

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic
Development and Transportation; Minister
of Human Resources*

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

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(Rankin Inlet South)

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responsible for Suicide Prevention*

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(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
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Minister responsible for Immigration;
Minister responsible for Indigenous
Affairs; Minister responsible for the
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Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)

*Minister of Community and Government
Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;
Minister of Languages; Minister
responsible for the Nunavut Housing
Corporation*

Hon. George Hickey
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial
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Minister responsible for Labour; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
Compensation Commission*

Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

*Government House Leader; Minister
of Family Services; Minister
responsible for Homelessness; Minister
responsible for the Status of Women*

Hon. David Joanasic
(South Baffin)

*Minister of Education; Minister responsible
for Nunavut Arctic College*

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Officers

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Clerk Assistant
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Law Clerk
Michael Chandler

Sergeant-at-Arms
Michel Albert

Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, March 9, 2021

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeegok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Calvin Pedersen, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Mr. Craig Simailak, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Paul Quassa)(interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, can you say the opening prayer, please, Mr. Qirngnuq.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good day. Thank you, Member Qirngnuq. We say “good day” to Nunavummiut. We once again welcome those who are listening to the radio broadcast and watching the televised proceedings of your Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Continuing on. Ministers’ Statements. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers’ Statements

Minister’s Statement 589 – 5(2): Joint Planning and Management Meetings for Territorial Parks

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I say “good day” to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the ongoing work in our territorial parks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, joint planning and management committees provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Nunavut on all aspects of the planning, establishment, operation and management of territorial parks.

The Department of Environment has had to adapt to the operational challenges of travel restrictions and limitations on social gathering since the onset of the pandemic. Despite these challenges, over a dozen joint planning and management committee meetings have taken place across the territory since last summer.

Mr. Speaker, this has been accomplished through a mix of socially distanced in-person meetings, teleconferences, and online platforms that allow for virtual meetings and screen sharing.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff at the department for their continued dedication to the joint planning and management process, and all committee members for their ability to adapt to the challenges that COVID-19 has brought. It is an excellent example of Qanuqtuurniq, by being innovative and resourceful in the face of uncertainty and change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Mr. Joanasie.

Minister's Statement 590 – 5(2): Igloolik's New School, Igloolik High School, Opens

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you and good day, Mr. Speaker, members, and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Igloolik High School, Igloolik's newest school, opened its doors to students and staff on August 17, 2020 and held its official opening ceremony on October 16, 2020. I was pleased to be part of the opening ceremony and to meet the school community.

This new school represents the effort and commitment shown by the community, the district education authority, the school staff, and my department to ensure the present and future education needs of Igloolik students are met.

Mr. Speaker, with a growing student population in mind, Igloolik High School was built to accommodate 229 students. The school has 12 classrooms made up of six standard classrooms and six specialized classrooms. It also has one home studies classroom, one trades classroom, one science classroom, one multi-purpose classroom, and two reading resource rooms. As well, there is a daycare, a library, a weight room, a gymnasium, and a super-accessible washroom.

Through the community design consultations for the school, a "sea ice" theme was chosen to represent the community's strong connection to the ocean and floe edge. It can be observed in the white and blue tones used throughout the interior design of the building.

Mr. Speaker, this new school will further provide opportunities for the people of Igloolik to come together and share knowledge, culture, and values that will enrich the lives of students, staff, and the community.

I also want to thank the member for Sanirajak for being able to participate, including you, Mr. Speaker, at the opening ceremony. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We were very proud when it opened. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 591 – 5(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Resources

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues. I also say “good day” to the residents of Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the launch of new *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* resources produced by the Department of Culture and Heritage. These materials were produced following the 2019 Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Conference: Inuit Maligait Piqqusituqavut Inuuttiarnirmut, also known as Inuit Customary Laws for Wellbeing.

Mr. Speaker, the audio recording from this conference was professionally edited and is now available with an accompanying summary report, and a booklet with the elders' photos and biographies. This resource will be an asset to learning centres, for personal development, and for language training and revitalization. The resources will be available from the department's website or from our office in Iqaluit. Copies will also be widely distributed.

(interpretation ends) The resources are based on the traditional knowledge of 14 Nunavut elders from across Nunavut, including the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit, and present their discussion on Inuit customary law and culturally relevant ways of managing health and wellness.

Mr. Speaker, the development of the new resources fulfills several priority areas of the *Turaaqtavut* mandate related to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit societal values. I encourage all members to read and listen to these *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* resources. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Minister's Statement 592 – 5(2): Nunavut Essential Workers Wage Premium Grant

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to introduce the Nunavut Essential Workers Wage Premium Grant, an extension of the Nunavut Essential Workers Wage Premium we launched last June.

Under the original program we have to date paid out over \$2.8 million to 1,848 employees working for 64 different employers across Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, this has helped top up wages paid for almost 540,000 hours of work. Our support also included over \$250,000 to help employers cover their own administrative costs.

Mr. Speaker and members, we are now expanding this program by adding a new grant. As I noted in my Budget Address, our hamlets have played important roles in delivering essential services, like organizing food deliveries and helping run screening and vaccination clinics. To support our hamlets we are making available grant funding of \$15,000, \$35,000, or \$75,000 per community based on size. In all we expect to pay out nearly \$800,000 across Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker and members, we also want to acknowledge the essential nature of the work that has happened during the past year within Nunavut's traditional economy. This is why our government is also making available a grant of \$5,000 for each hunters and trappers organization and other eligible non-profit organizations.

All grant recipients will be able to decide for themselves how and when to best use these funds in support of the essential work they do related to COVID.

Mr. Speaker and members, we have already started to contact eligible organizations to invite applications and expect to roll out these new grants in the coming weeks. Thank you to all who continue to provide essential services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): We do thank them. Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends)
Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Ehaloak.

Minister's Statement 593 – 5(2): Qulliq Energy Corporation Paperless Billing Update

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)
Good afternoon to my colleagues and those who are watching, especially Cambridge Bay.

Uqaqtii, I am pleased to provide an update on the Qulliq Energy Corporation's paperless billing system. The program launched in September 2020 and customers who signed up are now receiving their monthly electricity bills [by email] instead of through Canada Post.

Paperless billing is a more modern and convenient option for customers. In addition to being efficient, it reduces environmental impacts of printing and delivery and decreases the corporation's administrative [costs].

A public service announcement was circulated last fall to introduce the program and promotional billing inserts are being distributed as a reminder to sign up. So far, 3,772 of our customers have provided their email addresses and now receiving bills to their inbox.

Interested customers are encouraged to join by simply emailing their account information to the customer care office. For Nunavummiut who prefer to receive their bills by regular mail, nothing will change.

Mr. Speaker, providing a paperless billing option is an example of how the Qulliq Energy Corporation is prioritizing customer service while continuing their efforts to find cost-effective and environmentally friendly practices. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 594 – 5(2): Online Professional Development Programs for Public Servants

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I send my warm regards to the residents of Quttiktuq.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to providing professional development to public servants, enabling them to bring their diverse talents and skills as they deliver services to all Nunavummiut.

I am pleased to share that my department is offering three new training programs for public servants this year:

- The Communications Skills Program: develops skills in crafting impactful communications and media relations.
- The Mediation and Facilitation Skills Program: develops negotiation skills, managing challenging conversations, and mediation.
- The Practical Administrative Skills Program: develops skills in office procedures, minute taking, business and report writing, and project management for administrative professionals.

Mr. Speaker, these programs are delivered virtually utilizing Microsoft Teams in response to COVID-19 pandemic physical distancing requirements. As a result, Government of Nunavut employees from across the territory are able to participate virtually and learn together without having to leave their communities.

Mr. Speaker, as the territory's largest employer, the government must compete with other employers within and outside Nunavut to attract and retain skilled employees. By

offering a wide variety of high-quality workplace professional development programs, we are raising our profile as an employer of choice, making progress on our Inuit employment goals, building the overall capabilities of the public service, and ultimately improving the services we provide to Nunavummiut. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. I have no more names on my list.

Before we proceed, I just want to note to my colleagues that Mr. Kaernerck and Mr. Lightstone will be absent from the House today due to personal reasons.

Members' Statements. Member for Tununig, Mr. Qamaniq.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 845 – 5(2): Mary River Project

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Tununig.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to make a brief statement about the Mary River project.

Mr. Speaker, as you and my colleagues will be very much aware, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association issued an announcement this past Friday indicating that its board of directors has passed a formal resolution to not support the Mary River Phase 2 proposal.

Mr. Speaker, as the Member of the Legislative Assembly representing the residents and community of Pond Inlet, I wish to acknowledge the impact that this decision will likely have on the current Nunavut Impact Review Board process.

Mr. Speaker, in its announcement, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association indicates that it “remains open to resource development in the Qikiqtani Region and welcomes proposals from Baffinland that prioritize Inuit involvement from the beginning.”

Mr. Speaker, the phase 2 proposal is extremely complex. As of today, there are almost 2,000 individual documents currently available on the Nunavut Impact Review Board's public registry concerning the phase 2 proposal. Mr. Speaker, I doubt that there is anyone alive who has actually read every single one of them.

Mr. Speaker, I will have some questions at the appropriate time today concerning the Government of Nunavut's current position on this project, and I want to conclude by saying that perhaps it is time to push the reset button. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 846 – 5(2): Full-time Doctor for Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and the people of Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge our government to reconsider establishing a full-time doctor position for the community of Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time for our government to begin planning to have more physicians in Nunavut's larger communities.

Baker Lake has grown significantly and is large enough to warrant a full-time family doctor. Having a doctor in the community for three weeks at a time, with a very long wait in between visits, is not sufficient any more.

Mr. Speaker, at one time Baker Lake was fortunate to have Dr. Whittle come and stay for extended periods of time. Sadly we lost that resident physician a number of years ago.

My point is, Mr. Speaker, that we have had a doctor living and working in the community before. This isn't a new idea. I think the time has come for this idea to be re-visited.

Mr. Speaker, so many people are falling ill these days that we need to be more proactive in addressing our health needs and issues. We need the sustained efforts of health professionals like mental health workers, public health nurses, counsellors and physicians. People need more support to take their own health seriously.

Smoking reduction activities, assistance for elders, even exercise and weight-loss programs would be a huge benefit. In the past, individuals have run programs to address specific health issues but when they leave town, there is a lack of initiative by the Department of Health to keep the momentum going.

Mr. Speaker, posters and announcements on the radio and Facebook are not enough. So much money is spent on flyers and brochures that end up littering the floor of the post office. We need a more concerted effort to engage with people face to face and encourage them to live healthier lives. At the appropriate time I will have questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Member's Statement 847 – 5(2): Chesterfield Inlet Housing Needs

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to call for action to address the housing situation in Chesterfield Inlet due to the dilapidated conditions of housing units. We cannot just vocalize or write our concerns anymore. Real action is needed. It requires a focused approach and I am aware that this minister is dedicated to her portfolio in trying to resolve this challenge.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the community of Chesterfield residents are very frustrated with the situation. The community local housing organization is also very frustrated. The community Member of the Legislative Assembly is very frustrated with this situation.

Mr. Speaker, as I noted in the House last week, all seven members of the Chesterfield Inlet Housing Association Board of Directors signed a letter last June to the President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. I again, want to pay tribute to the hard work and commitment of the local housing organization board members.

In their letter, the members of the board noted that there are almost two dozen units in the community that were built in the 1950s, almost 70 years ago. There are numerous problems with these aging units and they are barely fit for human habitation.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's current housing construction allocation methodology ranks community by relative need. Chesterfield Inlet's relatively low population growth has resulted in its being far down on the priority list for new units and it is not clear when new units may be constructed.

Mr. Speaker, the community and its residents need hope. The current methodology and formula does not work for the community. The community feels it is suffering unfairly.

(interpretation) I will again state very clearly that I believe that the Nunavut Housing Corporation must take action in writing to address... .

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my colleagues.

I will again state very clearly that I believe that the Nunavut Housing Corporation must take action to address the immediate need to repair and upgrade the community aging housing stock. If we're not going to be allocated new housing units any time soon, then the Nunavut Housing Corporation must accept its responsibility to allocate the necessary resources to ensure that the housing units that we do have are in decent condition.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to address this issue throughout the remainder of our term of office. We need action, not colourful letters, not colourful words, but action. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Member's Statement 848 – 5(2): A Reminder That We Must Never Give Up

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am so proud of what I'm wearing. Geela Akulukjuk of Pangnirtung made this garment, and I'm very proud to wear it. Thank you, Geela.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) although it's going to be hard, I feel responsible and care enough about Nunavut to make the comments I'm about to make. May 28, 1986, at a very young age my sister was taken, murdered, unsolved today.

Mr. Speaker, then in May of 2019, I was yet once again impacted. Unfortunately, my nephew did a murder/suicide. Three months later, my sister, the mother of the late, passed. In July of this year, my mother-in-law passed. Two days later, we left because suddenly my husband was sick. Before we came back, August of this year, my *puukuluk*, my biological mother passed. That's a lot in a very short time.

I've gone through many different emotions; I've cried, I've been angry, I've been appreciative of support, but I say all this today because I felt for my colleague yesterday. (interpretation) We do not have to give up. Even though I went through difficulties, I'm still here.

>> *Applause*

I would like you to remember, even though it's not at the same time, we will all go through difficulties. Our past leaders worked hard, they didn't give up, and that's why we are all still here. I would like you to keep in mind, don't ever give up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I am remembering tonight, the words Peter Tapatai spoke that gave the same message. Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list.

An Hon. Member: Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): My apologies. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Kusugak.

Member's Statement 849 – 5(2): Love for Our Daughters, Mothers, Sisters, and Grandmothers

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll try to get my arm lengthened.

>>*Laughter*

Yesterday was International Women's Day. I'm happy. Yes, certain days come and go, and today I know that my siblings, though I hardly ever talk about my close immediate family, I have you in my thoughts. I am one with you. It has been 18 years and whenever that day comes, it seems like yesterday we lost a sister, and that was really hurtful. It is still hurtful today.

Our sisters, our mothers, our grandmothers, and daughters; let us love them and be proud of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Continuing on. No. 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Oral Questions. Thank you. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Item 6: Oral Questions**Question 1228 – 5(2): Full-time Doctor for Baker Lake**

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's population is steadily growing with close to 40,000 people in our territory. As I noted in my member's statement, Baker Lake is large enough to warrant having a full-time doctor in the community and had one in the past.

Can the minister clarify whether he has considered establishing a full-time physician position in the community of Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for the question. There is currently a physician on-site, and there will be one there for the foreseeable future. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the minister for the response. It's good to hear that the physician will be there for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Speaker, I do recognize that there are a number of factors that go into allocating the number and type of health professional staff for individual communities. Can the minister tell us how his department reviews such factors as population growth, health status, lifestyle and incidence of disease to determine what specific health staffing requirements, including nurses, mental health workers, public health staff and physicians, each Nunavut community needs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Or "C" all of the above.

Mr. Speaker, there really is no predetermined staffing formula nationally or internationally, but our Health department and team take a look at many factors, some of which my colleague outlined in determining whether it warrants a doctor or two, or what other specialists may be required in the community.

I can assure my colleague that there is a doctor there now in Baker Lake, and the doctor will be there for the foreseeable future. If and when the doctor needs to leave, there will be a replacement brought there. We have also hired a nurse practitioner into the community also. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for the response, but if I can get just a little bit of clarification. The physician will be in Baker Lake for the foreseeable future. Does that mean the physician will stay in Baker Lake permanently? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The only time there would not be a physician there is if for an unforeseen reason that the physician has to travel or the replacement isn't there and in those short gaps there would not be a physician. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Question 1229 – 5(2): Tourism Initiatives

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and the community of Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

As the minister will recall, I recently tabled correspondence in the Legislative Assembly from the Mayor of Gjoa Haven, and I again pay tribute... I just want to ensure that the minister was listening. I again pay tribute to the municipal council and its hard-working employees.

One of the priorities identified by the community is the need to develop the tourism sector of the economy and to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the recent discovery of the ships of the Franklin Expedition.

Mr. Speaker, travel restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have severely damaged the tourism sector.

As the minister is aware, his department's business plan indicates that it has "collaborated with Inuit Organizations, industry partners and federal government agencies to establish a Tourism Task Force. The Task Force is developing a Tourism Recovery and Resiliency Plan for Nunavut."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the activities and actions of the Tourism Task Force? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am listening and I thank you for tabling the document that the municipality has been wanting in terms of their infrastructure needs.

Also, when it comes to the tourism task force, I don't have an actual timeline in terms of what is being discussed and what has taken place, but I am sitting on the federal-provincial-territorial ministers of tourism and we go through each of our jurisdictions and the tourism has been impacted all across the world, including Canada. The recovery time for that will take time.

As you might know, the cruise ships for 12 passengers and over have been suspended for the Arctic, which would have an impact on your community because that's one form of tourism travel to your community to go see those old ships. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another priority identified by the community is the need to expand our beautiful and world-famous Nattilik Heritage Centre. Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what funding is available from his department for heritage centre upgrades and expansions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A variety of our programs do allow for funding requests and the community and the centre can bring in a proposal through our Strategic Investments Program. Through that program, we can take considerations for that. I would encourage the community to bring forward a proposal that allows us to look at whether we can fund it internally or look for other sources of funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is very highly unlikely, but it never hurts to ask.

>>*Laughter*

As the minister will recall, I have previously tabled documents in the Legislative Assembly concerning the community's request for airport improvements, including a longer runway. In the long term this expansion would also help support the tourism sector.

Can the minister clarify his department's current plans with respect to long-term improvements at the Gjoa Haven Airport? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For any of our airport expansions or airport upgrades, we go through our 20-year needs assessment, which we have not done yet. It is still in draft form. Those would be the case, and specifically for airport expansion studies, I thank the House for providing the capital dollars under our small capital programs, where it allows for the study of communities.

I don't know where Gjoa Haven is on this, in terms of our schedule, but we don't turn down any requests when a community brings forward a proposal, but we also are limited for funds. I thank this House for providing funding, allowing for communities to look at their own airports and airstrips. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Question 1230 – 5(2): Mental Health Support during Pandemic

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Netsilik, as well as to my colleagues here. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to mental health, everyone is impacted by such issues as the COVID-19 pandemic which is affecting people all across the globe. When people don't know where they are going in life, the stress can take over and this is a great burden on them. With this illness spreading across the world, governments have put protocols in place for people to follow.

Can the minister clarify what consideration has been given to putting protocols in place to reduce the levels of stress that people in all of our communities are facing so that they will not feel so over-burdened? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I understood his question properly, we are discussing ways to lower stresses, especially depression or mental health issues. We have developed a process to approve proposals for initiatives specific to recreation or other supports to help residents to have healthier minds. Residents can apply to this program and receive assistance in filling out their application forms as there are many different programs one could take advantage to provide more support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my preamble, everyone's life is being affected by this pandemic. It is not just the illness. There are side effects from the threat of illness that can affect a person mentally.

Can the minister tell us what his department has been doing to develop programs to reduce the stress that people are feeling due to the global pandemic? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Local mental health workers use different initiatives to try to provide more support for mental health issues through radio shows, public announcements, and try to develop more initiatives locally, and they work with the municipal governments and other stakeholders.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, starting from March 2 up to April 2 we have put out an announcement about stress and mental health, along with addictions, so we have developed several programs that people can apply towards for various initiatives. Groups such those supporting local youth can apply for programming support such as youth anti-addiction activities or information materials.

Further, this can be put towards developing a counselling program, and if they wish to work towards life skills or living a good life by taking them out on hunting trips or to teach Inuit cultural skills, that can be included as well. There are many different types of programs people can apply towards, and there is no limit on the number of applications they can submit for various activities.

I also would ask that they direct their applications, and I will mention the email address here, Mr. Speaker: rhollingshead@gov.nu.ca is where they can then submit their applications to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems that this minister has made many plans towards helping the people, as he responded with clear direction and cut off my next set of questions.

For my final question, so that this question will be easily understood by our people, I will ask this question as well. (interpretation ends) It is important for the people of Nunavut to have support to reduce the levels of stress and fear that have been brought about by the global pandemic. I believe the government can play a role with public campaigns to help people deal with and manage their stress.

Will the minister commit to creating and delivering public messages that directly address pandemic-related stress and will he do this before the end of the term of the Fifth Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We started working on this during the beginning of the pandemic last year, and to date, we have spent quite a bit of time to complete this work, and whenever we have any information to pass along, then we also use the public announcements to list the proper phone numbers. Programs that can provide more assistance are what we plan to develop continuously during the life of this pandemic, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Question 1231 – 5(2): Polar Bear Management

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Environment and the concern the issue of polar bear management and the return of the hides to Nunavut.

As the minister will recall, I asked him questions about the status of the southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation during the Legislative Assembly's sitting of September 23, 2020. At that time I noted that the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board had recently met in early September to consider recommendations concerning the total allowable harvest for the subpopulation.

Can the minister confirm today what decisions, if any, have been made by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board on the recommendations that were submitted and, if no decisions were made, when does he anticipate a decision? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No decisions have been made, to the best of my knowledge, of southern Hudson Bay sub polar bear population yet.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be meeting this month and it should be on their agenda and they should deal with it, but as the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board is an independent body, we will wait and see the results of their meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary question, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his minister's statement from March 1, the minister indicated that "Harvesters who sold their hides through the department will be able to get their hides back if they repay the amount that they were advanced." Mr. Speaker, some of these hides have been in storage now for up to five years.

Can the minister confirm that harvesters will be able to examine the condition of the reclaimed pelts before they decide whether or not to buy them back from the department, and if he can also indicate how many pelts have been sold back to hunters? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I'm a generous minister, I will answer both questions, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, the polar bear hides the member is enquiring about are physically here in Iqaluit now and there are 235 of them. It would be too expensive, complicated, and time-consuming for individuals to come and examine their hides. To the best of my knowledge from the letters that went out to the hunters that own these hides, the majority of them have agreed that the government can keep their hides instead of paying the advance back.

Mr. Speaker, at the time these advances were made, the polar bear hide market was really high and the advances were really high and generous. Since that date the market has evaporated. The polar bear market has crashed, so therefore most of these hides are not worth as much on paper as the advance that was issued to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for answering both questions, and I'll see if I can get two more in.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, also in the minister's statement he stated that "If a harvester does not wish to buy back their hides and they do not need to repay the advance, the remaining hides will be donated to non-profit organizations for projects or sold locally by the department." I know the minister touched on this and I would like to ask if he could elaborate on it some more. Can the minister update us today on this initiative and can he indicate when or where the remaining hides will be sold or donated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Good question.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, the polar bear hides are physically here in Iqaluit now, and they have been sorting them and categorizing them into the qualities of the hides. Some are not so good, and some are okay.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the timeframe as when they will be able to be sold, but it's in the neighbourhood of probably approximately two more weeks. Non-profit organizations can write to the Department of Environment and request hides and what they want the hides for.

Mr. Speaker, we will be selling these hides not to make money, we are selling these hides just to get our inventory of excess hides gone because they're not selling. If anyone in Nunavut wants to buy one, to the best of my knowledge, we will pay the shipping of that hide out of Iqaluit. We haven't quite figured it out yet, but we will do that. For the people here in Iqaluit, they will be able to go to look at the hides and buy one in the price range that they want it, when the time is right, or when they are ready. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Question 1232 – 5(2): Mary River Project

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

As I noted in my member's statement today, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association's board of directors has publicly announced that it does not support the Mary River phase 2 proposal.

In light of this announcement, can the minister indicate what the Government of Nunavut's current position is regarding the Mary River phase 2 proposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Nunavut Impact Review Board is currently reviewing phase 2, and there are still hearings that are being planned for this, and we continue to be an intervener on this front.

At this point, we haven't fully assessed what the Qikiqtani Inuit Association's board has passed, but we have seen their media release, and will continue to work to try and find ways of getting information on this. Currently, from the government's perspective, this is still under environmental assessment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. As the minister is aware, his department sent a letter on February 26, 2021 to the Nunavut Impact Review Board concerning its next set of hearings on the Mary River phase 2 proposal. For the record, can the minister confirm whether or not he approved the contents of this letter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a regulatory review in which we have full confidence in terms of our regulatory bodies. Through our government, we have set a number of committees, which includes, and is mostly comprised of our deputy ministers. When there are agreements at that level in terms of following our government policies, they don't necessarily come to me or to our Premier. Through this, we have the sustainable development committee which is co-chaired by both my deputy minister

under Economic Development and Transportation and the Deputy Minister for Environment.

When it comes to that level of agreement and that it complies within our government policies, we don't necessarily get to see those letters nor provide that input, because from a government's perspective, we set the policies in terms of what we would like to see. When it comes to caribou management, when it comes to any of our policies, be it our *Parnauti* document which is comprised of mineral development, we set those. If there is a disagreement among, in terms of what needs to be submitted, then it does go to both our ministers. When we can't agree on it, it then goes to cabinet level. At this point it has not reached to my level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the government's participation and how he can clarify how the process is here.

(interpretation ends) In my member's statement today, I suggested that it may be time to push the reset button on the phase 2 proposal. What is the minister's position on my suggestion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister for Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is right in the middle of a review right now and to try and reset; I want to hear what the Nunavut Impact Review Board has to say about this. As you mentioned there are over 2,000 participants that have provided input. They have to sift through all those documents, and with the QIA board's recent decision, that is more information that they need to go through.

As stated in their media release, Baffinland does need to come back and see how they are going to respond because that phase 2 is their proposal, and if it's not supported by the land owner at its forum, then the onus is on them.

For our government, when we looked at phase 2, we looked at the technical aspects of it: the caribou migration, the dust and those other issues that have been raised at the community level. All levels, including our biologists and our team of experts throughout our government, we've provided that input. We look forward to what the Nunavut Impact Review Board has to say when they make their final recommendations.

I look forward to their ongoing hearings that will take place, and I have full respect for that body and they have a very tough decision to make, a very tough decision.

It doesn't get any easier, but do we want development to stay in Nunavut. I think that's going to be the next discussion depending on the response or the recommendations. We are ready. As a government, we are open for development, as long as it's done with environmental stewardship and our economic opportunities.

We have 10,000 young people that are or will be coming into the workforce. How are they going to work? Our government only has 5,000 jobs. We need more jobs in the territory as our population grows, and so as a government we will continue to look for opportunities for the very population that we serve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Question 1233 – 5(2): Easing of COVID-19 Restrictions in Arviat

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are regarding the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in Arviat announced earlier today by the Chief Public Health Officer. It's a one-page announcement and going through it, I do have a few questions for the minister.

My first question is regarding a general instruction to the community. If I had to summarize this from where I sit, reading the doctor's advice, his advice is that restrictions are being eased, but COVID is still in the community and there are still rules and it's still important to follow the new rules. It can't be a free-for-all. There are still rules to follow. That's my first question for the minister. How important is it for Arviarmiut to follow these new rules going forward? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really appreciate the question. Mr. Speaker, now more than ever is it important to follow very tightly the new rules, otherwise we end up right back where we came from.

Mr. Speaker, the Chief Public Health Officer is easing the restrictions because there's an understanding that and, as my colleague and Arviarmiut have been saying, they're getting really tired of where they are. You're seeing that starting to shift. I believe, in the number of cases that are there, our team has been working very hard and here's an opportunity for Arviarmiut to follow the rules very strictly in terms of no more than 25 people gathering.

The Chief Public Health Officer has announced that Arviarmiut could now have five people visit their household on top of the people that are within the household. Follow that rule. Don't make it six or seven. There's a reason they're allowed to have five.

If I could elaborate also, the Chief Public Health Officer is encouraging to have bubbles within the community. Have your bubble. Don't have five or six bubbles. Have your bubble with, it could be your brother, your cousin, your neighbour, somebody, but to create that link from your household to another household and keep that from spreading. Follow these simple rules is what I ask now more than ever. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. With respect to the response the minister provided, I would like to ask further questions on this issue as I want everyone to clearly understand this in Arviat.

The issue of visiting is something that was brought up by the Chief Medical Officer where he mentioned (interpretation ends) "bubbles" (interpretation) as a possibility. If I were to use an example; if Minister Kusugak and I were in a bubble, if he was a resident of Arviat, it would be like a bubble of two houses. Only these two homes could visit each other as a bubble, but would not be allowed to visit any other household or person, and they would have to turn down any requests from outside the bubble.

We would only be visiting one other household in our bubble, almost as if the two houses had come to an agreement that "Yes, we will only visit each other." Perhaps that would make it a lot clearer for residents, if the minister can elaborate on this point, hence my question on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is exactly the point. Let me start off with this first, Mr. Speaker, that any person infected with COVID-19 has to remain isolated and cannot go visiting at all, or even go outside yet.

This part has not changed in any manner, so if any resident has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has been placed in isolation, and if this restriction also applies to other members of your household, then you must follow that restriction and people who are sick cannot form any bubbles.

However, residents who are not restricted or sick are the only ones who can develop a bubble with another household. I support the residents of Arviat, and perhaps if a resident would prefer to have their daughter as their permitted visitor and they wish to see their grandchildren, then only these two households would be able to visit each other.

Residents can also make arrangements with other households, nonetheless, it can only be with one other household and there are some other situations listed, but generally you can have one other household as part of your bubble, and it cannot be more than that. This is quite clear, so I hope residents will follow this new rule, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that response. In the coming weeks, weekends as well as future months, we don't currently know what the future will actually hold. Residents diagnosed with COVID-19 is what we want to have decreased to zero amongst the residents of Arviat, and to work towards that is a vision we can foresee and we want to reach that goal and date.

Can the minister provide additional details on the rules that are currently in place, including that rules may also be strengthened or more rules may be relaxed, depending again on these numbers.

I wonder if the Department of Health has an alternate plan to increase or decrease these rules depending on the situation. If he can provide more details, I would be sincerely grateful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, the medical team in Arviat conducting the testing for COVID-19 are working nonstop at this time. There are nurses, vaccination teams and testers checking people and contact tracing to see if it continues to be transmitted.

They are also testing people to see who is infected with COVID-19 in Arviat. Based on those results, more monitoring is done to determine if transmission has occurred amongst the household where the patient had the positive test, and to restrict the household to stop it from spreading.

The current people being infected by COVID-19 seem to be in the same households, and with the number of households that have been identified, we are trying to keep it from spreading by isolating each household. That is what they can do to start easing some of the restrictions and we can move forward from that point.

If we can start decreasing the numbers of patients suffering from COVID-19, then more easing of the rules will also take place, and as each level is passed, more rules would be removed. However, if the number infections increase, then obviously more restrictions would be put into place as well, so it can go either way depending on the situation.

That is where we are at, Mr. Speaker, in Arviat, and I want all Nunavummiut to know although we are talking about Arviat today, there is always the possibility of having COVID-19 arrive in another community elsewhere, so we have to keep our guard up here in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague for asking about this matter.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Pedersen.

Question 1234 – 5(2): Kugluktuk Sewage Lagoon

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to my colleagues and the people of Kugluktuk.

My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

It is important that all communities in Nunavut have high-quality infrastructure in the areas of solid waste management and wastewater management.

As the minister is aware, Kugluktuk's sewage lagoon is in need of major repairs, which is why I was pleased to note that her department has issued a request for proposals last week to develop a business case in support of long-term repairs to the Kugluktuk sewage lagoon. The RFP documents indicate that the final business case report is due to be submitted in early September of this year.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that a copy of the final report is provided to the Municipal Council of Kugluktuk and office of the community's Member of the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. Yes, the department can provide the final report to the municipality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the response. The RFP documents for the business case indicate that field assessments are to take place in mid-May and June of this year.

Can the minister clarify the extent to which COVID-19 travel restrictions may impact this phase of the project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) When it comes to COVID-19, it is so unpredictable all across Canada and all over the world. It is hard to gauge COVID-19 impacts, but it is in the planning stage for this

project. The department has taken into consideration what would happen if Kugluktuk was to get COVID and those are in the planning stage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The RFP documents for the business case study indicate that the recent water licence inspections have also presented the possibility of significant loss of volume in the lagoon prior to decanting.

As the minister will be aware, her department has been authorized by the Municipality of Kugluktuk to act on its behalf in respect to its water licence renewal application to the Nunavut Water Board.

Can the minister confirm what support her department provides to municipalities to ensure that their water licences are up to date and can she confirm the current status of Kugluktuk's renewal application? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Again I thank the member for his question. The Department of Community and Government Services works very closely with our municipalities on whether or not their water licences comply with the Nunavut Water Board. If some of the terms and conditions of the water licence don't comply, we work with the communities to ensure we mitigate some of those issues that are addressed and we work very closely with them.

We have engineers who are on site when the Nunavut Water Board is doing their inspections and they're testing at our water treatment sites or our sewage lagoons so that we are made aware of what is happening within our municipalities. We work with every municipality on their water licences. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Ms. Angnakak.

Question 1235 – 5(2): Legal Services Board

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions and I want to follow up with the Minister of Justice concerning the subject of the Legal Services Board.

I want to begin by noting that my questions to the minister last week on this topic did not state that the Legal Services Board was in a deficit position. What I did make reference to was the fact that the operations and maintenance budget for the Legal Services Board was set at \$11,818,000 in the 2014-15 fiscal year, and is projected to be set at \$11.8 million for the '23-24 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, that's a full decade without any change. Can the minister explain why the board's budget appears to have been frozen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been in the position where I've had to justify why we haven't changed budgets or why we have changed budgets many times in this House, and over the last few years we have made a very concerted effort on dealing with the actual of a division or department, any category of government operations.

Mr. Speaker, the Legal Services Board has never been in a deficit situation, to my awareness, and in fact has small surpluses, very small and very tight to the budget, over the last couple of years. In doing that, when we look at our budget reviews, it hasn't demanded an increase in the budget. We will continue to have oversight and to take a look at ongoing operations and if there are continued cost pressures where their operational budget does not meet their needs, we will definitely continue to review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I noted during Friday's question period, the most recently tabled annual report for the Legal Services Board, which is this one I'm holding here, 2017-18, included some strong language from the chairperson concerning the risk of service cuts or reductions as a consequence of the board's budget position. It's kind of confusing when you read that and then hear what the minister's response is.

Can the minister confirm how many face-to-face meetings he has had with the Legal Services Board of directors since he was appointed Minister responsible for the Legal Services Board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As always, I'm definitely open to business cases that any division puts forward to take a look at, but with regard to face-to-face meetings, there haven't been too many face-to-face meetings over the past year; I'm sure the member can understand. I have not met personally with the Legal Services Board at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current business plan of the Department of Justice indicates that the Legal Services Board has been working to develop a five-year

strategic plan. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: I was so excited to give a response to that question...

>>*Laughter*

...Mr. Speaker, I leapt to my feet.

Mr. Speaker, as recently as last week, my deputy minister has met with the CEO of the Legal Services Board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Ms. Angnakak.

Question 1236 – 5(2): Support for the Arts and Crafts Sector

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It does sometimes benefit us when a few members are not here...

>>*Laughter*

...we get to ask more questions.

My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. I would like to revisit the issue of support for the arts and crafts sector of our economy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last year the minister announced that his department had launched a \$150,000 Nunavut Public Art Initiative to support artists during these unprecedented and difficult times. Can the minister update the House today on whether he is considering a second round of support for artists under this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this is the last month of our fiscal year, I have not put a thought in terms of providing more funding towards this, but that does not prevent us from whether to revisit it in the new fiscal year. At this point I will be appearing before the Committee of the Whole for the economic development budget and through that process, you won't see that particular one in terms of within our budget, but as COVID continues, we need to continue to rethink our budgets and I think that's one of the ways that I'm saying no but maybe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say yes, I think it should be something that the department would consider.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, he writes an annual letter of expectation to the Board of Directors of the Nunavut Development Corporation, which has a number of subsidiary companies that are active in the arts and crafts sectors.

Can the minister describe what specific actions the Nunavut Development Corporation and the subsidiaries have been taking to support our artists during the COVID-19 pandemic, and will he commit to tabling this year's letter of expectation in the Legislative Assembly before the end of our current sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to mislead the House in terms of whether to table it or not. I know we table the letters of expectation on an annual basis; I just don't know when. What I do know is that those letters of expectation are still in draft form and we're going back and forth with the Department of Finance and ourselves and the agencies that we support.

I want to assure the members that the COVID-related topic is part of that letter of expectation, and I applaud the Nunavut Development Corporation for stepping up and producing those masks, unprecedented in terms of when it comes to what responses were needed to get done and through having corporations such as this and very active board members. They're able to reshape and retool some of the areas. I want to single out the Nunavut Development Corporation for doing that during this COVID, even without waiting for the letters of expectation. They came and be forceful as a very active board.

We have boards and agencies throughout our government and I would encourage all of our appointed and our hard-working staff to continue to do this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. It is good to know that the NDC has stepped up to the plate.

As the minister will recall, I asked him a number of questions last year concerning the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association management of the funding that the Legislative Assembly approved through his department's main estimates.

When I last raised this issue during our fall sitting, the minister indicated that the association was not in compliance with the terms and conditions of its contribution agreement with the department. Can the minister update the House today on the status of this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sadly, there is no update. It is still ongoing. I want to assure this House that there is no partnership agreement in place until all that is settled with the board. Right now, there is no resolution to date with the Nunavut Arts and Crafts and their board. Right now it is in a limbo. We would like to continue to work with them, but when you don't have that, you don't have that. I want to assure this House that what's been approved for our partnership program, when terms of conditions are not being met, we do seize that. At this point, as sad as I am, we have seized that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members please be aware that the time allotted for Question Period has expired. We will now proceed to Item 7. I would also like to remind members, I recognize the third year interpreter-translator students who are still here. I'm sure you've seen them. They are:

- Annalisa Arnatsiaq

>>Applause

Please stand.

- Susie Joanasie

>>Applause

- Susanna Kadlutsiak

>>Applause

Please be aware of them. This will be their last day here. Thank you for being able to be here. We will expect to see them again in the future as interpreters. The MLAs and interpreters will always be here. Thank you.

Let us proceed. Written Questions. Returns to Written Questions. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. Petitions. Responses to Petitions. Reports of Standing Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) Minister of Family Services, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents**Tabled Document 366 – 5(2): Child and Family Services Act Annual Report 2019-2020**

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to be tabling the 2019-2020 Annual Report of the *Child and Family Services Act*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Ms. Towtongie.

Tabled Document 367 – 5(2): Correspondence from Victor Sammurtok School

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a letter from the Chesterfield Inlet District Education Authority. I ask that you review the document with care as I will have questions on it tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Notices of Motions. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Motions. First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Second Reading of Bills. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 58, 59, 60, 61, and 68 with Mr. Akoak in the Chair.

In accordance to the authority provided to me by Motion 107 – 5(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:06 and Committee resumed at 15:31*

Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 58, 59, 60, 61, and 62. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the 2021-22 Main Estimates for the Department of Family Services, followed by the departments of Justice, Finance, and Economic Development and Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 59?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 59 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2021-2022 – Family Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Your officials are already sitting in their spot. Does the committee to let the officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Sheutiapik, please introduce your officials.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) To my right is Deputy Minister Yvonne Niego, and to my far right is Ms. Taylor, and Ms. Haramincic. I think I slaughtered it; sorry. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Welcome to the officials. We have already done the opening comments and comments to the opening comments. We're on page L-4. Corporate Management. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing me. The *Income Assistance Act* was amended in 2017 following the report on the review and reform of income assistance and economic development. Are there any programs or policy changes being considered for this year 2021-22? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Bear with me. One example of our changes is our fuel subsidy program changing the threshold. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been a number of concerns with regard to federal funding [because of the] COVID-19 pandemic. A lot of Nunavummiut applied for and received federal funding but they were not eligible for these funds.

How is the department preparing to provide support and assistance to those Nunavummiut who may be required to pay back these funds? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question.

I believe I answered that. Right now the federal government is processing how much people will owe.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, one thing I can say is for the clients that have been coming back for income support, there has been a gap. So there hasn't been a break in support in income that way. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My final question with regard to the department is the absolute homelessness. The Nunavut action plan on absolute homelessness is ongoing to 2024 business plan. The results of the hidden homelessness survey were published last fall.

Has there been any specific initiatives that have been developed to address the findings of this survey? That is my final question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The reports on the survey were tabled while I was gone, but through this budget process we have an additional \$515,000 being added to the Poverty Reduction Division budget which would support operations of homeless shelters in the Kivalliq region. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go to page 164 of the business plan. You have "Continue implementation of recommendations..." This is for a departmental organizational review and monitor the process.

I'm wondering why this came about because in the status it says "This review will provide consistency on duties on similar roles..." I'm wondering if that was something that you found out within the department. Were there people kind of doing the same thing? Was it just to really better organize the staff and make it run more efficiently? I'm just wondering why there was a need to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, the deputy minister would like to respond to that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The reorganization of the department initiated a few years back, through that process a number of items were looked at.

There was a large consultation amongst all of the departmental staff and the results of that were quite clear that there were discrepancies between headquarter and regional authorities. Then on top of that, over these few years, meanwhile additional resources were identified which also changed the reorg structure that was envisioned initially, so adjustments had to be made. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for the response from the department. When you went through that process, the first question is: is this process completed? My second question: did anybody lose their jobs or was anybody moved to a totally different position because you might have found that some staff were doing the same work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) To my understanding there were no job losses because when this department was created, back in the day we were already short-staffed. I do know that there has been some opportunity for cross-training, which to me is very beneficial because you get corporate knowledge. So I know that has happened through the restructuring. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: I wonder if the minister can tell us what new organizational changes are actually being considered or have been implemented because of this review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Last year, I was very excited to be removing some areas that didn't really fit our department, and this would allow us to really concentrate on people who really need our support the most.

I know there still could be improvements in a sense of it's a huge department still, and I know in having briefings and looking at what other ways can we improve upon, that is where the senior management, I think we can better improve on in a sense of other departments actually have associate deputy ministers. Family Wellness of itself I think

can benefit from such a move, but that might be later on in the future. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. Again, on 164, in your business plan, the last bullet says “Initiate a review of frontline staffing capacity within Family Wellness, and develop a plan to address challenges.” Can you tell us here today, out of this review what kinds of challenges were most common that really needed to be addressed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I will respond a little bit and maybe have deputy minister expand a little bit.

My understanding in this process is, clearly, we need to be committed for ongoing training. We actually have mandatory training now, and through that process the other thing that was clear was in order to better support our frontline, we needed more management director within those regions to better support. I know that that certainly helped our frontline because now they have better support within their region, coming to headquarters.

Yvonne, did you want to expand on that through the Chairman? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As part of the re-org., there were a few things. One; the split off of the stream, Family Wellness with Income Assistance and Career Development for that regional headquarter authority issue, to address that. Regional director positions were created in each region to double the regional directorship into two.

Also, for frontline staffing capacity, not only supporting, but the re-org. indicates a shortage of several resources at the frontline long-term. To address just the mandate of the government would have been well over 90 positions. We recognize that’s difficult to implement immediately, so it’s been done in stages, and right now we are looking now at furthering that from the regional director level downwards.

Another common area would be in the Family Wellness stream, of course social workers, recognizing that there is a shortage of social workers across the territory. It’s about increasing the training for the more opportunities for training for Inuit, in-territory as well as for schooling. In-territory, there was the creation of a program where you can take some training in modules.

There are several initiatives underway under the whole re-org. plan. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe we're on Corporate Management. That, to my understanding, includes information technology. When we look at the department's operations, in what specific areas are there information technology related problems or ongoing issues that the department has? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm not sure what different stage is each; there are different components to it. Through you, the deputy minister will respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As you are well aware, we have the CIS project, the information system database for social work or family wellness. That project is ongoing. Meanwhile we also have income assistance and career development on very old systems. The three areas do not talk to each other and where we're trying to amend our programs to be in line with one client, one plan. The IT needs to match that and once we are done the first project, the next plans would be to update the other two. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you. The CIS (Client Information System) now that's an important one and I know that your social workers are already under a lot of stress. In terms of the operations, I would imagine that you would want that fixed and finished as soon as possible. What's the timeline that your social workers will be able to start using that new system? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, Arijana would be the best to respond to that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That would be Ms. Turner?

Ms. Haramincic: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. It is our hope that within the next two years we will be able to have a functional and appropriate system for our social workers to document client information. We're in the second phase of the project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This is my last question on this page. Within the next two years, until then, what are the social workers using for a system? I know the child and youth representative had highlighted this as an area of concern. It sounds quite serious. What is being used in the meantime? (interpretation) That's my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Unfortunately we're using the old system that we do have (interpretation) at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the business plan, specifically page 166, the second paragraph speaks about the homelessness and other support services provided.

It states that "Poverty Reduction Division provides contribution funding to municipal governments" and I wonder if the funds are specifically for homeless shelters or are these funds to pay for their services. There are funds for support services, and the services provided are for Nunavummiut who are experiencing homelessness. How many communities have applied for these funds? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for the question. (interpretation ends) Currently we have five existing shelters: Sivummut House in Iqaluit, Uqutaq in Iqaluit, the low-barrier shelter is in Iqaluit, Umingmak is Cambridge Bay, and of course the one in Kugluktuk, which is not yet quite open. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the funds that are being made available, do you expend all the money, or what happens? Have they been using those monies for the homeless? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, the funding allocated is utilized every year. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's good to hear. The smaller communities... and we haven't seen any shelters yet in the smaller communities. Is it a benefit to those people who have those shelters? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Clearly, the answer is yes, there's benefit to having it, but the services always vary because it's a community that reaches out to us with the need, and we start that process. If it's a need in the community, clearly, it's beneficial. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since there's no shelters in the smaller communities, do you have any plans to build any shelters in the smaller communities? I would very briefly like the minister to outline how the system works, and what benefits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If a community is in need of a shelter, be it homeless or *qimaavik*, they can reach out to our department and there's an application process. I know during the poverty reduction roundtable, because the funding comes through that arm, every year there is a gathering of different communities. We're always more than happy to assist in proposal writing if need be to try and make that need in the community become a reality. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I asked that question is the other community that I'm representing would like to build a shelter. That's more of a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That was just a comment, something to think about. Last name on my list: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and staff. On page 166, talks about transitional housing and support services. (interpretation) Could the minister

give a brief outline of what (interpretation ends) transitional housing (interpretation) is for? Could the minister elaborate and outline exactly what that is? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you for asking that question because it's available. (interpretation ends) Imagine, in this House, we're always asked about the need for homeless shelters, but it is supposed to be a temporary solution. Transitional housing assists in the sense that if you are in a homeless shelter, transitional is a place where... . We hope to have transitional where it is just before you find your own private or social housing. It is transitioning into being independent and not reliant on shelters. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It says "...transitional housing and support services to Nunavummiut experiencing homelessness." Which communities have this transitional housing is my next question? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you. I apologize. (interpretation ends) Can you repeat that question, please? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 166 it says "...transitional housing and support services to Nunavummiut experiencing homelessness." (interpretation) Which communities provide what is called (interpretation ends) "transitional housing?" (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think that is more of a typical heading because unfortunately in Nunavut we don't have transitional housing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): So we don't have it in Nunavut. Why is it written there that way? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) All of our shelters are either *qimaaviks* or homeless. Recently, during the last sitting I think, were tabled the housing surveys. We hope to have transitional housing in Nunavut. So this is part and parcel in preparation of. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. My final question, Mr. Chairman, is: can the minister inform the House how much of her budget is being used for transitional housing support services to Nunavummiut experiencing homelessness? I just need to find out what the dollar figure is. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, I don't have that level of detail, but Ms. Turner would like to respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Turner.

Ms. Turner: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman. Currently we are in the final stages of hiring a transitional housing coordinator who will help to develop some of the policies and do some of the work for funding proposals to the federal government to access additional funding for these types of projects.

There is also some of the contribution that we give to the Uquutaq Society here in Iqaluit for them to build and strengthen their transitional program that they hope to expand with their new facility here in Iqaluit. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. So the department is in the process of hiring staff to address this transitional housing and support service to Nunavummiut when we don't have any transitional housing. Is this my understanding? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I do believe last year's budget was approved with our homelessness coordinators. That is who we are referring to. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. My question was that the department is in the process of hiring a director or coordinator in terms of addressing the transitional housing support services to

Nunavummiut when we are just informed that we don't have any transitional housing in Nunavut. Why we are spending money on something that does not exist is my question. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) With the restructuring and the need, clearly, and we also know the federal government always needs justification, and in preparation of the surveys that were done, we need a body to concentrate solely on that and collect additional data and following through, but I do believe Ms. Turner would like to expand on that through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Turner.

Ms. Turner: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman. At the moment there are opportunities that come up for an individual to move out of a homeless shelter or a shelter into public housing, but they still may need some support, so that role would be able to support that process. It's also important for us to have some policies and guidelines that provide the framework for which the department will support transitional housing projects.

There have been a number of new funding opportunities that have been announced in the last year through the CMHC that some shelters have submitted applications to and looking to expand and build, so we are anticipating that in the coming years there will be more transitional housing spaces and facilities. This coordinator will help support the development. We also provide support for capacity building to the organizations that will be developing these programs and running these programs. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one question. Maybe perhaps if this question is irrelevant, just let me know. I'm not sure if I can ask the question in this House this afternoon, but there was a new homeless shelter kind of thing that was opened in the fall. I don't know how you call that building, but is there any staff living in that homeless shelter as well as the people living in the shelter? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) To make sure we're able to respond properly, are you referring to the Uquutaq shelter here in Iqaluit? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's the one that was opened recently in the fall. I believe it was in October that that building was opened, where there used to be one

down there and they moved right across from the beer and wine store kind of thing. I don't know what that is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is the Uqutaq Men's Shelter. I must say that they did a lot of work to make that a reality, a lot of partners, and it has grown in the sense of there's actually programming being offered that didn't in the old facility. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$12,047,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page L-5. Family Wellness. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is with regard to adoption. That's one of my passions. The priorities for 2021-22 is to continue to revise the *Adoption Act* and the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*. What are the main challenges in administrating these two pieces of legislation, and what changes to policies and procedures are being considered? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's a really good question. It's a tough one because of course; obviously we don't handle custom adoptions. It's handled by, in a sense, our land claims organization. We do assist, so our part is in the sense of... just imagine the regulatory... For example, in this House we have been asked to work with trying to include a criminal record check. That's a huge document. We need to sit down with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and go through that whole, and which one do we really want in the amended Act? That will have to be our starting point in the changes, in hopes to amend the *Custom Adoptions Act*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe this should be a priority. The GN handles aboriginal custom adoption for commissioners. It's a partnership with the Inuit organization, and if we're going to protect our children, we need to ensure criminal record checks are prioritized. In saying that, my final question, on page 169, it notes that "The department has begun preliminary work to develop a plan to build Territorial capacity to facilitate repatriation of clients placed in Southern facilities." Does that mean that the department is planning to build new residential care homes in Nunavut for youth and adults? My final question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For our clients in care in southern Canada, sometimes it could be a young woman living in Ottawa, who for whatever reason has chosen not to bring that child up on her own, and sometimes is in the care until we make arrangements to find a foster parent, and repatriate back. We're not building any new infrastructure for that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and to your officials. Welcome. The Department of Family Services provides grant funding for women's initiatives, and men and boys initiatives. What kinds of projects are being undertaken with the funding provided, and how do you measure their effectiveness? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Bear with me and I'll find the right... .

For social advocacy initiatives for men, boys, women's and girls' grants, the budget for the Women's Empowerment Initiative grant is \$50,000. The budget for Men's and Boy's Initiatives grant is \$50,000. In 2020-21 the department, to move forward with eight projects, four under the women's grants, totalling \$58,266 was approved, and for Men's and Boy's grants initiatives, four applications totalling \$61,734 were approved under this project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Moving on, one of the department's priorities is to work with other entities to identify elders within communities to work in collaboration with community social workers and family resource workers to support families. What kinds of cases will these elders be involved in? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For a more accurate response, if Ms. Haramincic might respond to that. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Through you, *Itsivautaaq*.

Chairman: Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Thank you for your question, Mr. Chairman. Our vision is for the elders to be involved with families and children that are receiving services from the department. At this moment there are no restrictions in regard to what type of specific support, but they would be the ones that would provide the support. When there is an interview, there is support; when the family is attending the offices, so anything that a family chooses and the elder feels it would be appropriate to be involved. *Nakurmiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. My last question, the 2021-24 business plan indicates on page 170 that in 2022-23 the department will be undertaking a review of the impact of the role of the coordinator for the prevention of violence against children and youth. Where is this position currently located, and what have been its priority areas of responsibility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, if I can have Haramincic respond to that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The priorities of that position were child abuse, neglect; a child neglect and abuse agreement. That was the initial priority to ensure that there is a collaborative agreement between all the departments and Inuit organizations on responding to child abuse and neglect in Nunavut. The second priority was support of Umingmak Centre and supporting the work so that it does support children who have been or are at risk of experiencing abuse. The location of the position is here in Iqaluit. *Koana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) First of all, I just want to echo the comments from Ms. Towtongie. I think that the Custom Adoption Act needs to be dealt with in terms of the issues that Ms. Towtongie keeps raising specifically regarding protecting children from being adopted by somebody who has been convicted for sexual offences. I think that needs to be addressed. In the business plan it says that this is ongoing, so continue to make changes. What is the timeline to have changes made and make a decision about what will be done differently? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank you for that question because it is important and I was really proud to be in here when it was unanimous that we take this and advocate for this. During the sitting last week, when asked again, I had already directed the staff and they're already drafting a letter to the re-elect president to say, "I have been asked again; we need to have this meeting to continue that dialogue," but unfortunately I don't see a new regulation ready to be approved 'til next government. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is unfortunate and if there is any way that it can be done quicker, I'm sure the minister will do that. On the Residential Care Strategy, which is mentioned in your business plan on page 170, it says "Implement residential care strategy..." Is that care strategy available for members to review or is it an internal strategy? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It's more of an internal strategy. If you recall last year we'd been talking a lot about increase budget line item for this and it is because the needs of our residents are growing in different ways so we're trying to get a better handle in the sense of before a contract is up to be proactive on better understanding what the needs of the day are before a new contract is issued. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question is about the residential care line item. It's budgeted at \$43.7 million. So my questions are about what the department does to make sure that the facilities or homes that Nunavut residents are placed in, that they are meeting all their regulatory requirements, that they are meeting all the health requirements etcetera, which are not determined by us. The standards are determined by the southern jurisdiction or wherever they are located.

So how does the department make sure that the facilities that you are paying to take care of those Nunavummiut are meeting all of the requirements or that they are passing their inspections? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I actually have a minister's statement on that coming, but we actually have positions called client liaison officers who solely their job is to visit, whether it be the group homes or private homes or any home or facility that our clients are in. They meet guaranteed once a year face to face with our clients, but they work along with the

families also when they are visiting. So we do have what we call client liaison officers. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main, you said that was your last question? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The minister mentioned “once a year.” Can the minister clarify whether the department performs spot checks, unannounced visits or inspections to these facilities or to the homes, and if so how often? That is my last question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I can't say off-hand how many times, but I know myself as a minister with a deputy minister went visiting and I was not announced as the minister, so it happens regularly. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the business plan, on page 169 on the top, fifth bullet, it mentions foster care. I wish to understand, when a situation like this occurs in a smaller community, and if local youth are being housed in a home where the family, just an example, has four or five children, and it increases to six with the foster child.

How does the department deal with that, or does it have a written policy for cases like that? I would like to clearly understand this in light of impacts on health as I was just thinking out loud. This is what I am asking about, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize to the member; I don't quite understand this question.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq, can you clarify your question? Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my other constituency community there is a home that houses foster children or youth, and the foster parents are quite young as well. It is a couple with one child but they are limited by the lack of space because it is crowded.

Does the Department of Family Services have a policy for this issue where homes that have space limitations and are overcrowded may impact the child's health? Are their health conditions checked? Mr. Chairman, I hope I was understandable with that. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If he's asking if people in their homes are overcrowded, I'm sorry but we don't deal... . In Nunavut we all know there's overcrowding, but we don't deal with housing itself, the allocations. Maybe I'm not understanding the question properly, but that's the best I can say. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder then, what kind of scenario can we envision then? The home where the youth is being cared for, with the person who cares for them exercising social responsibility and supporting others as their reason for looking after the child, and this can be anyone, whether it is a younger person or even an older person.

I was looking to see if there are additional means of assistance that foster parents can request, as there could be more people who could care for the youth. What rules or regulations apply for this part? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Do you understand the question? Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was unable to hear him properly as I was on the wrong channel. (interpretation ends) If there's a youth living in the overcrowding and they want to help, that's my understanding now.

Obviously it's up to each household, if the youth wants to help within the home, I don't see a problem with that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Maybe my DM wants to clarify, through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I think Mr. Qirngnuq is asking that people are taking homeless people in, and they need support to help with groceries, and stuff like that. I think that's where he's going, if I understand him. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In order to assist the development of the communities, or (interpretation ends) development programs (interpretation) can the minister provide clarification about that? That is my question, which I am trying to clarify. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, the deputy minister (interpretation) will answer that question.

Chairman: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think I understand the question. In a small community if there is a household that is willing to help by taking in foster children who perhaps have been moved out of their biological homes, and the family that they are moving to may be extended family or whatever, if they are overcrowded, what are the supports there?

I think when our social workers look at each situation they have to weigh the benefits of keeping a child close to family and also weigh in the ability of the family to take care of those children well. So all of the work that the social worker does is to ensure a child-focused wellness.

If the child has been removed from one family and placed with another, so long as there are enough supports to enable a better life moving forward, while the original family also accesses supports so that children can be returned home. I think your question has to do with more of the housing also. The housing perspective is not up to the department.

Our focus is on the safety and wellness of the child. If it is too overcrowded and the health is at risk, then we may look for another placement and work with another family. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My fellow Nattilingmiut finally understood my question properly, Mr. Chairman, and I am very grateful for that. Now, since she understands, my question now is: how can the foster parents receive more assistance if they are caring for a child? I mean assistance for the child being cared for. Mr. Chairman, hopefully I am understandable now. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I finally understood that. (interpretation ends) I'm proud to say also through the support of this government, we have had some increases in staff, so we actually have foster parent coordinators who assist foster parents. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to my colleague representing Netsilik and Taloyoak, perhaps I am mistaken. He also represents Taloyoak, does he not? Yes, for Kugaaruk and I apologize.

This is to supplement part of his question. Residents who are too far in arrears for their unit to the LHOs are not allowed to move to another unit. This seems to be a natural supplemental question to his, so if I had a foster child but also had a large debt with the LHO, and even if I wanted to move to a larger unit but I couldn't, would the Department

of Family Services be able to assist me to lower my arrears so I could move to a larger unit?

I wonder if that was part of the question he was trying to ask. Can the department provide that type of assistance, madam minister? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I have heard of cases where arrears were included in the financial assistance portion, where a certain amount is paid towards the housing arrears as part of their compensation so they can make a payment to their housing association. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If a fellow resident asks that question I can respond now. Thank you for the response.

Also in the same area, I have a question regarding having a temporary foster child. In Nunavut is it almost impossible to find foster parents in the smaller communities, or do you happen to find somebody all of the time who can take in temporary foster children so they can stay in their community? I hope that was understandable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are different circumstances. Sometimes you have an agreement. Sometimes if the person has a relative, then the child will go to that relative, and if we can't find a family member in your community, we only send kids out if there is no family in the community and if we can't find a family member to take you in in the smaller community. Then and only then do we send them out to another community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for answering my question. I'm going to switch to English. Under your department's grants and contributions, funding for Child and Family Services Division, \$50,000 will be provided for Women's Initiative Grants. How many community projects have been undertaken with this funding to date? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have already stated (interpretation ends) those grants, for Women's Grants Initiatives for applications,

I don't have the detail of which for they were, I just have numbers with me, ut I'd be more than happy to pass it along. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Are you done? Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize. I did not hear this question when it was posed earlier. May be I wasn't (interpretation ends) paying attention.

You probably responded to this already. In 2020-21 for shelter programs, it will be increased and new shelters will be opened in Gjoa Haven, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet and Baker Lake. Well, thank you for including Pond Inlet in your plans.

I'd like to ask: after these new shelters are built, thinking more into the future, will this shelter building program continue in the other communities? Are just the first communities to get shelters, or will this year be the only time where there will be money for new shelters? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Well if the need is there, we would be sitting in this House requesting the same amount of money to start up new shelters within the territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Family Wellness. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$75,248,000 agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page L-6. Income Assistance. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm happy to see the senior citizen benefit will be going up. *Nunavunuurutit* is how they refer to it here. How did the department decide how much to increase the senior citizen benefit by? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, if Ms. Turner can respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Turner.

Ms. Turner: *Koana*, Mr. Chairman. It's a tricky financial calculation when we're looking at increasing benefits. We looked at what the current amount was, what the current demand was, as well as the amount that's available under OAS and GIS, and made a calculation on that basis. *Koana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Okay, so you looked at it and then you decided that was the right amount. When is the next time that this benefit will be reviewed? Is it statutory? Will it be every three years; the amount will be reviewed whether there needs to be an increase? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Like any program they are reviewed periodically, but more so especially when in this House clearly seniors are clearly important to us, so we made this change, and maybe in the next budget... . We had so much ask this year and last year that you kind of have to pick your asks when you have many divisions, but this was a starting point. Maybe you'll see a request in the next budget year to remove the thresholds that some of my fellow MLAs have been requesting. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) When it comes to your Income Assistance line item, you have \$52.5 million budgeted, roughly that amount. Given the messy situation with federal benefits, in the current fiscal year, is it looking like you will have a surplus under that income assistance line item, and if so, how much roughly are you anticipating? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, I don't have that kind of detail in front of me. If the deputy minister could respond. Thank you, (interpretation) Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For this current fiscal year, we are looking at some surplus. However, some of that surplus is expected to go to things like the guaranteed basic income contract, which will cost a significant amount of money, and to set us up for further improvements in the Income Assistance Program. Overall, I think Ms. Turner would have a better, exact, more accurate number for how much surplus would be left over after that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Through you, minister, do I go to Ms. Turner? Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

Chairman: Ms. Turner.

Ms. Turner: *Koana*, Mr. Chairman. As of the end of February, we had anticipated that there would be. There was an on average about 1,200 fewer income assistance clients since the CERB program over the course of the year, 1,200 fewer heads of households.

We do anticipate, that there's currently about \$6 or \$7 million less in expenses this year, and so by the time we take into account the improvements to setting up the improvements that the deputy minister mentioned, there might be \$4 million unspent. *Koana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm sure these discussions are happening internally, but I am concerned about people who have been victimized through these federal benefits, and specifically people who receive the benefits on paper, but didn't necessarily apply themselves because it was so easy to apply for these federal benefits like CERB. It took the very minimal information to apply, and I've been made aware of incidents where relatives have applied on behalf of their, maybe an older relative, and I would hate to see people get penalized for something that they did not do themselves.

I would like the minister to take that into consideration. I don't know what the solution is. I don't know if the federal government would entertain a request for forgiveness in that case, if a person did not have known knowledge of applying for the benefit. Anyway, I just wanted to mention that, and I have no further questions. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. That was just a comment. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question and I asked this in Legislative Assembly to the minister three years ago, and I'm not seeing it. It's about bingo winnings, and I have seen families across Nunavut, when one member of their family is working, and they play bingo, in order to deceive, that's the only word I can say, so they could claim the bingo winnings, they used a family member who's working to claim the winnings.

Page 172, it says "Complete the final phase of reform based on the recommendations from the review and reform process." I would believe the regulations could be changed to become more Nunavut-specific regulations. As you know, minister, the cost of living in Nunavut is very high. Income support assistance cheques are not enough.

Is your department planning to change, or have there been options to look at the regulations so people that do win bingo while on income support could claim their winnings? It's a very valid issue, a very valid concern, and I'm not seeing it here. I'm just seeing Income Assistance Payment "...and regulations deliver social assistance in all Nunavut communities."

In saying that, as a department, there has to be regulations looked at so it is justifiable and it becomes more Nunavut-specific. That's a question and a comment and my final question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The income reform, thanks to the last government, was started and that's why we increased the income supports and we continue to review and we've had discussions about this very topic. Unfortunately I can't say why it wasn't because at that point the review itself of the income support reform had started, but I can tell you that the one thing that I think would solve it and we're in the middle of preparing is the Guaranteed Basic Income because everyone would be receiving that. There would be no questions asked. It hopefully would rectify something like that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I knew that was my one question, but the Guaranteed Basic Income is just a feasibility study. We need actual implementation so the regulations can become Nunavut-specific on individuals who do play bingo so they can claim their bingo winnings and it has to be done as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not going to ask on this again.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: I have been in this House and I was asked about the... . To me, the Guaranteed Basic Income was the last question that I got in this House when it comes to income support. That's where we're heading towards and in my view, we wouldn't be questioning because it's basic income that automatically comes. That's what we're gearing towards right now. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just have one question and that's on page 173 on COVID-related actions. I know MLA Mr. Main alluded to CERB a few minutes ago and it says, "Amended the *Income Assistance Regulations* to address the various new Government of Canada COVID-19 related funding programs."

I translate it as the federal government is knocking on your door in terms of clawing back from people on social assistance. Has the federal government come to you in terms of what I just said, clawing money going to the income recipients? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There were changes because Inuit in Nunavut were receiving benefits through Tunngavik Incorporated or the arms of, and we didn't want to penalize that windfall from COVID to income support. That's why there were changes. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: I thought I had only one question, but so then the income recipients are not being penalized for collecting CERB and other various funding programs, COVID-related, from the federal government. Is that what she is saying? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) No, it is funds that were received from regional Inuit organizations. We didn't want to take away their income support because of money received from those organizations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. My question wasn't related to Inuit orgs, but in this business plan that the department wrote, it says, "Amended the *Income Assistance Regulations* to address the various new Government of Canada COVID-19 related funding programs." It does not say anything about Inuit orgs. Is there income being clawed back from income assistance recipients from what this says? (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Nothing to do with Inuit orgs. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The question was federally. This is an *Income Assistance Act*, so regardless of where the money came from, we have to look at, and we as a government had decided there was money coming from Inuit organizations. It links into income. I'm saying that we did not claw back any income assistance because of money received from the regional Inuit organizations. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member for Rankin Inlet North asked a question and I would like to supplement it to get additional information. With regard to young people who have young families and get income support from the government, usually the monies coming in are reviewed, and you know groceries are very expensive. My question to the minister: if they are fostering a child, do they get financial assistance, or is their income supplemented so they can take care of that foster child? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you very much for your question.

(interpretation ends) Foster parents do get a per diem. If they have a child that has special needs, be it maybe they need a laptop or hearing aid and those kinds of things; they are also provided funding for that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me move to a different item. On the page where elders' home fuel subsidy is listed, on page 172, the amount listed for the subsidy is a fund totalling \$478,000. There is a last paragraph listed that identifies the amount of the actual subsidy. I want to understand this, so I will ask it in English, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) For Senior Fuel Subsidy, "This program a subsidy for the high cost of home heating fuel to homeowners aged 60 and over. The program is income tested."

(interpretation) This wording, Mr. Chairman, is what I want to understand so I would like to know what that income tested wording means. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The changes on the Senior Fuel Subsidy; there were three different thresholds for income and different litres. We hope to change it where the net income is from 0 to \$100,000 and the increase is 100 percent of 4,000 litres. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Income Assistance. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$62,742,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Career Development on page L-7. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions here. This is on page 176. The first priority for the upcoming years is regarding working with Nunavummi Nangminiqqtunik Ikajuuti Secretariat about skills and trades training.

I really support this idea. I think we need way more Nunavummiut working in construction, especially on projects funded by public dollars. On page 175, on the status update, it references creating "...new processes that will require bidders on major government construction contracts to submit an overall Inuit Training Plan for the project as part of the bidding process." So making it mandatory would be a new step.

Is this the direction that the department is going that these training plans will be mandatory, or am I mistaken? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation end) That is a definite "yes." (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So when will these changes be implemented? When can we start to expect to see them in action? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I do believe the proposed ATA Act is in front of a committee. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Maybe if I could just get a clarification. I didn't quite understand the response. Was that a reference to the apprenticeship bill or something else? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) You are correct; it is the *Apprenticeship and Trade Act* and in there it touches on those things. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) The only other thing I wanted to ask about was the Nunavut Early Apprenticeship Training Program.

That is something I know is tied to the Department of Education. It mentions in the status update “The department has offered its support and engaged in discussions with the Department of Education...”. Are there any goals that have been set in terms of reinstating the Nunavut Early Apprenticeship Training. I’m asking, within the next fiscal year whether we can expect any announcements or projects to be brought forward. That is my last question. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Through you, if Ms. Lindsay Turner can respond. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Turner.

Ms. Turner: *Koana*, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Family Services and the Department of Education have just had some initial meetings to re-engage these discussions. As well, one of the areas of progress is that with some of the new WDA funding that the department received this year, the department has been able to support providing some additional funding to purchase equipment and tools for schools, for district education authorities to purchase for the trades kind of workshops within schools. That would be one, I guess, announceable. *Koana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’ve just got one question and it’s on page 166, COVID-related, the second bullet from the top, COVID-related actions, “Established youth on the land learning programs, in collaboration with the Nunavut Literacy Council...” Can the minister elaborate a little bit more on that and which communities will be hosting such on-the-land learning programs? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): I’m sorry. I’m trying to find it.

I’m sorry, Mr. Chairman, for letting you wait.

(interpretation ends) I always talk about poverty reduction because there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes and this is one of the best partnerships that I have witnessed with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and through this partnership, over \$25 million has been directed to Nunavummiut.

In 2020-21 the Nunavut Food Security Coalition provided \$495,000 to support 13 community food initiatives for young hunter mentorship and school or community cooking classes, in which 11 communities and one project took place in multiple communities.

And then through the Indigenous Community Support Fund, NTI and regional Inuit associations, communities, and organizations have received funding for food security, harvester support initiatives, and other projects. There's a list of: NTI, \$7.7 million; QIA, \$6.1 million and \$10.4 million in the fall; Kivalliq Inuit Association, \$4.3 million in March and then \$7.3 million in the fall; Kitikmeot Inuit Association, \$3.5 million in March; Coral Harbour got \$20,000; Pangnirtung got \$125,000; Ilisaqsvik, \$300,000; Tukisigiarvik, \$234,000; Baker Lake, \$73,000; Igloodik, \$454,000.

And then on April 1 the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated announced \$2 million for community food programs for communities under 1,000 received \$40,000 and the communities with a population over 1,000 received \$90,000; Iqaluit received \$200,000. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Inuit orgs that she mentioned, they got the money from us or the government got the money from them is my question. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik: The funding we got was from the federal government and, if I could expand on your first question, so Cambridge Bay, six youths went out for four weeks; in Rankin Inlet 24 participants, six youth per week; in Iqaluit 14 participants with seven youth per week; Arctic Bay, 14 participants and that was to be held in February 2020. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've just got kind of just a couple of comments to make with regard to apprenticeship certification and trades training.

Baker Lake being a mining town for 10 years now, I had expected to see a lot more of our people becoming trades people. I'm kind of hopeful now, seeing what is in your business plan here, and we really need your department to come through for Nunavummiut, especially my constituents because in Baker Lake there are no civil servant jobs. We have to look to the private sector and to the mining sector for these people to gain meaningful jobs.

I'm just wondering if you have plans coming up to go to Baker Lake to help iron some of this planning out, maybe, so we can do some more. I know it is a bit touchy here, Mr. Chairman, but it does touch on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As you all aware, I will be travelling after this sitting, and I have invited the appropriate MLAs to take part in whatever activity may happen in a community, and we are reaching out to hamlets to have council meetings.

I would be more than happy to sit down and brainstorm with you and bring back potential ideas for the famous Rob of Career Development. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on career development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$11 million... . Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize. You didn't see my hand. I have one question. In your business plan on page 175, the second paragraph under Regional Offices, in the Kitikmeot, Cambridge Bay is the regional office and in the Kivalliq it is Rankin Inlet. Correct me if I'm wrong. In Baffin, Iqaluit is the hub. Do they all have the same policies for community goals, or are there slight differences? I would like to better understand this, Mr. Chairman. That is why I am asking. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If I'm understanding correctly, he is asking if the policies are the same from headquarters as they are in regional headquarters. That would be correct. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Career Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$11,109,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page L-3. Family Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$161,146,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree we have concluded the review of Family Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Closing comments, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I want to thank the staff that are with me here today, but all the staff of Family Services. It is not an easy job. I must say a little tidbit for some of the new MLAs here, some of the challenges for the department have been in the last eight years they have gone through six ministers. Just imagine trying to lead a very hard department with no steady consistent leadership.

That being said, this government, thanks to everyone around here, I have a whole list of projects that improvements to the department I would love to sit and talk to the new MLAs about. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Thank you, minister as well and to your staff, for answering all the questions. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. Our next department is Justice and we will take a 15-minute break. Thank you.

>> *Committee recessed at 17:10 and resumed at 17:21*

Bill 59 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2021-2022 – Justice – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Hello, Inuit. Welcome back. I call the committee meeting back to order. Some officials are in their seats already. Does the committee agree to let the officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Hickes, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. I appreciate you letting me keep my witnesses. It would have been kind of embarrassing having to ask them to leave after they're already seated.

Thanks again, Mr. Chairman. With me I have Stephen Mansell, the Deputy Minister of Justice; Dwayne Twerdin, Assistant Deputy Minister of Courts and Justice Services; Jessica Young, Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Safety; and Mubashir Mahmood, Director of Corporate Services.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to appear before the committee to present to you the 2021-22 Main Estimates for the Department of Justice.

A total of \$134,473,000 is being requested for the operations and maintenance of the department for the 2021-22 fiscal year. This is a \$6.81 million, or 5 percent, increase from the 2020-21 fiscal year. Mr. Chairman and members, the total expenditure will include the following:

- Under Law Enforcement, additional funding of \$2,924,000 will be included in the 2021-22 budget for the following items:
 - three regular members to increase RCMP staffing, which was approved in 2020-21;
 - budgeted funding to fulfill our commitment to secure civilian oversight of external investigations involving the RCMP;
 - funding to increase frontline public services employees to support increased Inuit employment within “V” division; and
 - appropriate funding to continue the planned radio upgrade project, ensuring safe, adequate and reliable communications for members across the territory.
- Mr. Chairman and members, under Corrections, \$3,194,000 in additional funding will be included in the 2021-22 budget for the following items:
 - increase staffing for the new Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility, set to open in the fall of 2021; and
 - establish a corrections investigations office, which is necessary in order to bring the new *Corrections Act* into force.
- Mr. Chairman and members, an additional \$365,000 will be added to the 2021-22 budget for Community Justice to allow for the following:
 - Ensuring the Therapeutic Justice Program extends beyond the pilot phase and continues to allow access to alternatives to the formal justice system for Nunavummiut; and
 - Stabilizing our Community Justice Outreach Program by repatriating five positions from hamlets back to the Government of Nunavut. The total funds required to cover these positions is being offset by the decrease in contribution agreements previously paid to hamlets to support this work.
- Finally, Mr. Chairman and members, the department is requesting an additional \$330,000 to be used within the Department of Justice for legal articling positions to support the Nunavut Law Program, as we have committed.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening comments. I would be pleased to answer questions from committee members. *Qujannamiik*. Thank you. *Merci*.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have comments? Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Social Wellness

on its review of the proposed 2021-22 Main Estimates and 2021-24 Business Plan of the Department of Justice.

The department's proposed 2021-22 operations and maintenance budget is \$134,473,000. This represents a 5.3 percent increase from the 2020-21 fiscal year. The number of positions in the department is increasing from 410.0 to 435.0 person years. The majority of this increase is accounted for by new positions in the department's corrections and community justice budgets.

Protecting Nunavut's children against sexual violence is a priority of the standing committee. The 2019-2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth indicated that information provided by the territorial Department of Justice confirmed that there were 438 "in-territory registered sexual offenders with offences against children and/or youth." The standing committee supports such initiatives as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Specialized Investigative Team, whose stated mandate is to "assist and conduct investigations of sexual crimes involving children and youth within the territory."

The *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act* received assent on March 14, 2017, approximately four years ago. Although the department's proposed 2021-22 main estimates include \$250,000 for the operations of the Civil Forfeiture Office, the legislation has not yet been brought into force. The standing committee continues to look forward to this office becoming operational and contributing to the fight against the illegal sale of alcohol and drugs in Nunavut communities.

The department's proposed 2021-22 main estimates include \$2.8 million for the operations of the Office of the Public Trustee and Guardian, which was transferred from the Department of Family Services during the 2020-21 fiscal year. Bill 41, *An Act to Amend the Guardianship and Trusteeship Act*, was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2020. The standing committee looks forward to ongoing updates on the status of this transition. The standing committee supports initiatives to assist Nunavummiut in the preparation of wills and related documents.

The department's proposed 2021-22 main estimates include \$901,000 for the operations of the Office of the Chief Coroner. The standing committee pays tribute to the important work of community coroners across Nunavut. The 2011 Annual Report of the Office of the Chief Coroner was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 19, 2014. No other annual reports of this office have been tabled in the Legislative Assembly since that time. The standing committee strongly encourages the minister to resume the practice of tabling this office's annual reports so that all Members of the Legislative Assembly have the opportunity to review its important work. The standing committee notes that the department currently has a number of outstanding statutory tabling requirements under the *Human Rights Act*, the *Victims of Crime Act*, the *Labour Standards Act*, and the *Legal Services Act*.

The department's '21-24 business plan indicates that a new "Criminal Code Review" program will be established during the '21-22 fiscal year. The proposed budget for the program is \$183,000. The standing committee encourages the minister to clarify the objectives of this initiative.

The department's *5-Year Nunavut Crime Prevention Strategy* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 14, 2017. The standing committee looks forward to ongoing updates on the department's work to update this strategy.

On March 12, 2020 the *Government of Nunavut-Royal Canadian Mounted Police Shared Directional Statement 2019-2021* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The Canada-Nunavut Territorial Police Services Agreement provides for a contract management committee. The current 20-year contract was signed in 2012.

The department's '21-24 business plan indicates that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has been working to fill four new "Inuktitut-speaking call-taker positions." The department's 2021-24 business plan also indicates that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has "signed a new protocol agreement" in relation to the department's Therapeutic Justice Program. The standing committee looks forward to this protocol agreement being tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The standing committee strongly supports initiatives to recruit more Inuit into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

A new *Corrections Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2019, but has not yet been brought into force. On November 6, 2019 the 2017-18 Annual Report of the Division of Corrections was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The standing committee looks forward to the tabling of the division's more recent annual reports. The department's 2021-24 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2021-22 fiscal year is to "Continue to increase capacity for rehabilitative programs." The standing committee notes the importance of this initiative in reducing the territory's rates of recidivism. The department's 2021-24 business plan indicates that it has "completed an evaluation of the Victims Assistance Fund." The standing committee encourages the minister to table the final report from this evaluation.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2021-22 Main Estimates and 2021-24 Business Plan of the Department of Justice. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Any comments on the opening comments? None? Thank you. We're on page E-4. Directorate. Any questions? Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Welcome, minister and staff.

(interpretation) On page 58 of the business plan for their appropriation, which I believe is for their offices, most likely the deputy minister and the assistance deputy minister who deal with (interpretation ends) public safety and courts and justice (interpretation) under

the Department of Justice is projected to increase by over \$829,000 which is a rather large increase.

It says this increase is at 68.1 percent, so I would like to know how the business case for these large increases was added to this amount? Why is the increase so large here? I would like to understand the reasoning. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you very much for that question from the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The bulk of that is from the repatriation of the Public Trustee Office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. Where was this Public Trustee's office? (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It came over from the Department of Family Services. It was moved over there and then it's... . Oh, sorry, the guardianship. I mislabelled the division. My apologies, Mr. Chairman. It's the Public Guardianship Office that was with Family Services and we repatriated it back to the Department of Justice. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Are you done? Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. My next question is, the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act* received assent on March 14, 2017, as our chair indicated. As of today, who is the director of the new Civil Forfeiture Office and when will this legislation be brought into force? There are a lot of bootlegging and illegal activities that are happening in all our communities and this would be a great tool to curb the violence that it's causing in our communities. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question. With the civil forfeiture office, the regulations are completed. We are looking at implementation April 1. I can't name the executive director at this time, it is an Inuit beneficiary that has been offered the position, but hasn't accepted it as of yet to my knowledge. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. That's certainly good news because the former member from Baker Lake, as last Speaker was really pushing for this file to be brought forth. Now, my question, Mr. Chairman, is for those communities that don't have an officer, in terms of enforcing this unlawful forfeiture, or *Property Forfeiture Act*, how would make sure that this act is being implemented? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we build up the capacity of that office, obviously some of the focus will be more centric around some of the larger centres where we have more resources, but through you, Mr. Chairman, if Mr. Mansell would be able to give the details on what the plan is for roll-out across the entire territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So the plan right now is that the office will be located in Iqaluit, will have the director, and when the office gets more up and running, the director will likely have two staff. With respect to people outside of Iqaluit, the plan is to have a tip line for the director, so you can notify the director of a file, you can also go to your RCMP detachment, and we'll be taking referrals from RCMP detachments across the territory. So if a detachment has a file that meets the threshold for civil forfeiture, but maybe not for criminal prosecution, they would refer it to the civil forfeiture office. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Ok. Thank you for the explanation. There's illegal activities in all of our communities where drug dealers, bootleggers have a pile of equipment, certainly in their yards, and obviously all the equipment is bought through illegal drug trade.

My question to the minister is, does this law enact the authorities to take the equipment away from the drug dealers and bootleggers, amongst other things? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, and that's one of the facets of creating this civil forfeiture legislation. Civil burden of proof is a lot lower than criminal burden of proof. It would give us the right to be able to go to an individual and how did you get that 2020 truck? Where is your income? Where is the letter of gift from somebody? Where that burden of proof criminally is a lot harder to challenge, but through civil courts, it's a lot easier, where the impetus is on the person being accused to substantiate their burden of proof of where they got the funds from to be able to purchase those vehicles. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) So then this *Forfeiture Act* will enact the government confiscate the equipment that this person has, the 2020 truck, \$50,000. Will this act enable the government to seize the equipment? Is this what this act means? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, if the court agrees. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. I think this is a real welcome news to all of Nunavut. (interpretation) It's good to see something like this. For many years people in the communities lives have been damaged by these activities and sometimes it seems impossible to stop them. I'm very glad that we're going to see this coming out. Then the selling of cannabis and alcohol illegally selling of cannabis and alcohol something will be done about that. It's good to see things that don't help lives; something will be done about these things that don't help any lives. So I have better expectations now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That was just a comment. But, Minister Hickes wants to comment. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I appreciate the comment from the member. But I just want to really emphasize on how important it is for members of the public to come forward whether it be criminal activity or civil activity through the court processes. Nothing can get started. The government can't go into people's homes and look into these incidents or accusations. It's still is going to take members of the public or like the Mr. Mansell mentioned through current RCMP investigations to bring forward civil cases to the Civil Forfeiture Office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. So it's going to be enforced as of April 1 and is a department going to publicize this Forfeiture Act so that the people know who to go to, where to go to in terms of reporting these illegal drugs and activities. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is a communication strategy around this initiative. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go to my next name, I want to make sure Mr. Main wants to ask questions if he can wave while the next person is on. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess my first question is in looking at the accounting structure chart you have two assistant deputy ministers. Both are acting. When are they become indeterminate and what is the plan there? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's still fairly early on in their acting appointments and we're still reviewing some of our options going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. Since they're acting how will the department, I guess what I am asking if those positions are going to be opened up to others. I have had actual people come to me in the Department of Justice that said that they didn't feel they were given the opportunity as well that it went straight to people without it ever being advertised or anything. So I'm asking the Minister how you feel about that and what would you say to the staff within your department who feel that they have been overlooked? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first thing I would say that I'm always have been and always will be a strong proponent of self-promotion. If you feel as an individual that there's an opportunity that doesn't appear to be available to you, to talk to your supervisor to talk to leadership within the department and express your interest. Oftentimes we hear about these things anecdotally after the fact, "Oh I would have been interested in that." Well sometimes you have to let us know what you are interested in. Like I said earlier, I'm still evaluating what the path forward is going to be for both positions. They're both fairly early on and I am very happy with their performance to date.

That being said maybe Mr. Mansell could probably give a little bit better of a description on exactly where we are. But I do want put a caveat out there that there's still some analysis being done behind the scenes within my own office on the issues. Mr. Mansell, through you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the positions is coming out for public competition very soon, it's going through the process to get it out. The other competition is currently on an ITA, which has about 10 months left in it. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I don't want the current staff to feel I'm targeting you, what I'm getting at is the process. I think the process needs to be perhaps a bit more transparent, and I understand what the minister is saying when you say you have to do self-promotion, but some people are just very uncomfortable saying "hey I'm very good at this."

If there is a process that was straightforward that was used within all departments of the government that created opportunities that were perhaps fair to give more people a wider audience, a little bit more chance to say hey, we have some positions here, if you're interested, go talk to your supervisor or whatever it is, but the invitation would come out from the department. I think that's what some of this stuff we're getting at. They weren't particularly looking at the people in it; they were just saying that they felt that they didn't have the opportunity to say hey, I'm interested.

That being said, I wanted to go to forfeiture, it's coming into force April 1. You're going to rely on tips coming in from the public. Does it go to the RCMP in the community? Who in the community would be the actual one to take direction from the director to actually then carry out the work to find out and to go from there? To see if some property has to be seized or not. I guess that's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, there's a couple of different ways that tips could come in, to use that term, from members of the public, but also from the RCMP themselves where they could have a criminal investigation that's ongoing, where there's a suspected drug dealer or bootlegger, and the burden of proof or the criminal charges may not be met, so they could actually bring a referral to the civil forfeiture office to continue the investigation under a civil court.

It would follow the court processes at that point, when charges would be laid, so it would be very presumptive to think there would be a presence in every community. If the courts did dictate that there was going to be a repossession of a truck, as the example was used earlier, that would typically be done through the sheriff's office, unless I'm missing something.

Maybe just to get the act a little bit more clarification, through you, Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Mansell would probably be able to give a bit better detail. In a nutshell, it still follows the court process that are outlined legally. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the minister's right, and I think it's an important thing to get out about civil forfeiture, not just in Nunavut, but the concept of civil forfeiture. The civil forfeiture office aren't the investigators, we won't have sort of

teams on the scene. We'll get referrals, usually from law enforcement, but it doesn't have to be, and then the way that the civil forfeiture offices get the information is through the courts. So we would bring an application for forfeiture, and then the court would order the respondent to provide the information and to satisfy the court that the item in question has been obtained lawfully.

It's more of a court process than an investigatory process. Most of the investigating is done by the RCMP who would refer files. If we got just the tip, then we would have to gather the information from whoever provided it to us and then decide if we had enough to go to court.

With respect to the actual repossession, the minister's right, it would probably be the sheriffs that execute that, and then we're working with CGS, because once you have the thing, then you need to put it somewhere and sell it and do all that stuff.

CGS is the one that we've identified who has the capacity. We're working with them now to figure out where we would store things and how we would then sell it, or what we would do with the item.

The sheriff would execute, and then we would likely use CGS resources to store the item and make sure it was not taken back or something like that. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. In talking about the courts, and right now the courts are pretty full. I hear that there could be a wait list, it takes time to go through the different cases. Are they prepared for this additional work? Would you need to hire more lawyers, would you need to hire more staff through the court system to deal with this? I'm making an assumption here that when this first comes forward and people find out about it, everybody will be phoning to give a tip because that person and that person, you know. You kind of hear about it already with people assuming that the things that they see have been obtained illegally without really any proof.

I'm anticipating that once people understand that there's a process they could actually go to, you might see a flood there. I'm just wondering if the minister can tell us about the court side of things, are they ready for this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot of it will depend on the volume, initial uptake, but I think one of the things to remember that through the civil process, it can be fairly lengthy, as Mr. Mansell mentioned one of the earlier things you have your \$50,000 truck in the driveway and you don't work, so the first question is where did you get the money to buy the truck? So then there's a timeframe to provide that information to the court, then it would be looked at whether that information, how it could be verified,

it would go back to the proponent again. There's a lot of back and forth without actually having the investigation side of things done.

I don't know, as far as any task on increasing capacity or what the court situation is. I don't anticipate it being a big burst, because it is limited capacity. If you get 50 calls, it's very difficult to do 50 simultaneous cases. Again, through you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Mansell would probably best suited to respond to that legal side of it. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So we've been consulting and keeping the court up to date on the forfeiture process. I think, with the initial rollout and the initial few cases, I think we should be fine capacity-wise. If we see a big influx and a lot of work, and we might have to talk with the court and see how they're doing, but initial rollout, I think it should be fine. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. Just a couple more questions under this area. I'm just thinking that if I were the one perhaps being looked at, and I was being asked how I got my truck and that, number one, you'd really want to make sure that they know what their rights are, and I'm hoping the department will not only consult about how the process will work, but also consult in what your rights are if you are accused.

The other thing is, you'd want a lawyer. In talking with the Legal Services Board, I know there's a big, long wait list to get a lawyer. Their workload is full. I just see that as possible barrier, possible challenges that I think the department will really need to address and maybe look at now before you get to that. That's a comment.

I have one more question here. I want to talk a little bit about the Nunavut Crime Prevention Strategy that was tabled on a very good day, March 14, that is my son's birthday. The strategy expires next year.

How has the department measured the effectiveness of that strategy? What kinds of things did you do to say, you know what, this is really working, or these areas are really working and this is not really working? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickeys.

Hon. George Hickeys: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to get an up-to-date analysis on that, through you, Mr. Chairman, if Ms. Young be able to respond to that.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now, we're in the process of reviewing the tracking items in the crime prevention strategy just to see where we are, what items have worked really effectively for us and what we can do better on.

So we're in the process of doing that right now. Another thing that we are doing is working with our teams and other stakeholders to determine what we should do with that strategy next.

Currently, we're looking at essentially a 2.0 with the strategy, taking the things that have been successful, working with communities and that community-based work. In addition to that, we're looking at other programs and initiatives that would be really effective in crime prevention that were probably left out of the strategy in the first place.

Right now we're doing that initial review, and then determining how we can build on the successes, and also improve on the things that were not so successful in the first version. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. What in the strategy actually really stands out as something that was a "wow" you know, this really worked, this is good, and this is something that we really need to make sure everybody's doing in the communities. Perhaps what did you think would work but didn't that was surprising?

I know you're at your initial stages, but sometimes even when you haven't evaluated when you're using the strategy; you know when something's really good, when something is working. I could get some more information on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I ask you to go to Ms. Young again, I just want to throw a little caveat out there oftentimes what works in one community and doesn't work in other communities. So having a generalized "wow" moment may be more limited to certain communities or certain initiatives.

Through you, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Young would probably have a bit better detail. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We noticed very specifically in the strategy, a lot of the work that was very successful is when our coordinators actually went into communities and dealt with community-based programming, and a lot of the work in crime prevention we've noticed is based on community input and buy-in.

What has been really successful for us in terms of crime prevention is coordinating with our community-based partners and seeing various successes throughout all of the communities in Nunavut.

As was just mentioned, we saw very successful programs that could potentially be successful in other communities as well, and we look to build on that. There were some in terms of domestic violence that were done in Rankin Inlet that were exceptionally successful. We looking building on that, looking at best practices and seeing if we can assist other communities in implementing those types of programs as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say that that was very informative. I'm really interested in this area, and I guess going forward it would be really great to have something tabled that we can look at of how the strategy went and what's being implemented at the community level to help us combat crime.

The number of incidents seems to be going up in many communities, so I am interested in that. If the minister would agree, it would be great to have something tabled going in the future, how the strategy's working and what's working and just to give us an idea. That's it from me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll take a look at it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question to the department is the Criminal Code review. The budget for this is \$183,000, and it's on page 59 of your business plan, 2021-24. Can you describe what the priorities are of this program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically in a nutshell, it's just looking at some of the Criminal Code and current laws to see what needs to be updated. It's a very preliminary look at the Criminal Code and to see how we can either modernize or take in other best practices and make sure all our Criminal Code authorities are under proper legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: On page 60 of the business plan, your priorities for 2021-22, for that year, is to "Continue the legislative process for *Family Abuse Intervention Act* and

territorial offences legislation...” Do you do a cross-analysis with the Nunavik region? They do have Inuit culture and Inuit Family Abuse Intervention Act and it would be interesting to do a comparison for the specific amendments that are being considered. If so, what is the timeline for the introduction of the *Family Abuse Intervention Act*? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Whenever we go into an exercise like this, we do a jurisdictional scan and look at other jurisdictions and best practices, but just so you’re getting information straight from people that are directly involved in this, Mr. Chairman, through you, Mr. Mansell would probably be best suited to give an up-to-date analysis of it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The *Family Abuse Intervention Act* review, the consultation, strategy, and the review plan were approved by cabinet before the holiday and we have started now. A big portion of it is community visits, which is still a bit difficult, but we’re doing, as the minister said, jurisdictional reviews right now. I’m not sure if my policy team has looked at Nunavik, but we will bring that back for sure to do.

Because it’s a pretty extensive review and we plan on doing community visits and a lot of stakeholder discussions, we won’t have amendments to the Act under this government, but we are hoping fairly early in the next government to at least be able to demonstrate what a new Act would look like and what the amendments would look like. We want to talk to the people on the ground who use FAIA as well as the stakeholders who assist victims to ensure it’s being used properly. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My final question on page 63 is with regard to the Therapeutic Justice Program and it tells me that the RCMP is referring clients to the program to receive support for the underlying causes of criminal behaviour, mental health, addictions, and trauma. At the end of the paragraph it says, “...and the RCMP further supports the expansion in Arviat later this year.” I don’t understand that and I’m wondering: what’s the expansion in Arviat? My final question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I ask you to move to Ms. Young to give a little more detailed response, in a nutshell, we received some money from the federal government to pilot a therapeutic justice program and we did it in Cambridge Bay. It has been so successful we have leveraged other dollars to look at rolling it out in

another community and at this point we have chosen Arviat, but Ms. Young would be able to give you much better detail on this program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Therapeutic Justice Program, the pilot program was exceptionally successful in Cambridge Bay and really helps the community of Cambridge Bay. How the program works is they use community-based supports and resources available there to help specific members in the community. Moving it to Arviat means we will also be able to help any community members in that community get those supports as well.

When they deal with the RCMP, there is a protocol agreement that is in place between the Therapeutic Justice Program and the RCMP that allows them to refer clients over to the program. Our officials within the Therapeutic Justice Program have worked very closely with the RCMP “V” Division and the members from the local detachment.

Currently we are ready to go with the Therapeutic Justice Program as soon as we are able to get up and running in Arviat again. I believe there has been an offer made to an individual within the community who can help support the program and we have been able to identify some space to make sure that we can get the program up and running as soon as we can start going again in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Just a reminder that we have interpreters that need to keep up. The next name on my list: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have too many question. Just to follow up on the Therapeutic Justice Program; obviously I'm very pleased to hear that that is going to be coming to Arviat. I look forward to that and I thank the department for selecting this community.

Is it on a pilot project status, or after Cambridge Bay is it now going to be an established program that will have a longer shelf-life or a longer life? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question. I have actually had a one-on-one conversation with Minister Lametti on the success of this program.

It was a federal partnership on this as well as with NTI's involvement now with the Arviat project. With the pilot being held in Cambridge Bay, like Ms. Young had mentioned, it was extraordinarily successful, so we wanted to continue rolling it out so with our partners; with the federal government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, we

have brought it to Arviat, and we hope to expand it to other communities through continued partnerships. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I wish you success. I'm looking forward to that. On page 86 of your business plan, which mentions your Inuit employment plan, it mentions community justice outreach worker positions in five communities, including Whale Cove.

Are all the justice worker positions going to be within the Department of Justice now and no longer with the hamlets? Or are some of them still with the hamlets? My question is regarding this upcoming fiscal year. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just looking for the right paper. I know there are still a few left that are under hamlet operations and I'm just looking for the right column.

There are currently four. I thought there were three. There are currently four with hamlets. Out of those, only one is vacant and that is in Grise Fiord. I do apologize. I think the member may have misread somewhere that Whale Cove was in there; the five community justice workers that we are looking repatriating to the GN public service is Kugaaruk, Arviat, Qikiqtarjuaq, Sanirajak, and Chesterfield Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yeah, that might be my mistake. It was on page 86 of the business plan, and it might have been in this current fiscal year that it was referring to.

On your Inuit employment plan, I'm just wondering about the staff housing factor. I know it can impact recruitment within any department. Is the department currently having challenges securing staff housing units for any of your vacant positions, and how has this impacted your Inuit employment rate? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Mansell is directly involved with the allocation committee with staff housing, so he would probably be best suited to respond to the member's question.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is right that staff housing is definitely a recruitment tool and it helps us recruit. There is a crunch on staff housing across the territory including Iqaluit, but in the decentralized communities as well. We do our best to identify not just sort of lawyer jobs and things like that. But a variety of different jobs to try and get housing. But when you do that it definitely results in a delay in the process and I think the GN-wide is working the staff housing issue. But the member is right it helps with recruitment and there's a crunch at the moment. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) And thank you for the response. That's concerning because it's my understanding that depending on the position I guess Justice workers are supposed to be among the highest priority due to safety and I think I'll be asking similar questions to the Department of Environment as well as Human Resources.

I only have one more area to ask about that's the Legal Services Board and I think I'm on the right page with this one. So the Legal Services Board in terms of their budget and whether or not they need more money to do their job. How does that work? Does the Legal Services Board submit a business case to the Department of Justice or is there a different process that they have to go through? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I appreciate the opportunity and I thank the member for the question. I appreciate the opportunity to revisit this topic from earlier today. It was said, I believe if I understood my question earlier today that the budget hadn't increased in ten years.

Mr. Chairman, the information that I have actually is totally contrary to that. In the last 10 years it's doubled. So with regards to the member's question specifically there would be a business case brought forward. But as historically this division has been surplusing money and in fact in the last four fiscal years it has accessed to Vote 4 funding for some of their initiatives.

In fact, they're looking at taking on a number of articling students from our law program and they're able to fund that from within their existing budget. So I'm a little unclear on where some of these perceptions that it's underfunded. But I'm open to any feedback. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe the issue of funding the Legal Services Board came up a number of years ago. I believe it was during a hearing, a public accounts hearing, and we had some extensive discussions

on that at the time. The articling positions from the Nunavut Law Program, I just want a clarification.

The minister had mentioned earlier, there would be five articling positions, are these within the Department of Justice, or are these within Legal Services Board? If you could just explain the total number of positions and how long those positions are planned for. Will these become permanent jobs that articling students transition into, or do they have a limit on them, like one year, two years? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do appreciate the question, and it allows me to further elaborate. With the articling done through the Legal Services Board, that's done through their own budgetary process, so they are looking at taking on three articling students.

The Department of Justice itself, we've actually made offers to six articling students, three of which are in the budget before you for approval, and the other three we're looking at funding internally. We want to make sure that as this initiative is somewhat initiated by the Department of Justice, we want to make sure that we're supporting as many articling students as we can.

The term for an articling student in one year, so the hope is that as these students graduate do apply for full-time positions within the Government of Nunavut, whether it be with the Department of Justice or with other partner entities, including the courts. I look forward to featuring some success stories out of this graduating class. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main. Thank you. Sleeping already.

>>*Laughter*

Last name on this page, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While we are here, earlier our colleague for Aivilik submitted a question, which is part of this question and in order to understand it better, I would like to ask.

First of all, I want to mention that I was quite happy to see this introduced, as Justice Outreach seems to be part of the question, and I want to clearly understand as I am also a bit shocked about it, which is why I am asking about it, Mr. Chairman.

When dealing with somebody's equipment or vehicles that will be impounded, does the person who informed the police about the person, I am not sure where. How will the person tipping off the authorities be protected? This makes me fearful about consequences, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question, it's a very good one. As we rollout our communication strategy under this piece of legislation, a lot of those details will be answered, but typically, tips from the general public would be brought to the Executive Director of the Civil Forfeiture Office, or the executive director. Then it would be followed up at that point to see what course of action that case would dictate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not a question, just a general comment. I'll speak it in English. As it states (interpretation ends) in addition, the division is responsible for coordinating the department's implementation of Inuit societal values.

(interpretation) I prefer seeing that language as it makes me glad to see that Inuit societal values will be included in the legislation, and that is what I am so happy about and it is just a comment, Mr. Chairman. I don't have anything else to say. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. It's just a comment. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there was a misunderstanding with MLA Qirngnuq's questions in terms of the *Civil Forfeiture Act*. If I understood him, he was asking for those that inform the Civil Forfeiture Office about illegal activities, he fears for those that would report that. What kind of protection would they have was his question. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll let the lawyer respond to that question, Mr. Chairman, through you, Mr. Mansell, please.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) With civil forfeiture, we imagine that a lot, if not most, of our files will be referrals from law enforcement because they would have the evidence in the file to provide it. That's not saying we're not open to tips from the public and other forfeiture offices in Canada do have tips from the public.

The tricky part with forfeiture when you have anonymous tips is then you don't have any evidence to pursue the matter. We haven't sorted out exactly what the public tips might look like, but I understand the concern about protecting people who might be informing on other people in a very small community.

Another thing that folks are very welcome to do is to contact the local detachment at any time and the detachment could refer it to the forfeiture office as well. (interpretation)
Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Netser, for clarifying the question. We're on Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$22,618,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-5. Law Enforcement. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's draft 2021-24 business plan indicates on page 61 that the budget for the Law Enforcement Branch will increase from \$44,984,000 in the 2020-21 fiscal year to \$47,908,000 in the 2021-22 fiscal year. This is an increase of 6.5 percent. How was the amount of this increase determined?
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of different ways. We had previously approved and committed to providing three more regular members to increase staffing. We also budgeted to fulfill our commitments once we get the RCMP bill approved for external investigations for civilian oversight. I think it's a very important step that we need to take. There is funding for increased frontline public service employees to increase some staff within the "V" division and to finish off the planned radio upgrade project. That's pretty much about it, and six half-time public service employees, \$500,000 for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I'm going to go back to Mr. Simailak. If Mr. Main has any questions, he can wave. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for the response. Those sound like nice positions and good moves.

Moving on, the current 20-year Canada-Nunavut Territorial Police Services Agreement was signed in 2012. The agreement provides for a contract management committee. How often does the committee meet and how does it take into account concerns raised by municipalities regarding such issues as the number of officers posted to the detachments?
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will probably have to defer to Ms. Young in a moment, but I do want to emphasize the point that it has been an ongoing discussion for years on detachment capacity.

We recognize caseloads are going up, forcing up to bring in additional relief officers to help offset some of the demands, but with regard to how often that committee actually meets and how often other topics do come, through you, Ms. Young would probably be best suited to respond.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The contract management committee is actually a Canadian-wide committee that is made up of all jurisdictions with police service agreements, as well as the federal government, who are the partner in that agreement and the RCMP themselves as well.

It is a committee that is used to ensure that we are all across the board implementing our police service agreements with the RCMP in a consistent way. It is also a consistent voice when we are dealing with the federal government as well as the RCMP on these issues.

That committee meets on a very regular basis on various issues, including our budget, how we determine where we are going to position regular members in communities, and higher level issues like that.

When it comes to detachments and their specific needs, those are issues that we deal with at a territorial level. So we work with communities, we work with the local detachments in communities, the headquarters of “V” Division, as well as the national headquarters for the RCMP and our federal partners.

Sorry, I had something else I wanted to say. Oh, I apologize. This is an important one; as you may be aware, the police council is an initiative that the Department of Justice has been looking at as well and we hope to use that as an option for us to better address local concerns of individuals, detachments, as well as our Inuit organizations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you. (interpretation) On page 62 it says the RCMP are working with four Inuktitut-speaking people. Where are those four Inuktitut-speaking employees based? The RCMP has been working to fill four new Inuktitut-speaking call-taker positions. As of today what is the status of those positions? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately there were offers of employment made for those four positions and they were declined. From what I understand from my last information, there are other current offers of employment out on those four positions and they are all located here in Iqaluit to my knowledge. Thank you, Madam... or, Mr. Chairman. I thank Madam Member for the question.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister for your response. Those are very important positions I believe. Page 63, it tells me that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has signed a new protocol agreement and that is the Therapeutic Justice Program.

Will a copy be made available to the Legislative Assembly of the protocol agreement?
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have to take a look at the content of the agreement just to make sure there are no contractual details that could influence any privacy concerns, but I don't think there are any. I will take it away and if I can share it with members, I will. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie .

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My final question; the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on page 64, "...will partner with the Department of Justice to deliver a firearm education program through Public Safety Canada's Guns and Gangs Violence Action Fund." *Uah!*

Do you know in which community this will take place? That is my final question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a schedule on that, but it's intended to be rolled out to all communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. My next name on my list, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to elaborate on Ms. Towtongie's question about the education program for guns and violence. What age will be for participants to be allowed to partake in this, and how young actually can the person be to take part? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have to defer to Ms. Young on this. I know when I took my firearms safety, I had to wait until I was 12 years old, but that was in Manitoba. Ms. Young may have some further details on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are various aspects of the guns and gangs programming, in terms of education and awareness that are available. We're partnering with the RCMP as well as Quality of Life on a few different initiatives, including a trigger lock campaign, which will be implemented in each of the communities as well. Actually, the second week of March, we have individuals going into Kinngait to go door to door and deliver trigger locks to family members.

In terms of the actual gun training, that's delivered through the RCMP and Public Safety Canada. There is a minimum age, I believe it is 12, but the work that we are doing with the RCMP in communities will be available for all age groups. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for clarifying that answer. I'm happy to hear about the trigger lock program, and we could use that all over Nunavut. Moving on, if I'm out of place with this question, just correct me, Mr. Chairman.

On page 87, it says that work with Nunavut Arctic College and other programming providers to deliver justice careers training for beneficiaries, and then it goes on to say it's been postponed due to COVID-19 and classroom availability. Once this is offered, will it be offered to existing staff, or up and coming staff? Part two to that, if it's offered to current employees, who decides which employee will be allowed to take that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm still trying to find out exactly which bullet, but my deputy minister knows where the member is, so probably best if he responded. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So we had... the original intent was to work with the Arctic College on this program, and then we had identified Algonquin College as someone who wanted to work with us. The Algonquin program is the one that is delayed due to COVID because we were going to send folks to Ottawa. The admissions for that, the way we did it was open to Inuit employees first, and then anyone who wanted to participate.

Unfortunately, that is delayed, and Algonquin isn't having in-person classes. There is a new president at the Arctic College, as you might know, and I'm fairly new to Justice. I was working with the law program before that, so I've been quite interested in this issue, and stared dialogues with the Arctic College again to see what we can do in Nunavut.

We're very early in that, but possibly we might be able to offer some sort of safety justice careers training through the Arctic College, but that's very early discussion. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe the RCMP's efforts to recruit Inuit into the force have been also affected by COVID. I wonder if the minister or his staff could describe if the RCMP has any targets in terms of recruiting. I know they were working on a program. I'm not sure if it was called "Cadets"; I'm not sure what it was called, but I do know that there were some constituents who were very interested in getting into the force and I really would like to see that work continue. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The work is still ongoing. There's actually a class right now in Rankin Inlet that are going through some different courses. Here, I do have some information on it. One of the initiatives that they have taken, like the member said, is a pre-cadet experience program. There are a number of different aspects from the assisted application training program. It's in the second cohort.

With regard to the program that's ongoing right now, I think it would be best for probably Mr. Mansell to give some detail on. It's very exciting. There are a number of different courses outlined in the program that these young adults are in and I think it's a really...I don't even know how to describe it properly. I think it's not just a good initiative; it's a good introduction to law enforcement itself. It's one thing to see members driving around town and depending upon the interactions with the RCMP members in a community, it may give you a different viewpoint by actually going behind the scenes or taking a peek behind the curtain, as I call it, but Mr. Mansell would probably be able to give you a bit more detail on where that core programming is at this stage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The assisted application training program is what it was called. The purpose of the program is to help Inuit get through the application process to give the necessary background to get into RCMP depot, which is the academy in Regina.

As the minister said, the second cohort is underway in Rankin Inlet. Fourteen applicants started the program on January 26. The applicants are from Rankin Inlet, Arviat, Chesterfield Inlet, Baker Lake, Iqaluit, Sanikiluaq, and Kugaaruk. The program is to run for four months and then they will have the opportunity to write the RCMP entrance exam, and they have been given the opportunity to write it more than once if necessary in order to learn from their first experience. "V" division recruiting will then assist the

applicants in completing the rest of the RCMP application process, with the hopes of them going to Regina to complete the process and becoming RCMP officers.

The COVID delays the member asked about, we have been able to do a lot in Nunavut. One of the delays has been that the RCMP academy has been closed and so that has been a delay for some of the applicants from the first cohort. I believe the depot is opening again very soon, so we hope that some of the folks from the first cohort and the folks that are in Rankin Inlet right now will be able to go.

It's quite a good program and we're hoping to have a good contingent of Inuit go through this program and then through the RCMP academy quite soon, hopefully. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's really encouraging and thanks so much to the department as well as the RCMP for bringing that forward and pushing that. I really look forward to seeing more Inuit RCMP in the force.

My last question is on the body-worn camera initiative. I know that it is in the early stages pilot project, but specifically, what is the department's role in this body-worn camera initiative with the RCMP? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do thank the member for the question and appreciate the acknowledgment that it is very early on in this pilot project. I know there have been communications with Department of Justice officials and the RCMP.

I had a very brief conversation with Ms. Jones just last week on this and I think it is going in the right direction. There are still some bugs being worked out here, type of thing, but with any up-to-date information, Mr. Mansell would probably be best suited to respond to the member's question.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The program in Iqaluit is in the final phase, so they started with just a couple of officers a day using the camera, and then they added more. So now, generally any officers on regular patrol in Iqaluit should have a camera.

The RCMP are working on a much bigger project to roll out cameras nation-wide. The Iqaluit project is the only instance right now of the RCMP wearing body-worn cameras and it will be a helpful example when they move forward.

The RCMP are working on their policies and procedures nationally as well as the pretty big procurement process because it is going to be a lot of equipment. The department's role in all of this mostly has been as an advocate to move things forward.

A lot of it is internal RCMP equipping their staff and their own policies and procedures. Our role primarily has been trying to move things forward and strongly advocating for the pilot program to be in a Nunavut community. We didn't specify one, but we advocating that Nunavut should be where the pilot is.

Working with the RCMP, we are monitoring rollout and things like that, but they are kind of steering the ship on this because they are working on a national level. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main said that was his last question. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question and it is on page 64 on the priorities 2022-23, "Continue efforts to increase capacity to communicate in the Inuit language."

I think these are really good initiatives and I wonder if the minister can elaborate a little bit on that. Does this Inuit language person have to be a qualified RCMP member? (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) It is one of those questions and those are final. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ideally, yes, the more active members that speak Inuktitut is obviously an asset, but there are a number of civilian positions as well as in the call centre, where Inuktitut-speaking non-active members are still a great asset to the whole organization. So there are a number of people already that are in service with the RCMP that speak Inuktitut, in different levels of capacity from civilian to active members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): I only had one question, but I would like to ask another question, or seeing more Inuktitut speaking members in the communities because it helps tremendously and it would improve the services. I think it would help a lot in the communities to have Inuktitut speaking members. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I absolutely agree and I don't want to belabour the past. I think we have taken some great steps in the last couple of years, like the second cohort in Rankin Inlet right now, of bringing young Inuit adults that are interested in a law enforcement career and interested in going to the depot in Regina and

giving them all the tools necessary to pass the entrance-level exams and so they know what they're being prepared for.

Too often it's just career fairs and talking with a local member when they have time, talking to some youth of what a great career it is, but I think actually having an actionable class and a concerted effort on these individuals to assist them through the process is what's really going to be our page turned to that domino effect of more and more success. I'm very appreciative of the initiatives that the department and the RCMP are doing to actually bring some action to this instead of just hoping. I'm very excited about these initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Netser: I am too. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page E-5. Law Enforcement. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$47,908,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-6. Lawyer Support Services. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a few questions. The community justice committees that are providing community-based justice and healing programs, as of today, which communities do not have a functioning community justice committee in place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go to Minister Hickes, if Mr. Main wants to ask questions, he could wave at me. Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now there are four communities in the Qikiqtaaluk and that would be Kimmirut, Kinngait, Clyde River, and Arctic Bay; in the Kivalliq, Coral Harbour; and in the Kitikmeot, there would be Taloyoak that have inactive community justice committees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for your response. Now my question is on page 68. The Justice of the Peace Program is decreasing from \$657,000 in the year 2020-21 to \$522,000 in the coming year, 2021-22. How was this amount determined? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would probably be best for Mr. Mubashir to answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mansell. Sir, I didn't get your name, but whatever he said.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Mahmood: My name is Mubashir.

Actually this is due to the realignment of funds. They moved some of the funds to the Administration Branch, so that is why it decreased from \$657,000 to \$522,000. Thanks.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can he repeat it again? Why was the amount decreased? Is it because we do not have Justices of the Peace? I didn't quite get his answer. Thank you. The reason why I ask is because the Justices of the Peace currently appointed a senior Justice of the Peace that is committed to working with justice services to "expand the Justice of the Peace Program..." If that's the case, why was the amount decreased? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies to Mr. Mahmood, but if he could repeat his response for the member. Thank you.

Chairman: Mubashir.

Mr. Mahmood: Thanks for the question. Basically it is just the realignment. The funds are not taken from the Court Services. The funds are still in the Court Services, but it is from one section to another section, from the Justice of the Peace section to the Administration Branch. They asked because they said that maybe they don't fully utilize the funds, so they need to move it to another section, but based on the operation, if it is still needed, we can replenish the funds and put them back. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you. That was kind of confusing because if you're expanding the Justice of the Peace Program into the communities, then I would assume the amount of dollars that were being put into that would be greater. However, that's not my question. My final question is: who is the new Senior Justice of the Peace? My final question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for the member's benefit, and I have spoken about it a few times here, one of the exercises that we have been doing GN-wide is making sure that the budgets are allocated properly. Any adjustments that need to be made are made in that division. The only new money is for the articling students. The rest is just budget moved from administration over to different components of it.

Now I forgot the member's question. Sorry. The Senior Justice of the Peace is Ms. Nicole Sikma. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go to the next member, I would like to apologize to Mr. Mubashir. Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. I just have one question and that's to the justice committees. I note the minister mentioned that Coral Harbour doesn't have an active committee. Is the department seeking out nominations or names to start up that program again in my home community? It's my final question. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know I have seen some ads in the paper and I can't remember which communities, but Ms. Young would probably be best suited to respond to that question in detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The community justice outreach workers in each of the communities actually work very closely with community partners to also identify individuals who would be good applicants. They do local radios, they do callouts for committee members, and then we also have our CJOWs who help identify appropriate individuals for the community as well. Sorry, CJOW is community justice outreach worker. They are working on that.

Any committee that's currently inactive, they're putting plans in place now to get them up and running again, especially now that we're seeing court circuits back, happening in our communities. Now we can have an effective committee as well to help support that work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my colleague's question, Taloyoak is one of the communities named without an active justice committee. What has been planned for the future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically in Ms. Young's response to Mr. Netser, the answer would be the same, that they're going to continue to work with the community justice outreach worker to solicit names. Obviously, the members themselves in communities that don't have the committees established, if you have names that you would suggest, I would be absolutely welcoming to them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Lawyer Support Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$3,880,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page E-7. Registries and Court Services. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions. The department's Baffin Correctional Centre and Camps Division is increasing from 63 PYs this year, 2020-21, to 80.0 PYs in the coming year, 2021-22. That's an increase of 26.9 percent. What new positions are being created? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to give the member all the detail, so that's with regard to the Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility that's going to be coming online in the new fiscal year. Out of that, anticipated positions are assistant deputy warden, staffing and administration, mental health and addictions counsellor, admissions and discharge supervisor, a program coordinator, a community crew officer, and 12 correctional caseworkers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My final question, the department's proposed 2021-22 estimates indicate that the budget for adult institutions and correctional camps is increasing from \$11,748,000 in the last year, the 2020-21 fiscal year, to \$14,632,000 in the coming year. That is an increase of 24.5 percent. How was the amount of this increase determined? My final question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's also associated to the new facility that's going to be opening next fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That was the only name on this page. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one question I want to ask. It is the add-on to the list under the title of family violence or the bill. Perhaps I will state this part in English for clarity.

(interpretation ends) "...including the *Family Abuse Intervention Act...*" (interpretation) and within this section, what has the Department of Justice collaborated with the Department of Family Services towards the completion of this proposed bill, Mr. Chairman. Hopefully this was clear. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member's question on this. I think it shows again the partnerships that the courts and the Department of Family Services have to work together to make sure that especially our most vulnerable children are being looked after properly. It takes a lot of coordination sometimes to make sure that the right members of the family are involved in the process and that legal aspects are also adhered to. We work very closely with the Department of Family Services on initiatives of that. I shouldn't say "we"; the courts work with the Department of Family Services very closely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Registries and Court Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$14,024,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-8. Corrections. Any questions? Seeing none, Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$40,703,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page E-9. Community Justice. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions. The Community Justice Branch is increasing from 27 PYs in the last year, 2020-21, to 34 PYs in the coming year, the 2021-22 fiscal year. That's a 25.9 percent increase. What new positions are being created? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I may be confused here, but I only have five increased PYs there and that's the community justice outreach workers that we're repatriating from hamlet offices and bringing them back into the civil service, and of note, I'm sure the member is interested that Chesterfield Inlet is one of those communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister is correct; I was looking at Chesterfield Inlet, my community.

>> *Laughter*

My question is, on page 76, your department completed an evaluation of the Victims Assistance Fund. What are the results of the evaluation? My final question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I ask you to defer this question to Ms. Young, I would like to correct myself. I found the other two PYs that the member brought up earlier and they are the chief investigation officer and the deputy investigation officer...oh, sorry, the therapeutic justice positions into Arviat. Now I'm mixing up my own PYs.

>>Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to clarify that, there are the two positions going to Arviat for the therapeutic justice. With the response to the member's question, the most recent one, Ms. Young would be best suited to respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the Victims Assistance Fund and the review that was required, there were some challenges at the federal level because there were changes to federal legislation and so we had some concerns that the funding going into the Victims Assistance Fund would no longer be occurring and we would be required to find funding for those programs elsewhere. The program funding for the Victims Assistance Fund goes to community-based programming to assist victims of crime.

The review had to do with the legislation at the federal level as well as the challenges that might occur for our territorial government. Luckily after doing our review and having the legislation go through, we found that we will continue to get funding into that program and we will be able to continue with funding for community-based programs. We currently appointed new members to that committee and we should be able to do community callouts again in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I've just got a couple of questions on page 76. It starts on the community justice file and the objective is "To provide alternatives to the Court for offenders and those who have been wronged by crime through pre- and post-charge diversions." Can the minister elaborate a bit more on that? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Instead of me muddling around and talking about a bunch of different initiatives, to enhance the clarity, through you, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Young would be best suited to respond to that with all the details. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Essentially the alternatives to the formal justice system occur through the community justice committees and they work very closely with our partners, the Public Prosecution Services of Canada as well as the RCMP, to divert individuals from the justice system, so the formal court process, into either the Therapeutic Justice Program or community justice committees. Essentially the type of work that occurs is that they bring the offenders or individuals who have committed a crime together with the individuals who have been wronged through crime to find alternatives that more appropriately with the root causes of criminality.

They review the crime that has occurred, what harm it has caused to the community, and what type of appropriate punishments can be given to the offender of those crimes. That can include family group counselling that brings all of the individuals together, including their families, so they can talk about it and find a way to heal together and heal as a community, as well as providing traditional counselling to the offenders of crime and other items such as that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the response. Now my next question is I think this is really good under the same objectives is to “create a positive healthy relationship between those who have committed crimes and the community.” I think this is really needed and it would reduce the, I believe, recidivism rates. Can the minister also elaborate a bit on that and what programs would they introduce into the community in terms of rehabilitating the person that has committed the crimes? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Anytime we can divert somebody from the justice system to make sure that they still understand what they have done and how they have impacted community members, I think that’s where it’s so important to have strong leadership in our community justice committees to be able to offer different courses of action, I guess.

Just to give the member some detail and how exactly that rolls out, again, Ms. Young would probably be best suited to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Young.

Ms. Young: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the main purposes of restorative justice is to ensure we’re addressing root causes of criminality and why people do what they do. One of the main things they do through this group is through someone trained with the community justice committee as they bring everyone together through family group counselling, which includes the offenders, the victims of crime, as well as their families, to discuss what has occurred so they can really understand the issue and how it occurred in the first place, and then also looking at how they got to this point, how the offender did

commit this crime or what may have caused it in the first place. They can provide services, such as treatment for alcohol abuse, abuse and violence, traditional elder counselling, and other supports to that individual as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you for the explanation. It's very important, as the minister said, to have these community justice committees, and I know that I will be looking for names to present to the minister from my home community. I think these are really good programs that we need to utilize in our communities. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) That's my final question. (interpretation) That's it.

Chairman: Minister Hickes. It's just a comment? Thank you. We're on Community Justice. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$5,340,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page E-3. Justice. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$134,473,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree that we have concluded the review of the Department of Justice?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Closing comments, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the questions and the level of detail of enquiries. I know we have made some great strides. I know Ms. Young has been working very closely with the finance officials within the RCMP especially. We recognize that, as members have a supp. bill in front of Justice and RCMP and corrections, we know that there is more work to do. We have been making, I think, some very good progress in the corrections field of identifying some of the cost pressures.

I think even most importantly the financial relationship between the Department of Justice and the department of RCMP, although it has its little hurdles and speed bumps along the way, again, it's an unprecedented level of relationship from the financial aspect of things, and I think having my finance minister hat has really benefited myself personally in understanding some of the pressures from the RCMP side of things and we recognize that we're not going to fix it overnight, but I think, in true partnership fashion, we have recognized and they have recognized that we need to have a more open dialogue and a lot more transparency and accountability.

I would like to publicly thank Ms. Young for all the work that has been going into that. I know Mr. Twerdin, who I didn't call upon today, but I want to thank all the officials with me with the briefings and the level of detail that I go through to help understand this new portfolio to me. I appreciate the people behind me and I appreciate the members' questions today and I look forward to continuing a positive dialogue. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Thank you to the minister and his staff for answering all the members' questions. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would really appreciate it if you can report progress. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker (interpretation): Good evening. You can now be seated.

>>*Laughter*

Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Order. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Akoak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 59 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Ms. Sheutiapik. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion.

Some Hon. Members (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 10:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements

4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 58
 - Bill 59
 - Bill 60
 - Bill 61
 - Bill 62
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) In accordance to the authority provided to me by Motion 107 – 5(2), this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 10, at 10 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 19:17*

