

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, April 9, 2009 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes that have been made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 338, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party and Motion No. 380, standing in the name of the Member for Kluane, have been removed from the Order Paper as they were similar to Motion No. 220, which the House dealt with yesterday.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

TRIBUTES

Speaker: Under Tributes, the Chair will give a tribute on behalf of the House to the veterans of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

In recognition of the Battle of Vimy Ridge

Speaker: In April 1917, Vimy Ridge, a geographical feature in northern France, was in the hands of the Germany Army. The ridge was heavily fortified and held a commanding view over Allied lines. Several attempts to take this ridge had proven unsuccessful and over 100,000 Allied soldiers had been killed or wounded in this attempt.

Beginning at 5:30 in the morning on April 9, 1917, four Canadian divisions — 15,000 soldiers — supported by over 1,000 artillery pieces, attacked the ridge over ground littered with the remains of those who had failed to take the ridge in the past.

By April 12, the Canadian Army had captured the ridge and had achieved a great victory — one that had eluded their Allies. However, this victory came at a great cost. In over three days of fighting, 3,598 Canadians were killed and another 7,000 wounded.

For Canada the capture of Vimy Ridge was not just an important battlefield victory. The Battle of Vimy Ridge was the first time all four Canadian divisions, including soldiers from across the country, attacked as a single force. After the war, Brigadier-General A.E. Ross said, “In those few minutes I witnessed the birth of a nation.”

The victory also signalled to Canadian allies our military and political importance. In 1914, Canada had no control over its foreign policy. When Great Britain went to war, Canada was automatically at war. Due to Canada’s efforts during the First World War, the Government of Canada demanded and received greater autonomy from Great Britain. Canada was an independent signatory to the Treaty of Versailles that ended the

First World War and with the Statute of Westminster in 1931, gained full control of its foreign policy.

The victory at Vimy Ridge also earned Canada the gratitude of the French nation. In 1922, the Government of France ceded the battle site to Canada in perpetuity. The white marble Vimy Memorial, unveiled in 1936, stands as a permanent reminder of those who fell at Vimy Ridge and of the more than 60,000 Canadians who died during the First World War.

Today, 92 years later, Yukoners acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who joined the Canadian Armed Forces to make a difference in a war far from home. They bade farewell to family and friends, many for the last time. We commemorate their sacrifice by flying flags at half-mast, and by engaging in active reflection on the priceless contribution of those who gave so much.

Thank you.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?

Introduction of visitors.

Returns or documents for tabling.

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges all members to address the priority issue as recently identified by Yukoners, which is the economy during this period of global economic recession.

Mr. Cardiff: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to cease and desist the shameful and toxic practice of burning solid waste in burning vessels and open trenches throughout the Yukon without further delay.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to pursue an integrated solution to solid-waste management that includes the three Rs — reduce, reuse and recycle — and best practices for the preservation of environmental health and, toward this objective, mandate Department of Environment officials to attend and participate in all further public meetings about solid-waste management so that their valuable expertise and insights are available to the public and added to the discussion.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House calls for the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation to appear as a witness before Members of the Legislative Assembly, as is the case with other government corporations, so that elected members have the opportunity to ask questions in the public interest about the Yukon Housing Corporation’s:

(1) financing plan for the construction of the new staff residence and medical services facility on Yukon government-owned land;

(2) decision to drop the requirement for the certificate of recognition health and safety certification for the builder of this project;

(3) policies and/or regulations pertaining to public/private partnerships or P3s;

(4) role in the provision of health care services outside of Whitehorse; and

(5) responsibilities related to public health care service delivery.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Environment to launch a major initiative to monitor and measure the numbers and health of Yukon wildlife species, including our herds of boreal or woodland caribou, in light of the recently released Environment Canada report, entitled *Scientific Review for the Identification of Critical Habitat for Woodland Caribou, Boreal Population (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in Canada*, which shows that the future sustainability of these caribou is at risk — particularly in northwest Canada — as critical habitat shrinks due to encroaching development and human activity.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motion?
Is there a statement by a minister?

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Before the House proceeds to Question Period, the Chair would rule on a point of order raised yesterday during Question Period by the Minister of Economic Development. The minister raised the point of order in response to what he understood as an accusation of unlawful behaviour by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin against the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Community Services.

The Chair believes that there was a point of order and that the words used by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin in his final supplementary question, and I quote: "in direct contravention of the *Environment Act*" must be read in the context of previous remarks the member made in his main and first supplementary questions.

The Chair will conclude this ruling by reminding members of the meeting the Chair had with the three party leaders on November 26, 2008. The following day, the Chair gave a statement to this House with regard to that meeting. At that time the Chair said, "The leaders informed the Chair that they had reached a consensus that they, and all members of their respective caucuses, will rededicate themselves to their commitment to raise the level of order and decorum in this House. It is a fundamental principle of parliamentary debate that members should treat each other as honourable at all times. The Chair appreciates that this is not always easy for members. They are committed to improving the lives of Yukoners. They are also committed to the positions they hold on important issues that face this territory. Often these positions are in conflict, which can lead to unparliamentary behaviour as members passionately and enthusiastically debate the bills and motions

before them. However, the passion and enthusiasm members have for their own views cannot justify treating other members, who hold differing views, with disrespect."

I would ask all members to keep this in mind as we proceed with the business of this Assembly. We'll now proceed with Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: McIntyre Creek wetlands

Mr. Inverarity: A week ago, a large number of volunteer organizations attended the planning session for the protection of McIntyre Creek. I was there, along with over 100 other individuals from all walks of life, who were on hand to support this worthy cause. Everyone had different reasons for wanting this area protected.

However, the message was clear: let's protect McIntyre Creek. Another message that was clear was that this issue extends well beyond the jurisdiction of the City of Whitehorse. The city can't do it all alone, Mr. Speaker. The city needs this government's support to move forward. This issue deserves the involvement of all levels of government within the Yukon, and without this support, Yukoners will simply be left up the creek.

When will this government step up to the table and do its part?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I think that all of our respective comments were articulated in yesterday's debate on the motion put forward by the Member for Porter Creek South. Again, it was reiterated that the Government of Yukon is in complete agreement. We congratulate, we recommend, we commend those efforts and the very hard work of the Friends of McIntyre Creek in this regard.

As I have also articulated on the floor of the Legislature, however, under the *Municipal Act*, it is a question of jurisdiction. It's not a question of outcome at this particular time. That is, the *Municipal Act* provides the municipal government jurisdiction on land use designations, including parkland planning processes, et cetera. This has also been reiterated by the City of Whitehorse.

Yukon government has also indicated that we are very much willing to work with the City of Whitehorse on this particular park, pending the outcome of the official community planning process, which is currently underway. I would assume the member opposite should be fully aware of that.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, this is a citizen-driven issue, and this government has a responsibility in this matter. The City of Whitehorse has no jurisdiction, for example, over existing mining claims that are within the city limits. This government has sole jurisdiction over mining claims and Crown land disposition. Both are important issues and both have to be dealt with by this government. No one else can do it. Yukoners have spoken; they want McIntyre Creek protected. They want this government to do its part in support of this collective request.

So here's an easy way for the government to show that support. Will this government put pen to paper and make a submission to the official community plan in support of protecting McIntyre Creek?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I certainly have been part of the official community planning process. In fact, I attended a meeting with other respective constituents in Whitehorse West earlier in January, I believe it was.

As was articulated by the Mayor of the City of Whitehorse and as I have articulated among all other members here on this side of the House, we encourage all Yukoners to make their application to the planning process. That is in fact what it is about. It's about a vision for the City of Whitehorse, it's about long-term planning, and it's about land use designations, which remains in the purview of the City of Whitehorse. Government of Yukon is very supportive of that jurisdiction of the City of Whitehorse and we are very much on board and very much committed to working with the City of Whitehorse on that outcome.

Mr. Inverarity: Yukoners are trying to say something to this government and they just won't listen. Yesterday the government silenced the voice of Yukoners yet again. This government is not hearing the call to protect that natural habitat of McIntyre Creek. So let me say it again: Yukoners want McIntyre Creek protected.

Yesterday the Minister of Economic Development said, and I quote: "This is a unique area. It's one that is certainly worthy of protection." Mr. Speaker, they can't do this alone and they will not be silenced. Like the Minister of Economic Development said yesterday, and I quote: "This is not acceptable." The City of Whitehorse is currently updating their OCP.

Will the government make a submission in support of protecting McIntyre Creek?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, I have to make sure that not only this House but the public is well aware of the proceedings that have taken place in regard to this particular area of the City of Whitehorse. I'm sure the member opposite will recall that there was a lengthy debate in this House on a motion that was very similar to the one that was debated yesterday — very similar. There was a unanimous decision of this Assembly at that time, and that included that the government go out and conduct a very intensive and extensive consultation process with all concerned with respect to this particular area within the city boundaries of Whitehorse.

That has all been done, Mr. Speaker. We've turned all that over to the City of Whitehorse. I would submit that that is a submission to the City of Whitehorse, all that very extensive work.

Secondly, we have a protocol with the City of Whitehorse that obligates the government to do certain things when it comes to the city's official community plan. So we're at a point now where the best course of action for all is to inform the city of what their view would be in the construction of the official community plan for Whitehorse, as it pertains to the area of McIntyre Creek, and I encourage all to do that.

Question re: Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board investment fund

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Speaker, the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board takes the money it collects each year and pays it out to injured workers. Some funds are always left over and that money is invested to pay for future liabilities.

When he appeared before the House last December, the chair of Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board told us that 2008 was not a good year for the board or for workers when it comes to investments. He told us that the funds were down some \$20 million on the year. This represents a huge loss, Mr. Speaker. He also didn't expect things to get any better in 2009.

Can the minister confirm that \$20 million was lost in 2008 and can he tell the House if there have been future losses in 2009?

Hon. Mr. Hart: I am sure that he was asking this question of the chair when he was in the House. He addressed this question for the member opposite. Yes, there was a deficit situation with regard to the investment, but it is not really a loss. It is a deficit of the actual investment itself. The fund itself is still more than solvent.

Mr. Fairclough: It sounds like the minister doesn't know, Mr. Speaker. How the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board invests monies is determined by policy. On June of 2007, a new investment policy was adopted by Cabinet. The new policy allowed the board to make risky investments. The rules were relaxed. Shortly after the new rules were in place, the funds lost some \$20 million. By law, Mr. Speaker, any amendments to the compensation fund investment policy shall be transmitted to all Members of the Legislative Assembly within 10 days of approval.

This should not be a secret, Mr. Speaker. Why were those changes not made available to all members of this House and the public within 10 days, as required by law?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite, as he is well aware of the situation and the current economic strain that we have been in for the last six months — almost all stock, regardless of where it is and what it was before, has gone down in its value and that includes stock that secures many people's RRSP money. We are waiting for the market to catch up and, hopefully, retake some of the value that has been lost over the last six months, and that is the process that is underway.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister skirted around that question — it is about policy, Mr. Speaker. The Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board has made substantial changes to how funds are invested on behalf of workers.

Now the *Workers' Compensation Act* requires the minister to make those changes public within 10 days of them being signed off. It is the law. In January of this year, the policy was changed again, and guess what? The public wasn't notified this time either. Why the secret, Mr. Speaker? The Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board has made substantial changes to investment policy. It is now allowing more risky investments. In 2008, under the new rules, the investment fund lost \$20 million — that's a lot of money. Injured workers expect the minister to manage this money wisely.

They do not expect the minister to allow risky investments, so why weren't people told about these?

Hon. Mr. Hart: All changes relative to investments under the *Workers' Compensation Act* are handled through OICs and they are posted in the public process.

Question re: Technical briefings

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment plans to release the Yukon snow load survey, which will give the public some idea of where and even if to expect major flooding this spring and summer. Now the Minister of Community Services promised the media a technical briefing on this survey and related information on potential flooding and that's very commendable of the minister.

The trouble is that the minister has made no such commitment. In fact, he has refused to make a commitment to members on this side of the House to receive such a briefing. It would appear that we're getting snowed on this one, Mr. Speaker. Why is the minister afraid to share this information, and why won't he offer a technical briefing on this important subject to opposition parties?

Hon. Mr. Lang: There is a technical briefing going on this afternoon, and certainly that will be done through the process that we have at hand. All Yukoners will hear the outcome. The technical briefing is happening this afternoon at some time, and I look forward to what comes out of the technical briefing.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, the technical briefings aren't being offered to members on this side of the House, and technical briefings are an opportunity for MLAs on this side of the House, or on that side of the House for that matter, to ask questions and receive information — something we don't normally get from ministers on the floor of the Legislature.

Unfortunately, it's not the only example of how secretive this government is, but it's just the latest. Justice department officials recently gave only the media a technical briefing on the government's new plans for the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Like her colleague, the Minister of Community Services, I guess the Minister of Justice expects us to get our information about this project from the newspapers.

The members of the third party want to work cooperatively with the government, but this lack of openness and accountability is making that difficult. What is the Minister of Justice afraid of, and why hasn't she offered opposition members a technical briefing on the \$67-million project?

Hon. Mr. Lang: A technical briefing is just that — a technical briefing. I'm not going to the technical briefing myself. The individuals who are going to be at the technical briefing — working with the news media — are qualified individuals who can talk about the issues. This isn't a political issue. This is not something we can make politics with. This is very important to Yukoners. This technical briefing is exactly what it means — technical, and that's what's going to happen this afternoon.

Mr. Cardiff: I have no doubt that the minister doesn't want to get technical about the matter, but the reality is that our constituents expect us to understand these issues and to be able to respond to their questions. I can't respond to the questions if I can't attend the briefings.

Members of the third party have repeatedly called for a complete overhaul of the outdated *Landlord and Tenant Act*, which was passed back in 1972. The Minister of Community Services said last year his officials had done an internal review

of this act, which does not strike a fair balance between the rights and obligations of tenants and landlords. We've asked for a copy of this document and guess what? The government refuses to provide one. Once again, the government is not being open and accountable.

Why is the minister afraid to share information and when will he table the internal review of the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, so that the public can just see how out of date this legislation is?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I'm hearing that the government is secretive and the member is referencing such things as the new multi-purpose facility that will be used for both corrections incarceration and treatment.

I have to ask the question, and I hope I'm not too technical. Can the member explain how it is that we give briefings on the budget itself, department by department? How does the member explain that all this information is public? How does the member explain that we'll be debating this information on the floor of the House? How does the member explain earlier on in this sitting the many questions about this project and the many answers providing details to the members opposite about the project? How does the member explain that that is secretive?

I think what we have to understand here is the members opposite should recognize that they are given every opportunity and every possible access to information we can provide. I guess they just don't like the information they are getting. It is probably much too positive.

Question re: Housing availability

Mr. Cardiff: Just a few short days ago the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation replied to my questions about the report on housing from the Anti-Poverty Coalition. He made several references to red herrings and insisted that all anyone had to do to get affordable housing was apply to the corporation and pay 25 percent of their income. He said that the median rent for housing in Whitehorse or any other community had nothing to do with anything. Talk about red herrings. There is a whole bucket of them there, Mr. Speaker. The answers are red herrings.

I will give the minister one more chance to get back on track. What is the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation going to do about the chronic lack of safe and affordable housing?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: As the member opposite quite well knows, there are some major initiatives going on right now. We are investing in a 30-unit single parent complex in Riverdale that will be built to super green standards. We are in the process of constructing a 12-unit seniors' residence to super green standards in the Town of Watson Lake. We have recently built a nine-plex, I believe, up in Haines Junction for seniors. Of course, coming out of the Canada Winter Games and seeing an opportunity there, we built a 48-unit seniors complex. While everyone said seniors wouldn't want to live in it, we had it oversubscribed before we even had a chance to advertise it. The seniors have been quite happy with the facilities up there.

We continue, Mr. Speaker, to provide housing. We will be looking at other communities and we are very pleased with the

federal government's announcement that there will be \$50 million over the next two years to add to the other projects that we are working on.

This government is the first in many years — if not decades — to build social housing.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister can expound all he wants. For years there has been a crisis in housing available for low-income earners, and we have asked questions over and over. It is about social housing. There is a long wait-list for the Yukon Housing Corporation's social housing that the minister says is the answer. Families have to wait for up to a year to get a roof over their heads. While they wait, problems of poor health, violence, substance abuse and child neglect increase.

Ideas that we have brought forward are retrofit programs for older housing, a new *Landlord and Tenant Act* and programs to assist the homeless with financial literacy and life-skills education. In his so-called reply the other day, the minister himself listed recommendations made by the Anti-Poverty Coalition when they met with the corporation's board. These include portable rent supplements, rent-to-own homes, debt repayment, rent ceilings and tenant support groups. Will the minister do more than recite recommendations and —

Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: The Yukon Housing Corporation is in the process of planning and building a number of different social housing units — rent-geared-to-income units. Currently, in terms of number of social housing or rent-geared-to-income units, we have six in Carcross, 18 in Carmacks, 66 in Dawson City, four in Faro, 13 in Haines Junction, 19 in Mayo, 16 in Ross River, 13 in Teslin, 33 in Watson Lake and, including the rent supplement in Whitehorse, we have 330.

We are going to be increasing those numbers under programs we have underway and in the budget, which I hope we can get back to at some point, and with the \$50 million the federal government has put up for over two years to create more affordable housing.

The Yukon Housing Corporation has been doing a spectacular job in terms of moving these things along, and I'm very proud of the work that they've done.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, the minister's wrong. There's no money in the budget for social housing this year. He's right; the government is going to receive \$50 million over the next two years from Ottawa, but he hasn't said how that money's going to be spent. Once again, we're making a plea to the minister to make social housing a top priority. The crisis isn't with families who have 25 percent of their income to spend; it's with people who are couch surfing, living in tents and substandard housing units. Some are people who are affected by FASD, some are mentally or physically disabled, and they all need either emergency shelter or long-term accommodation.

What plan does the minister have to meet the need for social housing with this new federal funding that's coming? Can he tell us that?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can understand the member opposite's confusion on this, not having served in government, but there are very rigid communication strategies — since the money is coming from the federal gov-

ernment — of what we can announce and when we can announce it. That will all be coming out in due course.

But the member opposite, I think, needs to also look at other things such as: \$1 million into the new children's receiving home; a doubling from \$100,000 to \$200,000 in the prevention of violence against aboriginal women; we've put \$63,000 — almost \$64,000 — into community youth projects, youth camps, et cetera; Kaushee's Place and Help and Hope for Families Society — women's shelters — have received \$434,000 over three years — increased funding to bring the total funding to over \$4 million.

What the member opposite mentions is covering a wide range of problems that have a wide range of solutions. They don't have a single solution as he would want. Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite is asking for is a magic wand. Unfortunately, I don't think any government has that.

Question re: Highway maintenance funding

Mr. Inverarity: I have a question I would like to address to the Minister of Highways and Public Works. Last week I asked the minister to explain to the House why the O&M for highway maintenance has decreased. The 2009-10 budget clearly indicates a decrease of six percent. These are not my numbers, Mr. Speaker; I am merely reading them from the Minister of Finance's document that he tabled in the House.

So as not to confuse the minister, I'm referring to page 12-12 in the O&M budget. The bottom line clearly shows a six-percent decrease.

Why, given the deplorable state of the Yukon's highways, has the minister decided to decrease funding for highway maintenance?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I guess the technical briefing and the budget lock-up didn't really serve much of a purpose. I will try my best to explain once again for the member opposite and his colleagues exactly what the budget document says. The member is referring to comparisons that include forecasts from the prior year, which is also inclusive of all supplementary expenditures during the course of the prior fiscal year.

The government, being an astute fiscal manager, doesn't make those kinds of comparisons, and there is good reason for that. We compare mains to mains; in other words, the fiscal year main budget from last year to the fiscal year main budget for this year. The reason is, if we were to allow for one-time expenditures during the course of the fiscal year, emergency expenditures during the course of the fiscal year and other expenditures and supplemental budgets to become part of each department's main estimates — in other words, their base allocation of monies required for the course of the fiscal year — the government would be out of money in no time. That's not how to manage the finances of this territory. On a mains-to-mains comparison, the increase in this territory for all departments is quite dramatic.

Mr. Inverarity: Let me speak slowly so the Premier can follow. The 2008-09 mains, on page 12-12, show a dollar amount of \$35,294,000. In the 2009-10 mains, on page 12-12, show a dollar amount of \$34,760,000. The smaller number is for this year; the larger number is for last year. The actual dif-

ference is down to two-percent less this year in comparison to last year.

Now that the mains to mains have been compared — that's page 12-12 to page 12-12 — I have to ask the following advice from the minister: why has the minister decided to decrease funding in highway maintenance?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The member is looking at page 12-12 of the main budget, which is statistics and, once again, has compared the forecast for the prior fiscal year to the main budget item of this year. The fact of the matter is, if the member opposite were to take the time to look at the actual financial document that relates to this budget in its entirety, the member would find that the actual figures for 2007-08 — which are audited; they are in the public accounts — show \$95,380,000.

Then he could look at the 2009-10 estimates. He will see there's \$102,942,000 — a dramatic increase from actual figures as audited. The forecast figures for 2008-09, in total — and I'm now talking operation and maintenance — is \$101,499,000. That includes supplementary estimates, which we do not put into base-allocation requirements for the departments.

Once again, for the member opposite to understand this, he'll have to maybe spend some time further understanding financial management.

Question re: Medevac services contract

Mr. McRobb: Yesterday, the Health and Social Services minister let the cat out of the bag when he finally announced that the old \$11 million-plus contract for medevac services was extended for a year without tender. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting how this government kept that information secret until we asked about it. So much for being an open, accountable and transparent government.

The costs of this contract garnered a lot of attention by the Health Care Review Steering Committee, who in September recommended this contract be put out for public tender instead of sole-sourcing it. What the minister did, in fact, by extending the status quo contract for another year was a de facto sole source.

Now, we know that the present Health and Social Services minister has had his hands full dealing with the mess he inherited, but can he explain why the contract was not tendered before it expired? And why was the extension kept secret until after the fact?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I stated yesterday with regard to this question, the issue with regard to the medevac for the last 20 years has been out there. It has been open and transparent through all sorts of governments in the process. We did contact the two local providers in the last tender facility and one of them indicated that they were not interested in the medevac, thus we processed that contract.

We had indications from the Health Care Review Steering Committee that we should be looking at tendering out the facility. Early this year, we looked at this particular contract, but there was insufficient time. We were asked by those who were interested in the contract to give them additional time, so they could prepare that time, and we've done so. We have done so, Mr. Speaker, to assist them in preparing for this open and transparent contract that will be coming out this fall.

Mr. McRobb: It was the Yukon Party who put the breaks on this tender, Mr. Speaker. This contract should have been out for bid last November as indicated to an interested competitor by officials in Contract Services. That is what he was told last October by the very officials the former Health and Social Services minister urged him to meet with. They said the plan was to tender the contract in early November and have it resolved later that same month — well in advance of its expiry on March 31 of this year.

Let's be clear. The officials were aware there was interest from competitive bidders before they indicated the contract would be out last November. Obviously, something happened to cause a major disruption to this plan — something that wasn't foreseen by officials in Contract Services. Why did the Yukon Party put the brakes on this multi-million dollar tender and keep it secret?

Hon. Mr. Hart: Yes, I guess it is a secret. For the member opposite, the issue with regard to the contract has been out there and we've advised them of what we are doing. The term has been provided — an extension.

We have to ensure that the tender is out there and is provided in a fair and balanced process. We have to ensure that the health care of Yukoners is provided for. We have to ensure that, and we have to ensure that there's no break in the service for this contract. This is a very valuable service for all Yukoners. The medevac is used on a very frequent basis, and it is used by many, many Yukoners. We have to ensure that that service is maintained, and thus we have to take the time to do the assessment, do the terms of reference, ensure that we have a balanced process, and ensure that we have the facilities and the good service for all Yukoners.

Mr. McRobb: Why is it we have to pry to get information loose from this government all of the time? This type of information should be posted promptly, so that the public is properly informed. It should not be kept secret. This money belongs to taxpayers, not the Yukon Party. If the government can't bring itself to issue a news release, it should have updated the online contract registry, or brought in a ministerial statement — but we don't see those any more, Mr. Speaker.

Whenever a government sole-sources a contract, there's possible suspicion of favouritism. One would have expected this government to go the extra mile to avoid that perception by ensuring a fair public tender process occurred in time.

Let's zero in on the delay to this tender. Contract Services was ready to go last November but was stalled.

Did the minister have any involvement in this delay?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Well, you know, here we go. I have heard this week now that authors to letters to the editor are Googled and it's found out they are government employees. Freedom of speech is a fact and a fundamental principle that this government will never deviate from.

Yesterday we heard a long debate about investigating Finance officials and now we're hearing that contract people — officials in Contract Services — are doing things that — the member put that sole-source contracts or allocations are suspicious in nature because of favouritism. The member has accused officials of favouritism —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Kluane, on a point of order.

Mr. McRobb: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I refer you to a ruling I believe was last week, in that sometimes the words are twisted to imply that something else was said, okay? I did not imply that officials were the cause of this delay. I put it to the government, the politicians on the other side.

Speaker: Hon. Premier, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I have a suggestion for the member, Mr. Speaker. He maybe should have tried Googling this contract.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: When members stand up on a point of order, they are to give me advice on why this particular disagreement is or is not a point of order. Neither side did that, so the Chair has no option but to say that there is no point of order. It is a simply a dispute among members.

Hon. Premier, you have the floor. You have 10 seconds.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: There is no favouritism. We must be careful that no matter what happens when this contract is tendered that there is no disruption of service. The appropriate standard of equipment is made available and health care delivery for Yukoners is at the highest standard we can possibly provide them.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Nordick): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 15, *First Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, the Department of Community Services. Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: We will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 15 — *First Appropriation Act, 2009-10* — continued

Department of Community Services — *continued*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 15, *First Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, Department of Community Services, which is Vote 51. We will now continue with general debate. Mr. Cardiff, you have the floor.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Chair, for the minister's benefit, I will just recap from where we left off yesterday. We were talking about the motor vehicles section and the safety of young people and whether or not there should be changes made to the *Motor Vehicles Act* with regard to restricting young people using off-road vehicles such as ATVs and snow machines and the requirement for helmets.

I also have another question for the minister about the safety of young people. It is about the minister's role in the response to Motion No. 542, which you'll be familiar with, Mr. Chair, and his role as the minister responsible for the Employment Standards Board. Now, I know the report has just been tabled recently, but I'd like to get a feel from the minister about his willingness, as the minister, to give instructions to the Employment Standards Board to do some work. I realize there is a motion that his colleague, the minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, has read into *Hansard*, and it is on our Order Paper. It's requesting that both boards work together. I think they have done some good work together on this report thus far, and there is more work to be done in order to protect the health and safety of young people on work sites.

From my attendance and from talking to people during the consultations, it appears that a lot of what was intended to be done, and what we were intending to accomplish in Bill No. 109, *Young Worker Protection Act* can be accomplished in regulations. What we laid out in Bill No. 109 was something that was more geared, I guess, toward age groups that are laid out in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. So when you're setting rules and regulations around young people working in certain occupations, if they're especially dangerous occupations, we broke it down into age groups: between 12 and 16, and 16 to 18.

Now in the *Employment Standards Act*, it is my understanding that the age groups aren't broken down like that. This is important so that the Employment Standards Board could do some good work in regulations for the minister to bring to Cabinet for approval that would deal with hours of work, because a lot of what we were looking for in the protection of young workers can be dealt with in occupational health and safety regulations, but there are certain items and certain issues that need to be dealt with by the Employment Standards Board, those being hours of work.

There are a couple of concepts. One is about the importance of education and how many hours should children between the ages of 12 and 15 be allowed to work or be required to work by their employer on school days, or on days when they're not in school, but when they're still in the school year?

We have to be pretty clear about this that when school is in, and young people are at school, they need to get enough

sleep in order to show up for school and be able to participate meaningfully and receive a good education. Hopefully, they get a good breakfast before they go to school and they're well prepared, but if they go to school and then they work a six-hour shift, five nights a week, it's going to be difficult.

I know what was proposed in Bill No. 109 — I think we proposed something like two hours.

Nothing was written in stone.

Two hours doesn't even make sense in a lot of cases because by the time the young person arrives on the job and they get started and then they have to go home for some employers and for some employees — students — it wouldn't even be worth showing up for work. It wouldn't be worth the cost of the gas to drive home. What I'm looking for from the minister is an indication of what his willingness is to give direction to the Employment Standards Board, which he is responsible for.

The other piece around hours of work is about worker safety and the hours that young people can work, either supervised or unsupervised. Is it appropriate for a 14-year-old to work after 10:00 at night, or should they be at home getting ready to go to bed, doing the last of their studying and getting ready to go to school the next morning? As well, should they be supervised? That might be something that's covered in the occupational health and safety regulations — the supervision part.

But the hours of work, I understand, are in the *Employment Standards Act*. The other piece of that is whether or not young people should be working after midnight unsupervised or whether or not they should be working after midnight at all. What this requires, Mr. Chair, is that there would need to be, I believe, changes to the *Employment Standards Act*. This is under the purview of the Minister of Community Services and whether or not he would be willing to entertain those.

I believe it is about changing the legislation so that the Employment Standards Board can make regulations with regard to certain age groups. Right now, I believe that the age groups are set at 17.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* regulations are for 18 — the age groups are set at between 12 and 18 years. There is also the other category where they're not allowed to work on mine sites or in industrial settings below 16 years, I believe it is. I'd have to go back and check that. What I'm looking for from the minister is whether or not he'd be willing to look into that as soon as possible and ensure that if there are changes that need to be made in order for the Employment Standards Board to do its work, to make these changes in regulations, to carry out what the areas of consensus were in the report on Motion No. 542, would he be willing to do that? Would he be willing to expedite those changes so that the Employment Standards Board can work with the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board and make these changes as soon as possible for the benefit of all young workers? I would certainly be willing to work with the minister in that regard.

Hon. Mr. Lang: This, of course, was tabled this sitting and it was Motion No. 542, which was put forward in November of 2008. Of course, it involved the Employment Standards Board and the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health

and Safety Board and the Yukon government staff, who brought this forward. I'd like to thank those individuals and groups who did the hard work to initiate and move this thing forward. This was in a very timely fashion, and it was quite an extensive overview. So, as one of the responsible ministers, I would like to thank the board itself and the individuals who did the hard work.

After that was tabled, the Hon. Mr. Hart, the Minister of Health and Social Services, who is also responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, tabled another motion — Motion No. 723 — to address exactly what the member opposite is talking about.

As we move through with the motions, these are the kinds of discussions we could have, and I'm looking forward to the discussion when this motion is brought forward. But we are certainly moving forward, and I look forward to the participation of the member opposite when this motion is put on the floor.

Mr. Cardiff: I appreciate the minister's response. I, too, think that the amount of work that has been done in a very short period of time — we've come a long way. I guess what I'm looking for is that we keep the ball rolling on this and we try to move this ahead as soon as possible.

It's only 19 days until April 28, which is the National Day of Mourning. My feeling on this is that, yes, we've made an incredible amount of progress in a very short period of time. This has been on the radar screen. Bill No. 109 was brought forward last fall and Motion No. 542 was brought forward last fall. The Yukon Federation of Labour brought this to the government's attention a little over a year ago, probably about 14 months ago. As well, there were articles in the media about this subject, probably within the last 18 months to two years that made a lot of people think about it, and that's why we're talking about it here today.

My question for the minister is whether or not he would be willing to expedite some of these changes in order for the Employment Standards Board to go forward over the summer and make these necessary changes in an expeditious manner, because I think this is about our children. This is about the health and safety of young people in the workplace. I think the government has shown its commitment through the motion that it read into the record just the other day. The minister responsible for Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board read the motion in the Legislature — Motion No. 723. I thank him for that. I do look forward to the opportunity to discuss this more. I am asking the minister now whether or not he would be willing to expedite any legislative changes that are needed in order for this to move forward.

From my perspective, these changes are not changes that you can measure the results of. When you make the changes, you won't be able to measure what you've accomplished, because you can't measure an injury that has been prevented because you didn't know it was going to happen if it has been prevented. It is not accidents — it is injuries and death. That's the goal here.

I think the sooner and the more expeditiously we move on this, the better off our young people will be, and the more pro-

tected. I strongly believe in the second section of the motion, which talks about adequate safety training, orientation and supervision of young workers. I know that there's a lot of work going on around codes of practice for young workers, and I applaud all of that. The only thing I'm asking now is for the minister to do his job to ensure that any legislative changes that are needed be expedited so that these two boards can do the good work that they need to do.

Hon. Mr. Lang: We certainly will be working with these groups to facilitate what is needed to do exactly what these motions have set out to do. I look forward to the work. I'm not going to second-guess what comes out of it, but when the motion is brought forward we'll discuss it, and I don't think there's anybody in the House who disagrees with the direction we're going.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, I didn't get a commitment from the minister to expedite it.

What I'm looking for is for him to start — maybe not today but Tuesday would be fine if we could expedite this as soon as possible — any legislative changes.

I asked the minister the other day some questions about the Dawson City sewage treatment. There is \$3 million in the minister's budget for the Dawson City sewage project. It is a substantial amount of money.

The minister mentioned — I believe he said there were five proponents put forward in the request for proposals. My understanding is that there were five companies who put forward proposals in the request for qualifications, and of those five, two qualified. I am concerned.

We have two options for the Dawson City sewage treatment facility that needs to be built in Dawson City in order to meet the requirements of the court.

One of the things I've said many times both inside and outside of this Legislature is that we need to have fair and open tendering practices for Yukoners. The Department of Community Services plays a role in this. This is their project and the money is in their budget. It's my understanding — I'm just asking the questions; I'm hoping the minister is going to answer the question and shed some light on how we arrive at situations like this.

We have had two proponents submit proposals for the Dawson City sewage treatment facility. As someone who has worked in the construction industry — I haven't specifically worked on sewage treatment projects but I've worked on a number of large projects. I've worked with contractors and the amount of time and effort that contractors put in sometimes involves months of work and involves many, many other companies and people — experts in their field — in order to put together a proposal for a project, regardless of whether or not it's a design/build project or whether it's just trying to figure out the scope of a project and figure out how you're going to do it and put together a price. It requires a lot of work, and it costs a lot of money for Yukon contractors to participate in the bid process.

I've got a couple of questions for the Minister of Community Services because this is a Community Services project. The Department of Community Services should be involved in

reviewing these proposals. It's my understanding that part of this \$3 million may be going to an organization or agency known as — I'm not sure if it's known as B.C. Procurement or Procure B.C., Bid B.C. — apparently the review of the projects was done by an Outside agency.

I'm curious, number one — and one of the questions is, why are we using Outside agencies to review the criteria for projects here in the Yukon? Is it because we don't have the expertise? When the criteria for these projects are reviewed, why is there no explanation given when a proposal is turned down?

From what I can understand, it appears to me that the proposals are just turned down and there are no reasons given. The proponents were supposed to meet a minimum score on a technical evaluation. They were qualified to bid; they were invited to bid on this project, but then there's some sort of technical evaluation that's done and, if they don't score high enough, their submission isn't even opened. So the government doesn't have the benefit of even knowing what was contained in this proponent's submission.

What bothers me is that this is supposed to be a fair and open process. We have got proponents who spend thousands and thousands of dollars — hundreds of thousands of dollars in some cases — preparing these proposals. They get just summarily dismissed with no explanation by an Outside agency. That does not, to me, sound like a fair and open process. What bothers me even more is that the government is left with one proposal. So there is only one proposal that qualifies.

What happens to the Dawson City sewage treatment project? We've got five companies that qualified or that applied to qualify for the project. Only two of them qualified. I'm not sure why the other three were dropped or dropped off. Of the two left who were invited — and you've got to wonder why they were invited to participate in this process and then summarily dismissed as not meeting the technical requirements, without even opening the submission. What hurts even more and I think what irks contractors in this community is the fact that we are using an Outside agency from British Columbia to evaluate these proposals.

I don't know what the minister's answer to this is. He's definitely having a conversation about this. The other question I have about this agency's involvement — whether it's B.C. Procurement or Bid B.C.; they're all on the same Web site basically — is that Bid B.C. has been used or is being used by this government to explore options for public/private partnerships.

So that's my other question to this minister. This is a piece of public infrastructure that's meant to serve the citizens of Dawson City and the Klondike Valley. This is taxpayers' dollars.

In the briefing, the officials as much as said it's going to be a \$20-million project. I've got a pretty good hunch it's going to be more than \$20 million, Mr. Chair, if we're going down the road we're going down and we don't know what the O&M costs are. But we need to meet the requirements of the court, and I think the minister said we're in court today about this.

The other question I have is whether or not this government is pursuing a public/private partnership for this piece of public infrastructure. It's about fairness in the tender process; it's about some sort of explanation to Yukon contractors about how they're being treated in this bid process, summarily dismissed after spending months — and thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars — in the process and just dismissed without any explanation; and whether or not this government intends to pursue a public/private partnership for the Dawson City sewage treatment plant?

Hon. Mr. Lang: On the Dawson City sewer question, this Department of Community Services flows the money to Highways and Public Works. They're managing the project. Some of the questions would be best answered when the department is up. Community Services is the funding agency for this project and the money is flowing to Highways and Public Works to do just that. I'll remind the member opposite it is a partnership between us and Dawson City. The process is going forward. There was a court hearing this morning; I'm looking forward to what comes out of that.

These questions can be answered, but it's more appropriate to answer them when Highways and Public Works is up for debate in the House.

Mr. Cardiff: It's totally ludicrous. How do I ask a question about the Dawson City sewage treatment plant when the money isn't in Highways and Public Works? The money is in Community Services. We're debating the budget. There's \$3 million and what the minister is saying is, "I don't know what the money is being spent on; I have \$3 million in my budget but I don't know what it's being spent on."

How much of the \$3 million is for services provided by Bid B.C. or B.C. Procurement?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I'll be very short. The money is being transferred to Highways and Public Works to do just that, to address the sewer issue in the City of Dawson. That's the long and the short of it.

When the Department of Highways and Public Works is up, we'll discuss that department; today we're discussing the Department of Community Services. Its budget, the \$3 million, has been transferred to Highways and Public Works to work on the Dawson City sewer project. Once the department is up that's actually managing the funds, we'll answer the questions the member has at that time.

Mr. Cardiff: I would really like the minister — maybe the minister can point out on which page in section 12 there's \$3 million for the Dawson City sewage treatment project, so we can discuss it in Highways and Public Works because I don't believe it is there. It is not there. It is in this minister's department. This is not some sort of a shell game where you can just take \$3 million and move it over to another department which the minister happens to be —

Unparliamentary language

Chair: Order please. I think the member knows that the terminology "shell game" has definitely been ruled out of order in the past. I want to confirm to the Member for Mount Lorne that it has been ruled out of order and, when the Chair is

speaking, please listen to what the Chair has to say and respect it.

Mr. Cardiff.

Mr. Cardiff: Okay, well, call it what you want: the minister is taking \$3 million from the Department of Community Services. He says he is transferring it to the Department of Highways and Public Works. He is the minister for both of them. You would think he would know where it is because it doesn't show up in the Department of Highways and Public Works.

Call it what you want, the minister is hiding \$3 million somewhere and we can't find it.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Cathers, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, the Member for Mount Lorne just accused the minister of hiding money somewhere, and I think that would clearly be against our Standing Orders, and unparliamentary, and an accusation of doing something that is inappropriate.

Chair's ruling

Chair: The Chair does believe that there is a point of order. I know the intention of the member wasn't to imply that; it was just the terminology he used, so I'd expect the member to choose his words more carefully next time.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, maybe the minister can tell us where he put the \$3 million, because I can't find it. Can the minister find the \$3 million? It's kind of like a game of hide-and-seek. It shows up on page 5.9 in the Department of Community Services, and when you go to section 12, it disappears. I can't find it. Can the minister find it?

Hon. Mr. Lang: That question was asked and it was answered in this House.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister has a responsibility to the public. It's about accountability for \$3 million in his budget, and how it's being spent, and how we treat people who do work for the government.

We've got \$3 million for the Dawson City sewage treatment that the minister seems to know nothing about. What's even scarier, Mr. Chair, is that officials told us that this project is going to be a \$20-million project. I have it on pretty good authority that it's probably going to be more than \$20 million.

If the minister can't figure out where the \$3 million went, what's he going to do when he's got a \$20-million line item that disappears into thin air somewhere between section 5 and section 12 in the capital budget?

This is money that is in the Department of Community Services. It's my understanding that we're here to debate the dollars, the policies and procedures of the government related to the Department of Community Services right now, Vote 15.

There's \$3 million, and the minister doesn't seem to know anything about the tendering process of a project that's contained within his department. Contractors are concerned about a fair and open bidding process. I recognize that that's in the

Department of Highways and Public Works, but the minister is responsible for the project. It's in his department. I hope I don't have to go through this on the other project. There's one right below it for \$2.4 million. I wonder if the minister knows anything about the tendering practices around that project or how that money is going to be spent. It seemed to me that he did have a pretty good idea about it. He did talk a bit about that particular project, but he doesn't seem to know about the Dawson City sewage treatment project.

I'm just asking the questions and all I'm hoping for is that we get answers. Answers may have just come through the door — hopefully. The reality is —

We'll just give everybody a chance to —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cardiff: No, the minister didn't want to do that.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cardiff: That wasn't a good idea, I guess.

The concern for me is that we're supposed to be here to ask questions about Vote 51, the Department of Community Services, the Dawson City sewage treatment project, and the minister can't answer the question of whether or not the process for tendering is fair to everyone. More importantly, will there be accountability around the project when we end up with one proponent, with one project? That doesn't sound like a competitive bidding process to me, which is what I believe the minister and his colleagues would like to see — a competitive bidding process. I hope that is what they'd like to see.

We have seen in the past where they like to sole-source. There was some discussion in Question Period today about sole-sourcing contracts — large contracts. Maybe this is another case of where the government pre-selected a proposal and a project and just went through the motions, but the minister won't answer the question. The minister doesn't want to offer technical briefings on important things like whether or not we're going to have floods. He says that it's too technical for us. Well, it's not too technical for us. Our constituents want to know. They ask us the information. If the minister won't provide us the opportunity to attend and receive the information, the minister should — I don't have it here with me. If I had the March snow load synopsis or report, I'd send it over to him and see whether or not he could interpret it. That's why we want a technical briefing — because when I look at it, I can't interpret it. I can look at it, and I can tell some things, but I need technical experts to answer questions to tell me what it means so that I can communicate back to my constituents whether or not the Wheaton River or the Watson River may flood.

But the minister isn't open to that either. He's not open to telling us about the bid process and how contractors are summarily dismissed after spending months putting together proposals for a \$20-million project and then, without so much as a "See you later," they just get dismissed. It's like, "Sorry, you didn't pass." No explanation.

There were months of work and a large number of companies involved in putting together a proposal. I can't evaluate the proposal either. I never would claim to be able to evaluate the proposal, Mr. Chair, but we sent it to some Outside agency to

be evaluated. The minister must have officials. It's their project; they should be involved in it.

They should recognize the contribution of Yukon contractors. It's my understanding that all they want is an explanation. It's bad enough that they've been dismissed as not being qualified to do the project, but to not be told the reasons why is really distasteful, and it's a slap in the face. I think that the minister owes those people, those contractors, an explanation of why their bid was dismissed. Will he do that?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I'm very happy to stand up here today. It gives me a few minutes to discuss the Department of Community Services and the good things it has been doing. Of course, we're looking at a \$122.8-million budget this year, a large increase from last year — approximately a 9- to 10-percent increase. Of that \$122.8 million, \$87.8 million is going to be spent for communities and community infrastructure. That's money that's going to be spent on the ground in the communities, and of course that is being overseen by the Department of Community Services.

One of the questions in the last couple of days — and of course we have all afternoon to discuss it, as it is very important to the Yukon people — involved the large investment that this government has made over a period of time. We discussed here the ambulances and fire halls. In the last seven years this government has put in three new fire halls — one in Mendenhall, one in Hootalinqua and one in Golden Horn. That was a very positive and needed thing for those communities.

In the last seven years we have bought 12 new ambulances. By the year 2011, we will have a modern fleet of ambulances. That is an investment in our communities.

The communities that benefit from this investment include Pelly, Carmacks, Watson Lake, Haines Junction, Marsh Lake, Faro, Teslin and Dawson City. All those communities are going to be touched by these investments over the years. That covers a bit about what this government has done in the past. What we want to do is look at the future. The future looks very good for our community because not only do we have the gas tax opportunities for all our communities and First Nation governments, we also have infrastructure money that will be invested in the communities.

This government, over and above what these other funds are going to do, is going to invest \$87.8 million in communities and community infrastructure, including initiatives that will, first of all, encourage, strengthen, enable and support local government in Yukon and serve to promote health and safety in our unincorporated communities throughout the Yukon through community infrastructure. This is demonstrated through the \$14.1-million allocation that is going directly — a large increase — to Yukon municipalities through the comprehensive municipal grant funding. This is the first government in 10 years that has increased this funding. This is also demonstrated through our key investment in potable water infrastructure and treatment-system upgrades in Yukon communities.

Now, where does that touch Yukoners? We're looking at including Carcross, Teslin, Ross River, Marsh Lake, Haines Junction, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. These are all improvements — on-

site investment that this government will make this year in the communities in the Yukon. The budget provides for key investment in sewage treatment and disposal projects. I remind the members opposite that this is over and above the infrastructure money that is coming into the community. This is over and above the gas tax. This is money being invested in Yukon communities.

When we look at the construction of the Carmacks wastewater treatment facility, it's good news for Carmacks. It finishes up a project that the community has had on the table for a long, long time. Community Services budget also provides for investment in Yukon solid-waste management — again, another important thing.

By providing investment in a territory-wide Yukon solid-waste strategy that is currently under development, this government is showing leadership in the development of future best practices for solid waste in the territory.

We've been talking about this for two weeks in the House. We've funded it; we grew it to incorporate not only an overview of the unincorporated communities that we're directly responsible for, but we're looking at all the municipalities.

Not only that, we added the emission study that is going on as we speak. That will be separate from this draft that we're putting out this month so the communities can take a look at the go-forward plans. We're also having public meetings to get a buy-in from the communities.

Mr. Chair, the Department of Community Services also is continuing to provide significant investment in the Carcross and Whitehorse waterfronts.

You only have to drive through Carcross, Mr. Chair, to see what this government has invested on the ground in the community of Carcross. Carcross has become a destination point for our tourist industry, and it reflects well on the community, because it is also a destination point for all Yukoners to visit, and of course we have access there to the railroad, and of course it's a gateway to Alaska.

We are investing in an infrastructure upgrade to the extension of Hamilton Boulevard. Very good news, Mr. Chair. Hamilton Boulevard will not only give access to that part of the City of Whitehorse but also, from a safety point of view, it's very important infrastructure for the City of Whitehorse. This government has invested in that over the last couple of years.

The budget also will establish partnerships with Yukon communities and volunteer sectors. They will provide Yukon taxing authorities with current, accurate and equitable property assessments, and establish general property tax rates for all areas outside municipalities. That's the good work we do every day within Yukon communities.

We will provide continued investment in the domestic well program, and the rural electrical and telephone program.

Mr. Chair, that is a very popular program that was started by this government and has been utilized throughout the territory. That is a very positive thing.

Mr. Chair, the money that this government has put into FireSmart — we have to remind the members opposite that when the Liberal government was in power it downsized FireSmart. We have expanded the investment by 33.3 percent.

The members opposite understand that investment is very important on the ground in our communities and it has been very well received. Again, the Community Services budget enables communities and people to protect themselves from threat of wildland fire, structural fire and other emergencies or disasters through provisions of integrated emergency medical services.

Mr. Chair, again, I remind the members opposite the responsibility that this government has and what this government has funded. We have 17 rural volunteer fire departments. They are Beaver Creek, Burwash, Carcross, Destruction Bay, Golden Horn, Hootalinqua, Ibex Valley, Keno City, Klondike Valley, Marsh Lake, Mendenhall, Mount Lorne, Old Crow — Old Crow is the responsibility of the First Nation — Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Tagish and Upper Liard.

The equipment — again the member opposite talks about equipping our fire departments. We follow National Fire Protection Association recommendations, and these standards recommend fire engines are replaced if they are more than 20 years old. All of our fire departments at this time are within the standard.

The newer fire engines are larger than the older models because they've been modernized. The fire marshal's office — again the member opposite was worried about size — advises that the Ross River hall will accommodate the newer trucks. This will be confirmed before the new truck is ordered. In other words, we are doing our homework, Mr. Chair, in working with the communities and the volunteer fire departments to make sure that what we buy fits the investment that we have in fire halls.

I would remind the member opposite that this government has built fire halls in Mendenhall, Golden Horn — which I was out to the other day — and, of course, Hootalinqua. Those are all brand new investments on the ground in these communities.

It's interesting that again another question — emergency firefighters. We accepted that responsibility from devolution. Certainly, there were questions about the compensation for those individuals. Of course, again, it's very important that people are compensated. We updated the wage scale in May of 2008, almost doubling the wages and, of course, we now pay overtime, where DIAND did not pay overtime. We are compensating those people in a proper fashion.

We have \$24.5 million budgeted for fire suppression — emergency measures fire management, including FireSmart, emergency medical services structural fire protection through the fire marshal's office. This funding will support communities and volunteers who provide emergency medical and ambulance medevac services throughout the territory — another investment on the ground for the Yukon.

Promote and foster emergency preparedness and Emergency Measures Organization services — again, a very important component of Yukon society. Of course, it supports health, safety and protection through fire prevention and fire protection and protects communities, families, individuals, property and other community values from wildland fires.

We are also investing \$4.6 million in initiatives that serve to protect and enhance the public interest in professional and commercial activities. These are initiatives that ensure compli-

ance with minimum standards for employment for wages and working conditions in order to establish a fair and equitable work environment for the Yukon labour force.

The budget will help the department to protect public safety through driver and vehicle programs. It will provide community educational opportunities through public library programs and bilingual inquiry services to the public, and of course, to the Yukon government departments.

I remind you, the budget supports health, safety and protection of the public through programs such as application of minimum building, electrical and mechanical codes. Community Services provides a wide range of services to Yukoners and this is a budget that maximizes benefits to Yukon citizens.

In other words, this increase in our budget, growing to \$122,800,000, is an investment for all Yukoners. I remind the members opposite that these investments will touch every community in the territory. Whether it's water, solid waste or the sewer systems, the investments on the ground are massive.

I remind the members opposite that this is all part and parcel of an investment by this government, not only to enhance our communities, but let us not ignore the large investment that's going to flow out of the public meetings we're having and hope to have in the future on how Yukon infrastructure will move forward so all Yukoners can be part and parcel of the decision-making process to make their communities better to live in. That in itself is another \$30 million a year added over the next five years.

If you were to look at the investments on the ground today and the opportunities there for Yukoners, it is interesting to see that today we came out with an unemployment rate of just over six percent, which hasn't changed. We're looking forward to putting people to work on the ground — a massive infrastructure investment — and we have to talk about this in this House because this is an investment that will touch every Yukoner.

The objectives of our department — Yukoners have to hear about this.

It promotes sustainable, healthy communities by supporting local governments, community organizations and the volunteer sector, encouraging active living through sport and recreation, and directly providing community services. Planning and zoning, property assessment and taxation infrastructure and land development: this is all part and parcel of what the objectives of this department are.

But most of all, Mr. Chair, Yukon has to hear about this budget, this increase in budgeting — thank you, Mr. Chair. I have five more minutes.

This budget that's being tabled here today — and again, I remind the members opposite, \$122.8 million invested on the ground in the territory. Now, I went over some of the exciting investments that are going to be made, and that will be done over the next 12 months. Also, my learned friend here is pointing other lines out that are very important for us as a government, and for the Yukon public to hear. Protecting public safety through driver and vehicle programs, providing community educational opportunities through public library programs — Mr. Chair, the opportunities of libraries. There's a new library opening up in Teslin: another investment this government made

in a community to enhance and improve the facility they had in Teslin.

Also at this moment, there are discussions going on regarding our own library here in the City of Whitehorse and the investment made in working with the Kwanlin Dun and moving forward on an exciting project by the Kwanlin Dun First Nation — a large cultural centre and part of that would be a public library. Hopefully, those negotiations go well in the future and those kinds of investments can be made.

It is an exciting time for Yukoners. This department, with this exceptional staff of individuals who work for it, will touch every community and work with the communities to make sure that these investments that we have made over the seven years we have been in government — when you look at the investments Yukon Housing Corporation has made on the ground and the impressive list of improvements read off by the minister this afternoon — large investments; if you were to look at the investments that this government has made over the last three years in fire halls, Mr. Chair. We are averaging one new fire hall every two years.

This government has made more investments in a shorter period of time than any other government has done in the past. Of course, today, Mr. Chair, as we debate the budget, we can look forward to other improvements in our community. I remind the members opposite the budget is a very large budget; it's an improvement over last year. The figure, Mr. Chair, that we're going to be working with is in the excess of \$122 million. That is a 10-percent increase over last year and we certainly look forward to going forward after we have these debates — investing in the ground for all Yukoners. As we go through it, you'll see that there is not a community in the Yukon that isn't being touched by those investments.

We've debated the Building Canada fund for three or four days. The Building Canada fund is a fund set up by the Canadian government to invest on the ground in the territory. Of course we share in it as a partner and certainly we're willing to invest in the ground as well. That is a fabulous program for our communities. Of course all Yukoners are encouraged to come to our meetings, to work with it and to be part and parcel of the decision-making process on how they see these dollars being invested. These meetings have already started.

They started on March 31 in Watson Lake, and they go through the territory — Pelly Crossing, Old Crow has already been done, Keno, Mayo, Dawson City, Haines Junction, Burwash Landing, Destruction Bay, Beaver Creek, Teslin, Carcross, Tagish, Carmacks, Whitehorse, Ibx Valley, Whitehorse North, Mount Lorne, Marsh Lake, Ross River, Faro, Liard, Watson Lake, and Upper Liard. What can we say about consultation? It's all here. It's in this time schedule here, where Yukoners can get out and participate in the Building Canada fund consultation process.

I would remind people that we also have a schedule on the Internet. Visit www.gov.yk.ca.consultation.html for updates. So, in other words, we can follow the progress of the meetings through the Internet. I encourage everybody to participate. I think it's an exciting time for the territory. Again, I remind Yukoners that the investment on the ground by this government

is going to improve the well-being of our communities, and certainly Community Services will be one of the leads for that. I look forward to debating line by line so Yukoners can understand exactly where the dollars are going. It is a large budget: \$122 million — in excess of that. That's a large investment in the Yukon's infrastructure.

Mr. Cardiff: Amazing. I don't know how many more times I'm going to get to say that this spring sitting, but that was absolutely amazing.

The Minister of Education is applauding. That was quite the performance.

The one thing about it was there were answers to questions that I asked two or three days ago. Actually, there were answers to questions that I asked years and years ago of the former Minister of Community Services. It's good to know that, if you're persistent and you keep on it, you do get results. It's really heartwarming to know. I'll just inform the minister that devolution took place several years ago and it took them until 2008 to finally treat emergency firefighters respectfully and fairly. I'm glad to know that they doubled their wages and they're paying them overtime. I would applaud that. Thank you. Finally, after years of writing letters and making requests of the Minister of Community Services, finally we're treating people in our communities decently and fairly, and respecting the work that they do. That's wonderful, that I got an answer to that question, and I appreciate the answers to some of the other questions that I asked the other day, and the fact that the minister actually answered those questions.

But he avoided answering the question of where the \$3 million is. You know, I can just see the headline. "The Minister of Community Services has misplaced \$3 million." He won't answer a question about where the \$3 million is, or what it's being spent on. The minister should look at the first page of his capital budget — or it's the second page, actually, it's 5-2 — and it talks about departmental objectives: to promote sustainable, healthy communities by supporting local governments, community organizations, the volunteer sector, encouraging active living through sport and recreation, and directly providing Community Services planning, zoning, property assessment, taxation, infrastructure and land development.

That's what his department does, and it has \$3 million to do it in Dawson City this year for a sewage treatment facility. Now the minister said he looked forward to debating the budget so the public could understand exactly where the money was and where it was being spent. Well, he can't explain it.

He wanted to talk about the schedule of Building Canada fund meetings. Well, I was at the Building Canada fund meeting last night, and I'd like to thank the officials from Community Services who were there, for providing their guidance and the information that they had on a variety of things — whether it was the Building Canada fund, the solid-waste management strategy, the integrated community sustainability plans and the gas tax money. It's good to know that the government is finally getting an integrated community sustainability plan for rural Yukon, for unincorporated municipalities. The five-year funding is just about up and we are finally going to be able to access that almost \$7 million for the benefit of rural Yukon.

It was a very informative meeting, and I would like to publicly say that my hat is off to those officials for being there last night, taking hours out of their evening. I left the meeting at 11:00, and they were still loading projectors and screens and they had a long way to go. I live just across the highway, but they were still there at 11:00. I think the unfortunate part about that meeting was that there were no officials from the Department of Environment there to talk about a core component of the solid-waste strategy. If the minister wants to bring up the solid-waste strategy again, we can talk until next Thursday about the solid-waste strategy and how it needs to incorporate the Department of Environment, waste diversion, reusing, recycling and reduction of waste.

That is not the question that I asked. The question I asked is this: what is the minister spending the \$3 million on? What is his department using that \$3 million for? How much of it is going to an agency in British Columbia to evaluate the bid process for the Dawson City sewage treatment facility? How is that evaluation being done? Or how was it done — because it's done — not how is it going to be done? How was it done? And why is it that contractors in the Yukon can expect to be mistreated, to be dismissed after putting in hours and hours of their time? It's my understanding that on the proposal that was dismissed, 17 companies participated in putting that proposal together and most of them were from here in the Yukon — the majority of them. Thousands and thousands of dollars, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of man hours were spent putting that proposal together and it gets dismissed.

The minister doesn't even know where the \$3 million went. He says, "Talk to me in Highways and Public Works." Well, Mr. Chair, we're not in Highways and Public Works. We're in Community Services. That's where the \$3 million is, in Vote 51. It's not in Highways and Public Works. There's not \$3 million in the Department of Highways and Public Works for the Dawson sewage treatment facility. If I stand up, if I wait — if we ever get to the Department of Highways and Public Works, and I have the opportunity to ask the minister about the Dawson City sewage treatment facility in Highways and Public Works, he's going to stand up and say, "Well, there's no line item. There's no \$3 million here to talk about."

So the minister needs to answer the question now. He can't deny that there's \$3 million there, and that the minister is in charge of this project. That's what his department does: it invests in infrastructure: water and sewer projects, residential and commercial subdivision, providing advice.

Now, there is \$3 million, and I'm asking the minister to explain — or to tell us — where it is in Highways and Public Works, so that when we get there we can ask the question, because I don't see it in the budget in Highways and Public Works. If the minister can provide that information, then we can move on.

He's responsible for the \$3 million. He's responsible for the Dawson City sewage treatment project. He's responsible for the fact that there was a process that led to the summary dismissal of a proposal by Yukon contractors with no explanation. If the Premier were to come — oh, the Government House Leader is giving him some advice.

If the Premier came and told the minister he was out of a job, the minister would ask for an explanation. And he would expect to get an explanation. That is all the contractor wants, is an explanation of why their proposal wasn't opened and why it wasn't accepted. I believe that they are owed that.

If there are good reasons for it, I am sure they will accept those reasons — at least tell them what the reasons are.

The other question that the minister eluded — that he didn't want to answer and that he spoke for 20 minutes about other things, good things like finally treating emergency fire-fighters fairly — was what do we do now? Now we only have one proposal, one price, for the Dawson City sewage treatment facility. It is supposed to be a \$20-million project. It is going to be more than \$20 million, Mr. Chair. The minister may need to rethink his budgeting.

The other question that he avoided and refused to answer was whether or not the government is looking at a public/private partnership for this project.

The minister thinks that this is a joking matter. Well, it's not funny. This is about public funds, regardless of where they come from. The Building Canada fund is \$250 million, almost, including Yukon taxpayers' contributions to it — \$243 million, I think it was: \$180 million-something from the federal government and the rest is going to be Yukon taxpayers' money. The government needs to be accountable for the money. There's \$3 million, and the minister can't explain what he's doing with it, how it's being spent, what actions are going to be taken this year for that \$3 million, what value Yukoners are going to see for that \$3 million. He needs to explain that, and he needs to explain why the process has gone off the rails with the tendering process for this project, where contractors are dismissed and we end up with one proponent, one project. It's going to cost taxpayers more than what the government has budgeted.

The minister has an opportunity to stand up now and answer that question. Or he can stand up and do what he did the last time and he can read from his notes and he can tell us all the good things that he believes they're doing. Many of them are good things, Mr. Chair. It's not that we don't support a lot of things that are in this budget. We do support projects that improve water quality, but it's how this government goes about doing them sometimes that we question.

Now, it's not the motivation; it's the judgement of members opposite in how they do their job sometimes that we have to question. If we questioned their motivation, we'd be called out of order.

So the minister has an opportunity. I have gone on too long on this subject but I would like the minister to stand up and explain, number one, where the \$3 million is in his Department of Community Services and where it shows it as being transferred into the Department of Highways and Public Works so that we can ask questions about this. Number two, what happened to the tender process and why were contractors in Yukon — why did they have their proposals and why were they invited to submit a proposal and then summarily dismissed without an explanation? What is the minister going to do now that

there is only one proposal on the table? That is not a competitive bid process.

Number four — so he has four questions to ask and he's got 20 minutes to do it —

He is checking his watch.

Is this project potentially a public/private partnership?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Again, I stand here in the House and talk about the Department of Community Services and the budget that we're putting forward here in the House for this year. I certainly remind the member opposite that the Minister of Highways and Public Works looks forward to addressing some of the issues that the member brought up today.

But today we're on Community Services. I have a few minutes to go over a few of the things that I imagine would be asked, or information that the member opposite should have. I think it's important to look at different aspects of investment in the Yukon. The background on the Building Canada fund is very interesting. We could go back, and it could be an extensive discussion for a couple of days. I know we have all afternoon to discuss things, so I think we should put things on the floor here and into *Hansard*.

Building Canada is the Government of Canada's new investment in Canada. A \$33-billion infrastructure plan was established under the budget in 2007. Under this plan, funding will be provided to provinces and territories from the years 2007 to 2014. That's a seven-year window of investment.

This is for infrastructure priority projects that are intended to help drive economic growth and productivity, create a cleaner environment and build stronger and more prosperous communities — again, defining where the investments can be, Mr. Chair. The Building Canada plan includes an integrated suite of infrastructure initiatives, including the Building Canada fund, provincial/territorial base fund and of course we'll go on about the gas tax fund extension. This was another investment by the federal government for 2007-14.

It's very interesting, Mr. Chair — what is the Building Canada fund and base funding initiative? The Building Canada fund and base funding initiative is a distinct infrastructure funding program that forms part of the overall Building Canada plan. So that's very clear on how that is invested.

In 2008 the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon signed a framework agreement and a base funding agreement under Building Canada so the partnership was recognized in the signing of that agreement. Under this agreement, the Yukon will receive \$182.9 million over a seven-year period. That money is from Canada.

It's over a seven-year period from 2007-08 to 2013-14, for priority infrastructure projects — exactly, Mr. Chair, what we've been talking about this afternoon. The base and northern Canada top-up portions of the Building Canada fund amount to \$26.13 million per year for seven years — \$25 million base and \$1.13 million in northern Canada top-up funding.

This is the process of how the funding is invested. This federal contribution represents 75 percent of the program. The Government of Yukon provides another investment of 25 percent of the funds for infrastructure projects that are approved

and implemented. In other words, Yukon has to partner with this. This program obviously is a 75:25 partnership.

What are the eligible spending categories under the agreement? This is very important, Mr. Chair. What is eligible under this program? What is eligible to be part and parcel of this \$182.9-million investment here in the territory? The implementation of the *Canada-Yukon Framework Agreement* and the base funding agreement under Building Canada will focus on five key areas: drinking water — very important to our communities; waste water, which is very important; roads; solid-waste management; and green-energy infrastructure.

I remind the House and the members opposite that it was our Premier who was very insistent that solid-waste management was eligible for this program. This again is part and parcel of the investment of \$182.9 million that Canada is going to put on the ground over the next period of time — a seven-year program.

By focusing on these areas, we can help to ensure that the base infrastructure for all Yukon communities is improved to meet their needs well into the future. I remind the members opposite that this is over and above the territorial government budget we were talking about this afternoon, a \$122.8-million budget — a very, very large budget. It's an increase over last year and a very positive investment in Yukon communities.

As you can see, this money from the federal government — and by the way, the commitment of this government to partner over the next period of time with the federal government on these investments — is good news for all the communities. I remind all communities, as I read — and I could read it over again, Mr. Chair — of the timelines of the meetings out in the communities.

The member opposite himself was at a meeting last night. The reports from the member opposite are that it was a very positive meeting and it was well attended. Out of those meetings are going to come decisions and recommendations so we can move forward on investing over the next period of time on the infrastructure that is needed in our communities. This is a large investment. This is a \$182-million investment.

We move on. It is very important if we were looking at a question of how much funding will be provided for Yukon infrastructure project in each community or area? That is a question that will come up at our meetings and those are things we'll have to address. The base funding agreement requires a minimum of \$60 million to be made available for community-based public infrastructure initiatives. In Yukon — beyond this — the agreement does not specify the amount of funds that are to be dedicated to each of the spending categories or among eligible recipients.

Funding will be allocated based on infrastructure priorities identified in the forthcoming Yukon infrastructure plan. Again, Mr. Chair, this plan is coming out of the communities. It is called the Yukon infrastructure plan and that is exactly what the member opposite was doing last night.

I applaud the member opposite for going out to these meetings and working in his community to address these issues — very important for our communities.

What is the Yukon infrastructure plan and how will it be developed? That's another question that will be asked. Certainly, the member from Teslin will be interested in this. The Canada-Yukon framework agreement commits the Yukon government to prepare a 10- to 15-year infrastructure plan. This is a go-forward plan on how communities visualize moving forward. The planning process will focus on examining infrastructure priorities and needs as they relate to five key, eligible spending categories under the Building Canada fund.

Again, we go back to the five eligibility programs, which are drinking water, waste water, solid waste, green energy and roads. Those are the five eligible investments that communities can spend their resources on — this large investment that is coming through this partnership with the federal government, their part of it being \$182.9 million.

The Yukon infrastructure plan will be developed in discussions with the public. Again, everybody is having public meetings. We're having meetings with all First Nations to get their input on this and, of course, key stakeholders.

I remind the member opposite that all Yukoners can participate in this dialogue. It doesn't have to be a municipality. It doesn't have to be an organization. I recommend all Yukoners who have a stake in communities to get out and participate in this process. We will identify potential infrastructure gaps and significant infrastructure priorities within their communities in the Yukon — including those within municipalities, unincorporated communities and, of course, First Nation communities. Those are all investments on the ground.

The Yukon infrastructure plan will identify territory-wide priority projects for 2009 through to 2014. That is where we are looking today, and that's what will come out of these meetings we are having. The first two years of the funding — 2007-09 will be allocated to priority projects identified by the Yukon government through previous budgetary processes. Prior consultation relates to infrastructure or projects that have to be completed to satisfy regulatory requirements.

Funding is being accessed, Mr. Chair, to complete a number of priority infrastructure projects throughout the territory, including improvements to existing water treatment systems in Carcross and Ross River to meet the new drinking water standards, which will come into effect in June 2011. That's another thing we have to remind the government and the members opposite: we have some obligation to fast track the drinking water standards, because we have national standards to meet by the year 2011.

Yukon is required to submit annual capital plans to Canada, outlining the proposed projects. There is an agreement with the Government of Canada that we have to submit an annual capital plan to Canada to outline the proposed projects to be undertaken in each year that the program is operational. That's a process and part of the partnership that we agreed to.

An infrastructural framework committee consisting of senior federal and territorial officials has been established pursuant to the agreement to help support the decisions of the Premier and federal minister regarding infrastructure priority projects. The infrastructure committee will also include First Nation municipal representation, who will have observer status. In

other words, there are going to be Yukoners who will make these decisions.

How long will the funding under this funding last?

All funding — and this is important, Mr. Chair — all funding under this program must be spent by March 31, 2016.

What is the relationship between the integrated community sustainable plan being developed for rural Yukon and the Yukon infrastructure plan? The Canada-Yukon gas tax agreement requires Yukon to complete an integrated community sustainable plan for all unincorporated communities before funds can be accessed for eligible projects under the gas tax program. It is the Yukon's intention to fulfill this requirement as part of the development of the Yukon infrastructure plan which is required by the Canada-Yukon framework agreement under the Building Canada fund program. Eligible project categories under both agreements include water and waste-water management, solid-waste management, community energy systems and local roads.

In my short address here this afternoon on the Building Canada fund, it is important that we discuss it because it is a large investment on the ground in the Yukon over the next period of time.

As we grow from the Building Canada fund, we talk about the gas tax. Does the extension agreement change the allocations? No. The allocations remain the same as under the original agreement for 2005 to 2010. This was agreed upon by the Association of Yukon Communities on behalf of Yukon municipalities and by Yukon First Nations with the caveat that the First Nation allocation can be reviewed at some time in the future. Those are all agreements we made with our partners in First Nation governments and municipalities.

Can Yukon change the categories for funding? That is a question that is going to be asked. Funding categories are established by Canada under the agreement.

I remind the members opposite that this funding category has been a Canadian decision under the agreement. Eligible project categories include public transit, water, waste water, solid waste — again, Mr. Chair, all of these things are important for the communities. I remind the members opposite that this is over and above the \$122.8-million investment that this government is putting on the ground this year. We look at solid waste, community energy systems, active transportation infrastructure and building system improvements.

In other words, Mr. Chair, it covers a large gamut of projects that all communities have and all communities will benefit from this investment.

What projects have been approved? Well, Mr. Chair, that's an interesting scenario. I'm just going to read a few of them.

The community of Faro has have been approved for project 2009-001, for a well house — a motor upgrade to replace the existing motor with a VFD motor to increase efficiency in pumping water from the well. In other words, it was an improvement to their water infrastructure. That was an investment that they spent \$35,000 on.

Again, in Faro, project 2009-002 — recreation centre boiler replacement. Another obligation that communities have

is their recreational complexes. This is an \$87,000 investment that's being funded by the gas tax.

Another thing that Faro's doing is the sewer main replacement. This is to replace 122 metres of 40-year-old sewer main. This is an important piece of infrastructure for the community of Faro. That's a \$52,855 investment. That's just the start, Mr. Chair, in the community of Faro.

Haines Junction — what are they investing in? Well, fire hall upgrades — \$20,000 approved for engineering assessment, pending more detail. So there's \$20,000 to Haines Junction.

Teslin has many projects. One of the projects is a bike lane to develop surface and delineate a separate lane for bikes on foot paths to help move traffic along main streets through town. Nisutlin Drive — a \$75,000 investment. I'm not quite sure Teslin could do that without access to gas tax, Mr. Chair. There is another small one: sewer lagoon fencing upgrade — another important part of infrastructure in the community — \$3,200. A complex roof, lift and secure the roof for the recreation complex and curling rink/lobby as a first phase for retrofitting energy efficiency. There's another project. I'm not quite sure that Teslin could do that without help from the gas tax. That's \$25,000. Mr. Chair, recreation centre water supply. This again is Teslin. Install water tank hook-up to existing infrastructure. The tank would ensure clean, safe drinking water and reduce the existing energy requirements and supply appropriate water — another management situation in the recreation centre. That's another thing I'm not quite sure Teslin could do on its own. \$40,000, Mr. Chair. Teslin transfer station — replace open pit burning of solid waste with bins and transfers to Whitehorse. This is exactly what we've been talking about, Mr. Chair, in our many discussions over the last 12 days in — \$68,000 invested on the ground in Teslin on solid waste.

Another water closet replacement — install low-flow toilets in the recreation complex. That's an improvement in the rec complex again — \$16,000.

Now we move into Watson Lake — the administration building roof — replace skylight with roof — which is an improvement to the existing administration building — a \$40,000 investment. My time is limited, but I'm sure I can get up in my next response. Whitehorse has investments; we can go through that extensively. Carcross-Tagish; the Liard First Nation; Na Cho Nyäk Dun has projects; Ross River Dena and the Selkirk First Nation.

We can go on and on and on and go through these this afternoon for the members opposite to ensure they are aware of the investment that the gas tax is supplying to our communities.

There are many, many projects so, hopefully, in my next response we can finish this up and move on.

Mr. Cardiff: Citizens of Yukon aren't prepared to move on until the minister can come clean on where the \$3 million went. Now, I listened to the minister. I was at that Yukon infrastructure planning meeting last night for four hours. The minister almost sounds like he could have facilitated the meeting. The only problem is that if anybody had asked about the Dawson City sewage lagoon, they wouldn't have gotten an answer. They'd still be there listening to the minister talk about all the projects that are going on in Teslin, Watson Lake and Faro, but

they couldn't get an answer. So my recommendation to people who go to the infrastructure meetings is not to ask questions that are too hard, because they may not get an answer — especially if the minister is facilitating the meeting.

We just heard the minister do two things. The most recent thing he did was to list a whole bunch of projects that are being funded under the gas tax fund, and I didn't ask any questions about the gas tax fund. I was asking about the Building Canada fund and \$3 million that got transferred out of his department to some mystery place.

Probably why he would be good at facilitating the meetings for the infrastructure plan is because he has obviously read through all the frequently asked questions about the Building Canada fund, and knows all the answers to them. He just read through them all. It's a good thing he has something to read from, because he doesn't have the answer to the question that's on the lips of Yukoners right now, which is this: there is \$3 million in Vote 51, Department of Community Services. This is the department that does sewer and water projects. It provides infrastructure in communities; it promotes sustainable and healthy communities by spending \$3 million on the Dawson sewage treatment plant.

But the minister won't tell us how the money is being spent. How much of it went to Procurement B.C.? Why did the minister allow the tender process for this project to get off track? Why is it that contractors have their proposals dismissed without any explanation? I'm just trying to ask the questions and get answers for the public.

It shows \$3 million; it shows the \$3 million in the fund on page 5-9; it shows it being transferred — I believe it's the same \$3 million on page 5-12. It says, "Community Infrastructure: Building Canada Fund" \$3 million transferred — to where? It doesn't show up in the Department of Highways and Public Works.

I know the minister received a note from the Minister of Highways and Public Works that told him where the money went or where it's going. I saw him receive a note from the Minister of Highways and Public Works. He must know where it is and what line item it is.

The problem is that, when we get to Highways and Public Works, there's no line item that shows \$3 million for the Dawson City sewage treatment plant, so we aren't going to be able to ask the question.

Instead of stonewalling, filibustering and not answering the question, if you provide the answer to the question, then we could move on. So where does the \$3 million show up in the Department of Highways and Public Works? What happened to the tender process? Why wasn't the contractor given an explanation of why his bid was dismissed? What is the minister going to do, now that there's only one proponent — one proposal — for a project that is over \$20 million? What was B.C. Procurement's involvement in this process? Is this project a candidate for being a public/private partnership?

Hon. Mr. Lang: As to the member opposite's remarks, I look forward in the Department of Highways and Public Works to addressing those questions.

There is a — Community Services, as it went through — it's important that we get all the information out on the floor here, and of course we have a couple of hours here that we can discuss this, and the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin is very interested in the investment dollars that are going into her community as part and parcel of this \$122.8-million investment.

Some of the projects, Mr. Chair — an important project is the Whitehorse and Carcross waterfronts. You can see the change in our waterfronts over the last seven years working with Tourism and Culture and other departments, and of course our partners in the municipality of Whitehorse and the First Nation in Carcross. It has been a very positive experience, and having the resources to invest in this has certainly enhanced the community of Carcross. We only have to drive through it.

But also, part of the \$122 million is going to be invested in safe drinking water for our Yukon communities. We all understand that this includes upgrading to bring water supplies in line with the new Canadian drinking water standards. I remind the members opposite that we've got some timelines on that. We're looking at 2011 on that, so that's not a long way down the road.

This government — in conjunction with the investment of the gas tax and also Building Canada — I would say here on the floor today it will be a doable task on our part, hopefully.

Of course, waste-water treatment — we are looking at that in all of our communities. There is investment in sports and recreation — another large investment and part of the \$122.8 million, Mr. Chair. We are also looking at the extension of Hamilton Boulevard — I have talked about it this afternoon. There are a couple of reasons for that — not only is it the bottleneck of only one access but there is a safety issue. There is a very large investment in an area that only has one exit at the moment. This government — under the leadership of the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Tourism and Culture — invested heavily in this area. Of course, that will be finished this summer so that will give two entrances and exits to the community.

Another responsibility we have, Mr. Chair, is land development projects in Grizzly Valley, Arkell and Porter Creek. This, of course, is in partnership with the city. Grizzly Valley is stand-alone; Arkell and Porter Creek are, of course, a partnership with the city.

We've increased the investment in the FireSmart program — a 33.3-percent increase on a program that the Liberal government virtually cancelled seven years ago. So there is certainly a demand out there for that investment. This is all part of this \$122-million investment. And, of course, there is a large investment in emergency vehicles, including ambulances and protective services emergency response. I've said it again today — the investment on the ground. That investment of \$122.8 million is going to touch every community in the territory.

A continued commitment to Yukon municipalities — we have increased the comprehensive municipal grant for Yukon municipalities for the second year in a row — the first government in 10 years to do that, Mr. Chair — another investment that we've done as a government and also part and parcel of this \$122-million investment we have on the ground.

And, certainly, infrastructure investment — we can go through that this afternoon. This is a very large investment. This is a very large budget. The department's investment in infrastructure is designed to create immediate stimulus, long-term economic growth, and improved services to Yukon.

We're doing this internally in the Department of Community Services on top of the large investment that's flowing from Building Canada and the investment that communities and First Nations will make through the gas tax.

Later on this afternoon, we'll go through a list on the gas tax, on how it's shared and the dollar value. It's very important information because it is a large investment. The community of Whitehorse alone — I'll leave that alone because we have all afternoon here and I will get at that at a later time.

This department is responsible for building sustainable communities and making investments in services, including sewer and water systems, recreational facilities and reliable emergency response services. This budget — part of this \$122 million — provides for sustainable development that is fairly distributed to meet needs of all Yukoners. In other words, the master plan is to touch all communities and improve their lifestyle in the territory. There's a responsibility for health and safety to meet increased stringent regulatory standards for water and environmental safety — again in partnership with other departments, we're investing. That's all part and parcel of the \$122.8-million investment we're talking about this afternoon.

Drinking water — the member opposite was discussing that and what part of that \$122 million we are going to invest in drinking water. One of our many priorities in this government is to ensure Yukoners have access to safe and sustainable drinking-water resources for the future. That means that we work with our invested dollars on the ground to make sure that we meet those dates on standards by 2011.

The government has committed to providing safe drinking water to Yukon communities and we are delivering on that promise through a number of potable water projects outlined in our budget — all part and parcel of the \$122.8-million commitment here today.

Today I've made a commitment as Minister of Community Services that we are delivering on the promise of potable water projects in the territory. There's a question — and the member opposite understands the arsenic treatment upgrades have changed. They're getting more stringent, and the 2011 regulatory requirements are out there. We are investing \$750,000, part and parcel of this large investment of \$122.8 million on the street here. For the coming year there will be a \$750,000 investment.

That is to upgrade public water supplies in the municipality of Haines Junction, Teslin and the First Nations of Carcross, Tagish, Champagne and Aishihik, to ensure that they are in line with the new regulatory requirement coming in 2011. We are meeting our commitments here and we are working toward that date.

The Yukon government is working this year in planning, designing and construction of necessary upgrades to address arsenic treatment issues. We are concerned about it and we are going to go forward.

Investing dollars where they are most needed in our communities — again, this is all part and parcel of the business plan we put together when we put together our budget which totalled \$122.8 million.

There is a large investment in Marsh Lake of \$2.4 million. This involves the Marsh Lake intake and commercial fill system, and the member opposite will understand the need for that. This water treatment system will be located at Army Beach and will improve access and lower the current cost of hauling drinking water. We have discussed in the House over the last 12 days the necessity to have this facility in Marsh Lake. This investment is part of the overall budget of \$122.8 million.

This government is going to invest in the Marsh Lake intake and commercial fill system. The member opposite talked about the go-forward project on what happens if there were a fire hall. Well, this could fit into that, Mr. Chair. It's not something this government doesn't invest in. I'd remind the member opposite that we've been building fire halls for Mendenhall, Hootalinqua, and Golden Horn, and this would be another investment that we would make down the road as demand grew. It will utilize directional drilling to draw the water from Marsh Lake, and it'll be treated and provided with a filling system for personal and commercial use. This is certainly going to be a big help to the community of Marsh Lake. The new facility would lower water costs by reducing transportation costs. They'd move the water not as far as they do now. And, of course, it will help the existing fire department when there is an issue at that end of the lake, because they'll have access to that water.

And of course we're looking at, again, touching every community — all part and parcel of our investment of \$122.8 million. The water well in Old Crow: Old Crow has a \$250,000 investment to determine whether operational upgrades are needed to meet regulatory requirements in approved service. In other words, this government is going to do a review of the water facility in Old Crow and then make a corporate decision on how we move forward, if in fact the improvements are needed.

The Carcross water treatment system upgrade is a large investment and again, is part and parcel of the \$122.8 million. It's a \$400,000 investment. It's quality and supplied through planned investment and portable water supplies and system in Carcross and it includes Ross River. Yukon will upgrade the Carcross water treatment system to ensure it meets new regulations for treated surface water for use as drinking water. That's a \$400,000 investment.

The Ross River water treatment commitment this government has made in this budget — this very large budget, Mr. Chair, of \$122.8 million — we've invested \$750,000. The Member for Pelly-Nisutlin will understand exactly why this investment is needed. Now this was a water treatment pilot project last year in Ross River. Community Services will build a full-scale water treatment system in Ross River. In other words, we not only invested money today, but we invested money last year. So now the investment on the ground is a treatment system for Ross River.

What will this new treatment process do? It is required in Ross River to remove arsenic. Again, I remind the member

opposite that arsenic has become an issue because of the changing standards that the federal government is putting together for potable water over the next period of time. We have until the year 2011. At that point, we have to meet the drinking water regulation standard of the time — the modernized standard.

There is an additional funding process: \$1.5 million has been identified through the Building Canada fund. Again, we're looking at the Building Canada fund. \$1.5 million has been identified through the Building Canada fund for the construction of a new building to house the treatment centre — another investment that's on the ground to satisfy the community of Ross River on how they manage their potable water.

It is anticipated that the project planning will be underway over the next two years. The plan design obtained regulatory approval to construct a new water treatment plant. It's a large investment for the community of Ross River, and I'm certainly glad to announce it here today — that \$750,000 investment. Of course, as we went through the proposal, there is also the prospect of another \$1.5 million spent in the community of Ross River to build a structure that's needed for this investment.

What is important about investing in our water treatment is another thing that is very important: water operator training. This will become an issue in all communities. We have invested part of this \$122.8-million investment — this budget — we have invested in addition to improve physical infrastructure and develop a treatment process to improve water quality. The Department of Community Services is working with all municipalities and First Nation governments and community partners to address the human health and environmental safety issues involved in water handling; in other words, modernizing water handling in our communities. The funding part of this money is being provided to train and certify Yukon water-handling operators and an education and training program is being developed to certify water handlers and operators in the communities in partnership, Mr. Chair, with Yukon College. This will be an ongoing tool we can utilize through Yukon College on how individual communities will manage their potable water infrastructure. Good news for all the communities.

Waste-water treatment — the member opposite talked about that extensively. The construction of the Carmacks waste-water treatment plant is underway and completion is expected this year.

This was a large investment, Mr. Chair. It is a process that has been going on for the last couple of years. We're looking forward to the completion date that is expected the end of this season. In Carcross, another investment of \$250,000 is allocated for design and construction of a sludge drying bed at the sewage treatment facility. In other words, it's an investment on the ground, part and parcel of this \$122.8-million budget, for an expanded waste-water treatment facility for the town of Carmacks — Carcross, excuse me; in Carmacks the treatment plant is going in.

The Yukon government is also investing in waste-water infrastructure by undertaking upgrades and repairs in Ross River, Burwash Landing, Destruction Bay, Teslin and Watson Lake — another investment in the ground that this government is going to do in those communities.

Actually, I look forward to going through more of this. I have a few minutes left so we'll talk about Yukon solid-waste strategy implementation. Another investment of \$500,000 — a commitment by this government. We are the first government to commit this kind of dollar value in years on this issue. We are developing a Yukon solid-waste strategy for environmentally sustainable solid-waste management practices by conducting a full review and an options study for the solid-waste facility Yukon operates in unincorporated communities.

We talked about this over the last 12 days and I'm looking forward to discussing this more this afternoon. We've also incorporated eight municipalities in this study.

We are looking forward, first of all, to the draft study that came out on the footprint of the solid-waste establishments we have in the territory, and of course jump-started the emissions study that is being done as we speak. Certainly, now we're going out for public consultation into the communities to get input from them on what they would like to visualize at the end of the day in managing their solid waste.

Certainly, we're working with the First Nations on this issue. Again, we can go through this. I know my time is short, because the solid-waste strategy implementation — the \$500,000 commitment we're making — is an extensive commitment by this government and certainly would take a whole day or a couple of days to go through. I'm looking forward to the days we have left to go over that in a very detailed manner so everyone in the House can understand the investment this government is making.

In infrastructure funds we have a huge investment. As we go through with all of the conversation we've had this afternoon — waterfront development at Carcross and Whitehorse — we've gone through that extensively but we can talk about it again. I know that the members opposite are interested in it. The Carcross waterfront improvement alone will have a \$735,000 investment. What is that going to do for Carcross? Well, the footbridge and viewing platform are completed and the carving facility will be ready to allow tourists to see artists at work this summer. What an investment in the Carcross community and what investment in tourism. This year, Yukon government will advance the public dock and boat launch, welcome signs and road and drainage work. We are finalizing some of the work we started two years ago in Carcross.

I look forward to the discussion we will have this afternoon. I look forward to the member opposite responding.

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

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 15, *First Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, the Department of Community Services, Vote 51.

Mr. Cardiff: I listened with great interest to the minister before we took the break. It is really frustrating. The minister knows full well the answers to the question that we are asking. They are very simple questions. I don't know what he is

afraid of. Earlier today he was afraid to give us the technical briefing on the snow load and the flooding potential for Yukon. We need that information. The government can disseminate that information to the public but we as MLAs would also like the opportunity to respond to our constituents and their questions to us.

The minister is afraid to give us the technical briefing on the Whitehorse Correctional Centre so that we can ask questions that we have of the officials at those briefings.

The minister is afraid to tell us what the outcomes were of the internal review of the *Landlord and Tenant Act*. He refuses to give the answers and he is afraid to provide the information. I'd like to know what is there that the minister is afraid to share with us.

Now the minister is afraid again. He's afraid to tell us —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Cathers, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The member repeatedly standing and accusing the minister of fear is in contravention of Standing Order 19(g). He is certainly imputing unavowed motives to another member, not to mention it's not in keeping with the practices of this House and the agreement reached by all party leaders last fall.

Chair: Mr. Cardiff, on the point of order.

Mr. Cardiff: On the point of order, if the minister is not afraid to answer the question, then he would answer it.

Chair's ruling

Chair: On the point of order, the Chair was probably leaning to saying it was just a dispute among members until the discussion around the point of order came up. Then, during the point of order discussion, there was definitely a point of order created. I would encourage the member not to personalize the debate and, while defending or arguing a point of order, not to create a point of order in that point of order.

I hope members actually understand what the Chair is saying.

Mr. Cardiff: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a question, actually. Are you ruling that word out of order?

Chair: The Chair did not rule the word out of order. The Chair is ruling that the context in which the word was used was out of order.

Mr. Cardiff: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Well, the minister is off-loading his responsibility to answer the question. We have asked the question a number of times. For some reason — whatever that reason is — the minister doesn't want to answer the question. This raises the question of why the minister doesn't want to answer the question. I don't understand what the minister is afraid of.

I asked the questions. I am going to ask him one more time and then I'm going to wish the minister a happy Easter. Hopefully, he will provide the answers to the question.

Maybe the minister will find the \$3 million in his Easter egg when he gets up on Sunday morning.

There's \$3 million in Vote 51, the Department of Community Services, for the Dawson City sewage treatment plant. It shows it being transferred out of the department. To where, we don't know. He says it goes to the Department of Highways and Public Works. It doesn't show up in the Department of Highways and Public Works capital budget. So, it's lost somewhere in the ozone. It's like an Interac money transfer for \$3 million that hasn't been received yet.

So we ask the minister: where is the \$3 million? Where is it transferred to? Which department, which agency? We want to know why the bid process — the minister is laughing, and thinks this is funny. Well, it's not funny to the taxpayers of the Yukon, because it's their money.

\$3 million transferred to where? The minister can answer that question. Which department, which agency and which other government? What happened in the request-for-proposal process where contractors were invited to bid and then had their documents dismissed without an explanation? I repeat: without an explanation. If the minister were dismissed from his job, he would want an explanation.

Seventeen companies in the Yukon have been dismissed from the Dawson City sewage treatment project and they would like an explanation. That's all they want. I'm asking the minister to have his officials provide that explanation — or B.C. Procurement. Why are we using B.C. Procurement? Is this project a candidate for a public/private partnership? The minister needs to answer that question.

He has \$3 million in his budget that he's spending that could be going toward a public/private partnership for a piece of public infrastructure, and the minister is refusing to answer the question.

Anywhere else, this wouldn't be acceptable. The minister just needs to answer the question. That's all I'm here to do, is to ask questions; and all the minister has to do is answer them. There was one other question, and that question is this: now we're in a situation where there were two proponents who were invited to submit a proposal. Now we're in a situation where there's only one proposal for a project that will be over \$20 million. Where's the accountability? Where's the competitive bid process? You might as well sole-source a \$20-million contract — that's what it boils down to.

It doesn't provide options. It is like the flood abatement study — there is one option provided: raising driveways and dikes at Marsh Lake and dikes on the Liard River. There is no other option provided. In this case we are talking about \$3 million being expended this year on a \$25-million project. The government and the minister can't answer the question. You know, in any other job — if you are in construction and you can't do the job — you are down the road. It is the minister's job to answer the question.

The questions are — one more time: where did the \$3 million get transferred to? Where is it? He says to ask him in Highways and Public Works. Well, show us the money in Highways and Public Works or tell us where the money got transferred to.

Tell us why, through the request for proposals, contractors have been let down and not had a proper explanation about

why their proposals are being dismissed without an explanation. Why is B.C. Procurement involved in this process? Is this a candidate for a public/private partnership?

The minister is getting advice from the House Leader. We don't know what kind of advice. It may be the same advice that he received in a note from the Minister of Highways and Public Works not too long ago. I put the questions back on the record. The minister knows full well what the questions are. The final question: what is the minister going to do with only one proposal for a \$25-million project? Is he going to sole-source the project for \$25 million?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I remind the member opposite what department we're in. I'm sure the Minister of Highways and Public Works will address some of the issues. The \$3 million is still in the Department of Community Services. It will be funding for the project manager, which will be the Department of Highways and Public Works and, as that money is requested, it will be transferred to Highways and Public Works. But at the moment, it is a line item in the Community Services budget.

We look forward to moving forward and certainly, Highways and Public Works will be the project manager on-site on this project.

Mr. Cardiff: I'd like to ask the minister whether or not he could have his officials available when we get to this line item, so that we can discuss what the money is intended for. There is \$3 million in his budget, and we need to know what it's going to be spent on. He says \$3 million on project management.

We'd like to know some details about that when we get to that line item, about how they're going to expend \$3 million for a project manager in one year. Could he have his officials available so that we could get an explanation about where and how that money's going to be spent, because it doesn't show up in Highways and Public Works? The minister's not going to answer the questions there.

Hon. Mr. Lang: The question has been asked and answered. The money is in Community Services; it has not been transferred. Highways and Public Works will be the management team on the ground, the project manager. I don't know what part of that the member opposite doesn't understand. They will be expending investments on the facility when and if it goes ahead. We have allotted \$3 million, not for a project manager. That's why we sit in the House here for hours on end, discussing what we discuss, and then have the member insinuate that we were going to hire a person for \$3 million a year to project-manage. Community Services has got the Department of Highways and Public Works, and they're going to oversee the project in Dawson City. They have put \$3 million in their budget, part of a large budget of \$122.8 million. I can go through that again, Mr. Chair. \$122.8 million and Yukoners have not had a line-by-line House review of those figures.

Highways and Public Works will be in here with the officials and be able to answer those questions at that time, but I'm here as Minister of Community Services and I've answered the questions he has asked.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister answered one of the questions — maybe. I never suggested that they hired one person for \$3 million.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cardiff: I will.

What I suggested was they were hiring a project manager for \$3 million. A project manager on a project that big wouldn't be one person; it would be a team or a company.

I would like the minister to answer the question now about the request-for-proposal process because the minister is still responsible for this project. It is a Community Services project in this budget. So what happened? Will the minister commit to providing an explanation to contractors for why their submissions were dismissed? Will he do that?

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Cardiff: You know, this is — disgusting, actually, is what it is.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair's statement

Chair: Mr. Cardiff, the Chair feels that there is a point of order regarding the language that is being used in this Assembly. I would encourage the members not to use that type of language with regard to the debate that takes place in this Assembly.

Mr. Cardiff: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will use different terminology. It is an affront to Yukoners that the minister won't answer the question for the benefit of Yukoners, to tell them what is really happening out there — what is happening in the bid process and why they can't have an explanation of why their bids — why they participate.

You know, in the letter of rejection, it says, "Thank you for your interest in this project, and I trust you will participate again in the future." Well, why would anybody want to participate in the future, after they've invested a large amount of their time — a whole bunch of contractors got together and put together a proposal and invested a whole bunch of time and a whole bunch of money? It's my understanding that it's between \$100,000 and \$200,000 invested in putting a proposal together, months of time, and then you just summarily dismiss the proposal with no explanation. Dismiss the proposal, if you want, but give the explanation.

That's an affront to Yukoners and to the contracting community. It doesn't matter which company it was. If you do it to one, do you think that other companies are not going to look at that and go, "Well, why would we participate in this process?" when you get — I can't say what they get. They get nothing. They don't get an explanation for why their work isn't appreciated.

Mr. Chair, I'm astounded that the minister refuses to answer the question; unfortunately, that is the way that this government likes to operate. They don't like to provide answers and information. We saw that earlier today with the refusal to provide technical briefings or information about important questions that we have asked in this Legislature for a long time.

Once again, the government is failing Yukoners by not providing the information that has been requested. I hope that

the minister has a happy Easter and enjoys the long weekend. I am sure that we will return to this subject very soon.

Mr. Fairclough: I am not happy either with the minister's answers on this. All the companies that have been dealing with this and putting bids forward for this project in Dawson City have dealt with Community Services. Still, to this day, they deal with Community Services. The answers are with Community Services. I would like to ask the minister then. He says the \$3 million is going to be transferred over to Highways and Public Works. When can we expect that to happen, because it's not in the books now.

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Fairclough: What's wrong with the minister? He can't answer this question, Mr. Chair?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Cathers, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The member again is straying from the standards of decorum that have been agreed to — and to which leaders recommitted themselves on behalf of all caucuses last fall — by suggesting there is something wrong with another member of this Assembly. That's not in keeping with the decorum and standards of this institution.

Chair's ruling

Chair: On the point of order, I would encourage the member not to personalize debate. Mr. Fairclough, you have the floor.

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Chair, the minister could answer the question. Why wouldn't he? It's an easy one. It's not even a tough one like he faces in Question Period. He has officials beside him. If the minister wanted, he could bring his highways official; it would be the same minister who answers the question. I'm afraid when we get into Highways and Public Works the minister is not going to know the answers anyway. He has proven it here today. It's a really easy one.

Today, the people who have been dealing with this contract deal with Community Services. The minister may not think so, but we've been on the phone and people have contacted us. They have dealt with Community Services. If they are not dealing with Community Services and it's over to Highways and Public Works, this is not reflected in the books. The minister understands that.

So when can we expect Highways and Public Works to take over this project? Have they already been given that notice? Are we going to see it reflected in a supplementary budget? Is that why it's not in front of us here today? It is perhaps just a mistake in the books or is it a decision that was made afterward by Management Board and Cabinet?

Why — I think this is an easy question for the minister to answer — don't we see it reflected in Highways and Public Works? We want to ask this question, but when it comes to Highways and Public Works, we don't want the Minister of Highways and Public Works to say that it's not a line item and it's not in his department. So when are we going to be able to

see that show up in Highways and Public Works? Is it through a supplementary budget?

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Fairclough: It is a real tough one for the minister, isn't it? There must be something going on here — that is why they're not answering the question. The Government House Leader just wants to move on. The pressure is on. There is something going on here, Mr. Chair.

Chair's statement

Chair: Order. I would like to remind the Member for Mayo-Tatchun that insinuating in that context is not in order. I would like the member not to proceed down that path any more.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, soon we won't be able to say anything, Mr. Chair, with all these rulings.

Chair's statement

Chair: Order please. Mr. Fairclough, I have requested a number of times that members respect the Chair's ruling. The Chair does not appreciate comments made after the rulings. The Chair is an unbiased Chair who is here to protect the rights of all members and not just one particular member. I expect the member to remain quiet and seated when I am speaking, and I expect the member to respect my rulings.

Mr. Fairclough: Hooh. Well, Mr. —

Chair: Order please. Mr. Fairclough, sit down, please.

Chair's statement

Chair: Mr. Fairclough, there was a ruling a couple of days ago read into the record from the Deputy Speaker — myself, the Chair of Committee of the Whole — in which your leader stated that order and decorum would improve in this House, and comments like you just made toward the Chair are not acceptable. I expect that that was a mistake on your part and I would like you to proceed with the debate on Community Services.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, it's frustrating, Mr. Chair, because the minister won't answer the questions. It's frustrating for everyone, especially those who are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to get a contract in government, and the minister doesn't even know where the heck it is. Three million dollars and he can't even answer the question. That's what you call — well, there's unparliamentary language there.

Mr. Chair, then I would ask the minister, if he can't answer the question today, when will it get answered? When will these questions be answered — in Question Period? Is that where he prefers this line of questioning? We're supposed to make some progress here.

The minister's answers are really, really weak. No surprise though, because we've been getting those kinds of answers from the minister every time we sit in this Legislature. He gets paid the big bucks; he should be able to answer the simple questions. How much simpler can it get than this? The questions weren't answered. He must like this line of questioning,

and his Government House Leader just wants to move on and bury it. We'll never get back to it, because it's not a line item in any other department.

We're asking the minister to do his job. We've been asking the minister to do his job for quite some time now.

The minister doesn't know. This is kind of shocking, Mr. Chair, maybe even for you, that a minister would come forward —

Chair: Order please. Mr. Fairclough, do I have to even comment? Please continue.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister puts numbers in the budget and says, "Yukoners, have a look at this." We worked really hard at it, he said. We went all over the Yukon and came up with this budget. We worked really hard at it. Department officials worked hard at it and here are the numbers. They are right in front of us to read. So we ask a question and the minister can't answer the question. He is not doing his job. In my view, he doesn't have the ability to do the job.

What other projects like this in Community Services have been handed over to Highways and Public Works?

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Fairclough: Well, of course there is, Mr. Chair.

If the minister would like to hear some more, we will give him some more. There is a \$3-million line item and the minister just passes it on.

He's getting some instructions from his House leader and I'll just wait.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Fairclough: Oh, is he finished now?

Yes. The minister is unable to do the job for the rest of the day, it appears. Okay, we'll leave this one alone. We're going to ask the Highways and Public Works minister and see if he can do a better job.

Okay. All of you — do you think the Highways and Public Works minister can do a better job — put up your hands.

That's what I thought — no one. No one put up their hand.

Okay, let's move on to a line item in the budget speech that the Premier produced here in the Legislature. There was a \$5.5-million item for the Carmacks sewage treatment centre. Can the minister tell us what the completion date would be for that project?

Hon. Mr. Lang: That will hopefully be completed this building season.

Mr. Fairclough: This project has been looked at for quite some time by the community. Everybody appreciates this project to be in place. What happened last summer is that it was a very rainy summer, and it delayed the project, I would say, a lot, as far as progress — where they thought they would be by the end of the summer.

The minister said we'd still keep the completion date. Also, this project has been changed a little bit from what it was before, in that they shortened some of the lines where it was going to go in the community. Is this project going to be moved back to its original design — to have the lines go further and more of the community can access the sewer lines that have been put into the community?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Certainly we've been working with the community on many issues on this waste-water facility, but hopefully, as I committed here in the House, the project will be completed in this building season and be in use by the town of Carmacks as quickly as possible.

Mr. Fairclough: This project services about 40 percent of the community. I think the minister must realize that — about 40 percent of the community. It's quite a large cost and I'm not saying it's not a good project, because it is. But when are we going to get the rest of the community tapped into this mechanical sewage plant?

Hon. Mr. Lang: This government is working with the town of Carmacks. As I reminded the members opposite, with the Building Canada fund over the next five years there are opportunities for the community of Carmacks to come forward.

Mr. Fairclough: This project was funded partly under MRIF. Is this one of the projects that the government has its eye on for the Building Canada fund? I mean, this would go a long way — if it were actually completed — to service the whole community of Carmacks.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Again, I remind the member opposite that the Building Canada fund is just unfolding, and we are expecting to be in Carmacks on April 16 for those public meetings. That's the time when the community can get together and put proposals on the table that can be considered.

Mr. Fairclough: Is this a project that has been brought up to the minister in the past? Are the minister and the department familiar with the bigger project to the sewage system in Carmacks?

Hon. Mr. Lang: There have been discussions with the community of Carmacks on an expanded system. There has been no commitment from this government on that. We look forward to working with them on Building Canada, and of course, as I said here today, the gas tax is available. The town of Carmacks will be able to participate in our meetings here in April, and I imagine they'll be bringing this forward as one of the opportunities for the community to participate in the Building Canada fund. But also, I remind the member opposite that they have access to the gas tax now, so those options are there.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, I hope that it makes the priority list for the minister. Actually the community has a few large projects. This one I would like to have the minister's attention on it too. This sewage system that is going ahead in Carmacks for \$5.5 million is servicing about 40 percent of the community. Some of the community is a little way from the system and they have to have pumps and so on. But the other one that has been recognized and talked about by governments in the past — and I'm sure the minister and the Premier as they visit the community — is a system that the First Nation can tap into and that is one that has to cross the river. I am wondering if the minister is familiar with that and how much discussion the minister has had with the community of Carmacks and the First Nation on that project.

Hon. Mr. Lang: I remind the member opposite about the schedule for April 16. This is something that maybe he could write down. There is going to be consultation with Little

Salmon-Carmacks First Nation — that will be 10:00 a.m. in the morning and that will be held in the First Nation administration building.

At 2:00 p.m. is a Village of Carmacks meeting. It's going to be in the village's administration building, and then — to involve all of Carmacks — we've got a public meeting at 7:00 p.m., and that will be held at the Carmacks recreation centre. A lot of these decisions and planning will come out of this kind of meeting. This will all be looked at — all of that input. So I'm sure all of what he talked about this afternoon will be discussed at these public meetings.

Mr. Fairclough: Okay, I was hoping the minister would have said yes, that they've heard the voice of the community and the First Nation in the past, and they want to hear it again in this meeting.

Another one that was raised time and time again to the government is regarding the recreation centre in Carmacks. Phase 1 has been done, and the second half of it has not been looked at, or no monies have been committed to it in the past, even for planning. I'm wondering: is this again another project that the minister feels should be brought to the table? Is it something separate that he would like to deal with? How would he like to deal with the community on this?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I have to remind the member opposite that we don't bring anything to the table.

These are public meetings, community meetings and First Nation meetings. That's why we have this public consultation. They bring what they see the needs of the community are. So I think he's mistaken on who brings what to the table.

The Little Salmon-Carmacks gas tax is going to total over \$1.5 million, so those are resources the First Nation is going to get underneath their gas tax funding allocation. The town of Carmacks is going to be resourced. If you were to look at their allotment of gas tax over the next period of time, they are going to benefit by \$1.4 million.

These are all questions that are on the table. They will manage their gas tax within the guidelines of the gas tax and these investments will be made. I remind the member opposite that we don't bring anything to the table except the open conversation and consultation with the community.

I will read again for the member opposite that this is a very thorough day; it's a busy day for Carmacks because the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation will meet at 10:00 a.m. I remind the member opposite that will be at the administration building. That of course will be a thorough meeting. I see they have roughly four hours scheduled for that meeting and then they move over to the Village of Carmacks at 2:00 p.m. That again is a thorough meeting. The Member for Mount Lorne commented the meeting he went to last night lasted four hours. Again, we didn't bring anything to the table.

We listened to the community in our consultation, and of course, 7:00 at night is a full Carmacks public meeting. It's going to be a full day for the town of Carmacks, and we look forward to what comes out of it.

Mr. Fairclough: I'm sure the community is going to be voicing themselves on these matters, and one of them that the government has to deal with is the whole issue of safe

drinking water in the community. That's going to be brought up again because — you know, the community has brought this issue up over and over again with the minister, with the Premier, and it didn't make the cut. It didn't make the cut of the first set of projects that are going to happen under the Building Canada fund. Those who have been funded under the Building Canada fund — they went through the application process?

Hon. Mr. Lang: One of the questions the member opposite asked about this afternoon is on the recreation centre.

This government has expanded or resourced — expanded the resources — on the comprehensive municipal grant. We have resourced the town of Carmacks. Over the next period of time, those resources will grow. That's one thing that the government has done. Also, we are looking forward to details from Canada on the new recreation infrastructure funds. Those could be part and parcel of community resources to do exactly what the member opposite talked about.

So what have we done? Well, we have worked with the municipalities and certainly added to their comprehensive grant. We have made a commitment over the next period of time that it would grow, so it again is money the community can spend on infrastructure. Again, Building Canada is having meetings. Hopefully, we can put a business plan together for this year, so that we can get some of these projects up and running, understanding that this is a seven-year program. We are very excited about it and we look forward to all these meetings unfolding, so that we can get the decision-making process in place and act on these decisions.

Mr. Fairclough: The last time I questioned the minister about these funds — the infrastructure stimulus fund, the sports fund and Building Canada fund — the minister didn't quite know who the decision-making body was and how things were to be set up. He might know now, today. He did identify how much money Yukon was getting out of the infrastructure stimulus fund, and that was \$4 million, and also about the Building Canada fund.

What we didn't get out of the minister was how much money was involved with the sports fund. I am interested to hear the results of those meetings. Also, the minister said that communities, municipalities and First Nations are receiving some gas tax money, and identified \$1.5 million to the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation and, over some time, \$1.4 million to the Village of Carmacks.

How is government presenting this to the community? Is the government just hearing out the community on projects when they do have their consultation tour? Or is government making some suggestions, like perhaps you could put your gas tax toward this project, help us with it, let's leverage money out of Ottawa and get these projects off the ground? Are there suggestions that are being made by government to them, for them to perhaps think about how these projects can get off the ground?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I remind the member opposite this is a federal funding program and business plans have to be put together. For example, on the gas tax for the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation, \$30,000 — these are all just rounded-

off figures, Mr. Chair. There was roughly \$30,000 provided, and that is going to work to put their business plan together.

Once that business plan is put together and accepted, then they are funded on a yearly basis. This is not something where they come back to us. This is something the federal government — if the infrastructure business plan is accepted, at that point they manage their own gas tax. So that's not only for the First Nation, but let's take a look at what happened in Carmacks.

They've been advanced \$27,000, roughly, to do exactly that. Any of these plans that they put together, if they need help to do it, and we need the urgency of it, we in Community Services are available to work with them to get it done and get it in front of the appropriate decision-making body so we can fast-track this. But the monies that are allotted to First Nations and the Town of Carmacks become eligible — over the next period of time, 2005 to 2014 — as soon as that business plan is accepted. So I encourage all of these municipalities and First Nations to go to work and put the business plans together.

And by the way, Mr. Chair, a lot of them are done. So there have been resources flowing to individual communities. I haven't got a list of the ones here, but I do know some of the plans have been put together.

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Chair, the minister said that some of these plans have been completed, and money is flowing already. Is that what the minister is saying? If that's the case, then who's making the decision? The money's flowing through the Yukon government so I assume it's the Yukon government.

Hon. Mr. Lang: This is the list of the completed plans: Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Teslin, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, Carcross-Tagish First Nation, Liard First Nation, Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Ross River Dena Council, Selkirk First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Council. These individual — whether it's First Nation or community — obviously have been approved and the dates they've been approved.

Obviously the member opposite wasn't listening to the conversation this afternoon, because I read off a list of investments that have been spent in these communities on the back of these gas taxes.

Mr. Fairclough: If that's public information, could the minister send that over to us on this side of the House?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Fairclough: No, it's a different list.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Chair, instead of the department doing that, I'll read the investments off because it's good news for the Yukon to have these kinds of resources.

The community of Faro — rounded-off figures — \$35,000 to replace a pump motor — infrastructure in the ground; \$87,000 for recreation centre boiler replacement — again a heating system being upgraded in the community of Faro; sewer main replacement — \$52,000 and these, again, are all just rounded off and good news for Faro.

The community of Haines Junction — fire hall upgrades of approximately \$20,000 for engineering assessment pending

more detailed revised budget from Haines Junction — so again another investment.

Teslin — the Pelly-Nisutlin riding — \$75,000 for a bike lane — again, this is enhancing the community. That is investment. That is part and parcel of the community of Teslin. Another — sewer lagoon fencing, a security issue, \$3,200 and this is money invested on the ground and all from their participation in the fuel tax. Recreation complex roof — lift and secure the roof of the recreational complex hall and curling rink. That is a \$25,000 investment; recreation centre water supply — another Teslin investment — \$40,000. That is quite a large investment. The one for the Teslin transfer station — replace open-pit burning of solid waste in the community of Teslin.

That's an investment of \$68,000, all of that money coming through their gas tax availability.

Water closet replacement — again, enhancing the recreation centre and making the recreation centre more energy efficient, which is a \$16,000 investment.

Now, Watson Lake has one investment, the administration building roof replacement and skylights. That's \$40,000. That's in the Town of Watson Lake.

Now, Whitehorse, which is one of our larger communities — Whitehorse, by the way, will see roughly \$45 million over the next timeline with their gas tax. So they've got Fire Hall No. 2 — a \$3-million investment off gas tax; bike racks and lockers — \$150,000; compost program improvements — \$2.5 million; Livingstone Trail sewage outage pipe — improvements on the Livingstone Trail sewer outlet — \$5.8 million; Selkirk well development using the Selkirk aquifer in Riverdale — in other words, enhancing potable water — a \$3.4-million investment; sidewalk upgrade on Lewes Boulevard — an upgrade of public utilities or safety issues on the sidewalk on Lewes Boulevard — \$550,000; a treated water sample station will be completed in Arkell, Granger and Logan — another improvement to our subdivisions — \$25,000; a sewage lagoon monitoring well is completed — that's a \$90,000 commitment, Mr. Chair.

Okay, so we've got an environment coordinator half-time position to manage and ensure timely progress of gas-tax projects. In other words, we're funding an individual to stickhandle this investment through the City of Whitehorse.

Carcross and Tagish — now, they're looking at \$180,000 to construct a garage to house, clean and maintain a sewer pump-out truck — another investment on the ground. That's over and above the Community Services commitment of \$122 million.

Construct bus shelters and street lighting for students using school buses. Another thing in Carcross-Tagish: enhancing safety in the community — a large investment of \$72,000.

A daycare centre: upgrade to green building materials and provide training in green building techniques. This is a First Nation investment, and it's \$150,000.

Liard First Nation — Albert Creek landfill environmental assessment, monitoring and training: \$87,000. Again, one more step toward managing solid waste in the Liard community.

Na Cho Nyäk Dun — a geexchange heating system and central water supply for the new government house subdivision, \$535,000 going toward the First Nation in Mayo.

Ross River Dena — environmental assessment and land survey for sustainable subdivision project — another investment of a large \$150,000 commitment.

Selkirk First Nation piped water system — the member opposite was talking about it — a \$233,820 investment. That's a grand total of \$17,580,000 that's being invested in those communities that I read off this afternoon.

We remind the members opposite about the 2005-14 total. If we were to look at the First Nations in total, Carcross-Tagish First Nation will receive \$1.7 million roughly; Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, \$2.7 million; Na Cho Nyäk Dun, the Mayo First Nation, \$1.4 million; Kluane First Nation, \$1.1 million; Kwanlin Dun First Nation, \$2.1 million; Liard First Nation, \$2.4 million; Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation, \$1.5 million; Ross River Dena Council, \$1.4 million; Selkirk First Nation, \$1.6 million; Ta'an Kwäch'an Council, \$1.2 million; and Teslin Tlingit Council, \$1.8 million.

That is from 2005 to 2014. That doesn't count the large portion of investment the gas tax will be doing with the communities. There is an additional \$60 million in funding, which is good news for the territory. It means that all Yukon municipalities, First Nations and unincorporated communities can now continue to utilize the gas tax fund to make key investments.

In other words, the federal government has come up with another \$60-million investment. Tax funds will make key investments in community infrastructure projects that lead to a healthy Yukon community by supporting long-term planning and sustainable infrastructure. To date — here's the number — 25 gas tax projects have been approved in Yukon in cities, towns and, of course, First Nation governments. In addition to extending the gas tax payment, the federal Government of Canada is doubling the annual funding that Yukon receives through the gas tax fund and making the fund available to communities almost three months early. In other words, they are going to fast track this investment. This means that the gas tax payment has increased in the Yukon from \$7.5 million to \$15 million per year.

It has doubled from \$7.5 million to \$15 million per year. Yukon communities can now plan for the long term, thanks to an extension of the federal gas tax — which I just went through. The new deal between the federal and territorial government will mean \$60 million for towns, cities and First Nations from the year 2010 to 2014. The focus will be on infrastructure and job creation. It is good news for Yukon, good news for First Nation governments, and the unincorporated communities will all benefit from this investment in the communities.

Mr. Fairclough: I think the minister could have sent that over to us on this side of the House.

In the budget, also under MRIF, there is about \$5 million that is unallocated. There is a list of projects that are awaiting final approval. When can we expect that to happen? Is it this

month that it happens — the allocation of MRIF — and that would complete MRIF after these projects? Is that the case?

Hon. Mr. Lang: That is a decision that is made by Yukon and the federal government and that hasn't been made.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister said that the final approval to the projects hasn't been made. That is what the minister is saying. If they haven't been made, when are they going to be made? I was expecting these projects to be approved this month. If so, does the minister know which projects they are looking at? It is at its final stage so he must have that list in front of him.

Hon. Mr. Lang: The decision-making body is made up of federal government and territorial individuals and those decisions will unfold as they meet and discuss what the member opposite is talking about. We are working on it now. There is no announcement here today but it is one of the decisions that will have to be made in the near future.

Mr. Fairclough: Does the minister know when these projects are going to be approved? We were told that it would be some time in this month. If that's the case, we're probably going to be able to announce more projects.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Certainly, we are looking at this month, but there is no commitment on that. We would like to get them out the door as quickly as possible.

Mr. Fairclough: Again, with that, does the minister know whether these projects under MRIF would deplete the \$5 million, or are we going to see this come about in another budget, perhaps in the fall? Or, would that be complete this year?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Certainly, it is twilighted, so we're expecting to spend the funds in this business year. Yes, we are expecting to and we are looking forward to the announcements that flow out of this decision-making body.

Mr. Fairclough: The Premier — the Finance minister — identified \$5.5 million that was flowing to Carmacks for the mechanical plant treatment system there.

Part of that is coming out of MRIF. I tried to look back in the books to see whether that project was fully funded, or are we expecting to have that project announced in this \$5 million?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I would have to say — without the information — no.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, the government is involved in this. I am wondering why I would just get the straight answer: no.

I would ask, then, about the \$5.5 million — the total amount for the Carmacks sewage treatment system — it has been mentioned by the Premier that this was going to be completed. The minister said the same thing. This money, though, is flowing from MRIF. Has it already been approved through MRIF?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Again, Mr. Chair, I just don't have that information. I know that MRIF is being twilighted and CSIF is being twilighted.

We are working — the government is working — to approve projects and we have made a commitment to get them out the door as quickly as possible. We are committed to \$5.5

million, or whatever money it is that the member opposite spoke about, and that we would spend it in this business year.

Mr. Fairclough: It is in the budget speech. It has been mentioned time and time again by government. It is going to be complete. Does the minister feel that this project is going to be on budget?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I just said yes.

Mr. Fairclough: I do appreciate that. It is a long time coming.

The community of Carmacks also will be looking at some improvements to their roads and yes, that falls under their jurisdictions, whether or not it means chipsealing some of the roads within the community. In the past, government has funded, either through Highways and Public Works or Community Services, communities to chipseal.

Is there a project within this department to help the community to improve that road, because this is one they have left alone for years and years and years? Now that they've put the sewer lines in, it's just a real mess right now. I'm just wondering if there was a project or is it left up to the Village of Carmacks?

Hon. Mr. Lang: The Village of Carmacks —

Chair: Mr. Lang?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Yes?

Chair: Hold on please. Before members speak, they have to be recognized by the Chair. Mr. Lang.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for that correction. In answering the member opposite, the mayor and council of Carmacks have been working with the Department of Highways and Public Works to put a timeline and some costs together in partnership with that department to see if they can address the chipsealing on that road. We are aware of it; the mayor and council are concerned about it and the department has been working with the Village of Carmacks.

Mr. Fairclough: All of us look forward to completion of that project. I drive that river drive to get to my house. People have been going over this bumpy road for quite some time and they really want to see that improvement. The road improvement probably wouldn't happen this summer. That's unfortunate, but I think they need some time for the materials to settle in.

Now, all this federal money is coming to the territory. The minister said that he would soon know who the decision-making bodies are and how and with whom the split will take place. The one, in particular, that I've cited and was mentioned is the sports fund of \$500 million. That's a 50:50 split.

Right now, there is a lot of interest in this, along with the infrastructure stimulus fund and along with the Building Canada fund. The conversations I've had with community people is whether or not they can see if Yukon is actually getting these monies and are part of the decision-making body.

As part of the decision-making body, then can these funds — the Building Canada fund, for example, and the sports fund — be blended together to make a project, or are they separate projects that this minister sees to take place?

I think it's important that this information gets out to people, so that they're not thinking along those lines. So far, I've

not seen any communications, any press releases or government communications about how these dollars would be spent, who the decision-making bodies are, and whether or not they can be put together.

I say that with some interest, because of the minister's response to me about some of the projects that I've listed — that communities are in fact getting gas tax money, and some of them have been identified; they've put a business plan together. I thought that perhaps he was leading into projects that could be funded both with different funds — whether it's the Building Canada fund by the gas tax. There is a list of projects that the minister has read out.

I would assume that is not the case and that these funds are going to be on their own. If the minister can also bring back with him tomorrow some of the breakdowns — I shouldn't say tomorrow; it would be Tuesday — of how these things are going to take place. Now he has four days to work on this or for somebody to look at it. We may not get anywhere with people being on days off for the weekend and taking a long holiday, but I am hoping that the information can come back.

I do ask the minister to take this on as the Community Services minister because I've got some good answers out of the minister for this.

Chair: Order please. Seeing the time, the Chair will rise and report progress.

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Nordick: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 15, *First Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, and directed me to report progress on it.

Speaker: You have heard the report of the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 14.

The House adjourned at 5:32 p.m.