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**Proceedings of the Standing Committee on
Social Services**

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Department of Justice and Public Safety

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Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Department of Justice and Public Safety

Chair: Sherry Gambin-Walsh, MHA

Vice-Chair: Joedy Wall, MHA

Members: Paul Pike, MHA
Lucy Stoyles, MHA
Jeff Dwyer, MHA
Scott Reid, MHA
James Dinn, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Sandra Barnes

Appearing:

Department of Justice and Public Safety

Hon. John Hogan, KC, MHA, Minister and Attorney General
Denis Mahoney, KC, Deputy Minister and Deputy Attorney General
Debbie Dunphy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Emergency Services
Mike Noseworthy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Courts and Corporate Services
Gerrie Smith, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety and Correctional Services
Denise Woodrow, Assistant Deputy Minister, Legal Services
Andrew Green, Departmental Controller
Kellee Martin, Director, Policy and Strategic Planning
Joanne Turner, Director, Provincial Court Services
Lisa Stead, KC, Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions (A)
Pat Roche, Chief, Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
Kim Harding, Executive Director, Support Services, Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
Sharleen Simmons, Strategic Policy Analyst – Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Mark Vardy, Manager of Financial Operations, HMP
Shelley Organ, Chief Executive Officer, Supreme Court
Derek Peddle, High Sheriff, Office of the High Sheriff
Danielle Barron, Director of Communications
Lesley Clarke, Media Relations Manager
Tom Hayward, Manager of Budgeting
Glenda-Hearn-Ellis, Executive Assistant

Also Present

Hon. Sarah Stoodley, MHA, Minister of Digital Government and ServiceNL
Hon. Bernard Davis, MHA, Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Helen Conway Ottenheimer, MHA
Chris Tibbs, MHA
Lela Evans, MHA
Annie McCarthy, Government Members' Caucus
Scott Fleming, Third Party Caucus
Megan Winter, Official Opposition Caucus

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Helen Conway Ottenheimer, MHA for Harbour Main, substitutes for Joedy Wall, MHA for Cape St. Francis.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Chris Tibbs, MHA for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, substitutes for Jeff Dwyer, MHA for Placentia West - Bellevue.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Sarah Stoodley, MHA for Mount Scio, substitutes for Scott Reid, MHA for St. George's - Humber.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Lela Evans, MHA for Torngat Mountains, substitutes for Jim Dinn, MHA for St. John's Centre.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Bernard Davis, MHA for Virginia Waters - Pleasantville, substitutes for Paul Pike, MHA for Burin - Grand Bank.

CHAIR (Gambin-Walsh): Good morning, we're going to call the meeting to order.

I'm going to announce the official substitutions first. We have for MHA Wall, MHA Ottenheimer; for MHA Pike, Minister Davis; for MHA Dwyer, MHA Tibbs; for MHA Reid, Minister Stoodley; and for MHA Dinn, MHA Evans.

Is there water here?

CLERK (Barnes): Yes.

CHAIR: Okay. There are water coolers at the end. I'm not much of a morning person. I was here until 10. So we will have a break. There are a lot of you. I think this is the most ever.

CLERK: They're doing Fire and Emergency Services and then they'll do the rest of the department so we'll be able to let some of them go.

CHAIR: All right.

J. HOGAN: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: Yeah, that sounds about right.

Okay, so what I'm going to do is first I'm going to ask for the minutes? Do that first?

CLERK: Do the introduction of the Committee.

CHAIR: All right, we'll do the introduction of the Committee Members first and we'll start down on the end.

S. FLEMING: Scott Fleming, Researcher, Third Party Caucus Office.

L. EVANS: MHA Lela Evans, Torngat Mountains.

C. TIBBS: Chris Tibbs, MHA for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

M. WINTER: Megan Winter, Researcher with the Official Opposition Office.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Helen Conway Ottenheimer, MHA, Harbour Main.

L. STOYLES: Lucy Stoyles, MHA, Mount Pearl North.

B. DAVIS: Bernie Davis, MHA for the beautiful District of Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

S. STOODLEY: Sarah Stoodley, MHA for Mount Scio.

A. MCCARTHY: Annie McCarthy, Researcher, Government Members' Office.

CHAIR: Minister, I'll ask you to introduce your staff and you'll speak about the department, if you have anything to say, when we call the order of the Estimates. Just introduce the staff first.

J. HOGAN: Sure. So I'm going to let everyone do their own introductions. I'll start here and then go down the line.

A. GREEN: Andrew Green, Departmental Controller.

D. WOODROW: Denise Woodrow, Assistant Deputy Minister for Legal Services.

D. BARRON: Danielle Barron, Director of Communications.

D. MAHONEY: Denis Mahoney, Deputy Minister of Justice and Public Safety and Deputy Attorney General.

G. SMITH: Gerrie Smith, Assistant Deputy Minister for Public Safety and Correctional Services.

P. ROCHE: Chief Patrick Roche, Royal Newfoundland Constabulary.

K. HARDING: Kim Harding, Executive Director of Royal Newfoundland Constabulary.

M. VARDY: Mark Vardy, Manager of Financial Operations, adult corrections.

S. SIMMONS: Sharleen Simmons, Senior Advisor, Policing.

L. STEAD: Lisa Stead, Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions.

M. NOSEWORTHY: Mike Noseworthy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Courts and Corporate Services.

D. DUNPHY: Debbie Dunphy, Assistant Deputy Minister of Emergency Services.

T. HAYWARD: Thomas Hayward, Manager of Budgeting.

L. CLARKE: Lesley Clarke, Media Relations Manager.

G. ELLIS: Glenda Ellis, Executive Assistant to the minister.

K. MARTIN: Kellee Martin, Director of Policy and Strategic Planning.

S. ORGAN: Shelley Organ, Chief Executive Officer for the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal.

J. TURNER: Joanne Turner, Director of Court Services, Provincial Court.

D. PEDDLE: Derek Peddle, High Sherriff, Office of the High Sherriff.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you very much.

Just for the Committee, none of the independents are here this morning, but normally the routine, if everyone is okay, is at the end if they do come and they want to ask some questions, we allow them 10 minutes at the end.

So if everyone's okay with that, I'll ask the Committee for an adoption of the minutes.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: So moved.

CHAIR: Moved by Helen.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

CHAIR: Okay, I'll ask the Clerk to call the first heading.

CLERK: Okay, so my understanding is that we're actually starting with the last subhead, which is Fire and Emergency Services.

So it's 5.1.01 through 5.1.05 inclusive.

CHAIR: 5.1.01 to 5.1.05 inclusive.

We're starting with ...?

CLERK: We'll start with the minister.

CHAIR: Yes, we'll give the minister a few minutes. Do you have a few minutes?

J. HOGAN: Fifteen minutes, no sweat.

CHAIR: Just like me.

J. HOGAN: Good morning, everyone, and thanks for being here today to talk about the Estimates for the Department of Justice and Public Safety.

First, thanks to everyone for introducing themselves for the department, but I certainly want to welcome everyone because a lot of these faces are new, especially at the Executive level. The department has gone through some refreshing changes over the last year and I've got to say I'm very proud of this team. They have a lot of knowledge, as you'll see over the next three hours.

I know there are other ministers in the room but I constantly brag about how good my team is and how easy it makes my job and my life because I have all of them to thank. So I do appreciate them. I know that the Opposition MHAs always thank the officials as well and I'm sure they'll take the time to do that today.

Just a little bit about the budget before we get started for the department. The budget for this year is approximately \$350.3 million. You'll see throughout that the department has applied zero-based budgeting and made adjustments accordingly based on historical spending. As of March 31, 2023, across the department there were 1,725 total PCNs, which are position control numbers. Of those, 1,360 are full-time staff, 296 are temporary and 69 people are on contracts. These numbers do not include the RCMP or Legal Aid.

The department is, with that budget, as you can imagine, quite large, and has a combination of both union and non-union employees which provide services 24-7 through front-line services in our province. You will see, as we go through the process today, that there are salary increases which come from negotiated increases in last year's collective agreements, which you probably would've heard about through the

other Estimates already. You'll also see salary increases in divisions where we have solicitors, and of course, we have lots of solicitors. This is due to an adjustment of the solicitors pay plan, which has not been changed since 1988. There are 171 lawyers impacted at a cost of \$4.7 million for this new pay plan.

Not unlike experiences in the private sector, recruitment and retention of lawyers is challenging. The areas of the department that employ lawyers are civil law, criminal law, legal aid, executive support, Legislative Counsel, our Human Rights Commission, courts, RNC and SIRT.

Solicitors, of course, serve a necessary role in policy-making, prosecutions, upholding civil rights, providing legal services to those who do not have the means for private counsel. They advise in all areas of government, through legal services to the Crown, including legal advice to all departments in this government, litigation and legislative drafting services.

The department has provided grants to many of our stakeholders as one-time funding before the end of the last fiscal year. I just want to highlight some of these and they include: \$750,000 to advance payment for previously approved fire vehicles for the Town of Avondale, Cow Head, Forteau, Gander Bay North LSD and Spaniard's Bay; \$50,000 for support to the NL Association of Fire Services to provide mental health training and supports to members; \$1.5 million towards a new aerial ladder fire truck for the City of Corner Brook; \$50,000 to Stella's Circle to support existing correctional services programming for women; \$650,000 to the John Howard Society to supplement activities under the current contracts with the department, including operating expenses for two residential centres in St. John's and Stephenville; \$40,000 for Turnings to host a conference and workshop in the province regarding the future of correctional services in the province; \$25,000 for the Public Legal

Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador to support the important work they do in providing legal services to residents; \$410,000 to support the NL Search and Rescue Association for additional equipment requirements and to host national SAR conference in 2023; and \$90,000 to advance a pilot program installing long-life battery smoke detectors within the Corner Brook region of our province and to volunteer fire services. We look forward to continuing working with these important partners on these initiatives.

The department is also continuing work as it relates to the Drug Treatment Court. The funds for this court are 100 per cent offset by federal funding, and we have now a five-year agreement with the federal government. Currently, this operates in St. John's and the funding will support the expansion of the court to other areas of the province. As of March 1, 2023, in St. John's, 54 offenders have been accepted into the program, with 29 individuals having completed all or a significant portion of the Drug Treatment Court program.

In August 2022, the Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Court has expanded to Central Newfoundland and has had its first hearings. This court was previously called the Family Violence Intervention Court but was changed to the Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Court to more appropriately align with the nature of the issues and services associated with intimate partner violence and to reflect the programming of these courts.

Reflected throughout, you will see the budget decisions for this year which include: \$17 million to support residents in communities as they recover following Hurricane Fiona and \$7 million for Hurricane Larry payments; \$21 million to advance the province-wide radio system to improve the way emergency responders and other public service providers communicate with each other. To support fire services in our communities, we are doubling the budget

for fire protection vehicles and firefighting equipment to over \$3.7 million; \$1.1 million annually to support the work of Newfoundland and Labrador Search and Rescue Association; \$10.8 million for the inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection services; \$897,000 for new departmental resources for contract management and policy supports for policing in this province, as well as work with police and communities to implement crime prevention initiatives.

Currently, there are 20 policing and crime prevention agreements, including the RCMP provincial police service agreement, at a budget of \$92 million annually. These new resources will also look at the recently released mass casualty commission report and the ongoing work to address the RCMP workplace review.

Over \$1 million for the RNC to hire 10 new police officers; \$102,500 over two years for our courts to review and make recommendations for digital transformation which will impact other areas of the department that work with our courts; and \$750,000 between both the Supreme Court and Provincial Court for video conferencing for court matters.

So those are some of the highlights. I'm sure as we go through it, we'll get some more detailed questions and answers for you. If there's any information that we don't have at our fingertips, certainly make the request and we'll provide it to all Members of the Committee.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

MHA Tibbs.

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Chair.

I'd like to take a moment and echo the minister's comments about the departments and the officials that work in the

departments. I mean, we may be the faces out front but the real work happens on your guys' level and you fine people make everything work and we couldn't be more appreciative of that. So thank you very much for what you do in all departments.

I also want to take a moment to thank all firefighters, emergency responders and search and rescue units across the province. Their work does not go unnoticed. They save lives every day and they ensure that we are safe on our highways and in our backwoods and stuff. We couldn't be more appreciative of that either, so thank you very much to all first responders out there.

Minister, we'll start off with 5.1.01, Fire Services, Allowances and Assistance. Of the \$198,000 budgeted, \$177,000 was given out. Could you please outline where the money was given to and why the full amount was not allocated?

J. HOGAN: Sorry, I got to just get your reference there.

C. TIBBS: Sorry, 5.1.01, Fire Services. The \$198,000 that was budgeted, \$177,000 was given out. Could you please outline where the money was given and why the full amount was not allocated?

J. HOGAN: So that \$198,000 Allowances and Assistance would have been for workers' compensation payments for volunteer firefighters.

C. TIBBS: Perfect.

The full amount wasn't given out?

J. HOGAN: Pardon me?

C. TIBBS: The full amount wasn't allocated; is there a reason why it wasn't?

J. HOGAN: You make an assumption that that's what it's going to be. Obviously, that wasn't all needed.

C. TIBBS: Okay.

J. HOGAN: That was the amount of workers' comp payments required to meet those necessary –

C. TIBBS: Meet your needs.

J. HOGAN: – under the workers' comp scheme. So we'll budget again for \$198,000 and we'll obviously see where we are. I think I'm right in saying that those numbers have gone up over the years because of changes made to workers' comp legislation related to PTSD accepting more claims now.

C. TIBBS: Perfect. Thank you, Minister.

Under Grants and Subsidies, can you please outline where the \$241,000 went?

D. DUNPHY: Every year we give an annual operating grant to the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Fire Services of \$40,000. We also provide a \$15,000 annual contribution toward the annual fire services banquet and we have another \$61,000 that goes towards the Learn not to Burn Program. Then there's another \$125,000 budgeted in that account that we compensate departments for, for response outside their municipal boundaries.

C. TIBBS: Perfect. Thank you, Ms. Dunphy, some good programs there for sure.

Under heading 5.1.02 in Salaries, could you please explain the variance across this line item? We note that last year it was \$852,400 was budgeted, \$646,400 required and this year \$784,400 is being budgeted again.

CHAIR: Minister.

J. HOGAN: The \$206,000 variance is due to the timing of the hiring of staff for our provincial-wide radio project and staffing changes related to that. The decrease of \$68,000 is due to elapsed one-time funding

in 2022-2023 stemming from a *Budget 2022* request based on recommendations from the GSAR inquiry. The \$138,000 variance is due to the timing again of hiring of provincial-wide radio staff changes in 2022-2023. So it's shifting money, I guess, related to the radio program.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

Under Transportation and Communications, can you please explain why this line item went over budget and \$400,000 was spent?

J. HOGAN: Yeah, I can. It's due to the state of emergency helicopter costs during the forest fires in your area of the province.

C. TIBBS: Another much-needed expense. Thank you, Minister.

Under Professional Services, could you please outline what was spent in total, \$1.1 million? Additionally, what is the \$748,000 budgeted for?

D. DUNPHY: So the majority of this cost relates to the new provincial-wide radio system. It's for consulting costs, as well as the implementation. As you see, this contract was awarded over a number of years, so the cash flows will vary year to year.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

Under Property, Furnishings and Equipment, could you please provide some context in this line item? Last year, \$5.5 million budgeted, \$5.1 million spent, but this year \$10.6 million was budgeted. What was purchased last year and what is anticipated this year to make that change?

J. HOGAN: I think it's safe to say that's related to the provincial-wide radio system as well.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

Under Grants and Subsidies, last year there was an anticipated expenditure of \$4.3 million. Could you please provide an explanation for this amount?

J. HOGAN: The variance is due to grants paid related to Hurricane Fiona.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

J. HOGAN: Clearly, they're not budgeted for.

C. TIBBS: Yes, kind of impossible.

Under the province-wide radio system, could you please provide an update on the province-wide radio system and where we are with it?

J. HOGAN: If I say stay tuned – you'll hear something very, very soon within the next couple of weeks on where we are with that.

C. TIBBS: Okay.

J. HOGAN: But obviously we're working very hard on it. We're getting closer to being able to publicly say exactly where we are on that.

C. TIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

Under heading 5.1.03, Disaster Assistance, Salaries, this year Salaries is being increased by \$407,000. Could you please explain if any staff are being added?

D. DUNPHY: Yes, we've added some additional resources to our Newfoundland and Labrador-Disaster Financial Assistance Program. We have several programs still outstanding that we're working on the audits for to submit to the federal government for reimbursement. As well, we are still working on the Hurricane Fiona file.

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, Ms. Dunphy.

Under Professional Services in the same heading, could you please explain the variance in this line item? What services are included here?

J. HOGAN: This variance is due to additional insurance adjustor and contractor estimates. These services for Hurricane Larry in the Southwest Coast rain storm, which was in 2021. So there's always a bit of lag in terms of assessing the damage, doing the adjusting and then actually getting the funds to flow through.

C. TIBBS: It takes time.

J. HOGAN: I do want to make a comment about the numbers sort of being influx in relation to natural disasters. The program that the feds have in place to reimburse us for money we spend on disasters, I think the threshold – is it \$2 million?

OFFICIAL: Yes.

J. HOGAN: I've had conversations with the federal Minister Blair on that number. We're in the tens of millions of dollars on Hurricane Fiona already. So the program is clearly outdated in terms of how much they're going to allocate for these programs going forward, and the federal minister is well aware of that. He's been very good to the province in terms of him responding to us when we need quick answers on this program and other issues related to Fiona and these disasters.

So, clearly, it is difficult to budget, the numbers do move around over the course of a few years, but that is where we are right now. That's where we're going to be for the next little while for sure.

C. TIBBS: I can imagine. Anticipation isn't top priority (inaudible) –

J. HOGAN: It's not only anticipation; it is the size of the – the amount of money that we're spending on these disasters is not

what was anticipated even five years ago, I would say.

C. TIBBS: Perfect, thank you, Minister.

Under Allowances and Assistance, this line item is for personal property claims. Could you provide the number of claims and the total paid out for each event captured here? How does the \$18.8 million for this year break down?

D. DUNPHY: So the \$18.8 million for this year is related to the claims for Hurricane Fiona. You can see that for '22-'23, there's an estimated projection of over \$32 million and I can tell you, to date, we have paid out over \$29 million to the residents who have had total loss of homes.

C. TIBBS: Perfect. Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

Under Grants and Subsidies, this line item is for municipal claims. Could you provide the number of claims and the total paid out for each event captured here? How does the \$4 million for this year break down?

J. HOGAN: If you're interested in the number of claims so far for Hurricane Fiona, I think 69 have been –

D. DUNPHY: We delivered 74.

J. HOGAN: She's going to answer it.

C. TIBBS: Okay.

D. DUNPHY: So overall there were 101 total lost homes on the Southwest Coast. We have delivered compensation packages to 74 of these and 69 of those have received their payment to date.

C. TIBBS: Fantastic.

Thank you very much, Ms. Dunphy.

D. DUNPHY: You're welcome.

C. TIBBS: That's great.

So this line item is Grants and Subsidies for municipal claims. Can you provide the number of claims and the total paid out for each event captured here? How does the \$4 million break down for this year?

D. DUNPHY: So I can tell you that the \$4 million we have budgeted for next year is mostly again related to Hurricane Fiona and Hurricane Larry. I don't have a specific breakdown of what we've paid out this year but there are definitely three events that have been included, which was Fiona, Larry, and I believe the Southwest Coast rain event.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

Under the revenue for federal here, could you please outline how much was received from the federal government for each event?

D. DUNPHY: What I can tell you is that we're working on the audits of various disasters. It depends very much on – like, we have three to five years to submit an audit. So every year, our staff are working on these and it depends again on the extent of the damage. But, for example, we currently have seven events outstanding and each of those, they range from an amount of \$2.6 million up to over \$50 million or \$60 million, likely, for Hurricane Fiona. So this number that we're projecting for this year is a combination of what we're looking for as an advanced payment on Hurricane Fiona of probably about \$30 million, and then a portion of that also relates to the Southwest Coast.

C. TIBBS: Perfect. Thank you very much, Ms. Dunphy, and I can appreciate the moving target that your department has to deal with. It can't be easy.

Under 5.1.04, Fire Protection Vehicles and Equipment, Grants and Subsidies, is there a list of who received funding last year and how many fire trucks were able to be purchased for the \$1.8 million?

D. DUNPHY: So the way the program works, and I'm sure you can appreciate it, there's a time lag, again, from when a municipality or a Local Service District is approved to when they actually get their trucks. So in 2021-22, we approved 10 trucks and then normally they would get their payment the year after. So during this fiscal year, we have advanced payments to Burgeo, Old Perlican, Summerford, Bonavista and Hermitage-Sandyville. Those five municipalities, they're working with our Fire Commissioner's Office and our Public Procurement Agency to get those trucks ordered and received by the towns.

So in 2022-23, we've approved another eight trucks for various communities and, as the minister mentioned in his opening remarks, we were able to advance some funding to those this year because we had some flexibility. So that will hopefully free up some additional money this year. Those trucks were approved for Cow Head, Forteau, Gander Bay North, Avondale and Spaniard's Bay, as well as a contribution towards a used vehicle for Lamaline.

C. TIBBS: Perfect, that's where my grandmother is from, so we're happy about that.

How many requests for funding were received last year?

D. DUNPHY: Marystown was the year before.

C. TIBBS: I'm just wondering how many requests for funding were received last year?

D. DUNPHY: I don't have the number for last year but I know this year – the program usually closes the end of March – I think we have upwards of 75 requests right now.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

Under 5.1.05, NL 911, under Salaries, could you please provide an outline of how many staff are contained in this line item?

D. DUNPHY: So at our 911 office, we have a staff complement of six and right now we do have one vacancy there. You'll notice the numbers are different because they came in, transitioned into the department part way through the year. So the revised numbers only reflect approximately seven months of expenditures but we're budgeted this year for the full year.

C. TIBBS: Perfect.

Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

Under Professional Services, last year \$2.3 million was budgeted, \$1.3 million spent. Could you please explain the savings and could you please also outline what professional services are contained here?

D. DUNPHY: So again it's a reflection of only a part year expense, but what's covered here are the contracts we have with the City of St. John's and the City of Corner Brook for the Public Safety Answering Points, the PSAPs.

C. TIBBS: Thank you.

CHAIR: Okay, the Member's time has expired.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

I just have to go back now. First off, I would like to thank you all for being here and all the work that goes in. I'm really impressed at the full complement. It seems like you brought everybody and that shows how seriously you take this and we really appreciate your time.

Just looking at 5.1.02 now, Emergency Services, just going back, one of the advantages of going second is that my

colleague gets to ask most of the questions so then it makes my job much easier.

Just looking at 5.1.02, Supplies. He did ask a question on Transportation and it seems a lot of it went back for the helicopter costs for the forest fires, but does that account for the spending of Supplies being increased as well? So 5.1.02, Supplies.

J. HOGAN: No, that increase is related to licensing costs with the provincial-wide radio project.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Purchased Services was lower than anticipated. Could you just give us an update on that?

J. HOGAN: Yeah, so this is due to the timing of the implementation of our contract with Bell in relation to the province-wide radio project.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Now I'm just trying to juggle where he asked some of my questions already, so I have to work out what questions he didn't ask or maybe rephrase them.

C. TIBBS: I made it more difficult for you.

L. EVANS: Yeah, it's all fun and games in Estimates.

So just looking at the budget there for the Purchased Services, there was a decrease there.

J. HOGAN: Yeah, MHA Evans, that's the same answer. It's related to the Bell contract, the timing of the implementation of the contract.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just moving on now to the next heading there for Disaster Assistance, 5.1.03. My colleague did ask for a breakdown, but just

looking at the changes there, why are there big increases for both actual spending last year and the budget for this year?

J. HOGAN: So the big one there is the increase – I just had it – \$30-odd million for Allowances and Assistance, so that will be the majority of the projected spending; \$30 million is for damage caused by Hurricane Fiona and the remainder of the variance is for Hurricane Larry and the Southwest Coast rainstorm. So, again, it's just timing of payments versus best guess for budgeting and when the payments are going to be made.

L. EVANS: Yes, and I think mostly these differences are because of the hurricanes, the forest fire and the new radio system.

J. HOGAN: There's a theme, isn't there?

L. EVANS: There is a theme, yes.

Just moving on now to the next page there, 5.1.04, Fire Protection Vehicles and Equipment. My colleague did ask a question about who received money and about the fire trucks, but how many municipalities actually applied for monies for upgraded fire equipment over the last year?

J. HOGAN: So I think Ms. Dunphy said she didn't have that number but it's estimated at 75. Is that what you said? Around 75 municipalities applying or towns and communities applying, which seems to be pretty similar year over year. This is only year three for me and there are never big jumps over the last few years or decreases.

L. EVANS: My colleague is going through the binder; we don't want to be asking questions that you've got the information in the binder. So just to try to cut down on the time here and be more efficient, but it makes more work for us. But we do appreciate it.

Moving on to the next section there, 5.1.05, just down there on the bottom of page 226

for NL 911. Just looking at the Salaries there, my colleague did ask about the staff and you said you had six staff and one vacancy, but why was the spending on Salaries far lower than anticipated last year?

J. HOGAN: So the staff didn't come on to government payroll until August, so there was a lag there in terms of getting their full year's salary, so obviously that's why it went down. But then the budget for this year is more in line with what would have been projected last year.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

J. HOGAN: So it was the same number of staff, it's just that they weren't there for the full year.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you very much.

Just looking at the budget for Transportation and Communications, that went down and the Supplies and Professional Services increased. Can you just give us a brief accounting for that? So the line Transportation and Communications.

J. HOGAN: Yeah, so it is based on zero-based budgeting. There was an adjustment made based on additional requirements or anticipated requirements for '23-'24.

Do you have any more details on that?

D. DUNPHY: The only other comment, I guess, is that when we transition the 911 into the department, we did a review and we recognized that some of the costs that they were incurring were costs that could be absorbed through the department, through our own Corporate Services branch.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

I don't think my colleague asked this one here, just looking at the Purchased Services. Spending was higher than anticipated. I'm still under 911.

J. HOGAN: So that increase in cost was increased costs for public education items about Bell pre Next Generation costs.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

J. HOGAN: You remember we talked about that in the House of Assembly, about Next Generation 911. So there's been some work done on that to educate the public about how that's going to work and roll out.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Just looking under this section as well, looking at some of the recommendations that came out of the search and rescue inquiry, because that does fall under your department. I was just wondering if you could give us a brief update on how you're progressing with the recommendations, the 17.

J. HOGAN: Sure. One of the things that I mentioned right off the start today was we've drastically increased the annual funding we give to Newfoundland and Labrador Search and Rescue. I think the number was \$98,000 –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

J. HOGAN: It was \$191,000, so I was totally wrong. So it is \$191,000 annually. Now it's \$1.1 million annually. I mentioned a few grants as well that we've done over the last couple of years to help them spend money on equipment and focus on some training in Labrador as well. Obviously the Search and Rescue report stem from that tragic incident in Labrador. Forteau and Mary's Harbour, for example, they're working on training in that area. Cartwright is working on integrating the RCMP and generating interest there in relation to search and rescue work.

In terms of any federal obligations as well, because it's not all obligations that we have, I'm sure you've seen that Minister Dempster led a contingent of people from the

department and from her department and local people from Labrador to lobby the federal government, the federal minister, about doing things there in relation to their jurisdiction. It was a pretty positive meeting, actually. It was certainly said that it's recognized that work needs to be done and that they're willing to help. So I guess there as a bit of informal working group there in relation to federal jurisdiction and what can be done there on their end.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

The increase in funding is very positive and I thank you. Burton Winters lived and passed away in my community, just next door, actually. My house is here and across the road is his grandmother's house, where he grew up. So it really hits home.

With the tremendous increase in funding, have you done a needs assessment? With all this funding that's going out, are you going to make sure it goes to the areas where the greatest gaps are, where the serious liabilities exist?

J. HOGAN: I think it was in last year's budget when an increase in funding was provided. Part of it was to create a position to actually do what you just asked us, to determine needs throughout the province for search and rescue and that's what led to some of this ongoing work about what's needed, what equipment is needed, where teams are needed. So it has been ongoing since the last, I guess, year, year and a half, two years.

One other note is that two independent SAR teams have been set up and trained in Sheshatshiu and Natuashish as well. That's part of the assessment, part of the payments, part of the funding, part of the training and it all sort of develops into that. You can see it comes to fruition there when you have two brand new SAR teams in Labrador.

L. EVANS: I just want to ask a question, even though my time has expired. In response to what you said, it's really good to have the needs assessment done and to look at the areas because like I say, for example, my area is really vulnerable because it's really difficult for people to be able to actually advocate for what they need. There are so many gaps in communication and also the knowledge of how they communicate. So that's very, very important.

I know Minister Dempster did go to Ontario, to the federal government, but she didn't take anyone from my area. So there was no voice there. When we're looking at equipment and gaps, a lot of times in my area, in rural areas, rural areas don't really even know what's available to them or what the expectation is for search and rescue, for volunteers, for training, for mental health supports.

So a lot of times you can't ask if you don't know you should be asking. So thank you very much and thank you for indulging me with the extra time.

CHAIR: Okay.

The Member's time has expired.

MHA Tibbs.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Chair.

That's important stuff for sure.

I just have a couple of questions left, Minister. We go back to 5.1.05, NL 911. In Purchased Services could you please account for the \$190,000 in Purchased Services and what was included here?

D. DUNPHY: So about half of that, or a little bit more than half of that, \$98,000 is for rent and the remainder then relates to promotional materials that – it's very interesting because I was fairly new to this as well, but they actually buy the decals for

emergency response vehicles to encourage, in particular in rural communities, to dial 911 as opposed to the local number for the fire department or the ambulance. The remaining is for some printing and shredding and the pre Next Generation costs that the minister referenced.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

The Next Generation 911, it's still being planned for. Is there a timeline that we have right now?

D. DUNPHY: No.

C. TIBBS: Okay, thank you.

To stick with the Next Generation there, we had some money in the bank we talked about at this session. I'm not sure what the exact amount was but has any of that money been spent, where is it and what's planned for it exactly?

J. HOGAN: Sorry, do you mean the money that they would have had when they were still the government and that was brought in to –?

C. TIBBS: Yeah, that shifted over from Vince and that crowd.

D. DUNPHY: So that money is still – like, we have not spent that; it's there for the Next Generation 911.

C. TIBBS: Perfect, and –

D. DUNPHY: But I will say, even though we don't have a timeline, I mean our staff are certainly working doing a lot of the GIS mapping, in particular again in rural communities where civic addressing is a challenge. But we're working through that and working with our colleagues to come up with appropriate measures for that.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Ms. Dunphy.

I just have one question left, Minister. Could I get a new fire truck for Buchans, please? Yes, it is.

Thank you very much for your time, Minister.

J. HOGAN: I was going to say stay tuned.

C. TIBBS: Stay tuned, yeah.

Thank you very much for your time here today and, again, I appreciate all the work you do. It's important work and, moving forward, I look forward to working with all of you.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, MHA Tibbs.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Just waiting for the light to come on.

I do have a couple more questions there. One of the things that came out after Burton perished was a call for the Labrador centre. So I was just wondering if you could give us an update on any kind of works that may be implemented that would get us towards a Labrador centre?

D. MAHONEY: MHA Evans, we had a meeting with Public Safety Canada this week as a follow-up to the minister's delegation meeting in Ottawa. That meeting this week has committed to both the Government of Canada having a premeeting with all stakeholders involved in the search and rescue environment from the Government of Canada, RCMP, Coast Guard, DND, et cetera. We will do the same thing at the provincial level to bring all stakeholders at the provincial search and rescue level together to prepare. We will then have a joint broad stakeholders' meeting to talk about working towards developing pilot projects and plans that will

address the needs that were expressed in the meeting in Ottawa.

Secondly, we are hosting the SARscene national conference in St. John's in September and so we will also have a joint working group that will contribute to utilizing the SARscene conference as a foundation for talking about the special needs of search and rescue in Labrador.

Lastly, we were also advised that there will be a SARNIF fund that is being launched that will allow for parties to make application for funding for pilot projects. So we will receive information about that program and we will be working as a department to identify potential projects which may include things as you've indicated, which would be the Labrador centre or other needs that have been identified by the applicable stakeholders.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

I actually travelled with the team with Commissioner Igloliorte and Geoff Budden who was actually, I guess, providing the support for the inquiry. One of the things that were identified was mental health. This is something that anyone that works – both myself and my colleague has been involved in emergency response. I've been a firefighter. I was undergoing rescue and surface emergency response responder as well. One of the things that we did in industry is we always had mental supports. We had debriefings and we had a lot of support for any impacts and any trauma to sort of negate any long-term impacts with post-traumatic stress.

One of the things that came out in the inquiry, especially in my region, where Burton perished, and we've had quite a few deaths where people have drowned. People have drowned right in the harbour. People have been found perished on the ice and it's very troubling for our responders who don't get that support.

So I was just wondering if you'd be able to just provide us an update because there are several of the recommendations deals with mental health and trauma.

D. MAHONEY: MHA Evans, we have made a significant focus in our department in working with all the stakeholders that you've identified to ensure that we can provide supports from the broader health community as well as providing funding. So by way of example, the minister mentioned in his opening remarks, funding was provided to the Association of Fire Services to support their request for making available mental health supports.

We've worked with the RNC in supporting their request. Chief Roche can speak about this more, but there has been a lot of attention made about the importance of policing services as emergency responders also having access to mental health services. We've also talked about it in the context of with NLSARA, some of the money that has been allocated to them and this annual \$1.1 million is to recognize the need and the importance of them having access to mental health supports.

So I certainly agree with your comments and our department is alive to the issue and working with stakeholders on that issue.

L. EVANS: Yes, I just want to add, too, since you're here, with rural areas where the mental health supports is not as easily accessible, it really impacts the ability to form a team and keep a team because in some of the communities in my district, and I'm sure it's reflected elsewhere in rural areas, is that people who've had multiple traumas because they know the people who've perished or they've gone through the stress of not knowing if the person they're looking for is alive or dead, that trauma. We've had several people off who are very, very important and special because of their knowledge and their skillset for the team. So it's really important for us to be able to support people and ensure that

we can avail of their resources. It's so important and I must say thank you for starting to build that infrastructure and that resource for people.

The other question I had was around families. There were supposed to be policies developed so that when the family that's impacted by a missing person or somebody who's perished relating to search and rescue, there was going to be policies about integrating and engaging with the families.

J. HOGAN: So we are continuing to work on all the recommendations of that report. I will say I think it's clear that there's work being done, it's paid off. It's clear from Deputy Minister Mahoney's answer there about where we're going next in the engagement with stakeholders, Public Safety Canada, et cetera, that we're going to have a lot more information coming our way that we can take in and build on what we've done so far. So I recognize the recommendations, have worked on some and continue to work on the ones that we haven't complied with yet.

L. EVANS: Having you here and having the time left on the clock and the fact that you've actually dedicated so much money, such an increase, indicates that you want to help, you want to improve the services for all search and rescue across the province, especially for rural Newfoundland and Labrador. So I did want to sort of make sure everybody understands that it's not just about the money, it's making sure that it's spent efficiently and it goes to really fill those gaps because Burton Winters, and many other people, have perished because of gaps – gaps that needs to be filled.

So I do thank you and I really appreciate your time. I really appreciate the resources that you're putting towards this.

Thank you.

J. HOGAN: Thank you.

CHAIR: No further questions?

L. EVANS: No.

CHAIR: Okay.

I ask the Clerk to recall the grouping.

CLERK: Fire and Emergency Services, 5.1.01 to 5.1.05 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 5.1.01 to 5.1.05 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, subheads 5.1.01 through 5.1.05 carried.

CHAIR: I ask the Clerk to call the next grouping.

CLERK: Executive and Support Services, 1.1.01 to 1.3.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: 1.1.01 to 1.3.01 inclusive.

MHA Conway Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

First of all, I would just like to open up by saying this has always been a valuable experience for me. This is my fifth Estimates and I find this whole exercise a very important part of our entire budget process.

I, too, am very impressed with the quality, with the knowledge and expertise of the government officials, and that is really appreciated. I can see why you're very proud. I, too, am proud of our one staff that helps me prepare and her expertise and knowledge, as well, I'm sure equal to yours. So I'm very lucky.

I also wanted to say one other thing, and I think this goes to the spirit of collaboration, the fact that the minister provided the briefing binder to us ahead of time. I really appreciate that. In fact, that will help make this a more efficient exercise because there are going to be questions that I don't need to ask now because they've already been provided. Those are the little things that really help make this a positive experience.

I have one general question to start off with and that's just with respect to the department's attrition plan. How many positions were removed last year through attrition and how many are planned for this year?

A. GREEN: There were no positions eliminated for attrition last year. At the moment, we do not have any plans to eliminate any positions next year, but that could change depending on how we assess the previous plans that were identified in 2017, I think.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

I expect that you'll be answering a lot of these questions too, if I recall correctly from last time.

Subhead 1.2.01, Executive Support, Salaries: In '22-'23, Salaries were budgeted to be \$1.2 million but revised to \$1.3. Salaries went over budget by \$137,700. Could you please explain why? Additionally, I'll note that the Salaries budget is increasing this year, and why is that as well?

A. GREEN: The salary overage last year was due to the general salary increases that occurred for the division and plus we had an additional executive member for part of the year to perform some strategic work for the department. The increase into next year is the annualization of the salary increases and part of that would be some of the impacts of the Solicitors' Pay Scale because there are solicitors that are executive.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

J. HOGAN: Sorry, can I –?

CHAIR: Minister Hogan.

J. HOGAN: Just a little bit more detail. When the last interim deputy minister was there and there was a bit of overlap with the current deputy minister and she did obviously provide some assistance to train – I guess, is that the right word – Mr. Mahoney. But at the same time, she was there and she did some additional work outside of what a deputy minister would do. I just want to note that it was the review of the Public Utilities Board. She took that on as well and sort of led that charge and made – any recommendations and future legislation that comes from that would have been from her involvement in leading that and that team would do that work.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under Transportation and Communications, last year there was \$36,000 budgeted for T and C but the line item went over budget, spending \$49,000. Could you please explain why that occurred?

CHAIR: Deputy Minister Mahoney?

D. MAHONEY: Last year, with the release of the COVID conditions, we were able to resume to regular departmental travel. So that increase in transportation was principally a function of interprovincial travel where we did a number of different site visits to meet with our people around the province. Myself and the minister also went to Labrador. We visited the correctional facilities in the province.

So there was some interprovincial travel as well as there was a significant amount of additional travel involving special meetings that the minister had that I attended in Ottawa for meetings with federal ministers

as well as FPT meetings. There was a pretty intensive level of FPT meetings last year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

D. MAHONEY: There were three ministers that we met with in Ottawa when we travelled so it was a busy travel year last year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Good. Okay, thank you.

Under Purchased Services, I believe you outlined the \$49,000 was required, I think you indicated, for relocation costs. I just wondered how and what was relocated exactly.

D. MAHONEY: In the hiring of the Executive team, one of the Executive members relocated back to Newfoundland from outside the province. So the relocation costs were the result of the recruitment and relocation of a member of the Executive team to the province last year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

D. MAHONEY: So that was the moving costs.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay. Thank you.

Under access to information statutory review, I believe that the ATIPP statutory review has been completed for some time now. Has the department completed its review of the recommendations?

J. HOGAN: Yes, the review has been completed.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: So can we expect any update on that as far as the review, your recommendations?

J. HOGAN: Yes, the next time you hear about it will be when it comes to the House.

There are no further recommendations or consultations to be done with the exception, I think, there might be some further consultations needed with the Privacy Commissioner once the bill is finalized. It's section 112 of that statute requires consultation on privacy issues and transparency issues.

I don't think that final step has been taken with him yet, although he has been involved in consultations since the report had been issued and, as the department was analyzing the report itself, he was involved in consultations there on decisions or possible decisions that the department was going to make.

So the work has been done and the next step will be to take it to the House of Assembly.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: So do we have a timeline for that?

J. HOGAN: I don't want to commit but like it's a priority in terms of legislative agenda for me as a minister.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, good stuff.

J. HOGAN: I know you're going to say you're the Government House Leader so you can do it anyways.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: This is true.

Moving along, under Support Services, I wanted to ask – I know that there's been a new name now instead of family violence intervention court. You indicated that it is called intimate partner violence Provincial Court. Is that right?

J. HOGAN: Sorry, indicated it is called ...?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: The new name of the court, it is no longer the family violence intervention court. So I think you said – I was trying to catch that earlier in

your introduction, in your highlights – intimate partner violence Provincial Court, correct?

J. HOGAN: Correct.

OFFICIAL: Prevention.

J. HOGAN: Prevention.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Prevention court, okay. Thank you.

So can the minister give an update on the Labrador and Central family violence intervention courts – or I should say the intimate partner violence prevention court. Can you please give an update on those courts?

J. HOGAN: So intervention.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Intervention.

J. HOGAN: I said prevention.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

J. HOGAN: But obviously it is intervention; prevention, we wouldn't be in court, right?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, yeah.

J. HOGAN: So Labrador, other than I can say we obviously want to expand through the province as much as we can. It is on the list of places to go but we are still working through the first expansion right now so there are no immediate plans to have it happen in this fiscal year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

Last year in Estimates, officials talked about hiring a new policy analyst. What work has this analyst completed and what's the timeline, also, for the Central Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Court?

J. HOGAN: We got it.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, we got it.

K. MARTIN: That policy analyst was hired and her work involved planning for the expansion to Central. As the minister mentioned in his opening remarks, that court was implemented in August 2022, and we have had 15 individuals appear to date and one who is currently in programming in that Central court.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Also in your opening remarks, Minister, you mentioned the Drug Treatment Court program. Is there an update on that? I know you said there was a five-year agreement with the feds. I didn't catch everything that you said. I know that last year there was an indication in Estimates that you had said that you were hoping to have this completed and expanded outside of St. John's, so I am just wondering what's happening.

K. MARTIN: As the minister indicated, the new five-year agreement has been signed so this will help support the expansion to other areas of the province. Our intent is to work toward expansion of Central and Western right now to align with the expansion of the Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Court and that is to identify synergies between the two courts.

CHAIR: Okay.

The Member's time has expired.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

I'll just start off with some general questions. What work has been accomplished in the past year on the implementation of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan that was released in June of 2021?

M. NOSEWORTHY: So one of the recommendations of the *Hear Our Voices* report was to establish a Reconciliation Council. Work is under way on establishing that council and the council will be comprised of representatives from all First Nation groups in Newfoundland and Labrador as well as representatives from all of the relevant government departments. The goal of that council, once it is established, will be to coordinate and lead a meaningful action on the 196 recommendations.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

You sort of answered the second question I had about the Reconciliation Council. Do you think the one Reconciliation Council will be enough though, like, in terms of a lot of the legalities that are impacted by the 196 recommendations?

J. HOGAN: No, I don't think that one council is going to be able to implement all those recommendations. I know we're not going to go through every recommendation here today, but it's hard to just sort of talk to Justice about it as well. I mean, I have huge printouts of the recommendations in my office on huge pieces of paper and there are three or four different stacks of them because they're Health, they're Indigenous Affairs, they're Women and Gender Equality and there's Justice and Public Safety as well. We have a member of our Executive team that sits on the council, Gerrie Smith.

So there's work ongoing on that, but we're not trying to say that that is the answer to the inquiry itself. That's one small piece of the overall picture.

L. EVANS: Yes.

Since everyone is here too, just to stress, the inquiry into missing and murdered was about decades of Indigenous women going missing and being murdered. I know it's a nationwide effort, but the report that's come out and the recommendations have been

made quite a while now. There's a lot of distance, so it would be really good to see a lot more of a consolidated effort.

Moving on to my next question: Where's the department in examining the recommendations in First Light's police oversight report; in particular, those calling for a civilian-led oversight board? The reason why I bring up that question is I realize First Light's report sort of bridged on Missing and Murdered recommendations and those from the Truth and Reconciliation. So there was a lot of overlap.

So I was just wondering where you are in examining their recommendations.

J. HOGAN: So I read that report more than once. Where we are with that – and I've had conversations with that group as well after the report was issued and it was pretty clear to them that – I heard what they said. I read what was in the report. I understand their position. I did say to them as well they are only – not that they are only one group, they are a group, a stakeholder in relation to police in this province, which obviously covers everybody, and we are making plans to include other stakeholders to hear what they have said.

I've met with other individuals from communities in this province who have a different viewpoint on how there should be police oversight in this province. So we hope to gather more information from more stakeholders, women's groups, other groups in the province that want to comment on this and to get a more fulsome picture on what different inputs are so we can come up with the best solution and not a solution just based on consultation to smaller number of groups.

L. EVANS: Yes. I do appreciate what you're saying.

And since everyone is here I will take the time, because there's effort there that you're

putting into this. You are putting money into it. We don't want to have a continued legacy of having more recommendations, more plans that, basically, just says very similar things.

So if you could put in some effort into addressing the initial problems and looking at recommendations there would not be other groups coming forward with the same recommendations. Right?

J. HOGAN: So I do want to respond to that because we do recognize that issue and it's not only that issue. We recognize that there's a conversation in this whole country about policing. We provided additional funding to the RCMP last year and we provided additional funding to the RNC this year. But what is important and what I think – I did say at the outset that it might get lost in the budget conversations because it's an internal change in the Department of Justice and Public Safety as we've allocated almost a million dollars to create 10 positions within the department to deal with policing in this province, to deal with crime prevention.

So that will help us expand our ability to discuss with stakeholders, to meet with stakeholders, to hear what everybody has to say and I do think that's a big important move from the department to show that we recognize that we need help within the department to talk to people in this province. The budget came out very much around the time of the release of the report on mass causality loss in Nova Scotia so you did talk about the missing and murdered Indigenous women and obviously that's a report specific to Indigenous women in this country, but I know that the mass casualty report, one of the things that came out of it, certainly a highlight, was they referred to gender-based violence as endemic in this country. That's not just in relation to Indigenous people, that's all women in this country.

I'm very happy that we have that expanded sector in our department right now to deal with the discussions around changing

policing in this province and gender-based violence. I think that's going to really help.

L. EVANS: Another general question that's along that theme is I've been advocating since I got elected in 2019 now for additional policing in Postville. It's a small community in Northern Labrador and we hear a lot about Northern Labrador actually leads the statistics when it comes to domestic violence, incarceration, addiction, sexual assaults. The community of Postville does not have any policing. I was just wondering, are you making any inroads into allocating more resources from your budget to ensure that the community of Postville does have some presence there?

S. SIMMONS: We work continuously with the RCMP to determine what their needs are in various communities. Postville, you're right, is a remote community. There are challenges in getting patrols into those communities and we are having those ongoing conversations with the RCMP.

The new departmental resources will also be working towards looking at the policing services for all communities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Moving on to the next general question: Will the department be setting up any further restorative justice programs in the upcoming year?

J. HOGAN: We did provide funding to a group from Memorial University I think it was last year for \$300,000 for a three-year study that they proposed to us. We provided the full funding, the request that they made to look at restorative justice, how it fits into the education system in this province.

I know that the chief of our Provincial Court is very interested and very keen on restorative justice in the justice system. I'm just going to read out a note here after a conversation with him, and he says that

they're in the process of developing a wellness and healing court in the community of Conne River that will reflect the principles of restorative justice and respect the culture and traditions of the Miawpukek First Nation.

Work is being done between the Provincial Court and the First Nation there, as well as there are now Gladue writers trained in the community who will have the ability to write these reports to help inform the court at the sentencing stage of the court process. As well, he is having conversations – which are at the early stages – of having the Provincial Court return to Sheshatshiu, which I think will be a big thing as well.

So there are restorative justice conversations going on. I am very pleased that Chief Justice Fowler is very much a proponent of restorative justice in our system.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

I have more questions but my time is just about expired so I'll let my colleague go.

CHAIR: MHA Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Mental Health Court: I'm just wondering if we could be provided an update on the number of people who are participating in the Mental Health Court. Is there a desire to expand this court to other geographic areas?

K. MARTIN: During the '22-'23 fiscal year, we had 19 individuals who completed programming and five who were within the program during that year. We're always looking for opportunities for further expansion but we have no immediate plans to expand the Mental Health Court at this time.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Under 1.2.02, Administrative and Policy Support, Professional Services, the budget for Professional Services is planned to increase

to \$553,700. Could you please explain what Professional Services are included here and what the increase is for?

J. HOGAN: That funding was in the budget this year – the large increase was due to allocation of funds for security in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in relation to requests from the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay for increased security related to the transient homeless and homeless population in the town.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

J. HOGAN: So we listened to them, we allocated the funds and now I guess we'll see where we go from there.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Are there any new initiatives with respect to the issue in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in terms of policing or community policing initiatives?

J. HOGAN: I would say that this is a new initiative. It is a lot of money for security. I think over the last couple of years we, in the town, have tried to – funding has been provided. I'm not sure the exact amount but I think it would have been around \$100,000 to try and have security in the form of municipal enforcement officers. That money wasn't used because they couldn't find anyone to fill to roles of the municipal enforcement officers, so this was an idea to get some other groups on contracts – not police – to provide security.

Part of the reason for that was, while I don't think we can police our way out of this situation, I do hear that people in the town who say that seeing individuals in uniforms – whether it's police or other agencies patrol the areas – would give them a sense of extra security and safety. So this is why we tried to get this funding for them and why we were successful in doing it.

In terms of policing itself, obviously we've talked about the RCMP issues across the country in terms of shortage of RCMP

officers. It is the same here in Newfoundland and Labrador; this is across the country. I've met with the commanding officer here, Assistant Commissioner Ebert, on a few occasions about our vacancy rates. I don't know where it is on our priority list, but she certainly has stressed to me the initiatives that she has taken in trying to make sure that we get our fair share to fill our vacancies here in Newfoundland and Labrador which would include, obviously, Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

As the deputy minister mentioned, we've been to Happy Valley-Goose Bay, along with the assistant commissioner. I think she heard their concerns as well and while, again, we can't police our way out of it, I did hear from members of the community that felt and saw that there was an increased patrol of the RCMP in the area since our visit there. The RCMP will be hiring two new officers at the detachment in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. I am not going to speak too much outside of Justice and Public Safety, but the Minister for CSSD certainly has made some efforts to have a facility built in Happy Valley-Goose Bay to deal with addictions treatments.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

So there will be two new RCMP officers hired?

J. HOGAN: They are hiring them, yeah.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: They are hiring them. Okay, thank you. That's good to hear.

Under Grants, who receives these grants? Could you please provide a breakdown? I believe the grant for search and rescue is in here, along with some other costs.

CHAIR: Andrew Green.

A. GREEN: So the search and rescue grant would be the majority of the grant in this account. We also provide annual grant

funding to the National Judicial Institute; we do the motor carrier costs for the Public Utilities Board; we do a grant for the Association of Provincial Court Judges; and then in the grants that the minister addressed earlier, we would have used some of the funding for those agencies.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay. Could you give me a breakdown, exactly, please?

A. GREEN: Yeah, we can get you a breakdown of the grant funding.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Perfect, thank you.

Under Revenue - Federal, can you please explain where this revenue comes from and how the amounts are determined? Last year there was \$1.3 million expected but just over \$1 million received.

A. GREEN: There are two federal agreements in this budget which is 100 per cent offset federal funding agreements. There's the guns and gangs initiative which is block funded here. It actually is moving now out of this division on a go-forward, so it shows up in both the RNC and the RCMP budgets now because it ended as of March 31. The new agreement will be in the police agencies.

The other one is for Drug Treatment Court and then there's some funding there for the expansion of Drug Treatment Court, as referenced in the five-year agreement that we're working through.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Now just on the guns and gangs initiative, what is being planned this year for the guns and gangs initiative?

S. SIMMONS: The Gun and Gang Violence Action Fund agreement recently expired. We have entered into an amendment agreement to bridge the time until we enter

into a new agreement. We're currently having those ongoing conversations with the federal government. Once we have a draft agreement in hand, we'll be able to look at the terms and conditions and figure out how we're going to allocate the funding for the next five years, hopefully.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under 1.2.04, Administrative Support, how big is the RNC fleet currently and could you please outline how many RNC vehicles have over 200,000 kilometres on them?

K. HARDING: Currently we have 120 front-line operational vehicles and 82 per cent of those vehicles have less than 200,000 kilometres on them.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you, Ms. Harding.

Under 1.3.01, Fines Administration, under Revenue - Federal, could you please outline what program this federal revenue comes from. Last year, \$74,900 was expected but until \$57,200 received. Could you please explain why?

A. GREEN: This is part of the *Contraventions Act* funding agreement. This is for salary and some operating expenses. The position would have been vacant for a part of the year and I believe it's filled now.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

What is the total amount of outstanding fines owed to the province?

A. GREEN: \$47.5 million is the total amount outstanding.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Is there a strategy to collect these fines?

A. GREEN: The allowance for default accounts is \$32.5 million. We've collected, I

think, around \$9 million this year in outstanding fines.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

The fine-options program, last year during Estimates an official said that development is still ongoing with the fine-options program.

Could you please provide an update on this program?

M. NOSEWORTHY: So my understanding is that the work on evaluating policy options for that fine-options program was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic and since that time on because of, you know, changes in the justice system and changes in society, work is currently under way to go back and look at those options and evaluate policies for exploration of whether that program is something that would be brought forward or not. So that work is currently under way to look at that new information that's been gathered since the work was paused, and determine options for moving forward on that.

CHAIR: The Member's time has expired.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Just one last general question. Are there currently any outstanding recommendations from the Jesso report? If so, when do you expect them to be addressed?

G. SMITH: So most of the recommendations from the Jesso report, which was issued in 2018, have been actioned and the outstanding. There were 13 recommendations that relate to the Department of Justice and Public Safety. The outstanding recommendations, at this point, are related to the alternatives to incarceration, so bail supervision, expansion of electronic monitoring, which is under active consideration within the department,

and other recommendations related to mental health units and direct supervision of inmates, which is again being considered. There are some challenges with the physical layout of our existing correctional facilities. So those are recommendations related to those pieces (inaudible).

L. EVANS: Yeah, so I wasn't quite sure if you were finished because I took my earpiece out.

Thank you very much for that response.

Just looking at section 1.2.02, Administrative and Policy Support. Giving the findings of the Auditor General's report into Adult Custody and Community Corrections in December, I was reminded that the report is a bit dated, as the minister responded in the House.

What additional resources are being put into developing relevant policies and procedures for these departments since the report has come out?

J. HOGAN: Yeah, so it was dated, obviously, but it doesn't mean there's not more work to do on that. When I said at the start about some of the funding we've provided, the \$650,000 to the John Howard Society was in relation to their two facilities, but also the agreement with them for that additional funding would be to have them review the Auditor General's report with us to help implement some of the recommendations in that that are outstanding.

L. EVANS: Yes, to clarify my point, the report is dated, but it was so far reaching and showed such gaps at the staff level and the resources for the inmates that I know that even though a few years has lapsed since this report was placed, that there are still a lot of issues existing, right. So it's really important to look at that.

Looking at the Salaries, just looking at the line item there, I'm still on Administrative

and Policy Support. The Salaries were down last year, so I was just wondering which vacancies are there currently, when we look at that Auditor General report?

A. GREEN: Salaries, one of the biggest variances here is that the Guns and Gangs funding agreement is all budgeted in the salary account for this year. We changed that going forward. So the expense occurs in other areas, whether it's training, supplies, equipment, et cetera.

Currently, there is one vacancy in this division.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

My colleague asked a question there on the Guns and Gangs initiative and it's federally funded. My second question was are you seeing any success for this province from this program?

S. SIMMONS: Yeah, absolutely. The Guns and Gangs funding over the last five years, we had \$1.8 million allocated from the federal government. That funding was primarily used to support law enforcement, the RNC, to ensure that they are equipped to respond to serious incidents, incidents involving firearms. They would purchase equipment using that funding as well as implement training initiatives.

CHAIR: I just want to interrupt here for one second. For those who are listening at home, our audio web stream on the government network is experiencing long buffering pauses at the moment. It is currently being worked on and we will advise when resolved.

Continue.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Still under Administrative and Policy Support, looking at the spending for Employee Benefits; Transportation and Communications; Supplies; Property,

Furnishings and Equipment, these were all over budget last year.

Can you just give us a breakdown on that?

J. HOGAN: The Employee Benefits increase of about \$400,000 was due to increased departmental-wide workers' compensation costs. Transportation is due to eligible spending under the federal Guns and Gangs initiative, it's what Andrew Green spoke to, why the money has been moved around a little bit.

Did you ask about –

L. EVANS: Supplies

J. HOGAN: – Transportation as well?

L. EVANS: Yeah.

J. HOGAN: Sorry, Supplies?

L. EVANS: Transportation and Communications, Supplies, Property –

J. HOGAN: All both related to Guns and Gangs.

L. EVANS: And the Property, Furnishings and Equipment?

A. GREEN: We would have purchased laptops for the department. I think we purchased approximately 27 laptops this year and that would be the overage.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Moving to 1.3.01 on page 213, Fines Administration. The question was what positions are currently vacant in the ticketing, processing and collections? Are the vacancies having a material impact on our ability to levy and collect fines?

A. GREEN: I believe there is only one current vacancy. We did have some vacancies throughout the year which had a delay in –

J. HOGAN: Two.

A. GREEN: Sorry, two current vacancies. We were able to put some student staffing in place. I think we provided three summer students, which helped assist in ticket processing. We were able to fill some of the – I think last year we had approximately four positions vacant.

L. EVANS: Okay. Thank you.

That is the end of my questions for this section.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Conway Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Under 2.1.01, Civil Law, Professional Services, can you please outline how many matters required outside council to be retained last year? This year there is a planned reduction –

CHAIR: I'm sorry.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Oh, 2.1.01, I'm getting ahead of myself. Actually, I think that's it for me.

CHAIR: Okay, I'll ask the Clerk to recall the grouping.

CLERK: Executive and Support Services, 1.1.01 through 1.3.01 inclusive.

Shall Executive and Support Services 1.1.01 to 1.3.01 carry?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, subheads 1.1.01 through 1.3.01 carried.

CHAIR: I'll ask the Clerk to – no, actually, we're going to take a 10-minute break now.

J. HOGAN: Can I, just before we go?

CHAIR: Minister.

J. HOGAN: When we gave the number about the outstanding fines, we said \$47.5 million. It is actually \$48.85 million so I just wanted to correct that.

CHAIR: All right. It is 10:32, so 10 minutes.

Recess

CHAIR: Can everyone take their seats?

Minister, are you ready?

We have three groupings left. I'm going to ask the Clerk to call the next grouping.

CLERK: Legal and Related Services, 2.1.01 through 2.4.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Legal and Related Services, 2.1.01 to 2.4.01.

MHA Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Under Professional Services, can you please outline how many matters required outside counsel to be retained last year? I understand this year there's a planned reduction in the budget. Could you please explain how this will be achieved?

So just to ask you how many matters required outside counsel to be retained last year?

J. HOGAN: So we wouldn't track how many matters we send to external counsel. It's a lot, right? Sometimes, obviously, there are long retainers that last for years. Other times there's one offer where you need to get a legal opinion and it's just one file. So I don't think we would be able to track how many matters were referred out.

In terms of the reduction of the \$1 million, that would be \$1 million less that we feel we

don't need in terms of the rate mitigation file this year. It would have been ongoing work over the last number of years that required external legal counsel on that file.

So the base budget has always – I should not say always but has recently been about \$2 million and that bump last year of a million was specifically for rate mitigation work.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: So last year, because I do know that were several class actions last year and I wondered if it was possible to have a list as to which counsel were retained and what matters were required. I don't know if you're able to provide any list to us.

D. WOODROW: We can get you a list of what firms were retained. Not necessarily what the matters were but we can give you the list of the firms.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under Allowances and Assistance, last year \$5 million was budgeted and \$9.5 million spent. This year \$5 million budgeted again. Could you please provide an explanation of these amounts, including what was the total for the class action involving Whitbourne?

J. HOGAN: The \$9.5 million you're asking about, I think?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Yes.

J. HOGAN: Yeah, that would be increased settlement payments for litigation. The number for the class action for Whitbourne, I can't remember specifically. About \$12 million?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

J. HOGAN: It was \$13 million. That would have come out of last year's budget. Even though the finalization of the settlement would have been in this year, it did come

out of last year's funds so it wouldn't be included in that number.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

2.1.02, Sheriff's Office: How many vacancies are now in the sheriff's office?

D. PEDDLE: Currently now, vacancies in court security, we have two in Wabush and we have one in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in court security. There are seven vacancies in the main office.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Moving along to 2.2.01, Criminal Law, last year Professional Services went over budget spending \$147,600. Can you please detail how many matters required outside counsel?

J. HOGAN: So it is in relation to hiring agents for Crown-related matters. Did you want to speak more to that?

L. STEAD: Sure, I can speak to that.

J. HOGAN: Sorry, she can comment in more detail than I can.

L. STEAD: The need for outside counsel would involve conflict of interest for Crown attorneys, but also the use of agents to cover court matters where we don't have Crowns available to cover them. That is why we would need to use agents. I don't have a listing of numbers. Sometimes it might involve days rather than actual matters, if it happens to be a Plea Day or something like that.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you, Ms. Stead.

Under 2.3.01, Legal Aid, how many lawyers are now practising at Legal Aid? I don't know if you stated that earlier but I apologize if you did.

D. WOODROW: There are 67 lawyers, including 14 area directors that are lawyers as well.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

Now, I look from last year, I believe there were 75 legal aid lawyers across the province. Why the lower number now? Can you account for that?

A. GREEN: That number is consistent. There was no reduction in lawyers. Last year the account might have included any contracts that they would've had in place. But that would've been offset by vacancies.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under Grants and Subsidies, the grant to Legal Aid is being increased by \$2.7 million. Could you please outline how Legal aid will use this additional funding?

A. GREEN: There was a recent increase to the five-year agreement for Legal Aid, so we've annualized that. There are also general salary increases for their employees. Then the impact of the solicitor pay increases.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under 2.3.03, Other Inquiries, could you please speak generally about the expenses listed here for other inquiries? I'm aware that the amount spent in any year largely depends on the timing and the needs of an inquiry. How were the amounts for this upcoming year calculated? Specifically, I'm wondering about the variance in the salary line item for this past year and how the budget for Transportation and Communications, Professional Services and Purchased Services was estimated for this upcoming year.

J. HOGAN: This is in relation to the Innu inquiry. When we first did the budget for that

all we could do is look at previous inquiries to come up with a general ballpark number of what it was going to cost. As the commission came to life and the commissioners were appointed and the staff were appointed, obviously, they did a lot of detail work and have come to us about what they feel that they need in terms of funding, services that they need. The big issue that they were concerned about, and rightly so, was support services for individuals who have to testify or attend the inquiry.

A lot of the numbers where it came from was working with the commission inquiry staff itself. Obviously, in the public record is that the inquiry didn't start on time. There have been delays for whatever reason and there continues to be some delays here and there, so there is going to be ongoing work in terms of timing of the inquiry, completion date and adjustments to the funding as we go through this inquiry for however long it's going to take.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

The Bowes inquiry, last year when I asked we were told that 47 out of 65 recommendations of the inquiry were fully implemented. Can I get an update on the other recommendations? Are there any obstacles preventing the full implementation of all recommendations?

G. SMITH: Yes, so the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in her annual report last year reported that 50 of the 65 recommendations were complete. The outstanding recommendations relate essentially to two particular items. One is a digital database program. We can say that the office continues to work with the office in Nova Scotia. They have spent a lot of time, I guess, working through the bugs in terms of their system. So the intention is that once they pilot theirs, then we will benefit from their experience. I'm told that in this fiscal year, we expect that program will be in place.

The other recommendations relate to the facility itself. I can say that the office has been working over the past fiscal year with Eastern Health and now the new Provincial Health Authority to locate new space within the Health Sciences Centre. We are currently in a design phase with the authority. The Chief Medical Examiner, the engineers and other staff at the office are having meetings regarding the design of the new space at the Health Sciences.

So once those two pieces are in place, then I think we'll be able to report back that all the Bowes recommendations will be fully implemented.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

I see there is only a few seconds left so I'll leave until next time.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Just going back now to the beginning of the section 2.1.01, Civil Law. Would it be possible to get a brief update on the class action lawsuits that the province is party to right now?

J. HOGAN: Sorry?

L. EVANS: Could we get a brief update on the large class action lawsuits that the province is party to?

J. HOGAN: Is there a specific one that you want an update on?

L. EVANS: Tobacco.

J. HOGAN: Tobacco?

L. EVANS: Yeah, that's the one.

J. HOGAN: Yup, sure.

D. WOODROW: I'm hopeful that the tobacco lawsuit would be resolved possibly this year.

L. EVANS: I'm just going to put my hearing piece in.

Okay, thank you.

Could we get an update on how discussions are progressing with the Innu Nation on rate mitigation?

J. HOGAN: Sure. There was a meeting with the Innu Nation representatives within the last two or three months with the Premier's office and this department and rate mitigation was one of the topics. It was agreed to get back to the table. So right now we're working on some dates for meeting with innovation and with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to further talk about that specific issue between the parties and see if there's some sort of middle ground where we can get to satisfy the issue.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Still under Civil Law, Professional Services, the \$2 million being spent on Professional Services, we understand a lot of that's for the Innu inquiry that's ongoing. How much of that is going – sorry, I got the two mixed up. I got my questions and my newest questions that I added.

Under Professional Services, the \$2 million that's being spent on Professional Services, how much of that is going to staff solicitors versus retaining private council at the downtown law firms, which have much higher hourly rates?

J. HOGAN: So all of that is for external legal council. I wouldn't say it's all downtown council in St. John's. Some of it is for downtown lawyers, I guess, whatever that means, and then obviously we would use some council as well in Ontario and we

would also use smaller firms throughout the province.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Sorry for getting those mixed up, I'm just juggling. I must say, I commend you. There are many answer in the binder, so I do thank you for giving us the binder ahead of time.

Just moving on now to section 2.1.02, Sheriff's Office. Has the (inaudible) counting processes been updated at the Sheriff's Office? It was a major part of the reason last year why they couldn't provide financial statements to the Auditor General.

CHAIR: Minister?

J. HOGAN: So the trust audits are ongoing. The update right now is the 2017 audit has been done. The Auditor General is continuing to work, obviously, on 2018 and forward. My understanding is that she is satisfied with the work that is going on there right now. I have said this publicly, and just for the record as well today, the funds there are not public money in terms of government money. It's trust money related to judgments, et cetera, and other things that will be related to the Sheriff's Office. There has certainly been no evidence of misuse of funds.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you, Minister.

Moving to section 2.2.01, Criminal Law, for the Salaries line, why has there been an increase in the salary budget this year?

J. HOGAN: Why has there been is that what you said?

L. EVANS: Yeah.

J. HOGAN: That would be due to the increase in the solicitor pay scale and general salary increases, not just lawyer salaries.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just moving down to 2.3.01, under Legal Aid, are there currently any plans in the works for cutting funding to Legal Aid as was recommended by the Green report. We noticed that budget has increased, but are there any plans to actually cut funding?

J. HOGAN: No, there are no plans to cut. I'm just going to use a line not used before, is that history is a good indicator of the future, so, yeah, the fact that it's increased is a pretty good indicator that there won't be cuts.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Moving down to 2.3.03, Other Inquiries, could we have an update on the work of the Commission of Inquiry into the Treatment, Experiences and Outcomes of Innu in the Child Protection System?

J. HOGAN: I'll just comment. I don't know if anyone else here can fill in a little bit more detail. The work has started. They've had some sessions in Labrador but, unfortunately, I know at least two had to be postponed due to deaths in the community. I've met with the group maybe on two or three occasions just to continue to discuss requests that they have and just to make sure that we're aligned and that they recognize the importance that we see in the inquiry, but also to stress that it is their inquiry and they're independent of government and decisions that they make on how to induct the inquiry is all on them. We're very much aligned on that.

They've come to request an extension of the timeline for the filing of the report on that, which was granted. I think that is public record. So other than that, I don't have much more details on that.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Still with Other Inquiries, the \$10.7 million allocated for Other Inquiries, as we did say,

the majority of that is for the Innu children in care inquiry. Is the minister aware that the inquiry has identified that the budget was not realistic – and I'm using quotes from people – over the expected period of time, but the budget has not been increased? With these delays extending and uncovering I guess additional things to be covered and the extra time –

M. NOSEWORTHY: We're working with the inquiry and in regular contact and conversations with them and open to their feedback and working in the spirit of collaboration to do what we can do within the parameters available to us to make adjustments, where necessary. Those conversations are ongoing at various levels throughout the department and we're hearing those concerns and doing what we can to address them.

L. EVANS: Okay.

I was wondering if you were looking at some of the statements there that have been made that legal counsel for the families may not be compensated. Have you heard that and are you looking at –?

J. HOGAN: There's been some back and forth in terms of what goes in the retainer letter. Lawyers are going to be compensated for the work they do on the inquiry.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just moving to 2.3.04, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, under Salaries. Why was spending under Salaries under budget this year?

A. GREEN: That was the delay in hiring the additional medical examiner. Their salary is pretty large and it was just a four-month delay in when that person actually was hired.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just moving down to 2.3.05, Human Rights, looking at the Salaries line again. Why did spending on Salaries go over budget last year?

M. NOSEWORTHY: Those numbers are due to funding for additional staff related to restorative justice work through Community Justice Connect at the commission, as well as the hiring of an articling student. I believe that there was also a retirement payout, and then as well as has been mentioned in other areas, the general salary and the impact of the solicitors' pay scale is also applied to the Human Rights Commission as well.

CHAIR: Okay, the Member's time has expired.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

CHAIR: MHA Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

Under 2.3.04, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, under Salaries, in '22-'23 it appears there were some vacancies. Could you please explain the salary savings of \$105,400?

G. SMITH: So there was some change within the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner over the last fiscal related to the position of medical investigator. That office had two medical investigators; one resigned and there was a period of time where we only had one and that person has left. Now we are currently recruiting for the two positions, so that would explain the difference there.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under 2.3.05, Human Rights, last year the budget for Professional Services went over budget, spending a total of \$152,900. Could you please explain why?

J. HOGAN: That would be due to external legal fees attributed to historically increasing number of cases and ongoing matters heard by the commission. The one in relation to NLESD is probably the one that would have attributed to that increase.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

That's it for me under this heading.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: I just have one question left under 2.3.05 under Human Rights. Just looking at the Supplies and Professional Services that were over budget. We learned that was because of the number of cases heard by the Human Rights Commission so we were wondering why is the number of cases being heard by the Human Rights Commission increasing.

M. NOSEWORTHY: As of yesterday, there are 478 active complaints before the Human Rights Commission and that is up from about, I'm going to give a range, 300 to 350 average over the past few years.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Why are there more people coming forward? Is that about awareness or is it about situations that actually create more cases that come forward?

M. NOSEWORTHY: It is difficult to answer that with absolute certainty but I can say that we do believe it is, at least in part, due to awareness in the Human Rights Commission being active in the media and on social media, making sure people are aware that the services they provide are available to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

L. EVANS: Okay, because human rights violations are very serious and, of course, to

see such a significant increase is concerning so thank you.

I'm finished, thank you.

CHAIR: Okay.

I'll ask the Clerk to recall the grouping.

CLERK: Legal and Related Services, 2.1.01 through 2.4.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 2.1.01 to 2.4.01, Legal and Related Services, carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, subheads 2.1.01 through 2.4.01 carried.

CHAIR: I'll ask the Clerk to call the next heading.

CLERK: Law Courts, 3.1.01 to 3.2.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: 3.1.01 to 3.2.01, Law Courts, inclusive.

MHA Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

Under 3.1.01, Supreme Court, Salaries, last year there was a salary savings of \$499,000. This year, the salary budget is being increased to \$8.2 million. Could you please outline why?

CHAIR: Shelley Organ.

S. ORGAN: That's primarily due to two federal agreements that we are receiving federal funding for. Some positions that weren't filled are able to be filled through competition at that point. Then there are the salary increases.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Are there any cases being challenged under the Jordan decision?

S. ORGAN: No, there actually are not at this point. We do have nine matters that are nearing the 30-month limit, but none of them are at that age, I guess, due to court related. They're mainly due to the accused waiving their time limit.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

S. ORGAN: So there are none at risk right now for a Jordan application, I guess, is what you wanted to know.

CHAIR: Lisa Stead.

L. STEAD: We currently only have one application filed in our cases in the province. We only do the provincial prosecution so we can't speak for the federal or Crown. But there is one filed and it's in Provincial Court in Port aux Basques. We have had no findings against, no applications that were successful against us in the last year. Whether there are other applications about to be filed, I can't say but certainly right now there is only one ongoing.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, that's great. Thank you.

With respect to the Supreme Court and the Provincial Court backlogs, are there backlogs of cases waiting to be heard? If so, how are the backlogs being addressed?

S. ORGAN: For the Supreme Court, we have not had any major backlogs as a result of COVID; I know that is where the question is coming from. Right now, we can schedule criminal jury trials within the year; for family civil matters, within the year, just less than a year; for applications and that type of things, we can schedule matters within three to four months, generally, throughout the province.

J. TURNER: With respect to the Provincial Court, similar to Supreme in that we don't feel that we have a backlog of cases. We are able to schedule trials within a matter of months, depending on which court centre. There are 10 court centres. So we feel that there is no backlog with trials or appearances at this point.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay. Thank you.

That concludes all of the questions from me for this heading.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Just looking at 3.1.01, Supreme Court, spending on Purchased Services was higher than expected last year and the budget for the upcoming year has increased. What is the source of these higher expenditures?

S. ORGAN: For this past fiscal year, we went over \$120,000. That was primarily due to the installation of a fire escape for the Family Division in St. John's for the public area. There was no second egress and that was the reason for that overage.

Coming up for this fiscal year, the extra funding can be contributed to the federal funding, the two agreements that we have with the federal government, the supervised parenting and the *Divorce Act* Official Languages fund. As well as \$350,000 of that is to go towards purchasing a more robust video conferencing system for the Supreme Court.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just looking at the federal revenue there at the bottom, why are we expecting a significant increase to federal revenue this year?

S. ORGAN: That would be as a result of the two federal agreements that we have, so the supervised parenting program and the *Divorce Act* Official Languages fund.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Moving to 3.2.01, Provincial Court, last year's budget included the creation of a new travel judge that will be deployed to areas where an increase in demand was for their services. Has this position helped decrease any backlogs and can we have an update on the initiative? I know you said there were no real backlogs.

J. TURNER: So the itinerant position has been appointed internally within the provincial judiciary. The individual has not taken up the position as yet because they are located in another Provincial Court centre. We await the appointment of another Provincial Court judge before bringing that individual to St. John's to begin their itinerant duties.

The position will assist greatly with any leave from the judiciary. So while we've identified that we aren't concerned with large backlogs of files and scheduling trials and the like, the position is required to assist with vacancies or absences by the judiciary, whether it be for medical purposes, if they're going to take some vacation time, et cetera.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Under vacancies, just for the Provincial Court now, would you be able to tell us how many current vacancies you have?

J. TURNER: We currently have nine vacancies within Provincial Court.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

J. TURNER: You're welcome.

L. EVANS: Under Transportation and Communications there, spending was

higher than expected in the last year. Yet, this year, there's a decrease to the budget. So what would account for the fluctuation?

J. TURNER: This variance is due to – well, the expenditures for the past year were as the result of having to provide support to other court centres. We have staff travelling from one court centre to another to provide support when vacancies occur at the time.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Under Property, Furnishings and Equipment, there's a budget increase for this year. Would you just be able to explain why, what that's for?

J. TURNER: Sorry, could you repeat the question?

L. EVANS: Property, Furnishings and Equipment, there's a budget increase this year.

J. TURNER: This is with respect to contraventions funding. There is an allocation for additional resources through contraventions, which means we will require additional funds to provide furniture and equipment for those individuals for those positions.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Looking at the federal revenue, why did we receive so little federal revenue last year?

J. TURNER: This is with respect to revenue that we received from the federal government related to the *Contraventions Act*. We do a bill back to the federal government based on the number of contraventions tickets that we've processed for the year and any related expenses in collecting those amounts.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

That's the end of my questions for this section.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Conway Ottenheimer, finished?

Okay, I ask the Clerk to recall the grouping.

CLERK: Law Courts, 3.1.01 through 3.2.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 3.1.01 to 3.2.01, Law Courts, carry?

Carried.

On motion, subheads 3.1.01 through 3.2.01 carried.

CHAIR: I ask the Clerk to call the final grouping.

CLERK: Public Protection, 4.1.01 to 4.2.02 inclusive.

CHAIR: 4.1.01 to 4.2.02, Public Protection.

MHA Conway Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

4.1.01, RNC, Salaries, can the minister please give an overview of how many employees are with the RNC? The Salaries line item had a savings of \$1 million, can you explain why?

K. HARDING: This year we've seen a number of retirements and resignations in our police service. Our permanent complement is 403; we're at now at 390. And our civilian employees, we have approximately 20 vacancies last year so this contributed to the salary savings.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

How many RNC officers are eligible for retirement and how many new recruits are available to replace them?

K. HARDING: As of March 31, we had 25 police officers eligible to retire and we have 17 recruits at the Atlantic Police Academy.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under Transportation and Communications, how many officers had to be relocated and thus have relocation costs been paid?

K. HARDING: For last year, approximately 12 officers were relocated from Labrador to St. John's, St. John's to Labrador, or from Corner Brook to St. John's and St. John's to Corner Brook.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Harding.

And finally Revenue - Federal, can you please outline what the \$450,000 of federal revenue is to support?

K. HARDING: The federal revenue is from the guns and gangs initiative and supports our specialized training related to gangs and gangs and specialized equipment.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Under 4.1.02, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Professional Services, could you please outline how the amount budgeted for the RCMP compares to the amount asked for by the RCMP? I note that last year not all the budgeted money was spent. Why not?

S. SIMMONS: Last year, because of the timing of the invoicing process under the provincial police service agreement, one of the invoices was related to the previous fiscal year which was based on the previous budget cap which was lower than the current RCMP budget, so there was a one-time savings this year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Simmons.

Under Revenue - Provincial, last year \$77,800 was expected but \$112,900 received and this year \$141,300 is expected. Could you please provide some details?

S. SIMMONS: This is related to an agreement with Miawpukek First Nation for a community policing services; the increase is related to the cost of having an officer located in that community.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay.

Under 4.1.03, RNC Public Complaints Commission: How many complaints does the RNC Public Complaints Commission receive on average each year? How many were received last year?

CHAIR: Denise Woodrow.

D. WOODROW: They have around 60 files right now and around 50 they had last year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Finally, one question, 4.1.04, Serious Incident Response Team: How many files did SIRT review last year?

D. WOODROW: Last year they had 66.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: It seems like my colleague has asked a lot of my questions already. Thank you, Helen.

Moving to 4.1.02, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, just looking at Salaries. There's a figure here for Salaries but there was none last year when you look at the line items.

J. HOGAN: So that's not salaries for RCMP members. That's salaries within the Department of Justice and Public Safety. So that's what I spoke about earlier, how there's a new, sort of policing division within the Department of Justice and Public Safety. That's what that increase in salaries is for.

L. EVANS: Yeah, because if it was Salaries we were looking at there, the Professional Services being so high and the Salaries being so low, I guess you've just answered that question for me.

J. HOGAN: We certainly paid more than \$900,000 in salaries.

L. EVANS: Yeah, but I thought it might have been an error in the book.

J. HOGAN: Yeah, for sure.

L. EVANS: We've seen errors in the book so we just wanted some clarification there.

Looking at 4.1.03, RNC Public Complaints Commission, how many public complaints did the Commission receive in the past 12 months and is there an increase or decrease over the last year?

D. WOODROW: So they had around 50 complaints in previous years and 60 to date, so it's an increase of about 10.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Looking at Professional Services there, still under 4.1.03, why was spending on Professional Services higher than expected last year and why is the budget increased again this year?

D. WOODROW: Due to conflicts in investigators, they had to hire some additional investigators, and some additional investigators to deal with some appeals.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Moving to 4.1.04, Serious Incident Response Team, why was the spending on Transportation and Communications, Supplies and Professional Services all under budget last year?

A. GREEN: That would just be due to the nature of the investigations, if they had to travel outside of St. John's and such.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Moving on to Adult Corrections there, 4.2.01. How many classification officers and community officer positions are currently vacant?

M. VARDY: Can you repeat that? What were the positions?

L. EVANS: Classification officer and community officer positions?

M. VARDY: We have three vacant classification officers.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Does this budget contain funding to create more of these positions?

M. VARDY: Pardon?

L. EVANS: You have three vacant. In this budget, do you have more funds for creating more positions?

M. VARDY: No more funds but they're vacant funded positions.

L. EVANS: Moving to my next question now; is there any change in the amount of money that the provincial government receives from the federal government for housing federal prisoners in our facilities?

M. VARDY: The current rate for the exchange of service agreement that we get for housing federal inmates is \$378.09 per night per inmate.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Sorry, just looking at my questions. So is that the same as last year?

M. VARDY: In '21-'22, the rate was \$415.91 and in '22-'23, it dropped down to \$378.09.

L. EVANS: Okay, so there was a decrease.

M. VARDY: There was a decrease in last year.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Why was spending on Supplies over budget last year?

M. VARDY: The variance in supplies was due to additional collectively bargained uniform costs for correctional officers and increased household and cleaning supplies, just general personal hygiene items and stuff like that that's required for inmates in the correctional institutions.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Still under Adult Corrections there, when you look at Property, Furnishings and Equipment, why was spending lower than expected last year?

M. VARDY: In Property, Furnishings and Equipment?

L. EVANS: Yeah.

M. VARDY: It was just less than anticipated equipment required in that fiscal year.

L. EVANS: Under provincial and federal revenues, why was the provincial and federal revenues higher than expected last year?

M. VARDY: The federal revenue was due to greater than anticipated revenue for the federal exchange services agreement for the federal prisoners held in provincial prisons. The provincial revenue was

projecting an increase of \$700,000, which was due to additional provincial victim find surcharge fees collected.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just going back now to the question there where there was a decrease in monies received from the federal government for housing of federal prisoners. You said that the previous year was \$415 and now it's \$375. What accounted for this decrease?

M. VARDY: So the decrease, it was really an anomaly due to COVID. In that year, there were a lot of inmates released from prison; therefore, our expenses were still high, our inmate count was down, so the cost per inmate actually went up. Now it's getting back to normal and the number decreased.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Just looking at 4.2.02, Youth Secure Custody, why was the spending on Supplies as well as Professional Services under budget last year?

G. SMITH: So those numbers would vary depending on the number of youth that are being held at the facility so they will fluctuate. So it covers costs, transportation, other household supplies, so that fluctuates depending on a number of youth at the facility.

L. EVANS: So there was less youth in custody last year?

G. SMITH: Yeah, it does fluctuate. So we have had periods of time where there are no youth, but as of today we have four. So, again, over the course of the year you obviously have to budget but that number will fluctuate.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Why was federal revenue higher than expected last year?

A. GREEN: That would be the collection of old-year revenue in this current year.

L. EVANS: That ends my questions for this section.

CHAIR: Okay.

Do you have any additional questions?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Yes, I do.

CHAIR: Okay.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: 4.2.01 under Corrections, Salaries. Last year, Salaries went over budget with \$30.6 million being spent. Could you please provide in the explanation how much of the budget is overtime for correctional officers?

J. HOGAN: (Inaudible.)

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: I'll repeat it. Last year, Salaries went over budget with \$30.6 million being spent. I'd like an explanation and I'm wondering how much of this budget is for overtime for correctional officers?

A. GREEN: Are you looking specifically for the total amount spent in overtime?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Yes.

A. GREEN: We can provide that.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you, we appreciate that.

Grants and Subsidies, could you please outline where the \$101,600 was given and what it was in support of?

J. HOGAN: That would be for the John Howard Society.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Could you please provide an overview of the capacity of each facility, if they are full or have space available? If so, how much? I know the numbers fluctuate and you can, for the interest of time, if you could submit a list that would be even better, if you want.

J. HOGAN: I'm having trouble hearing.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: You're having trouble hearing?

J. HOGAN: Yes.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, I'm just asking for an overview of the capacity of each facility, if they are full, if they have space available and, if so, how much? But we're content with a list being provided in the interests of time and –

OFFICIAL: I have (inaudible).

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: You have it?

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

OFFICIAL: I'll go down per facility. As of April 5, which was yesterday, at HMP we had 182 inmates and the capacity is at 175, so we're heavy there; Bishop Falls we had 21 and capacity is 26; Labrador we had 42, capacity is 63; Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for Women we had 25, capacity is 26; West Coast Correctional Centre we had 59, capacity is 63; Corner Brook detention centre we had eight, capacity is 17; and St. John's Lockup, we have 14 inmates, capacity is 26. Overall, across the province, we are at 88.6 per cent capacity.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Still under this heading, inmate disciplinary process. Last year in Estimates, we talked about this process and the minister

indicated that a new independent oversight process would replace what has been often referred to as a kangaroo court. Last year, an official noted that regulations were being worked on. Could you please provide an update?

J. HOGAN: We are actively working on that, I anticipate something very soon. Part of the problem was because it took so long to actually proclaim the legislation into force, we now had to go back and look at the legislation and the legislation that isn't in force is already outdated.

I haven't been briefed on the issues that have been recently found with the – quote, unquote – old legislation but there have been solutions identified for that so we're working through it. We're getting there.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

The bail supervision program, are you able to give us an update on the progress towards this program?

G. SMITH: So the bail supervision is partly tied up with the correctional regulations as well. So the *Correctional Services Act* has yet to be proclaimed, once it comes into force it will actually repeal, not only the *Prisons Act* but the *Adult Corrections Act* as well, which is the probation program.

So our chief adult probation officer is looking at bail supervision, other alternative programs to incarceration, including electronic-monitoring adult diversions. So we're looking at that in a holistic way in terms of needs and resources, as well as how it would fit in with the other work we're doing, as the minister indicated, with respect to the correctional regulations. So we are actively working on that and we expect in this fiscal to see some significant progress on those initiatives.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you, Ms. Smith.

With respect to the *Correctional Services Act*, do we have any timeline for that being proclaimed?

G. SMITH: The way it would work is that we would have to have the regulations in place in order for the act to come into force. So, as the minister indicated, in doing our work around ensuring that the regulations are current and meet best practices, we have to look at the act as well. So both the act and the regulations are currently under consideration.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

You mentioned the electronic-monitoring program. I believe last year this time there were 21 units in use with 60 units total. Can you give us an update on how many units do we have in this province that are in use?

G. SMITH: So the capacity in terms of the contract we have is still 60. The most recent stats I have are as of the middle of March. There were 33 individuals who were participating in the EM program.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Now the replacement of the HMP, I'd like to get an update on the replacement of the HMP. Also, in relation to that, I notice that in the highlights it was referred to as \$7.3 million – this was highlights of the budget – to advance work that was used on a new correctional facility replacing the HMP.

What does that really mean, advance work? Can you give us an idea of exactly what that means, \$7.3 million to advance work? Can we get any more specifics about that, please?

D. MAHONEY: The work is in relation to some of the site work, design, engineering work associated with the build. As the minister said, there is also ongoing work to support the design of programming, support

services, the health facilities that are going to be integrated into the new facility. So there's a significant amount of work that's ongoing this fiscal year in relation to the design and early build elements of that site and that new facility.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

The Clarendville women's correctional facility, I've met with a number of advocates and organizations in this province and I've been to the facility myself. A number of the people I have spoken with have talked about it and women have reported poor conditions, trouble getting health services, programs, et cetera.

Have there been any improvements in the last 12 months?

CHAIR: Minister.

J. HOGAN: We can get details on the current conditions there. I mean, in terms of what are the improvements over the last 12 months, I guess we probably need to know from what you're talking about, 12 months ago versus now because there are always ongoing issues at our correctional facilities. But we can get an update for you at a later date to get any issues related to conditions in that facility for you.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

I just have a few more questions left.

Restorative Justice, you did refer to this before and the funding allocated, but I'd like an update on the work that they're doing on the Restorative Justice initiative with Dr. Vaandering. What work has been done?

M. NOSEWORTHY: So the department has been supporting the work of Relationships First, which is an initiative of Education stakeholders inside and outside the traditional schooling systems in

Newfoundland and Labrador. The goal of Relationships First is to commit, create and sustain relational cultures in the province and it's really focused on recognizing the value of Indigenous ways of learning and being.

The work includes things like research, professional development opportunities and providing support for Restorative Justice throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as being a body that can facilitate situations where harms have occurred. The department also participates as a part of that organization's steering committee and we regularly attend meetings with them in addition to the funding that the minister mentions that has been provided.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you, Mr. Noseworthy.

Under 4.2.02, Youth Secure Custody, Salaries, last year there was a salary savings of \$215,000. Could you please detail why and were positions left vacant?

A. GREEN: Can you repeat the question?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Last year, there was salary savings of \$215,000. This is under Youth Secure Custody, 4.2.02. Could you please detail why and were the positions left vacant?

A. GREEN: There were vacant positions in this division.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

CHAIR: MHA Evans, do you have any additional questions?

L. EVANS: In crossing out many things that was in the binder and my colleague asking, I did miss something in section 2.1.01. I wonder if it's possible to ask for leave to just go back and be able to ask a question.

CHAIR: A section that we've already voted on and carried, we can't go back.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Do you have any additional questions?

L. EVANS: No, thank you.

MHA Conway Ottenheimer.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: 4.2.02, Youth Secure Custody, two final questions. Last year, Supplies had a savings, could you please explain how this was achieved?

G. SMITH: So those savings would be related to the number of residents that are in the facility at any given time. It includes food, household supplies, transportation and transportation, as well, would be reduced depending on the number of residents. So the variance would be related to a lower resident count during the fiscal year.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Okay, thank you.

Professional Services: Last year \$220,000 was spent on professional services. Can you please provide some detail on what professional services are included here?

G. SMITH: The professional services would include an art instructor, psychologists, teachers, so that when there are youth in the centre that they do continue to pursue their education. There is counselling. So those types of services would be available and, again, that would fluctuate based on the resident count at the facility at any given time.

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: Thank you.

That completes my questions.

CHAIR: Okay.

MHA Evans, you're finished?

L. EVANS: Yes, I am.

CHAIR: Do you want more on this? Go ahead, Minister.

J. HOGAN: Just a couple of items that were asked about. We have the information now so I will just give this to make sure we get it done. The amount of overtime in corrections in 2022-23 was \$3.4 million.

The list of grants that were asked for out of section 1.2.02 was the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities, \$3,248.59; Metro Community Chaplaincy Inc., \$40,000. That's the group I referred to earlier, called Turnings. So that's for consultation with regard to HMP construction and design and educational programs. National Judicial Institute, \$21,000; Newfoundland and Labrador Search and Rescue, \$1,501,000; Provincial Court Judges' Association, \$25,000; Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, \$25,000; and Uniform Law Conference of Canada, \$12,000.

CHAIR: I ask the Clerk to recall the grouping.

CLERK: Public Protection, 4.1.01 to 4.2.02 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 4.1.01 to 4.2.02, Public Protection, carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subheads 4.1.01 through 4.2.02 inclusive carried.

CLERK: The totals.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, Department of Justice and Public Safety, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Department of Justice and Public Safety carried?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Department of Justice and Public Safety carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Minister, do you have any final remarks?

J. HOGAN: I have 12 minutes, right? I'm kidding. That's not my style. No, thanks to everybody. Thanks for the well-prepared and thoughtful questions. I think even I learned a thing or two about the department this morning, so I appreciate it. Thanks again to the staff and to Sandra and Sherry as well. I appreciate it.

Thank you.

CHAIR: MHA Conway Ottenheimer, do you have any final –?

H. CONWAY OTTENHEIMER: No, final questions –

CHAIR: MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: I just want to thank you all for being here and, I guess, just to remind you

how important your roles are. Justice and Public Safety is essential for everyone and we talk a lot about vulnerable populations but it's the overall province that really, really benefits from your efforts. So I just want to thank you again.

CHAIR: The date of the next meeting will be at the call of the Chair and I ask for a motion to adjourn.

L. STOYLES: So moved.

CHAIR: Moved by MHA Stoyles.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: This meeting is now adjourned.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.