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

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Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

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Honourable Wade Verge, MHA

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

Chair: Glenn Littlejohn, MHA

Members:

Tony Cornect, MHA
Lisa Dempster, MHA
Stelman Flynn, MHA
Glen Little, MHA
Kevin Pollard, MHA
Gerry Rogers, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Sandra Barnes

Appearing:

Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

Hon. Clyde Jackman, MHA, Minister
Dawn Brown, Executive Assistant
Ken Curtis, Department Controller
Elizabeth Day, Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Social Development
Mark Jones, Assistant Deputy Minister, Promotion, Wellness and Sport
Heather May, Director of Communications
Brent Meade, Deputy Minister

Also Present

Rex Hillier, MHA
Graham Letto, Researcher, Official Opposition Office
Dana English, Researcher, Official Opposition Office
Susan Williams, Researcher, Third Party Office

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Rex Hillier, MHA for Conception Bay South, substitutes for Dale Kirby, MHA for St. John's North.

The Committee met at 6:00 p.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

CLERK (Ms Barnes) Good evening.

This is the first meeting of the Social Services Committee. Before we get started, there is a need to elect a Chair for the Committee. So I need to –

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

CLERK: Before we get started, I need to call for nominations for the Chair.

MR. POLLARD: I nominate Glenn Littlejohn, Port de Grave MHA.

CLERK: Okay.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CLERK: Okay. Mr. Littlejohn, can you assume the Chair?

On motion, Mr. Littlejohn was elected Chair.

CHAIR (Littlejohn): Are there any nominations for a Vice-Chair?

Hearing no nominations, can we continue, Sandra, until the next meeting?

CLERK: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay. We will continue until the next meeting.

The first order of business, Minister, just before I get to you – our first order of business for a Committee is that we need to adopt our minutes of the last Social Services Committee on May 7, 2014, from the Department of Health and Community Services.

Can I have a motion to adopt the minutes, please?

Moved by Mr. Cornect, seconded by Mr. Pollard.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried, thank you.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

CHAIR: I would like to welcome the minister and his officials from the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. It is great to have you, Minister. Welcome to the Social Services Committee.

Just some ground rules for all Committee members. I traditionally use the clock. So, Minister, you will have fifteen minutes for opening remarks, up to fifteen minutes. Mr. Hillier, I am assuming that you, as the critic, will have fifteen minutes to respond and ask questions.

I would just ask members, as we go through this evening, when you ask questions, refer to the correct subhead so the minister and his staff know exactly what subhead we are talking about. We are in Committee, there is time for some preamble but basically it is Estimates. We are focusing on the Estimates document and the subheads that are relevant to the various departments and services.

Without any further ado, unless we have any questions from Committee members, we can commence this evening.

Minister, I open it to you. Would you introduce your staff, please? I remind staff members that you need to wait until the little red light in front of you comes on, that means your mike is live.

Minister Jackman.

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I guess what I will do is start off by asking my staff to introduce themselves. I will start with my deputy.

MR. MEADE: Brent Meade, Deputy Minister.

MR. JONES: Mark Jones, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Promotion, Wellness and Sport.

MS DAY: Elizabeth Day, Assistant Deputy Minister, Seniors, Aging and Social Development.

MS BROWN: Dawn Brown, Executive Assistant to Minister Jackman.

MS MAY: Heather May, Director of Communications.

MR. CURTIS: Ken Curtis, Departmental Controller.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Minister, begin your opening remarks, please.

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will not take up my full fifteen minutes.

Mr. Chair, we are a new department. As the department indicates Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. The seniors component of it, all we have to do is take a look at the demographics. Mr. Chair, we recognize what faces us in terms of dealing with the number of seniors we are going to have in our Province over the next coming years. By 2026, it is predicted that per capita, Newfoundland and Labrador will have more seniors than any other jurisdiction in Canada.

I have said on a number of occasions in places where I have spoken, I have said it in this House, that at no point do I, as a minister, want to be seen and the public to see seniors as a liability. We have to treat seniors with dignity, the respect that they deserve. These are the people who built our communities; therefore, as such, we need to ensure they get the services they need. Over the past number of years, I feel as a government we have done much towards addressing many of the concerns the seniors have.

The second component of our department is wellness. We have heard recently in the media about the issues that face us as a Province. I

know my critic is very much into the sport and recreation side of things. I believe he has been into it a fair amount of his life. He is very much aware of the challenges we face as a population around our obesity rates, the rate of heart attack, Type 2 diabetes that we have, and oftentimes these are – many of them are beyond our control. Many of them can be within our control because of the lifestyles we lead. That wellness component of our department talks about the general overall well-being of our population. Everything from the mental health issues that we confront to, as I said, the challenges that many of our people face around leading a healthy lifestyle.

The third component of it is social development. That is more around the inclusion part. That we, as a Province, recognize that every individual in our Province has the right to participate and be an integral part of what makes our Province run. Whether you have a disability, or whether you are a part of a group where sometimes you feel you may not be totally represented, but everyone has the right to live in this Province and to be treated equally.

A large part of our department is around the Disability Policy Office. We know the challenges the disability community face within our Province. I am pleased to say – I think personally, and I think the staff – we have a good working relationship with the organizations that promote the rights of disabled people in the Province. It is something we are very much proud of.

Mr. Chair, that is about it for my opening remarks. I am sure we will have some questions and commentary around the department. I look then to entertain any questions that people opposite might have.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Just before we start, this is usually informal. So if I could take the liberty to say Rex and Gerry, or do you want to be addressed more formally?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is fine.

CHAIR: That is fine.

Hi, Ms Dempster, nice to see you.

If we can just start with you, Rex, and we will go down the front row. Then Tony will come back and go down, so the officials from the minister's department know who is in the room.

Rex, please.

MR. HILLIER: Rex Hillier, Member for the District of Conception Bay South. Dwight has asked me to be responsible for following this department from the Opposition point of view.

MS ENGLISH: Good evening, Dana English, Researcher with the Official Opposition.

MR. LETTO: Graham Letto, Researcher, Official Opposition.

MS ROGERS: Gerry Rogers, I work for the good people of St. John's Centre.

MS WILLIAMS: Susan Williams, Researcher for the NDP.

MR. CORNECT: Tony Cornect, representing the great and cultural District of Port au Port.

MR. LITTLE: Glen Little, MHA for the beautiful District of Bonavista South.

MR. JACKMAN: Everybody has beautiful districts.

MR. POLLARD: Kevin Pollard, MHA, Baie Verte – Springdale District.

MR. FLYNN: Stelman Flynn, Humber East.

MS DEMPSTER: Lisa Dempster, Member for Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair, and Opposition critic for persons with disabilities.

CHAIR: I guess I should introduce myself. I am Glenn Littlejohn, the Member for Port de Grave.

Rex, you have fifteen minutes, if you wish.

MR. HILLIER: Okay. Thanks, Glenn.

I just want to point out that sitting back there with my back to the wall is a lot more comfortable than sitting here with Kevin Pollard breathing down my neck.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. JACKMAN: That is a good opening line.

MR. HILLIER: That is a good opening line.

Thank you, Minister, for you and all your staff being with us this evening. Not everybody is aware, but we sat down with the department about a couple of months ago and had a very good morning, went over some of the treetops in terms of what the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development is all about. I am looking forward this evening to taking some of those topics we talked about briefly at that time and look at them in some more detail.

Is this where we start with –

CHAIR: We can start. If you are ready for questions and that is your opening remarks, Rex, we can start.

MR. HILLIER: Yes, I am fine.

CHAIR: Okay.

Just for all Committee members, we are on page 22.3, Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. We are starting at subhead 1.1.01, the Minister's Office. Is that where we are, Rex?

MR. HILLIER: No.

CHAIR: Okay, and I need the Clerk to call the subhead first.

CLERK: Okay, 1.1.01.

CHAIR: The Clerk has called 1.1.01.

Rex, where are we going?

MR. HILLIER: We wanted to start with the Salary Details by Department, Schedule I.

CHAIR: Okay.

We follow the subhead, normally, Rex.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, and that is where we go – we are fine after that, but there were a couple of questions tied to –

CHAIR: Okay. You want to just ask a couple of questions and we will go from there?

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay, good.

MR. HILLIER: Under the Summary of Salary schedule, in 2014-2015 there were ninety-seven permanent positions budgeted at a cost of \$3.7 million, and the revised number for 2014-2015 shows forty-five permanent positions.

MR. MEADE: I did not catch the first part of his question.

CHAIR: Ninety-seven permanent positions, and then it went down.

Minister?

MR. JACKMAN: So the makeup of our department now is forty-seven in total?

MR. MEADE: Yes, forty-five.

MR. JACKMAN: It is forty-five in total. So your question around the ninety is what?

MR. HILLIER: In the schedule it is showing ninety-seven.

MR. JACKMAN: Do you want to speak to that?

MR. MEADE: Yes.

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: Mr. Chair, what that is, it is because the way they were carrying the past year still had Tourism, Culture and Recreation staff in the department, and then when we moved through the transition, the creation of a new department. That is why it reflects what is now truly left in Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. I would think, and I did not do this, but if we were to look at a comparison of BTCRD, you see how their number went up.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. MEADE: You see how Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development was at 156 and they went to 205.

MR. HILLIER: Right, okay.

MR. JACKMAN: Our previous numbers were the old Tourism –

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Our previous numbers were the total of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. Some of those bodies now are gone with BTCRD and then the rest are remaining with us. That would make up that forty-five.

CHAIR: Okay Rex, good?

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

MR. HILLIER: If we go back to that page 1 again.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Budget 2015-2016 shows forty-five permanent positions, as you have indicated, at \$3.4 million. That is \$200,000 less than the realized figure for 2014-2015 for the same number of positions.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: You are on page 22.3?

MR. HILLIER: No, page 1, Schedule I, Summary of Salary Details. Do we want to go on and come back to this one?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: Okay, so if I understand your question, the 2014-2015 Budget is at \$3,725,900 and the revised is \$3,648,300. That is reflective – when we go through each of the Estimates or activities you will see, Mr. Hillier, where there are some variances in the Budget revised.

Revised reflects what was actual, what we projected as the actual expenditure. When you go through the Budget, if there are variances

here we can explain them by division if you wish, or by activity. It generally would be because you have vacant positions you were recruiting for and they were not filled.

MR. HILLIER: Did not fill.

MR. MEADE: So you slipped a little bit of the salary dollars. That would be largely what that is attributed to.

CHAIR: Rex.

MR. HILLIER: Again on page 1, there is \$794,000 in Other Salary Costs for 2015-2016. What does this cover?

MR. MEADE: I believe it would be largely related to the pools and our temporary employees who would be working at the pools, and the 3 per cent salary increase and things like that. That is what that would be.

MR. HILLIER: They are permanent positions or would they be ...?

MR. MEADE: They would be temporary positions. They would be your swimming, your guards, your lifeguards, your instructors, those kinds of positions that would be in the pools.

MR. HILLIER: Okay. If we go to page 3 it shows one position lost in a summary of attrition, one position lost in this department. This is one position for 2015-2016?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. MEADE: That would be one position that we will need to find in 2015-2016.

MR. HILLIER: What position would that be?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it is going to be in the Sport and Rec division, is it?

MR. MEADE: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: We have one position that is presently vacant in the Sport and Rec division

and it is likely that is where the attrition will occur.

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: The attrition plan for the department, what that indicates is we are to find one position to a value of just over \$62,000 for this year. As the minister notes, in the Rec and Sport division we know we have a number of retirements coming, we have a position that we are in the middle of recruiting for. So, our plan is we will find the savings in that division.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Our attrition plan over five years is one position each year.

MR. HILLIER: Did you see my notes?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MR. HILLIER: That was my next question. You are looking at losing five over the five-year period?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

Before we start going through the core document, one other item on page 113, it is the summary of 2015-2016 Salary Funding by Activity. There are four areas here that have significant other costs. One is Recreation and Sport at \$395,000, Seniors and Aging, Poverty Reduction, and Disability Policy Office. Do you want to take us through where those extra costs might be coming from?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: The majority, has already spoken to, the other being the call in and temporary positions in the pools. That is where the Rec and Sport \$394,000 would largely be. That is what that is.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. MEADE: The other significant one, Seniors and Aging, \$113,590 is related largely – in the other would be the 3 per cent increases but

in this one as well we have a position that has been created. We had a position, adult protection consultant, who was on contract being paid for from Grants and Subsidies, that this year has now been voted into the salary vote of the department and a permanent position will be created.

MR. HILLIER: That role is?

MR. MEADE: Adult protection consultant.

For Poverty Reduction, the \$88,000 again would be the same thing. It would be a small increase, around 3 per cent, but it would also be a policy and program specialist position that we have in the budget process for the Poverty Reduction office, and the same thing then for the Disability Office. We had a temporary position approved in the Budget – so the Poverty Reduction and the Disability Office both had one position each, temporary policy and program specialist positions approved in the Budget.

MR. HILLIER: Will they be permanent positions?

MR. MEADE: Right now, they are temporary positions.

MR. HILLIER: They are temporary positions.

MR. MEADE: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: As employees of the department as opposed to being on contract?

MR. MEADE: That is right. The position will be given a temporary position number. It has not been created as a permanent position in the department, only as a temporary one, and it is in our fiscal framework for a two-year period.

MR. JACKMAN: For two years, yes.

MR. HILLIER: The Disability Policy Office, what is the role there?

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: That is policy and planning.

MR. HILLIER: Policy and planning.

Okay, we will go to the core document.

CHAIR: So can I assume 1.1.01?

MR. HILLIER: Subhead 1.2.02.

CHAIR: Subhead 1.2.02, General Administration – just to keep the Committee members inline.

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

MR. HILLIER: Page 22.4. It is showing Purchased Services of \$18,600. What are we using that for?

CHAIR: Subhead 1.2.02, Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: Purchased Services; this would be applicable, I would suggest to you Mr. Hillier, across almost all of the divisions.

Purchased Services is where you are paying for things like your postage, your copiers, and those kinds of administrative function supports you have in the department. That is what would come out of Purchased Services. Any rental costs or anything like that, we would not have that in this case, but that is what Purchased Services would be.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: As Brent said, across this entire section you are going to find that there are some ups and downs. There will be things like in-house printing and copying, for example, we would have done some, but generally, like he said, that is basically what it is.

MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

The other one on that page, there is a provincial revenue number there of about \$3,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Brent.

MR. MEADE: The \$3,000 revenue here is a very small number but is there and it is under Administrative Support because if you have things like trip advances that are paid back by staff or petty cash accounts that are given back to the Crown, these are the things that are recorded. It is a very small number; it would fluctuate from year to year. It is just a small administrative amount that is put there, particularly where we handle cash to pools and stuff like that, that is where those kinds of things would be.

MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

Subhead 2.1.01, page 22.5.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Again, you have a list there for Purchased Services which we are assuming is pretty much the same thing. As you said, going right across the board for all areas.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. Is it the \$2,700 one you are looking at?

MR. HILLIER: In this case it would be \$21,900.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: If we look at 01 there, Salaries, it is showing an increase of almost \$100,000. Is that a new position?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. Well, one of the things is the 3 per cent salary increase. That is one part of it, and the other one is the provincial pools.

MR. HILLIER: We have three pools, is that correct?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Where are they?

MR. JACKMAN: One is in Gander –

MR. HILLIER: That is in the Arts and Culture Centre in Gander.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, and Corner Brook and Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

MR. HILLIER: Under Transportation and Communications there is a \$73,000 budget. What is that?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. That is basically –

MR. HILLIER: Is that staff travel?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, and communications as well.

MR. HILLIER: There is no athletes travel.

MR. JACKMAN: No, but if you look at that line where it went from \$73,000 to \$99,200, that is to do with mission staff who went to the Canada Games this year.

MR. HILLIER: You are looking at my notes.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. MEADE: Travel subsidies will be down in Grants and Subsidies.

MR. HILLIER: Purchased?

MR. JACKMAN: You asked specifically about – did you ask about travel?

MR. HILLIER: I just asked that particular travel number.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay, but travel for athletes is in the Grants and Subsidies section down below that.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

CHAIR: The last question for the first round there, Rex.

MR. HILLIER: The Budget announced \$500,000 for a new school-aged physical activity program.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Does this fall under Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, or –

MR. JACKMAN: No, under the Wellness component of it.

MR. HILLIER: Under the Wellness component of it?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: What is that program going to look like?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, there are some programs we have on the go now that we are running in schools that we would like to continue to operate. I think the big thing in this one is that we are hoping we are going to be able to leverage more monies from the Jumpstart type programs –

MR. HILLIER: Canadian Tire.

MR. JACKMAN: – and as well from Public Health Canada. So if everything works out, we should have a substantial amount that we would be able to put towards that.

CHAIR: I am going to hold you there if you have a follow up to that, Rex.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

CHAIR: You are good there?

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

Gerry.

MS ROGERS: Great. Again, thank you so very much for being here this evening. I think it is probably one of the toughest evenings to not be able to go outside once the House closed or once your office is closed.

Seeing the new department described, it was very exciting to see some of the potentials there and the possibilities with clumping Seniors, Wellness and Social Development together. So, it will be interesting to see how it rolls out and how it works as you get your footing in this new department. I know you have some really fantastic staff on board. So, it is really exciting.

MR. JACKMAN: And a good minister, too.

MS ROGERS: Hey, you have a fabulous minister – and I know that you love working with me as much as I love working with you, Clyde.

In all seriousness, yes, it is great to be able to work with you. I look forward to that, because I know with our changing demographic, boy, we have some wonderful challenges ahead of us that will require some very creative solutions.

I would just like to pick up where we just left off. So, 2.1.01, down to Grants and Subsidies, number 10.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: So, we see a nice big jump in there.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: What is that increase?

MR. JACKMAN: There is \$500,000 of it is money we just talked about.

MS ROGERS: Right.

MR. JACKMAN: There is another \$500,000 for the Lab Games. They are held every two years.

MS ROGERS: For the Lab Games, okay.

In Grants and Subsidies, is it possible to get a list? How are they working right now? Is there a specific date of call for applicants? How is that working out?

MR. JACKMAN: We were talking about that before we came over. As we go through each one of these divisions, you look at the grants and subsidies. In this list, other than the two that I have just mentioned, you have things like community rec grants, you have the seniors' rec grants, and you have the travel subsidies.

Feel free to ask all the questions you want, but we can certainly provide a breakdown, if you want, for each one of the divisions.

MS ROGERS: Yes, that would be great. It would be wonderful.

For revenue for federal, where is that coming from?

CHAIR: Revenue – Federal?

MS ROGERS: Yes. The Amount to be Voted.

MR. JACKMAN: The \$280,000?

MS ROGERS: Yes.

OFFICIAL: That is Sport Canada.

MS ROGERS: Sport Canada?

MR. JACKMAN: Sport Canada, yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

The Revenue – Provincial?

OFFICIAL: That is the pools.

MR. JACKMAN: That is the pools.

MS ROGERS: The pools?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if at some point we did not have to pay to go to pools? Wouldn't that be great?

MR. JACKMAN: It would be but – okay, we will leave it at that.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

Then 2.1.03, Healthy Living, under Health Promotion, Wellness and Sport.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Wellness co-ordinators – which wellness co-ordinators do we have now? Because I know we lost a number of them in 2013.

MR. JACKMAN: Wellness co-ordinators – where are you?

CHAIR: Subhead 2.1.03

MS ROGERS: On page 22.6, under Healthy Living.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay.

MS ROGERS: What wellness co-ordinators do we have now that are staff positions?

MR. JACKMAN: Mark?

CHAIR: Mark.

MR. JONES: You are referring to the Healthy Living –

MS ROGERS: Maybe the consultants?

MR. JONES: The Healthy Living consultants in the Healthy Living Division?

MS ROGERS: Yes.

MR. JONES: There are currently –

MS ROGERS: Before you go – has that been moved into this department?

MR. JONES: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

MR. JONES: The Health Promotion, Wellness and Sport branch includes the Healthy Living Division and the Recreation and Sport Division. There are two divisions in that branch. The Healthy Living consultants are in the Healthy Living Division. There is a director and five Healthy Living consultants, currently.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great, thank you.

Under Supplies there is a \$30,000 increase in the revised budget for 2014-2015. Do you know what that was?

CHAIR: Supplies?

MS ROGERS: Yes, under Salaries, then Operating Accounts. It was budgeted for \$16,000 then it went up to \$46,000.

CHAIR: Mark.

MR. JONES: Each year the activity will fluctuate. So depending on the type of activity, sometimes you need it in Supplies, sometimes you need it in Purchased Services, or sometimes you need it in Transportation and Communications.

In this particular year, we did a print run and updated our resources that we provide with the post-natal and developmental screening tools that we use with the public health nurses, and that is where that activity will be reflected.

MS ROGERS: Great.

Would it be possible to get a list of the positions of the wellness consultants from the two divisions?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: That would be great.

Thank you very much.

Professional Services: I see that there is a bit of drop from \$70,000 in the original budget for 2014-2015. Can you explain that?

MR. JACKMAN: The lines of the department have changed and we think this is reasonable and in line with what we need to run the department.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

Thank you.

Support to Community Agencies: Is it possible to get a list of recipients?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, same thing. I can name some for you or if you want to, we can do up the list and provide them to you both.

MS ROGERS: That would be great.

Do you foresee any reductions at all to lists?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

All of those community agencies are doing such great work.

MR. JACKMAN: That is true.

MS ROGERS: Yes.

If we can go over to –

CHAIR: Just to be clear – Gerry, you want the list of the agencies that receive support under 2.1.04.

MS ROGERS: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

Just to be clear too, Minister, what we are giving to one we are giving to the other parties –

MR. JACKMAN: If they want them, yes.

MS ROGERS: Great, thank you.

MR. JACKMAN: I figured they were going to ask for them anyway.

MS ROGERS: Page 22.8, subhead 3.1.01, under Salaries we see an increase of \$114,000 or \$115,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that is the position that was mentioned earlier, the adult protection.

MS ROGERS: Okay, so that is the adult protection?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

Under Grants and Subsidies, there was \$140,000 not spent. It was revised last year.

MR. JACKMAN: The cost for on call at the regional health authorities for adult protection was less than anticipated.

MS ROGERS: Okay. The new adult protection, that is a temporary two-year position as well, is it?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MS ROGERS: No?

MR. JACKMAN: No.

MS ROGERS: So that is permanent?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

In the interim, it was a contracted out.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Yes, great.

Then under Poverty Reduction, 3.1.02.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: We see an increase in salaries of \$88,000.

MR. JACKMAN: That is the 3 per cent –

OFFICIAL: And the position.

MS ROGERS: And a position?

MR. JACKMAN: And a position, yes.

MS ROGERS: What would that position be?

OFFICIAL: That is program and policy.

MR. JACKMAN: That is program and policy.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

Will that be a permanent position?

MR. JACKMAN: We have it now listed for two years.

MS ROGERS: Two years?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

Under Professional Services, I see there was \$50,000 not spent. What were you planning, and maybe what did not happen?

MR. JACKMAN: That has to do with Stats Canada, so Brent will explain that to you.

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: If you look below, you will see the Purchased Services went up. So really it is a direct line from the \$50,000 Professional Services going to the Purchased Services. We purchased this year, because we were in the middle of renewing the action plan for PRS –

MS ROGERS: Yes.

MR. MEADE: We wanted data from Stats Canada, and we bought two years of datasets at \$80,000.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

MR. MEADE: That would have been reflected under Purchased Services. That is why Purchased Services is up and we took it within our operating – we would have taken it from the Professional Services.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

I have a few other questions about some of these areas, but maybe I will come back to them. We will just deal with some of the numbers and then get back to some of the other questions.

Disability Policy Office, I think you spoke about that. So that is another new position as well.

MR. MEADE: Correct.

MS ROGERS: That is the temporary two years, right?

MR. MEADE: That is right.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay, Gerry, I am just going to hold you there. I will go back to Rex and I will come back to you, if that is okay?

MS ROGERS: Okay.

CHAIR: Rex, where are we going to start?

MR. HILLIER: I want to go back to the \$500,000 for new school age programming.

MR. JACKMAN: Which one?

MR. HILLIER: I am sorry, 2.1.01.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

CHAIR: Page 22.5 in the Estimates booklet.

MR. HILLIER: Just some idea of what type of implementation we are talking here and what students are we going to –

MR. JACKMAN: Do you want to list some of the programs, Mark?

MR. JONES: Sure.

CHAIR: Mark.

MR. JONES: It is going to cover the full range of the K-12 student population. So depending on which age, the programming will be different. We are going to be using existing programs that have been proven to be successful. For example, Participation Nation with School Sports, they have a K-3, a Grade 4-6, and a Grade 7-9 component. The high school component matches up really nicely with the volunteer hours that are part of the mandatory graduation requirements. So that covers the full range as well.

One other example would be with Active Schools which is in the K-6 school system right now. To varying degrees, the uptake is high and in some areas of the Province it is low. Part of our initiative is to work with those schools so that everyone gets that program fully implemented.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

Moving on, I am going to try to negotiate what Gerry has covered. If I ask the same question again, you will have to excuse me.

Budget 2015 announced approximately \$2.2 million for initiatives, programs, and projects focused on healthy living, recreation, and wellness at the community level. Is this new

money or is it something that we have done in the past?

MR. JACKMAN: The –

MR. HILLIER: Initiatives, programs, and projects focused on healthy living, recreation, and wellness at the community level.

CHAIR: Brent, do you want to go?

MR. MEADE: Yes, sure.

CHAIR: Okay.

MR. MEADE: That would be a reflection of existing programming in wellness and in sport and rec. It would have just been a rolling up of some of the key programs there.

MR. HILLIER: Is it possible for us to get a list of those programs?

MR. MEADE: Of how that \$2.2 million was derived, yes we can.

MR. HILLIER: Moving on, Budget 2015 announced \$24.9 million for sport and recreation infrastructure projects, bringing the total invested since 2004 to \$169.6 million. What are the current big projects that you guys are working on in 2015 in terms of infrastructure?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: The \$24 million that was referenced –

MR. HILLIER: Or am I asking the wrong question?

MR. MEADE: No, no, no, you may be asking the wrong department.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. MEADE: The number that was quoted there is what would be funded through municipal affairs.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. MEADE: That is municipal affairs funding for recreation projects through municipalities.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: As an example there is a recplex type of thing happening in Marystown right now. So that would be continued funding for projects of that nature.

MR. HILLIER: That is not completed yet? That has been going on for some time. That was announced in 2011.

MR. JACKMAN: It takes two or three years to build them.

MR. HILLIER: Yes, the same thing as the one in Conception Bay South. They were announced at the same time.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Is it possible for us to get a list of the infrastructure projects for 2015-2016?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we will co-ordinate with municipal affairs.

MR. HILLIER: I guess while we are doing that, maybe a list of the \$169 million as well from 2004?

MR. JACKMAN: Of all the projects?

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay.

MR. MEADE: Yes, it is all municipal affairs.

MR. HILLIER: It is all municipal affairs.

Where am I now?

CHAIR: You have me confused.

MR. HILLIER: Before we go on to the next one, we are hosting Canada Games in 2021.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Are you in a position to give us an update, at this point in time, where we are?

MR. JACKMAN: This year, in particular, we do not see the requirement for funds, but

planning is just continuing. We expect that dollars are going to start to need to be rolled out not this year but subsequent years, right into 2021. Planning is still underway.

MR. HILLIER: What do you see as major infrastructure projects?

MR. JACKMAN: For sure the Aquarena is one – swimming. Another one that is being asked to be looked at is a track and field complex. I think those would be the two major ones.

MR. HILLIER: Do you see using the old Aquarena or a new facility?

MR. JACKMAN: Right now we are looking at the Aquarena. We have asked for some assessments as to the dollar figure that would be required to upgrade that. We have had discussions with Sport Canada and seeing what kinds of things we would need to do to bring it up to code. There are some electrical and mechanical that we have to take a look at.

Likewise – I was not aware of this – looking at track and field around wind, the speed of winds and everything, because we have people who are setting records here, so that is something that was new to me.

MR. HILLIER: The orientation of the track.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. It is really interesting.

I think those two would be the two biggest pieces of infrastructures.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

Some discussions with the provincial sports associations, they are talking about being prepared for 2021. My understanding is there was a study or discussions on a document called Medals Matter. Has that been released at this point?

MR. JACKMAN: We do not have it released. I believe we received it around February, wasn't it?

MR. MEADE: Yes, that was when they were in and presented it.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, they presented it. We are having internal discussions and we will continue those discussions with the sports community. Certainly, we would like to have a few medals, yes.

MR. HILLIER: It would change the philosophy as well though.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it would. There is no doubt about it.

MR. HILLIER: We know that everyone would like to send their children to Canada Games.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

I tell you, though; I was out to Canada Games to see a couple of young people win medals and the pride that is with it. We have to do a bit of rethinking about it.

MR. HILLIER: Good.

Any idea when the sports associations would get that –

MR. JACKMAN: No, I do not have a date, but like I said, it may not be too long. I have learned in this racket never to give you a date.

MR. HILLIER: We have learned not to accept it as well.

MR. JACKMAN: That is good. That practice shall continue.

MR. HILLIER: There you go.

Let's go to 2.1.03.

CHAIR: Subhead 2.1.03.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, 2.1.03.

MR. HILLIER: We have worked our way through a couple of these items: Professional Services, Purchased Services, and so on. Again, there is a federal revenue stream there of \$58,000.

MR. MEADE: Smokers' Helpline.

MR. JACKMAN: Pardon?

MR. MEADE: That is the Smokers' Helpline.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that is the Smokers' Helpline.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, so the feds are involved. Good.

Budget 2015 announced \$500,000 to promote healthy living initiatives which support breast feeding, healthy eating, school health, smoking cessation, and more. Is this under Seniors, Wellness and Social Development?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Can you break it down and give us some idea as to – you have four or five areas there and \$500,000? Can you tell us roughly how that is split?

MR. JACKMAN: Again, we could provide you with the breakdown of programs –

MR. HILLIER: That is fine.

MR. JACKMAN: There is everything from wellness grants to post-natal care and all that kind of stuff. Healthy baby clinics all fit in under that. So we can give you the breakdown.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, going back to the federal funding. There was a drop from \$100,000 down to \$58,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, what has happened is that they put in \$100,000 a year. This is the final year of that program. This year's commitment is \$58,000. We are into negotiations with the federal government and hopefully they will continue that program.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR: Is that a good spot for you to stop, Rex?

MR. HILLIER: If you want, yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

Gerry.

MS ROGERS: Thank you.

That would be nice if we did not need that Smokers' Helpline, but we still sure do, don't we?

MR. JACKMAN: There is a fair number of people still smoking.

MS ROGERS: Our young people are taking it up more and more.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Let me see where I left off. Under the Disability Policy Office, 3.1.03, under Salaries – oh, that is another one of the temporary two-year positions, isn't it?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay, great.

Transportation and Communications, we see a nice bump there. Do you have any kind of new initiative that you are planning?

MR. JACKMAN: We feel we need that amount for the operation of the office and also included in that would be meetings of the provincial advisory council.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

MR. MEADE: If you want, I can also further explain that whole section because it is a little bit –

MR. JACKMAN: Do you want us to expand on the whole section a bit more, Gerry?

MS ROGERS: Sorry?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: Ms Rogers, I could explain this whole section a little bit because you can see some numbers are up and some numbers are down.

MS ROGERS: Yes, that would be great.

MR. MEADE: What this is really a reflection of is where the budget came from AES – and AES used to cover a lot of the operating expenses of the Disability Office from varying sources in the

department. That is why you are seeing Purchased Services relatively high; Transportation and Communications was low. Then when we said this is what we feel we need for operating this office, we restated it to the way we felt that it should be. It is just a bit of a cleaning up in some ways in the transition from one department to the other.

MS ROGERS: That makes sense because you are moving staff around or at least positions around as well.

For Grants and Subsidies, can we get a list of recipients for that?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we can.

MS ROGERS: There has been no increase at all?

MR. JACKMAN: And the type of grants.

MS ROGERS: There has been no increase at all to those wonderful people doing all that great work out there.

MR. JACKMAN: I think once you get the list to see what dollars we have there and where some of these dollars have gone. It is the taxi initiative –

MS ROGERS: Yes, I would like to hear a little bit more about that because I have a few questions for you.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay, then I will wait to hear your questions.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

That is it for those. I would interested, as well, when we look at some of the overall budgets for some of the different sections in the budget, where the money came from, from what departments were they transferred over from. For instance, when we look at the Disability Policy Office, some of that was from AES.

So in the Minister's Office, who did we rob? From which departments?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: It is a fair question. So, the Minister's Office, we did not need to create a Minister's Office because in the restructuring, the pieces that went to Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development – I think I got that right – that already had a minister. So for all intents and purposes, we adopted the Tourism, Culture and Recreation ministry office.

MR. HILLIER: I thought you were going to say you adopted the minister.

MR. MEADE: We adopted a minister – adopt a minister could be a program, I guess –

MS ROGERS: You would have to keep him. You are stuck with him.

MR. MEADE: That would be an interesting concept.

Then if you look in the rest of the department it would have also really been parts of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. Policy and Planning, there was one position, I think, that went to the business department, but the rest of it would have remained there. Then in terms of what came from Advanced Education and Skills, it was the Disability Policy Office and the Poverty Reduction Office.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

I cannot remember now – I did not check this out and I should have. The budgeted amounts for the Disability Policy Office when they were under AES, how does that compare to the budgeted amounts for them this year?

MR. MEADE: Technically, the budgets will be higher because there were elements of the operating budgets of both poverty reduction and disability that were being covered in other areas of AES. When we moved those into Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, we cleaned that up and had the budget restated to reflect what we felt the operating needs were. So we actually had money out into our budget in order to properly reflect that.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

MR. MEADE: Then of course the other elements that would have come into the

department would have been from Health. They would have been healthy living, seniors, and adult protection.

MS ROGERS: Okay, thank you.

The Wellness Advisory Council has created working groups on mental health promotion, environmental health, and healthy child development. Have there been any policy papers that have come out of those initiatives?

CHAIR: Mark.

MR. JONES: Mental health and protection is actually still with Health and Community Services as a policy and division of government. The wellness council is still a council that reports up through to our minister and is more of a broader approach. The most recent paper that we have received from them would have been the Healthy Built Environment.

MS ROGERS: Okay, I cannot remember if I have seen that or not.

OFFICIAL: It is a Cabinet document.

MS ROGERS: Okay, thank you.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy, when we look at how it is presented in terms of the amount of money that is spent on poverty reduction, it is a little bit hard to get a handle on what is actual money or programs in other departments. Is there any way of getting a breakdown of the allocation?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, there is. Isn't that online?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible).

MS ROGERS: That is online like that, the breakdown like that?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Great.

MR. JACKMAN: We can look it up. We will get it for you.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

Are there any new policy directions or programs that the Poverty Reduction Strategy is looking at, at this point as well that we do not know about – any new directions or initiatives?

CHAIR: Elizabeth.

MS DAY: We are in the process of analyzing all of the information that we gathered as a result of the engagement process and developing a new action plan, so we hope within the coming months that that action plan will be released.

In this year's Budget, there were some new initiatives that we are analyzing now as well that would be included as poverty reduction initiatives that would not have been included previously.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: There were consultations and a summit that was held here in March, I believe it was. There was really good input into that. That is directly – Elizabeth said hopefully before too long we will have that out.

MS ROGERS: Right. So you will release a document with that information.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Great. Any surprises?

MR. JACKMAN: No, I do not think so.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

I think this is a good place for me to stop. I just have some questions about the Disability Policy Office.

CHAIR: Okay.

Rex.

MR. HILLIER: Budget 2015 announced \$86,000 for a new wellness centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. That is a piece of consultation work that is going on to continue

that, to see what we need to do, if we are going to replace it or whatnot. That is what that is, it is consultant work.

MR. HILLIER: So, obviously, that is one left over from the military which you are using there now.

MR. JACKMAN: Left over from the military, you say?

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: I am not sure if it is or not.

Yes, it is.

MR. HILLIER: Yes, that is not uncommon. We had one in Stephenville and –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: So we are looking at the possibility of putting a new facility there.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. MEADE: (Inaudible).

MR. HILLIER: What is that?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: We are working with the Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay on that. That funding actually does not sit in our department. That funding, as I understand it is in (inaudible) again but it is for them to continue planning to look at the feasibility of building a new recreation facility in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

MR. HILLIER: Something similar to what we have in Bay Bulls.

MR. JACKMAN: It is working towards that end.

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

I know the last time we met I asked about the phase two of the Provincial Wellness Plan. I

think the answer was soon, at that point in time. Where are we with that?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, that is still ongoing. I cannot give you a date again but the initiatives I think that we are undertaking as a department around the general wellness initiatives is a positive one. If you look at a tough Budget year, that is one of the areas we did focus upon but I cannot give you a specific right yet. We are continuing to work on it, yes.

MR. HILLIER: Going back to – we talked a little bit about pools and cost of staffing and so on. Where do we find the operation budget for the pools and maintenance and so on?

MR. JACKMAN: That is through Transportation and Works.

MR. HILLIER: So you have money coming from everywhere.

MR. JACKMAN: All jokes aside, that is true. We are tapped into so many other departments. I say sometimes our department is almost like an overseer. Representation through our department into papers and initiatives does tap across many, many departments.

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: The salaries, the operating of the pools does reside with us.

MR. HILLIER: Right.

MR. MEADE: It is found under 2.1.01, Recreation and Sport.

MR. HILLIER: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: You were talking about maintenance, though, right?

MR. HILLIER: Yes, as I was going through here I noticed we had the salaries. I was just wondering where maintenance and –

MR. MEADE: Okay, but the buildings themselves, the pools and the arts and culture centres, all those that are joined in are operated by and run by TW.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

I have to apologize; I believe I already asked this. We talked about the breakdown of \$500,000 for breastfeeding, healthy eating and so on. We asked for a breakdown of that, did we not?

CHAIR: Yes, you did.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, thank you.

Subhead 2.1.04, page 22.6.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Budget 2015 announced \$5.9 million for community-based organizations and agencies which are strong advocates for health and wellness and deliver key programs and services in our community. I assume this is not new money either. This is an ongoing –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, and it is the one that Gerry asked for.

MR. HILLIER: Oh, okay.

MR. JACKMAN: We will provide you a list of that as well.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, thank you.

Subhead 3.1.01, page 22.8. Under Salaries, from 2014-2015 you have an increase of \$120,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, I see it; adult protection.

MR. HILLIER: That is the adult protection?

MR. MEADE: A clerk typist position as well.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, and a clerk typist position. It is the adult protection consultant and a Clerk Typist III position.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

Under Transportation and Communications, what are we looking at that \$43,000? What kinds of things will come out of that?

MR. JACKMAN: Those are things around the advisory council that would have some travel, and staff travel as well. This is one of the things that is a bit different about the department. We are just developing, so you see some of them last year in the department might have had 70,000 and this year it is 40,000. What we are doing is adjusting it more in line with what we figure this is what the department needs.

MR. HILLIER: You have \$92,000 there for Purchased Services. As we came through with some of the smaller numbers of \$18,000, \$10,000 and so on, but that is a significant number.

MR. JACKMAN: That is more of the print services, website services that we carry out.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: Some of the documents that we put out, like the healthy eating brochures that we put out and those types of things.

MR. HILLIER: The division description mentions implementation and monitoring of the Provincial Healthy Aging Policy Framework. Can you tell us a little bit about the work going on?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we are in the process of –

CHAIR: Elizabeth.

MS DAY: The Healthy Aging Policy Framework was implemented in 2007. The directions that are there are certainly still valid, we believe, but we are in the process now of doing a review of that framework; hopefully, consulting with seniors and coming out with the next phase of the framework within this year sometime.

MR. HILLIER: Okay. So, we will expect to see that sometime this year.

MS DAY: Hopefully.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that is what we are hoping to do.

MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

Let's go back to the Adult Protection Act. Can you tell us a little bit about the work that is going on? You have hired a new staff person there.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, you want the work of what this act does?

MR. HILLIER: Yes. Like, what kind of issues are you dealing with?

MR. JACKMAN: Basically, it protects those who are vulnerable and cannot act on their own behalf. They would have somebody else who would act on their own behalf.

I do not know, Betty, if you want to speak a bit more to the office but that is the basic premise of it.

MR. HILLIER: Do you handle a lot of cases? I am not trying to suggest that it should not exist or anything like that. I am just trying to get my head around a day in the life sort of thing.

MS DAY: The legislation was proclaimed in June, 2014. It is operationalized through the regional health authorities. So there are social workers, managers, directors within the regional health authorities who actually operationalize the act. The provincial director, as well as a consultant, work within our department.

The numbers of reports we are receiving, they are what we would consider to be significant. Different types of referrals; some are of physical abuse of adults, fraudulent behaviour where there is financial abuse, physical, and sometimes sexual abuse of adults who do not have the capacity to protect themselves.

I will say that it is very busy. It does take up a lot of our time in terms of the oversight of the program. It is a new piece of legislation, so education and training related to the act is ongoing. There is a steering committee. The police, RCMP, RNC are on the steering

committee, as well as representatives of the regional health authorities.

MR. HILLIER: What would be the consultant's background? Would it be a social worker, legal –?

MS DAY: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Social worker.

MS DAY: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

CHAIR: I would say it is a good spot for you to stop, okay, Mr. Hillier?

MR. HILLIER: Ten minutes go pretty quick.

CHAIR: I tell you.

Gerry.

MS ROGERS: Just one little line that I missed there under 3.1.01, under Grants and Subsidies. I am not sure if I asked this, I kind of think I did not. There was \$140,000 that was not spent, that was revised last year.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that is the one we mentioned about the cost of the on call from regional health authorities.

MS ROGERS: That is right.

Thank you very much.

I just have a few, I think, quick questions. I would like to know a little bit about how the seniors' transportation program is going.

MR. JACKMAN: The pilot?

MS ROGERS: Yes, because you have renewed it again this year for \$400,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we have five communities that are into this. We have the Red Cross, the City of St. John's, Clarendville, Bay St. George, and Springdale. Those are ongoing.

Betty, do you want to speak to them?

CHAIR: Elizabeth.

MS DAY: There is a \$1.3 million budget for this pilot project over a period of three years. It started in 2013; we are now going into the third year. It is going very well. We are in the process of now designing evaluation for the project. Hopefully, it will continue and potentially be expanded in the out years if we demonstrate that it was a worthwhile project.

MS ROGERS: We are in our third year now?

MS DAY: Yes, the start of the third year.

MS ROGERS: It has maintained just those five communities?

MS DAY: Yes, the same proponents who applied three years ago are going through the three-year pilot.

MS ROGERS: Right. Yes, okay.

Do you know what the plan is for after the end of the third year?

MS DAY: It will depend on the evaluation outcomes.

MS ROGERS: Great.

Okay, thank you very much.

CHAIR: Minister.

MR. JACKMAN: It cannot be anything but good coming out of it. One of the things that is identified as the biggest barrier to inclusion is transportation.

MS ROGERS: Yes, and it is –

MR. JACKMAN: So, for seniors, the whole gamut. The taxi program we announced the other day; that is what it is about.

MS ROGERS: It is so important. I have seniors who cannot afford to go to their doctor.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: We all know we have the fastest growing proportional shift for seniors, but also

we have the highest percentage, I think, of seniors in Canada on GIS and OAS, meaning they are living below the poverty line. So I am just wondering – I know you do not handle everything that has to do with seniors, but since you are talking about that you were kind of overseeing, is there any plan of looking to this whole issue of our seniors living in poverty?

I think that transportation is a good example of somehow addressing some of that. Do you have any plans in the –

MR. JACKMAN: In terms of the programs that we have in place, there is always going to be the demand for more and more and more. Some of the things we are running, like the pilot program, like the rent subsidy program we were looking at through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, those are all initiatives aimed at making life better for the vulnerable and some of our seniors.

I think if you take a look at the programs we have in place, the income thresholds, the supports that we put in for housing, home repair programs, the seniors benefit that comes out in October. If you accumulate them all – there is always demand for more, but I would be satisfied – always looking for more –

MS ROGERS: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: – but I think the supports we have in place right now are pretty good for seniors.

MS ROGERS: Yes. Well, when somebody has to rent an apartment or buy some fresh fruit, it is tough.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, and I will acknowledge one thing. I think the difference between rural and Newfoundland – we are seeing the demand. You see them regularly around the demand that is placed on people living in urban areas, especially in St. John's. How we work our way through that, it is something we have to continue to have discussions about.

MS ROGERS: Even Clarenville and Marystown –

MR. JACKMAN: Clarenville, but that is what I am saying, the larger areas within the Province, it is demanding. There is no doubt about it.

MS ROGERS: Yes, or if you are near any large-scale projects, resource (inaudible) projects.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: The same thing for people looking for – if you are in this advisory capacity I guess, is it the role of the department then to be in an advisory capacity with, for instance, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing when you are talking about seniors? Then people with physical disabilities, I imagine the whole issue of accessible housing, it is a nightmare in terms of housing stock but also cost.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. I think if there is one thing that we have done, especially as it pertains to Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, I will contend they have always had a focus on it but I think our department brings another lens to it.

Betty can attest to that. That through her and through people in AES, we work more closely now with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, I think, than as probably ever worked that collaboration between departments and Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. It is probably better now than it has been. I think to continue that is to the benefit of those people that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing serve.

MS ROGERS: Would you work also in an advisory capacity around, for instance, a program in AES, the Open Doors?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: We work closely with the clients that AES supports. We do work jointly with them, yes.

MS ROGERS: Okay, I will talk to you a little bit about that at another time.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: I do not have any further questions.

CHAIR: Okay.

Thank you, Gerry.

Rex, we are on until you are done.

MR. HILLIER: Yes, I have a few more. I might be finished in Gerry's time.

CHAIR: There you go.

MR. HILLIER: Budget 2015 announced \$42.1 million for low-income seniors' tax benefit which is estimated to affect approximately 44,800 seniors. Are those households or individuals, the 44,000?

MR. JACKMAN: I will check that and let you know.

MR. HILLIER: All right, and tied with that, I am just wondering how many total seniors would be affected? If that is households, what would be the total number of seniors?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, okay. We will get both of it for you.

MR. HILLIER: As a supplement to that.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: To get the maximum rebate of \$1,059, what is the income threshold?

MR. JACKMAN: I think it is \$32,500.

MR. HILLIER: It is the same as Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, I think it is.

MR. HILLIER: Is that a solid threshold or is there a sliding scale? That is the highest.

MR. JACKMAN: I am not sure if it is a sliding scale or not, but this would be administered through the Department of Finance. I will get it for you.

MR. HILLIER: Okay. Yes.

What we are looking for, if it is not a solid threshold, how does the scale work? How many people do you anticipate being at the various levels in that scale?

MR. JACKMAN: Okay, but we will get you some information. Then if you have a question on part of that, we will follow-up on that for you.

MR. HILLIER: Sure. Absolutely; yes, perfect.

Another one is the discount fees for seniors. Would that also fall under Finance?

MR. JACKMAN: That would.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

We know there are discounts, but we know that fees are going up as well. Our question is: What would be the net impact on our seniors in terms of fee increases?

MR. JACKMAN: The net impact?

MR. HILLIER: The net impact. Like we know that fees are going up, we know that we have a 35 per cent discount.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay. Yes. So you are asking for the net impact over all of them?

MR. HILLIER: I guess the question is: Have you had a look at what the net impact would be?

MR. JACKMAN: No, I have not.

MR. HILLIER: Has Finance had a look at what the net impact would be?

MR. JACKMAN: I will check with Finance and see.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

The final one, it is a similar one. Budget 2015 announced \$8 million for the Provincial Home Repair Program, which is a Newfoundland and Labrador Housing initiative. The Budget pointed out that 86 per cent of the funding recipients are seniors. What is the income cut-off for that one to qualify? Is that the \$32,500 as well?

MR. JACKMAN: I will get that for you as well.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, all right.

I think we are good.

CHAIR: We are good.

Gerry, you good?

MS ROGERS: I believe I am. I want to say again thank you very much. It is very exciting to see the development of this new department. Some of it makes sense. It will just be interesting to see how far your reach can go and how you can influence that. Boy, do we have a challenge ahead of us.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Thank you so very much. Maybe the sun is still shining.

CHAIR: Rex, it looks like you have one question.

MR. HILLIER: I apologize; I do not have just one question. I have another set of questions tied to Poverty Reduction, 3.1.02.

MR. JACKMAN: Okay.

MR. HILLIER: Under Salaries we are looking at an increase of almost \$100,000, even though we have a decrease in staff. Is that a position? Is that for their benefits or is there a staff person there?

MR. JACKMAN: Staff.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

Under Purchased Services we have \$83,000. Why was this line item overspent by \$50,000?

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: Ms Rogers asked that question earlier. If you go up to Professional Services you will see it was not spent.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, yes.

MR. MEADE: Remember, that is around the Stats Canada data that I had spoken about earlier.

MR. HILLIER: Right, okay; sorry.

MR. MEADE: That is fine.

MR. HILLIER: Budget 2015 includes \$185 million for Poverty Reduction. What is the extra \$15 million over and above the \$170 million budgeted last year?

MR. JACKMAN: That is the Labrador violence prevention court initiative.

MR. HILLIER: I am sorry?

MR. JACKMAN: The violence prevention court initiative. That is one part of it.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. MEADE: Earlier in the discussion we had talked about how – Elizabeth Day, the ADM, had mentioned how we are monitoring now that the budget is down. We work with departments to finalize the list of those initiatives that are included as part of Poverty Reduction, and just confirming that they indeed are. We usually complete that every year about two to three weeks after the Budget comes down, and we are in the process of doing that now.

What that number would capture was our preliminary assessment of what that is, but we are finalizing that and we will make that available to you. We will actually list it by initiative, and then it will total up.

Certainly, the Violence Prevention Court was one. There were some additional positions put in Labrador, as I understand as well, to work on the coast. Those are the types of things that would be reflected if you see an increase.

MR. HILLIER: Okay. Thank you.

Budget 2015 mentions the Low-Income Tax Reduction Program of \$12.2 million. Can you tell us a little bit more about what that is?

MR. JACKMAN: What was that again?

CHAIR: The Low-Income Tax Reduction Program talks about \$12.5 million.

MR. JACKMAN: That would have to be Finance.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

I believe Gerry asked about the release of the poverty reduction plan?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: It is soon?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Is there a dollar figure in the Budget to deal with recommendations coming out of that?

MR. JACKMAN: No, not at this particular point. What we will do now is we will assess what comes out of that over the next coming months and then see where we go from there.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

The elimination of the Residential Energy Rebate – have you determined what the impact of this will have on low-income individuals?

OFFICIAL: That would be Finance.

MR. HILLIER: That would be Finance as well?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Was your department consulted on that at all? Did you guys have input into that?

MR. JACKMAN: Well, as a minister and through the Budget process we did.

MR. HILLIER: Yes, obviously.

MR. JACKMAN: I provided my input there, but again, that would be something you could put to Finance.

MR. HILLIER: Your department mandate letter mentions a down payment assistance program. Can you tell us about this program?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, that is through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. What that is, it is set at a \$60,000 threshold so that –

MR. HILLIER: That is household income?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes. Basically what it does is through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, they would provide the percentage down payment for someone to purchase a home, then a payment schedule would be setup whereby people would pay that back.

MR. HILLIER: Is that rolled out at this point in time?

MR. JACKMAN: No, we are in the process of rolling that out now, in conjunction with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

MR. JACKMAN: The dollars are there and available for it.

MR. HILLIER: Budget 2015 increased the income threshold from \$15,000 to \$30,000 for the HST credit and stated that the number of eligible families will increase from approximately 58,000 to 127,000.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: So we are talking here about families or individuals? Families?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Families. Okay.

Do you have any idea how many seniors would fall into this category?

MR. JACKMAN: No, I have not. I do not have it with me.

MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

Gerry, you asked some questions on the Disability Policy Office, so I apologize if these questions have already been asked.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it is all right.

MR. HILLIER: Subhead 3.1.03.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: Again, we had Salaries increased by (inaudible) so that was the person you referenced?

MR. JACKMAN: That is the program and policy development specialist.

MR. HILLIER: Right.

In Transportation and Communications, there was \$50,000 more than last year.

MR. JACKMAN: We have meetings with the advisory council, we have those people who travel, and others are around operation of the office.

CHAIR: Brent.

MR. MEADE: As I explained at that time as well previously, Mr. Hillier, if you look down you will see really what we have done is properly restated what we feel the operating budget for that division will be and should be. Where the numbers were under the revised is the way it came to us when we took the division from AES.

MR. HILLIER: So there is a transition piece here.

MR. MEADE: The way AES used to cover a lot of the expenses in the Disability Policy Office is they covered it from a lot of different places. That is why the numbers are unfortunately a little bit all over the place. Then what we are trying to do this year is restate it properly. That is why, our sense is, that the majority of our funding will be required in Transportation and Communications because that is where most of our costs are associated with advisory council meetings and stuff like that.

MR. HILLIER: Okay.

We have a little over a million dollars in grants here. Can we get a list of the recipients of those grants?

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

What we will do is we will go through the entire thing, and where it says grants and subsidies we will provide you a breakdown of each one of them.

MR. HILLIER: Yes, that will be great.

Finally, in 2015, the provincial government will release a three-year action plan to further guide implementation of initiatives under the Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. When do we expect that one to be –

MR. JACKMAN: Soon.

MR. HILLIER: Is there a dollar figure, again – do we have a budget item built in there for when that is –

MR. JACKMAN: What we have is whether we have to make some adjustments within existing funds or whatnot, but that is what we are looking at.

MR. HILLIER: Okay, and I believe that is finally all for me.

Thank you very much.

MR. JACKMAN: Thank you.

MR. HILLIER: It has been a great learning experience this evening for a new MHA.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, this one has been a bit different for me. Really what we have is a new department and you have been taking stuff in from other departments. So, this one has been a bit different.

MR. HILLIER: We knew that coming in. That was a conversation we had, how we were going to compare and –

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MR. HILLIER: – the answer to some of these questions.

CHAIR: Gerry.

MS ROGERS: (inaudible) modification.

MR. JACKMAN: If you keep it up, the sun will definitely be gone down by the time we get out.

MS ROGERS: The list of grants and subsidies.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes.

MS ROGERS: Is it possible to have the amount that groups applied for and then the amount that was awarded?

MR. JACKMAN: Support agencies and this kind of thing, you are talking about?

MS ROGERS: Yes.

MR. JACKMAN: Yes, we have that.

MS ROGERS: So what they applied for, how much they applied for –

MR. JACKMAN: Oh, what they applied for.

MS ROGERS: – and then how much they were awarded.

MR. JACKMAN: Well, I will see what we can do. We will take a look at it. I do not know what the end result will be, but I will discuss it with staff.

MS ROGERS: Okay, thanks.

CHAIR: On behalf of all the Committee, Minister, and your staff, I want to thank you for coming out this evening and giving some frank answers. As you said, it is a new department, and I know sometimes it is difficult to mix and match numbers after taking numbers from various departments over the last year or so.

So, once again to all the staff members, thank you for your answers and your time this evening. We really appreciate it.

Now we need to call the subheads.

Clerk.

CLERK: Subhead 1.1.01 through 3.1.03 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 through 3.1.03 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, clauses 1.1.01 through 3.1.03 carried.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development without amendment?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Can I have a motion to adjourn?

Moved by Mr. Pollard; seconded by Mr. Hillier.

Adjourned.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.