different ways is what I am saying. I am not aware that at this point a community wellness plan could activate the appointment of another Community Counselling Program staff, but that is something that I can certainly check into and respond to the Member with more detail.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. No. Just to add to that, I appreciate that, and I think that many of the Members who serve in this House would like information on that, based on what resources are available because I think, to achieve your community wellness plan, it does not matter to a community member what funding pot it comes from, just the fact that they have access to services that are needed for the wellness, the overall wellness, of their community. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take that as a comment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 585-19(2):  
PUBLIC HEALTH TRENDS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. In my statement, I referred to the conditions described in the Health and Social Services System 2019-2020 Annual Report. The report portrays some very mixed results here in the NWT, where we still seem to be lagging behind many other Canadian jurisdictions. Can the Minister describe for us how this tracking of some indicators feeds into planning and delivery of healthcare programs and services, particularly around mental health and addictions? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department uses monitoring of indicators as an ongoing means to both provide program oversight and to provide planning in all areas, including mental health and addictions. Some of the things we look at include usage rates, wait times, common presenting concerns, topics of prevention and promotion efforts and that kind of thing to get a feel for what is going on. The data that is obtained is used to monitor performance and also adherence to the program mandate: does the data show that the program is properly focused and delivering the services for which it was intended? We also find from the data that we are able to track trends and ultimately move that into system planning and professional development and staffing needs, so that our staff is up to date.

One of the areas in which we've had a lot of success and which I mentioned earlier today is stepped care. This is an approach where we overhauled the Community Counselling Program and decided that, instead of making a client a series of appointments over weeks or months, we would make appointments available on the same day so that there would be no waiting list. If you

need an appointment, you could go and get an appointment. The waiting list or a long wait time would not be a barrier to being seen. This is the kind of innovation that was put forward in the mental wellness and addictions recovery plan and which we have now implemented, so that is an overview of how the data and the planning fit together. Thank you.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. I know that she loves evidence and she loves making decisions based on evidence, so I appreciate that. Some of the more recent statistics during the ongoing pandemic paint a rather bleak picture of substance abuse, predominantly alcohol abuse, and overall health, mental health, and hospitalizations, family violence, child neglect. In June 2019, the Department of Health and Social Services released the mental wellness and addictions recovery action plan that the Minister referenced. Can the Minister tell us how this action plan is being adjusted to take into account findings of social conditions during the pandemic?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The current mental wellness and addictions recovery plan expires next month, so there is no point, at this point, to try to bring new actions into it. Instead, what we're doing at this point is we are looking at other ways to capture information and trends, as I mentioned before, and bring those into the everyday operation of the department. The Member referenced the social indicators that were produced for the first three months of the pandemic. It's my understanding that the department is getting ready to produce another of those reports. The thing about that first report is that it only covered three months, and so it wasn't a long enough set of indicators to really make firm policy decisions on. The intention is to continue repeating these social indicators over time, so that we get a good grasp of what needs to be done on a priority basis next.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. As this year's budget address points out, though, 30 percent of GNWT operation spending is devoted to health and social programs and services, and in the budget that is proposed for next year, it is going to go up another \$75 million. The Minister of Finance said the current expenditure pattern is unsustainable and that a plan was being developed to stabilize health and social services costs. I am quite concerned about what that plan is going to look like, and I don't want it to lead to a reduction in Health and Social Services programs. Can the Minister of Health and Social Services describe what is going on with this sustainability plan for the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority and tell us when it's going to be available to the public?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** There is no question that the Health and Social Services system is under enormous financial pressure. The accumulated deficit is \$120.7 million. That is within the health authorities, the NTHSSA, the Hay River HSSA, and the Tlicho Community Services Agency. Sustainability is a very complex problem and, as the Member says, the place to start is not by cutting, but rather to look at what the drivers of spending are and what the value is we get out of that spending. This is really the core of the government renewal initiative, which my colleague the Minister of Finance has talked about, and also within the sustainability plan. What is going to happen is that there will be a dedicated group of three or four staff who will engage in looking at the detail of what we're spending money on and what value we're getting for that money and whether there are ways to reorganize ourselves to spend less money on those particular things.

I'm sure the Member is aware that fiscal sustainability is a problem in healthcare systems all across Canada and has been the subject of federal negotiations for an increase to the Canada Health Transfer, which we in the North don't get. We get our money through the FFT. However, we share this problem that they have. What we are going to do is look at, as I mentioned, internal costs containment, operation review in quality improvement, and the funding and service level so that we can get a grip on what we're spending and why we're spending it. This is not a public plan; this is an operational plan. We have offered to brief the Standing Committee on Social Development on a confidential basis about this plan and to answer questions that they have about that, and that offer still stands.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that, and I look forward to getting that briefing, but I still think it should be made public somehow. In discussing ongoing wellness and mental health needs with some community leaders, there doesn't seem to be enough resources at the local level for planning and service delivery. Can the Minister describe what resources and services are available to communities for local solutions to mental health and addictions? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** We are now in year three of four of the children and youth care counselling program, which is a joint initiative with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, and those counsellors are in place throughout Yellowknife and north to the Beaufort Sea. The last area that will be brought online is the South Slave. We have the Community Counselling Program,

which is available in 19 communities, and then available in different ways such as telephone, virtual, and occasional visits to the remaining communities. We have the dedicated funds of on-the-land healing, peer support and suicide prevention. We have access to facility-based addictions treatment. We have a lot of programs and a lot of variety at our disposal. We're looking forward to having the results of the addictions recovery survey to get the on-the-ground look about whether the supports we are offering are those that are most needed at this point. Could we do things differently? Of course we could, but we do now have a pretty robust set of programs in place and we are interested in hearing from the public about what else they need. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Oh, oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 586-19(2):

STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL MEDICAL  
DETOX SERVICE

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I was going to share some time with my colleagues, but I'm not going to let some time stay on the clock. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I am wondering if the Minister of Health and Social Services can let us know how many people Stanton can serve through medical detox at one time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. It seems like a theme day here. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Lands. Just kidding. Sorry about the heart attack, Minister.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, there are no dedicated rooms for detox at Stanton. The rooms are made available as they are needed and they are made available to people who need medical management while they are withdrawing. For some people, that's a very important step. Withdrawal can be fatal if it's not managed properly. Other requests for medical detox are assessed one at a time. As I mentioned earlier in response to another question, most people actually do not need a medical detox. The vast majority of people do not need it, but there are some people who are very alcohol dependent for whom life and death really depends on a proper detox. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** If somebody presents at a health centre or a hospital, rather, in another community and wants to go through a medical

detox process or if the nursing staff knows that this is somebody who would require medical detox, will that person be medevaced to Yellowknife in order to go through their medical detox here, or would they be able to stay in their home community to do that?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** It could go either way, depending on the judgment of the nurse whom the patient sees. It may be necessary, depending on the level of alcohol dependency, to bring that person into Stanton, or they may be able to stay in their own community. I will just say again that the vast majority of people do not need the facilities at Stanton for detox, so it would really be however it's decided on a case-by-case basis.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** I have had numerous conversations with constituents who have gone through different portions of treatment for addiction within the Northwest Territories and also outside of the Northwest Territories. One thing that has come up multiple times is the issue of every doctor in the territory not being able to refer somebody for an in-patient treatment facility. I am wondering if this is something that Health and Social Services is looking to change so that, regardless of the doctor who somebody sees, they are able to receive a referral for an in-patient facility.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** I need to investigate that further before I can give a proper answer.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. My next question for the Minister is in regard to protocols of care for people when they present at the emergency department within the Stanton Territorial Hospital. I am wondering if there are protocols for after-care for people once they do arrive at Stanton Territorial Hospital emergency with mental health challenges and if there is a protocol for either the attending physician or the attending healthcare staff or potentially people within primary care to then reach out to that person and to provide follow-up care. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** There is a medical social worker, at least one, maybe two, at Stanton Territorial Hospital, and they do discharge-planning with people who are leaving the hospital with all kinds of health needs, including mental health needs. The idea of the discharge-planning is to connect that person who is leaving the hospital with other supports that he might need or she might need, whether that is counselling, family physician, or other types of medical and counselling services that are relevant to them. They recommend it; whether the person decides to take that up is really

up to them. When we are talking about adults here, the health system does not hound them to attend appointments. They make appointments for them. They may be reminded that they have those appointments. Of course, it's our hope that they obtain the care that they need, but at the end of the day, we can only set everything up; we cannot enforce it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 587-19(2):  
STABLE HOUSING AFTER ADDICTIONS  
TREATMENT

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am going to just change direction a little bit there. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services again. I have heard from different people, and I am pretty sure the Minister has probably heard some of the same information, that people struggle with housing stability and affordability especially during after-care and post-treatment. What I have heard from people is: it's far easier to fall back into a life of addiction than it is to find support and remain in stable housing sometimes. I am wondering if the Minister of Health and Social Services will establish a relationship with her Minister to the back and two people over, for the Housing Corporation, to provide support to people struggling to maintain stable housing through their sobriety. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am of course delighted to work with my colleague from the NWT Housing Corporation. I really believe that housing is a key component to recovery, that people need to have their own space to provide for sober living and a sober social life and that without that it's very easy to relapse and go back into shelters and couch-surfing and to be exposed to all of those triggers that sent them into their decline in the first place. This is truly an integrated case management issue, where the person who is trying to retain their sobriety is going to need a number of supports. Housing is certainly one; counselling is another; and of course, income assistance and other measures, as well, to really stabilize the person in their recovery. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** I am wondering if the Minister will commit to specifically working on the eviction protocols and policies that the LHAs and LHOs currently work with to evict people who are not paying rent or are not meeting tenancy agreements, to see where Health and Social Services can further support LHOs and LHAs to see housing success for the people of the Northwest Territories.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The rental office is a division of the Department of Justice.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** I realize that the rental officer is part of Justice, but what I am referring to is: the LHAs and the LHOs go through a methodical process before they evict somebody, and they try their best to provide people with support from their LHOs and LHAs. LHOs and LHAs simply are not mental health counsellors, and they are not addiction counsellors. I am wondering if Health and Social Services will lend some support to the NWT Housing Corporation to see where Health and Social Services can further support them in that process.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** The supports are there. They may not be well known, so certainly, I would like the LHAs and the LHOs to be aware of the Community Counselling Program, child and youth care counselling program in their communities so that they can make known to their tenants that these services are available to them and that then, hopefully, the tenants will take that up and will get the assistance they need. The Member may also be referring to housing support workers. I know there was a pilot program in Behchoko where there was somebody who was specifically working with tenants on housing stabilization, and that I think was more of a navigator position. That is really something that my colleague at the NWT Housing Corporation could speak to in more detail.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, reports of standing and special committees. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Justice.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 317-19(2):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LAW FOUNDATION  
37<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL REPORT, JULY 1, 2018-JUNE 30,  
2019

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table to following document: "Northwest Territories Law Foundation 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

TABLED DOCUMENT 318-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
491-19(2): FIRE SERVICES FOR INGRAHAM  
TRAIL RESIDENTS

TABLED DOCUMENT 319-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
511-19(2): ALTERNATIVE VOTING METHODS  
FOR COMMUNITIES

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following documents: "Follow-up letter for Oral Question 491-19(2), Fire Services for Inghram Trail Residents;" and "Follow-up letter for Oral Question 511-19(2), Alternative Voting Methods for Communities." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, motions. Item 17, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act; Committee Report 8-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Motion 5-19(2): Referral of Point of Privilege Raised by Member for Monfwi on March 10, 2020; Minister's Statement 77-19(2), National Housing Co-Investment Fund; Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2), Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2), Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 167-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2), Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT; and Tabled Document 286-19(2), Main Estimates 2021-2022, with the Member for Hay River South in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Ms. Cleveland.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 286-19(2), Main Estimates 2021-2022, for Lands.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, committee. We will take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 286-19(2), Main Estimates 2021-2022. Does the Minister of Lands have any opening remarks?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. I am here to present the 2021-2022 Main Estimates for the Department of Lands. Overall, the department's estimates propose a decrease of \$939,000, or 4 percent, over the Main Estimates 2020-2021. These estimates support the mandate objectives for the Department of Lands while continuing to meet the Government of the Northwest Territories fiscal objectives to prioritize responsible and strategic spending.

Highlights of these proposed estimates include:

- a sunset of \$976,000 for the Addressing Equity Lease Initiative;
- a sunset of \$453,000 for base funding received at devolution for the compensation and benefits shortfall for transferring federal employees and one Director of Land Administration position which has been double funded since devolution;
- a sunset of \$75,000 for the Agricultural Strategy Implementation Initiative;
- additional funds of \$309,000 to support implementation of the Unauthorized and Potential Rights-Based Occupancy Initiatives; and
- \$253,000 in additional funding to support and staff the Wek'eezhii Land Use Planning Office.

These estimates continue to support the priorities of the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly by:

- continuing efforts to develop new regulations to bring the Public Land Act into force;
- continuing progress on the equity lease initiative, which includes transferring equity leases into fee simple title in all regions of the Northwest Territories;
- addressing the long-standing issue of unauthorized occupancy and identifying potential 'rights-based' cabins;
- working with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to create a process guide for transferring land within municipal boundaries to

community governments, and the Departments of Industry, Tourism and Investment; Environment and Natural Resources; and Health and Social Services to support the development of the food industry; and

- continuing to work with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs negotiators and external planning partners to advance land use planning in areas that do not currently have plans in place, including Wek'eezhii, Deh Cho, and the southeast NWT.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Does the Minister of Lands wish to bring witnesses into the House?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yes, I do.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce his witnesses?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have with me today Deputy Minister Sylvia Haener and director of finance and administration, Katherine Macdonald. We also have, in the waiting room, the assistant deputy minister of operations, Blair Chapman. We will be swapping him out with our deputy minister when it comes to operations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. The committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does the committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Committee agrees. Committee, we will defer the departmental summary and review the estimates by activity summary, beginning with corporate management, starting on page 310 with information item on page 313. Questions? MLA for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. You got it right. I appreciate that. One of the items in this section is found on page 312, the Northwest Territories Surface Rights Board. I raised this with the Minister back in January about whether the funding had been received from the federal government for this. Can the Minister tell us whether there's an agreement in place for the funding for this board? Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I'll start, and then with your permission, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Presently, we don't have an agreement in place, but we've been in negotiations and conversations with the federal government. We just recently had an update that I would like to share with the House and, with your permission, turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've been in pretty frequent contact with Canada in our work on reaching an agreement regarding the Surface Rights Board funding. The indications we've received, in fact, today, are very positive. They viewed the planning documents that we submitted favourably. They have indicated that we are well within our ability to reach an agreement soon, and it would be a five-year agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Any further questions? Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Someone might want to start the clock going, but just can someone confirm for me that this board has been in existence now for eight years and that it has never, ever had a dispute brought to it? Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** The Member is correct. We haven't had an issue brought forth to the board for the length of how long it has been there. I will ask the deputy minister for clarity on the duration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you. Yes, that time frame is accurate. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Any further questions?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. This board has been in place for eight years. It has never had a dispute. Can someone tell me what the cumulative total of the money that has been spent for this board has been over the eight years? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that kind of detail, we'll probably have to get back to the Member, but

just so everybody is aware, this is an in-and-out. This is an agreement with the federal government. They give us the money, and then we give it to the Surface Rights Board. It's no indication from GNWT to spend any of their money into it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. We will take that as a promise to provide additional information. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't know. Based on what's in the current budget here and there are probably some start-up costs, it's probably safe to assume that probably somewhere between \$2 million and \$3 million has been spent to support this board. Look, I know some of the people who serve on it, the staff. This is not about the performance of any of these individuals. This is about an institution that has been set up and has nothing to do, quite frankly. I know I asked the Minister questions about this back in March. This board was set up under the previous Harper government. It was sort of forced on us, in my view, and really there are a number of issues and problems with the way the board has been set up. It's not a co-management body by any stretch of the imagination. All the board can really do is offer compensation. If there is a surface right holder and someone wants to mine under their property or where they are using something, all the board can really do is offer compensation. It can't actually say, "It's not a good idea to go ahead with that." With that in mind, is this act ever going to get reviewed by this government? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that, right now, no, we're not going to be reviewing this. The NWT Surface Rights Board Act meets Canada's obligations that arise from the Gwich'in, Sahtu, Dene, and the Metis comprehensive land claim agreements to establish surface rights legislation in the NWT, so it does meet that requirement. No, we have no desire to bring it forth. We have other obligations, legislation, and other work that we need to do that are priorities that we sent out from the mandate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I think we have a difference of opinion about that. There were provisions in the land rights agreements, as well, for the arbitration panels to serve this function, and I think that would have been a far better way to deal with this than set up this separate legislation. We don't have the money secured for this. Why is it

appearing in the budget if the money has not been secured, and what would happen if there was no agreement signed with the federal government? We would have to expend our own money? Is that what would happen? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, yes, probably me and the Member are going to disagree on why we need it. First and foremost, I respect his opinion, but in regard to the funding through the federal government, it's like all other federal government programs that are out there that we as the GNWT are mandated to work with and utilize. Sometimes, a negotiation takes a little bit longer because it's on their timing and that, so we need to work with them. Right now, we would just move along based on the fact that we feel very comfortable that we are close to signing it and we are able to complete the work and bring the money forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister tell me how long these negotiations have been going on with the federal government to secure funding? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I will turn to Ms. Macdonald.

**MS. MACDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've been working with the federal government since November, and they have told us that we can expect to receive our agreement within the next few weeks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Macdonald. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm wondering: if this was deleted, could the funding be brought back through in a supplementary appropriation once the agreement is signed? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I don't deal in hypothetical situations, Mr. Chair. If it was deleted from the budget, then we would have to see what we do. I know how much committee does not like the fact that we're coming back for supplementary appropriations, so it would be a difficult opportunity if we had to go through the supplementary process.

Again, I can't deal with hypothetical situations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

COMMITTEE MOTION 79-19(2):  
TABLED DOCUMENT 286-19(2): MAIN  
ESTIMATES 2021-2022 - LANDS - CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT - DELETION OF \$303,000 FROM  
GRANTS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND TRANSFERS,  
DEFEATED

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't think I need to delay this any longer. I move that \$303,000 be deleted from the activity corporate management under the Department of Lands for grants, contributions, and transfers related to the Northwest Territories Surface Rights Board. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. The motion is on the floor, and it has been distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. It's not often that we have to deal with motions in budgets in Committee of the Whole. Look, as I said earlier, we don't have the funding for this. This shouldn't come as a surprise to the Minister. I raised this in January with the Minister that, if the funding had not been secured by the time this came to the floor, I would bring it forward, so it doesn't come as a surprise to the Minister. I'm not saying anything against our staff who have probably been working hard, trying to get the federal government to pay some attention to us, but the fact is: we don't have the money to do this. I think it could easily be brought through in a supplementary appropriation afterwards.

More importantly, this is a board, too, that has been around for eight years, has not dealt with one dispute, and I think is based on some legislation that was basically forced on us by the federal government in the past and does not meet expectations of co-management regime. Even some of the principles that we've passed in the new Mineral Resources Act in terms of making sure that there's some reasonable limits put on the way that mining is conducted in the Northwest Territories. For a whole variety of reasons, I just don't see the need for this board. It's not doing any work. We don't have the money in place, and I would urge my colleagues to agree with me that this can be removed. Then if the Minister can find the money somewhere else, he can bring it back through a supplementary appropriation. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. To the motion? MLA for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a couple of questions to be answered here: one, whether we need a Surface Rights Board. I think there's a bit of disagreement about that. I think that there probably is some need to make sure that the claims have an ultimate board. Whether the legislation that the GNWT passed is accomplishing that, there is a bit of a debate there. As the Member for Frame Lake said, there are other bodies that could fulfill that function. The second question is whether a board that has never heard an appeal, and likely never will, needs \$303,000 a year to operate. It kind of seems like one of those ridiculous government things of, whether we or the feds are paying for it, that we've spent likely a couple million dollars on a board that's never done anything. The third question is: if we do need the board and they need \$300,000, who should pay for it? I think clearly, given that the intention of this board is to uphold and implement the land claims, that is a federal responsibility to pay for it.

I heard the Minister of Lands say that we don't like supplementary appropriations. If it comes back with a five-year federal funding agreement, then no one's going to complain about that. I'm inclined to vote to remove this until the Minister can come back with some confirmation that the feds are paying for it. If the feds aren't paying for it, then I think there's a really hard look that they probably don't need \$300,000 a year to operate. I will be voting in favour of removing this money. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. To the motion?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the Chair will indulge me just for a second, I'd like to just ask about the revenue summary, if that's okay? I know we did agree to skip the opening ones. I just wanted to know how accurate, and you might want to start the clock for me, too. How accurate is that estimation for the quarry revenues? I do understand that the Minister of Finance has indicated that you're not sort of zeroing out your budgets and such. I'm wondering with the downturn, if we're not going to see as much construction projects this year, is it really realistic that we're going to bring in \$100,000 in royalties for the quarries? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member, and I will allow you the one question on that section. Thank you. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I will turn to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we are determining or estimating revenues, we have looked at previous years and the patterns in previous years to try to determine what makes sense. As everyone can appreciate, the last year has been very unusual, and we expect the coming year to be somewhat unusual. It is an estimate, and there may be some considerable variance there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. When I look at the next line, which is the leases, which is at \$2.8 million, this is just a drop in the bucket compared to that. I think my next question, actually, is in the next section, so I will stop there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can I have an update on where we're at with developing a process guide for the transfer of land within municipal boundaries? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I will start, and with your permission, I will turn to the deputy minister. With the City of Yellowknife, we have been in meetings. I think our next meeting is March 2nd, I believe, that we're meeting with them to talk about it. There is a process that we feel we're close to. We've provided it in writing. We've asked for their feedback. We've also reached out to the NWTAC to give it to them because we're not just looking at Yellowknife. We're looking at across the Northwest Territories. We're trying to develop the process, and if I've missed anything, with your permission, I'll ask the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Minister hit on pretty much everything. However, just to elaborate a little bit, we are taking almost two tracks at the same time. The process guide with the

City of Yellowknife is being used to help us kind of maybe take a step back to make more general process guide that we can share with other communities more broadly, and that is our intention. We're working with Municipal and Community Affairs to make sure that that more general process guide meets the needs, and our intention would be to walk through that with members of the Association of Communities, probably before the end of, we hope before the end of the fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm looking to have some understanding of: if we accomplish all this work and a municipality has control of all the land within the municipal boundaries in fee simple, what role does the Department of Lands then have in regards to municipal activities and their land? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I'll turn to the Deputy Minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll reference the Public Land Act. That's our primary piece of legislation and as the title says, public land. Our mandate derives from supporting good, strong management of public land. When land is turned over to a municipality or to others, it becomes private land, and our role is greatly diminished to almost non-existent in relation to that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am happy to hear that. I think one of the frustrations, municipalities have experienced and why they're asking for this is that they often get confused of where Lands authorities starts and Municipal and Community Affairs authorities ends. I recognize that community plans will still have to continue to exist, and MACA will approve them. I have no issue of that. I think the frustration in the past has been MACA pointing to Lands and then Lands pointing to MACA. In regards to the City of Yellowknife, can I get an update of -- I understand we are working on getting a process guide, but the actual transfer of land has many steps. The surveying and actually getting it transferred over. Do we have an expectation of when that will be complete? When we'll actually see the bulk land transfer done? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we're looking at this bulk land transfer, we are trying to do it well-played out and well-plotted. We don't want to just say, "Here you go," and it's done. We want to make sure that we do it successfully. We want to make sure we help the municipality, which is the City of Yellowknife, be prepared to do things. We are willing to start out with small parcels of land and move towards getting the large bulk land transfer, but again, it comes down to when the City of Yellowknife, when we go through it and negotiate, when they are ready to take over the bulk land transfer. It's going to take us some time. I cannot put a time frame to it. When they come to us and say, "Yes, we're ready to go," then we would go into the next step and get going on that, but we need to work with them. That's why we have that meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Any further questions? No further questions. Please turn to page 311. Lands, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, 2021-2022 Main Estimates, \$3,592,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Operations beginning on page 314 with information item on 316. Questions? Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering if the department can tell us around equity leases, for those that are paid and are in good standing, when are they going to be able to get the title? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you very much. If they're in good standing, we have set out a process. That information has been sent out to the individuals explaining the process as we move forward. The time frame, we are hoping to have it done as quickly as possible, but for more clarity, with your permission, I will ask the deputy minister to provide more information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, there are 14 leases in the fee simple title administrative process. One is transferred. In January, an additional 17 equity lessees submitted an application for fee simple title. There's a total of 218 that have been identified for transfer under this

project, and they have been coming in in bits and pieces, so to speak, depending on the readiness of the individuals, the lessees. We are obviously interested in trying to support the lessees to make these transfers as expeditiously as possible. We will continue to work with them to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just looking at the active positions for operations. I have noted that the department has decreased by six positions over the year and, notably, four of them in regional offices, which is concerning given our mandate of increasing employment outside of headquarters. Could the Minister speak a little bit to the loss of those positions? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those six positions were our equity lease positions that were sunsetted. Those positions were removed from our budget. However, just so the Members are aware, none of the people that had those positions lost any jobs. We were able to find positions within our organization to keep them at work. It was in equity leases, and it was just, like I said, sunsetted. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Minister said that it was within his own department that those people were reallocated, but is there any move to move some of these other positions out of headquarters or to get more positions into regional offices? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. Right now, we haven't looked at that. To be honest, we have a number of projects on the go that we have developed teams. Whether it's regional or headquarters that are working on teams, we need to get that job done, and then we will look if there is that opportunity. Right now, we are not looking at it. We just need to get the work done that we have committed to do in this 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When I look at the item for program management and administration under regional operations, there is

an increase of \$300,000, over \$300,000. Could the Minister maybe explain why that's increasing? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. Basically, that there is from our unauthorized occupancy that we are dealing with. That's the money that we are doing. For clarity, I will turn to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those additional funds are largely for contract services to perform removals of unauthorized occupants. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not to wade into a super controversial area right now, but could the Minister or the department explain: do they anticipate an escalation in this situation? I'm starting to see in social media, et cetera, where some of the Indigenous organizations and others are looking to advocate on behalf of their members for some of these scenarios. I'm just concerned about whether we are going to see this get a little bit hairier over the next while. Maybe not a budget question, but perhaps the Minister can shed some light on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Interesting question. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. We are working with our Indigenous governments. We are trying to get them to identify the rights-based cabins. We are trying to work with them. We have had some contracts with Indigenous governments who have given us their lists. As we tried to explain to people, whether it's been to Indigenous governments, or I have been on a constituent tour, if you are posted, it explains exactly what you should do. You can either reach out to a regional office or reach out to our IGO, your Indigenous government, identify it as rights-based cabins, and then we put it over to the side. What we are trying to deal with is people who do not have authorization to be on the land. For further clarity, I would ask you to reach out to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the risk of sharing information that I haven't yet shared with

my Minister, just an update as of today, because as the Members are aware, we have started posting in the North Slave area. Just in the last day or so, we actually received two designation forms from individuals who were indicating that they were occupying potential rights-based cabins. The process that we have laid out, people are aware of, and they are utilizing it, we believe, and we are continuing to communicate quite extensively around this and, as the Minister indicated, to engage with Indigenous governments and organizations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that, and I do just want to clarify that I don't think you're running out there and taking people's cabins that you shouldn't be. It's just that we all know how things can be perceived, and I did receive some messages of, "Oh, no. What is this going to mean?" Is there an appeal process in place? I know that sometimes, in small communities, there are small community politics at times, and I am just curious to know if there is a mechanism for people who might be looking to declare themselves to be a rights-based cabin and then, perhaps, not have an agreement from the local organization, that they can then, perhaps, appeal that. Is that even a concern, really? Do we think that's going to happen? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** From my understanding, we work with our Indigenous governments to identify rights-based cabins. We have heard some challenges, that people may want to assert their rights-based cabins but that it's not their traditional territory. That could be some of the challenge that we face. However, if it's rights-based cabins and we are able to deal with it, we are putting it to the side; we are not dealing with that issue right now. We want to deal with the people who are squatters, I guess is the best way to say it, people who are not supposed to be there. That is what our priority is. It has been 50 years without it being addressed, so now we are moving forward.

We do have an appeal process to go through unauthorized occupancy. We do have lawyers. There is a process that we need to follow. Just so everybody is aware, whatever process we start is how we are going to finish. We are not going to be changing things. We want to be very consistent in our messaging and how we deal with matters because, if we do not, that is when we get ourselves into trouble. There will not be one-offs, a Minister's discretion. It will be done properly, and I just wanted to make sure the staff was aware of

that and the public is aware of it. We are working to make sure it's done right. There are not going to be one-off exemptions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank, Mr. Chair. Can I get a sense of how many notices for unauthorized occupancy went out in the North Slave? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I will turn to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe it was around 30. Unfortunately, on the days when we started this, it was very cold. Obviously, we have to consider the safety of our enforcement staff, so how they approached the initial postings for the North Slave was perhaps more limited. They are continuing to work on their posting plan, and we expect more to be undertaken in the coming weeks and months. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can I get a sense of how many unauthorized occupants or potential ones we have identified, either territory-wide or North-Slave specific? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Around 700 that we have identified from the territories; 550, I believe are in the North Slave area roughly, approximately, from what we understand. Those are the ones we have been able to identify presently. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to narrow in here. I think a lot of those are old abandoned cabins. I have seen a few that are garbage, and it's probably great for Lands to go and clean those sites up. Quite a few of those are going to be rights holders, and I am confident that Lands will work with Indigenous governments for a process to that. Then there is a category of post-2015 and no chance of getting a lease; we will just knock them down eventually, and that will cost us time and money. What I have heard from constituents, the most concern, is the pre-2015 structures that would be eligible for a lease, and

there is that concern of are we now rewarding squatters; they never got in the cabin lottery. I am wondering if we have a sense of how many of those structures actually fit, are in that category, even a ball park. Yes, I will start with that. How many do we believe would actually be eligible for a lease? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I will start, and then I will actually ask our assistant deputy minister to come in and finish off the answer, with your permission. Thank you. Right now, we are looking at -- sorry, I am trying to get my wording here. We are looking at making sure we do it properly. We are going to be reaching out to people. I just want to answer the Member's comment there. If they are eligible for a lease, we need to follow a process. The process is exactly what we did post-devolution, so there is a process, which would include a Section 5 consultation. However, for the numbers and that, I will ask if Mr. Chapman could come in, and he could just switch.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, will you escort the witness out and the new witness in? Minister, would you introduce your witness, please?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** This is Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations Blair Chapman. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the Member's question, the issue is multi-staged, as he probably would appreciate. One of the first steps that we have in the process obviously is going out to post to identify which cabins are out there so that we get information from the individuals. As the deputy minister has already identified, we have got two people already identified who are asserting their rights. For the remaining ones who are not perhaps without any assertion of rights, we will work through a process of identifying how many of those there are. What we will need to do at that point in time is to go out to consult with the local Indigenous governments to determine whether or not we are in a capacity to be able even to enter into a potential lease down the road. It again will be a stage where we need to reach out first to the IGOs, get their feedback, and engage in a dialogue with them. Then at that point in time, once we get that information, we can determine how to move forward.

A great number of these, we have already gone out and done some work on the ground to where we

have identified the location, the number of structures that they have in place, how close in proximity to the ordinary high water mark. Whether they meet criteria to actually enter into a lease will be a significant issue, as well. The early numbers from the work that we have done show that it's certainly not going to be a majority of these that will actually be able to apply for a lease because they do not meet the criteria that we currently established. There are going to be some major challenges for some of the individuals out there. It's not going to be a significant number of these that we anticipate, but I guess that process will play itself out over the next couple of years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I am glad to hear that explanation because I think the initial reaction I got from a lot of constituents was that, "We are just going to let a bunch of squatters get cabins?" I think this is probably a multi-year process and rather complicated. Can I just get conformation of that, the path forward where you would become an authorized occupant? Would it be pre-2015, you built a structure; does it have to meet all of the 2015 cabin lottery lease requirements, which were 100-foot setbacks, number of structures -- they are actually quite elaborate rules, looking at all those leases. Is that the criteria we essentially would be using for granting people leases, was those 2015 cabin lottery leases? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. All of our lessees are held to a certain high standard, and we anticipate that anyone else who would be considered to potentially enter into a lease must meet that same high standard, and so fundamentally, the answer is yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister speak to what the plan is to do with structures that don't meet those cabin requirements? I know of a couple of people who have built structures over the years that would probably be, if they were legal, a few hundred-

thousand-dollar homes that may be not 100 feet back from the water. If we have a perfectly good home that doesn't meet the lease requirements, is the end of this process then demolishing that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I'll start, and with your permission, I'll turn to the deputy minister. We do have a process. We will be going through that process that would require us, if they are not authorized occupants there, we do have to go through a process. If they are not eligible for a lease because they are not following the variants, we have the court process that we can go with. I think we can also, if we are able to move the structure, that is an option to fall into the variance, but for clarity and further detail, I will ask the assistant deputy minister, with your permission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. The Minister has touched on one of the criteria that we will obviously be using to evaluate, is whether or not they can be moved in a reasonable manner in a location, not to a new location itself, but within the current proximity to where it is. Again, that is always going to be premised with the need to go out to consultation in advance of that, so even the idea that it could be moved still may not be enough to meet the criteria that we will be establishing. The other piece to this is that, through our notice process, we will be giving individuals the opportunity to deconstruct or remove, whatever it may be, and so fundamentally, we will be following the legal process and if they choose to remove that, then that makes it less of a burden on the taxpayers, obviously.

Ultimately, if they choose not to and they fight this and we go through the legal process, we will take over control and ownership of the assets and we will need to remove them. We may take a variety of different avenues at that point in time, which could include things like having an auction to remove some of these and/or ultimately going after the individual for costs associated with the removal. There are a couple of different legal steps that could be deployed, but again, each one will be case specific. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. One of the earlier speakers mentioned the elimination of the equity lease administration line for 2021-2022. This

was a program that was announced with much fanfare by the previous Minister and was supposed to go on for I think five years. Is this ending early, and have all of those leases been inspected now and they've all been transferred to fee simple ownership? Is that what has happened? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** It is being sunsetted, so it is done. The funding of the program has been sunsetted. As for the number of leases or equity leases out there, I think the deputy minister talked about a number of them already going through the process, but all of them, no. They are not all done, but we are able to provide services from our existing staff to fulfil that mandate to complete that task. The task has not completely been completed, but we are working to get that done. For further clarity, if I missed anything, with your permission, I will ask the assistant deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Minister has stated, we are in the process of trying to work through these. I think one of the questions the Member had asked is whether or not inspections had been completed at all of the various leases. Yes, they have been, on all the parcels, so we had all that work completed by end of summer/fall of 2020. We have that information, that baseline data that is on each and every file. We have gone out with letters to the existing lessees to notify them of getting into the next stage of this process, which would be potentially moving toward fee simple title, which will, again, as I mentioned earlier, involve the process of consultation with our various Indigenous governments and organizations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can someone just give me a rough figure? Like have 50 percent of these been converted now to fee simple title, or 10 percent, or 3 percent? Can I just get a rough figure of how many of these equity leases have actually been converted to fee simple title? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I'll turn the floor to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point, we've sent out 150 letters to the lessees in this process, to which we have heard responses, as of earlier today, from 46, and we will now be moving toward fee simple with those individuals. Not everyone who we've engaged with seems to be as eager as others. There are some who are certainly moving much more quickly than others. When it comes down to the specific that the Member has asked, the question of how many have transferred to date, we have transferred only one at this point in time, but a lot of that is due to a variety of different aspects that are within the lessees' control, as well as our own, to move through the land titles process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'll move on now, too. Can the Minister tell me whether there is any funding in here for inspection and remediation of Cameron Hills? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I'll ask Assistant Deputy Minister Chapman to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As part of our ongoing budget, we do provide for inspection services in the South Slave, and so we have our regular inspections at Cameron Hills or in other locations where there is activity going on. We do have that as part of our ongoing affairs, year in and year out. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Is there any funding in here for remediation work at Cameron Hills? I understand that the property is in bankruptcy and there is still a court-appointed receiver, but it is certainly heading our way. Do we record a contingent liability anywhere in the department for the remediation that is required there? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. For that detail, I'll turn to Mr. Chapman. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, there is nothing in our existing or current budget for remediation. While this operator is certainly under court-monitored protection at this point in time, we are not at a stage where we have determined what the final outcome will be, and so fundamentally, until that point in time, we have not submitted for any form of remediation costs associated with that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'll get a little bit more technical here. Where would a contingent liability then be? It's not found anywhere in the main estimates. Is it recorded in the public accounts somehow? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I'm going to have to go to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the best of my knowledge, we haven't booked a liability because, again, there is an operator in place. I understand the Member's concern where this is potentially going, but until such time that the decision is finally made and the outcome is clear, we are not in a position at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I understand that whoever is left in charge of the property, I guess the receiver, has to submit some plans to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board for remediation by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Is the department aware of the status of that work, and is there an expectation that it is going to be submitted and that we are going to review it and participate in that process? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I will need to ask the assistant deputy minister to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am unaware of what work the receiver has completed to date. At this point in time, they haven't chaired that, to the best of my knowledge, with ourselves. They are working with the court-appointed process and working through that process, but until that point in time, we are still awaiting some outcome from that decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm just more than a little bit disappointed that whoever is in charge of the property hasn't bothered to consult or talk to the GNWT about what the remediation plans are at this point because it's heading our way. Look, I'm going to be here asking these questions next year, and I suspect, by then, this property is going to be on our books. A fair heads-up to my colleague on the other side, I will be asking these questions again a year from now. Thanks, Mr. Chair. That's all I have. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. I will go to the Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is on page 316. If you add up the headquarters in North Slave, it increased by two, and the South Slave increased by two in employees. Then you said that the equity lease employees were eliminated at regional centres. These equity lease employees, were they term employees?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I would have to ask the assistant deputy minister to answer that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the process of hiring for the equity lease project, we had, at various times, as many as five people working on that project. They were placed in those positions through a variety of different mechanisms. Some were hired as term employees originally, for as long as three-year terms, because that was the funding that was provided on the project. During that period of time that they were hired, as we look back, the Union of Northern Workers agreement was negotiated. It made some significant changes to how we manage employees. Any employees over 24 months were required to be hired on an indeterminate basis, so we transitioned two of those employees to indeterminate employees at that point in time. They transitioned from term to indeterminate. The remaining employees were in

other positions within the department, and we deployed them through another mechanism, a transfer assignment, to those project-specific jobs that they were hired for. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Chair, were these P1 employees?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I will have to ask Mr. Chapman if he has that. If he doesn't, we will provide that to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of the two employees who were transitioned from term to indeterminate, one was a Priority 1 candidate and the other was a non-priority or non-affirmative action candidate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Chair, we have been talking about affirmative action here for quite some time. I thought that all departments followed the same process and the same terms of reference. I am just wondering if affirmative action applies in this case of P1s or P2s or whatever it is. This department seems to use the term "Indigenous governments" very often. Every other sentence is about Indigenous governments, Indigenous governments. You have to talk the walk, and I don't see that talk the walk when it comes to P1s. Are they just afraid of setting up our own Indigenous people of P1s, setting them up for failure, like other departments sometimes say? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I might be a little confused on what the Member is asking, but we want affirmative action people in place. We want to put Indigenous P1s and P2s in our government doing the work representing and working for the residents of the Northwest Territories. There is a hiring process. There is an HR process that we need to follow. We follow that to a T. Sometimes there are effective employees, and if they are effective employees, then there is a system in place where they actually get the opportunity to get the next job available if they're qualified.

To answer the Member's question, yes, we respect the Affirmative Action Policy that the Government of the Northwest Territories has, and we make sure that we want Northerners representing us at the table working for all our Northerners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Chair, affirmative action is about P1s, P2s, and so on. Yes, I agree that Northerners have to also be part of the whole concept of employment, and we have a lot of that. Most of the people who work for the territorial government are P2s, and the advancement always seems to be a P2 and not a P1. I'm not saying that all P1s are perfect, either, but when you have people who are in place who could be mentored within an organization, why aren't we taking that opportunity?

The terms of reference with HR, I have a concern about that, especially with Lands. Two main things in Indigenous governments are lands and water. I just feel that using those terms very loosely is unacceptable. There are people who could have filled a position. If a person is an effective employee if they were a term position, is that an effective employee? I don't know. I want to have clarity on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. The Member is talking in regards to our equity lease staff that had a three-year term contract. The collective agreement changed it so that, after 24 months, this person would become an indeterminate position. When they were in that position with equity leases, they were indeterminate. When the funding was gone, that person became an affected employee; they were no longer a term employee, so as the assistant deputy minister explained, because of the new collective agreement, it changed from a term to up to 24 months; then it became an indeterminate, so we needed to follow the HR process but also the collective agreement.

The collective agreement said, if you are an affected employee, you get that opportunity for advancement. The collective agreement also -- or not "advancement." If you are affected, you then have that right to apply for or get another job within the organization if you are qualified to do that position. If you are a term employee, then you are not qualified, but if you basically, to make a long story short -- I apologize. I may be trying to make it confusing. If you are an indeterminate position, you are an affected employee. You get that right to

move, get put into a position that you qualify for. That is my understanding of that process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Chair, I have concerns with the way the HR policy is being implemented across different departments. We hear one thing from one department, from the main department, and then you have another set of rules for another department. The departments have control over whatever they are going to do. I thought HR policies are unified across the board and that P1s with qualifications take priority. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. It sounds like that question is probably for the Minister of human resources, but I will allow the Minister to make a comment.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I may make the water murkier, so I am going to turn to the assistant deputy minister to help out, try to hopefully make people understand what we do. Thank you, Mr. Chair, with your permission.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Chapman.

**MR. CHAPMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we are dealing with a competition or a competitive process to where we are hiring an individual, we follow the Affirmative Action Policy. Where we have qualified candidates, we screen them in; we put them through the appropriate process, to which we would determine whether they meet our expected criteria. At that point in time, we would hire them. As I indicated earlier, in one of these instances we had a party, one candidate, who met that qualification standard and in the other one the second person was not an affirmative action candidate.

What I can say that would provide a little more information around this is: when we are running term positions, we have a much lower number of applicants on those competitions. Most people who are looking for indeterminate work, they are not going to submit an application in many cases for what they would consider a term employment. They like that benefit of having indeterminate status, and so we do not get the number of candidates, nor do we get sometimes the quality of candidates in those situations. I think that led to a very low number of applicants during the initial process, so we did not have many at that point in time. I actually sat on the board whenever we did the hiring of those positions, and the numbers were much lower than we had anticipated. We had actually some decent numbers in a couple of the regions, but they were

much lower in others. That is one of the limitations from running term competitions.

When it comes to an affected employee, as the Minister pointed out, when someone goes through the process to where their funding or in this case the funding for their position was then running out, we have to deal with them as an affected employee under the Public Service Act, and so that takes a very different approach. From that standpoint, we utilize the provisions under that Public Service Act. I can say we did utilize the services of human resources. I reached out personally to the regional superintendent, and we walked through what was happening. In that situation, they provided us with very good advice through the process, to which we arrived at the outcome that we were. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Are there any other questions on this section? No further questions. Please turn to page 315. Lands, operation, operations expenditure summary, 2021-2022 Main Estimates, \$11,153,000. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Sorry. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. With your permission, I would like to switch out our assistant deputy minister to our deputy minister again. With your permission, thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber and bring in the new witness. Lands, operations, operations expenditure summary, 2021-2022 Main Estimates, \$11,153,000. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Planning and coordination, beginning on page 317, with information items on pages 320 to 322. Questions? Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is about the securities and project assessment line item on page 318. I notice that the actuals were a lot larger for 2019-2020. I am just wondering if that is like the sunsetting or finishing of a project, like maybe Cameron Hills or something like that. Could the department confirm? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yes, so that is securities coordination. Is that what you were looking at?

**MS. NOKLEBY:** [Microphone turned off]

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** [Microphone turned off] ...is decreased due to sunset of funding for the shortfall in compensation and benefits at devolution. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do remember that in our previous briefing. Thank you. I am looking at the grants, contributions and transfers, noticing that that is the line item on page 319, or the line items. There is a decrease to some of that funding. However, the 2019-2020 was a lot higher than the budgeted, as well. This, my understanding, goes to Indigenous governments to help them. I always think there could be more support there. Plus, we are moving to a more virtual, unknown sort of world when it comes to consultation and engagement. I mean little "C" consultation, as well. Could maybe the Minister or the department speak to whether this is an accurate number, why those numbers have changed a little bit, and what they are doing to adapt to the virtual world for consultation? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I would turn to Ms. Macdonald.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Ms. Macdonald.

**MS. MACDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In 2019-2020, we were oversubscribed in our contributions related to land use planning initiatives. There was a lot of work done in the south, south east of the NWT. In the current year, we are still providing funding, but a lot of the meetings that would be face to face have either been cancelled or done virtually. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Macdonald. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to sort of reiterate then, the department does anticipate that the costs of doing this type of work is going down due to COVID-related issues? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. Yes, correct.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does the Minister and the department feel like this is an adequate amount of money, or is it, at some point, we should be looking to increase funding in this area? I'm always all about giving our money out to community groups and Indigenous organizations so that they can spend the money there versus spending it may be here always. If the Minister could speak to that, that would be great. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. Presently, what we have here right now is adequate. We've been able to be able to utilize our existing budget, and if we find shortfalls, we try to find it within. Presently, we feel that money that we have budgeted for is adequate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to beat my colleague from Thebacha to the question and ask about the two sunset positions in Tlicho there on page 320. I am assuming those, again, are some of those positions that were mentioned earlier that had been moved to other locations within the department, just to confirm? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Page 320? You know what? It's probably even better if I just go to the deputy minister to get clarity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a point of clarification, on page 320, the Tlicho actually indicates an increase in positions, and that is for the Wek'eezhii land use planning office. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's been a really long day, Mr. Chair, so I'm just going to leave it at that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Questions for this section? Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. One of my favourite areas, land use planning, it brought me up here in 1985, and it's almost as long as the Dehcho

Land Use Plan has been in development. It's now been in development for 20 years. I asked the Premier about this in June of last year in connection with a decision that the government had made to make permanent the subsurface land withdrawal for Edehzhie. Can someone give me a brief update of the Dehcho Land Use Plan and why it hasn't been completed after 20 years? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For 20 years, I probably can't give you that answer. What I can tell you right now is that we've appointed our government person on there. The committee's excited, and they basically said within the next two years, supposedly, that we are going to have the land use plan up and running. We are working on that. If I've misspoken, I will actually, with your permission, turn to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Edehzhie was referenced earlier, and in the lead-up to actually putting forward the subsurface withdrawal for Edehzhie, there was considerable discussions with representatives from the Deh Cho. A commitment to devote extra and continued energy towards work on the land use plan and completing that work. The Minister referenced that we did have the GNWT representative for that work retire and appointed a new representative. We received a very favourable response from the Deh Cho in relation to that, and from that, took to heart that the commitment to continue to work diligently on completing the land use plan would continue. The Minister said three years? Two, sorry. I think in the lead-up to discussions around the subsurface, the expectation actually was and the impression formed was that it would be a shorter time frame than that for the completion of the work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm hoping that I can bargain the other side down to a lot less than two years. As I've said, this has been dragging on for 20 years, and I know some of the people who have been engaged and involved in this over that period of time. It's just incredible. There's been at least two or three plans prepared. They were rejected by our government not once, twice, three times, so we're the problem now. It's our government that's the problem. I'm hearing, though, that the Edehzhie subsurface land transferred to the federal government, that's going to happen in

the next six months. Did I hear that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** We're transferring land to the federal government? Sorry, I apologize. I'm asking the Member questions. Is that what he's asked?

**MR. O'REILLY:** [Microphone turned off]

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Okay. We've withdrawn the land subsurface rights as per their request. Basically, once the land use plan is completed, then the land will be basically transferred as part of the land use plan. We're not doing it in six months for the Member because I know the Member's trying to get things done in six months, but we're working with their committee. We, as this government, has shown good faith. Usually, you do a land withdrawal for a short period of time. We've done the withdrawal permanently until the land use plan is completed. We are working with the Deh Cho First Nation and the committee. We're working on it to get it done. I would actually thank EIA for the work they did to remove -- just not have it for short periods of times, withdrawals. Now, we're working on getting the land use plan completed. When I say "we," the collectively "we." We are working with the Deh Cho First Nation on it. I'm excited about it. I am from that riding, the Member beside you, and if we are able to get this done in this Assembly, I would be very, very happy. You said it's 20 years? I'm hoping it's going to be done in 22 years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I thought I was patient, but 22 more years, it better not. Look, I'd understood that the subsurface for Edehzhie needs to be transferred to the federal government so that it can actually formally set up as a national wildlife area. The money can then flow from the federal government. This is on hold while our government continues to twiddle its thumbs about whether we're actually going to transfer the land back to the federal government. It should never have been given to us in the first place under devolution. I don't know why that ever happened. It's my understand you have to transfer the subsurface back to the federal government so then they can start to invest money and complete the agreement that's already been made with the Deh Cho. Anyway, I'm going to move on because my clock's running down here. I hope that the Minister can get that clarified.

Wek'eezhii land use planning, earlier, we talked about how we're going to carry out some federal

responsibility even though we may not have the money. Now, we're going to be carrying out federal responsibility again using our own money. Wek'eezhii land use planning, why are we paying for land use planning in the Wek'eezhii management area? I keep asking this. Why is the federal government not paying for this? It's in the Tlicho agreement. It's an implementation issue. Why is our government paying for land use planning? Thanks, Mr. Chair. How much in this budget is for Wek'eezhii land use planning? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** We have a three-party approach to it: the federal government, the Tlicho, and the GNWT. What you're seeing here and our budget here today is our money to complete that commitment. It's our commitment that we agreed to be part of. As for the amount of money in there, with your permission, I will ask the deputy minister to provide that information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you. Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The total amount of funds for the Department of Lands for the Wek'eezhii land use planning governance work includes funds to lease office space in Behchoko and positions, and it amounts to \$443,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't think I really got an answer to my question. Can someone tell me, then: how much money is in this part of the budget for Gwich'in and Sahtu land use planning? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I will turn to Ms. Macdonald. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Ms. Macdonald.

**MS. MACDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have specific funding for those categories, but it would just be included in our base funding under land use and sustainability. For land use planning, our budget for 2021-2022 is \$2,357,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Macdonald. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just made my point. We are not making a financial contribution for land use planning in the Gwich'in or the Sahtu settlement area. Yes, we are at the table. We help participate. We provide information and so on, but we don't make a financial contribution there because the federal government pays for it, as they should, in terms of the land rights negotiations agreements that were reached for those two settlement areas. Why are we paying for land use planning in the Wek'eezhii management area? This should be a federal responsibility under the Tlicho agreement. Can I get an answer? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I guess this is going to be one of those "I agree to disagree" with the Member. This is our commitment, the Northwest Territories' commitment to the Wek'eezhii part of the plan. That's our commitment. That is our understanding. This is what we have to pay, and we are honouring that. We have worked with the federal government, we have worked with the Indigenous governments, and this is what our costs are. This is something that we are honouring. We have worked with them, and we are able to do it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm happy that we have a new Public Lands Act. I look forward to the day when it's implemented. I'm looking for an update on when we will see some changes in how we assess and we essentially tax land. I think it's fair to say right now that there are some inconsistencies in the system right now. You pay 5 percent on a residential lease on Commissioner's land and 10 percent on a recreational. Many people live on their recreational leases, and if they actually were allowed to, they would then pay less tax. Then we have territorial lands, and both are appraised differently, using different methodology. It's fair to say that we're hoping to clean all of this up with the Public Lands Act, but I'm hoping the Minister can give me a timeline on when we will see some changes on lease fees. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. My understanding is: we are 18 months away from getting everything done, completed. The team is working diligently. We are on schedule, from my latest report today I received. We do have a template that shows us where we are, so right now, we are on schedule to be done. It will talk about

leases, lease fees, not taxation. Please understand, taxation belongs the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I know the Member may not like that answer, but that is the reality of it presently. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Admittedly, I don't fully understand this, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister help me clarify? My understanding is that Commissioner's land uses the Property Assessment Taxation Act. Territorial land uses a different metric created by the Department of Lands. Is that going to change? Are we going to have one metric for how we assess value and then charge a fee? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** The answer is yes, but for further detail, I will turn to the deputy minister, with your permission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department is in the midst of broad public engagement and land pricing has probably been the vast majority of comments that we've received as part of that process. We are aware that there is a great deal of concern about this, and it is our objective to take more time to look at how land is assessed and priced and to create a unified process and approach and not have multiple approaches. One of our inherent underlying principles in the work that we're doing on the regulations is to support greater transparency, so we do want to have a process that is clearer to individuals, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can I get an understanding of how improvements to land fit into the assessment? Are we taxing improvements presently on Commissioner's, recreational, industrial, commercial, and the territorial lands? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. The Member is asking about taxation again, and that's not our department. That is Municipal and Community Affairs' responsibility and how they assess the taxes. The question that he is asking, he will probably have to reach out to the Department of

Municipal and Community Affairs to get clarity on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a lot of issues with how the taxes are calculated, as well, but no, sorry. Right now, you pay a lease rent, and your lease rent is based on 10 percent or 5 percent or some other different methodology. I believe the lease rent is the Department of Lands. That lease rent, which is a percentage of the assessed value, does the assessed value for the multiple different types of lands we've created include improvements to land is my question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I would get clarity for how we assess the leases from the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. For most leases, there is a five-year periodic review of the lease rent that is charged, and for that, we do rely on some information provided to us from Municipal and Community Affairs to assist us with that lease rent review. My understanding is that Municipal and Community Affairs' process does include potential improvements to the land, so there is a factoring in, given the process that we follow. In terms of going forward, because I think there was interest in pricing going forward, we do have to, as I indicated, determine what that process is going to look like in terms of the value of land going forward and whether it's based on the assessed value of the land or not and how improvements factor in. Those are definitely items that we will have to consider as we move forward on regulation development. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. I think a lot of work needs to be done here. I recognize that Commissioner's land that falls under MACA does tax improvements. Then the territorial land on which we have our own evaluation, I get different answers depending on where you are and whether there is any market in that land or the improvements have any value. There just seems to be inconsistency depending on who decided whether the land has any value because we're using two different assessments. I understand that we will have that resolved, hopefully, in 18 months. Where I was also going with this is: in the

Department of Lands business plan, one of the goals is to develop criteria for assessing applications for agricultural uses of land. How many agricultural leases do we have presently, commercial leases that are using agricultural land presently in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I will have to actually ask the deputy minister for that answer. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was just referencing my notes to see if I had that with me, and unfortunately, I do not. Yes, there it is, buried. Currently, we do have six existing commercial leases for agricultural use on Commissioner's land. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have asked this previously, if we can look at somehow lowering the assessment or the lease rate that agricultural leases pay. I know the lease rates are quite generous, but there are some perverse incentives here. Every time an agricultural lessee builds infrastructure, then their assessment goes up, and they end up paying more tax. There's a bit of a perverse incentive to build large greenhouses. I recognize we are only having to deal with six farms, but one day maybe that can be 12 farms.

As part of this work, can we look at a subsidized rate for agricultural leases? I would have no issue if we gave people agricultural leases for free. If people agree to farm the land, I am completely happy to lose the very small amount we get in our budget that we actually take from them. I think right now the assessment process is creating a bit of a disincentive. As part of the pricing update, will the Minister create a lower rate for agricultural lessees? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I like the way he worded that really nicely. It's part of our evaluation process. In phase 1 of our Public Land Act is agricultural leases, how it is impacted, and how we are going to do it. For further detail, I will actually, with your permission, go to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Government has within its ability to advance policy objectives even through land pricing. One example currently is the seniors discount for lease rent. Certainly, other jurisdictions use those abilities to apply certain incentives or reduce pricing for agricultural land and those types of initiatives or even other industrial activities on land. That is certainly something that we would want to contemplate and consider with our partners in ITI. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it's a great news headline that we will charge our existing farmers less every year on their lease rents. I will ask MACA one day to charge them less on their taxes. As part of the business plan, one of the measures is that the department is going to increase the amount of land leased by the GNWT for agricultural purposes by region and location. One of my concerns with this is we don't actually have a database of what land is available for agricultural use. We kind of wait for people to come to us, and they have to explore that list to see whether it's subject to a withdrawal or available for leasing. Can the department go out and identify all of the land that is potentially available for agricultural leasing? I think that getting that information out there would really encourage people, even if it's the existing lessees, to know that they could expand and that there is land available, and we will work with them. Can the department go out and identify that, considering the mandate item says that they will actually measure that amount of land, but I don't believe we know how much we presently have? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I appreciate the Member asking me this on the floor. He asked me in Committee of the Whole. Right now, no, we are not doing that. We have prioritized a number of projects that we need to get done. Once those projects are done, that is something that we can go out and do. Presently, we have a whole bunch of priorities that we need to get done with the Department of Lands, and we need to be respectful of that moving forward. We will take the Member's idea and put it in our plans, but presently, no, we are not making that commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions? Any Members? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. My understanding was that the work on the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, there had been some money in the EIA budget to look at that work. It's been deleted. Is that work now going to be picked up by the Department of Lands? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that clarity, for the second round of questions, I will ask the deputy minister to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Deputy Minister.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Department of Lands role has been a supportive one with EIA, and our work to date on this project has been coordinating GNWT input on regulatory improvements to MVRMA regulations. I would expect that that would continue to be our potential role going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think that's all I have, but in reply to the Minister, yes, I had to have a second round because I wasn't actually getting any answers in the first round. That's it. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Member. Any further questions from any of the Members? If there are no further questions, please turn to page 318. Lands, planning and coordination, operations expenditure, 2021-2022 Main Estimates, \$7,680,000. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Thank you, Members. Please return now to the department summary found on page 307. Lands, operations expenditures, total department, 2021-2022 Main Estimates, \$22,425,000. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Mr. O'Reilly.

COMMITTEE MOTION 80-19(2):  
TABLED DOCUMENT 286-19(2): MAIN  
ESTIMATES 2021-2022 - LANDS - DEFERRAL OF  
DEPARTMENT (PAGE 307),  
CARRIED

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Lands at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Consideration of the Department of Lands, 2021-2022 Main Estimates, operating expenditures, total department, is deferred. Thank you, Minister, and thanks to the witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. What is the wish of committee? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move that the chair rise and report progress. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson):** The motion is in order. The motion is nondebatable. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I please have the report, Member for Hay River South.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act; Committee Report 8-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Motion 5-19(2), Referral of Point of Privilege Raised by member for Monfwi on March 10, 2020; Minister's Statement 77-19(2), National Housing Co-Investment Fund; Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2), Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2), Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 167-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2), Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; and Tabled Document 286-19(2) Main Estimates 2021-2022, and would like to report progress, with one motion

carried, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Do we have a seconder? Member for Sahtu. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

#### DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the day for Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Highways Act
  - Committee Report 8-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Motion 5-19(2): Referral of Point

of Privilege Raised by Member for Monfwi on March 10, 2020

- Committee Report 9-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the Chief Electoral Officer's Report on the Administration of the 2019 Territorial General Election
- Minister's Statement 77-19(2), National Housing Co-Investment Fund
- Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
- Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
- Tabled Document 167-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
- Tabled Document 286-19(20), Main Estimates 2021-2022

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

