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Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

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SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

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Paul Davis, MHA Carol Anne Haley, MHA Paul Lane, MHA Betty Parsley, MHA Scott Reid, MHA Gerry Rogers, MHA

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Appearing:

Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

Hon. Sherry Gambin-Walsh, MHA, Minister Derek Bennett, Parliamentary Secretary Robyn Hayes, Departmental Controller Mark Jones, Assistant Deputy Minister, Promotion, Wellness and Sport Brent Meade, Deputy Minister Roger Scaplen, Director of Communications Kelly White, Executive Assistant

Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

John Ottenheimer, Chief Executive Officer Jenny Bowring, Manager, Corporate Communications Dennis Kendell, Executive Director, Regional Operations Tom Lawrence, Chief Financial Officer Kate Moffatt, Executive Director, Programs Policy and Research and Monitoring

Also Present

Veronica Hayden, Executive Assistant Susan Williams, Researcher, NDP Office The Committee met at 9:10 a.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

CHAIR (Dempster): Good morning, everyone.

I apologize for the late start. I had to drive a little bit of a distance and it was unpleasant, as you can appreciate, but I'm glad you're all here safely to the Estimates of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development and the Housing.

We'll start with the minister having a few words. There are no substitutions here this morning, from what I understand. And we'll go through subhead for subhead. So the minister will have a few words. You can start with 15 minutes of questioning. We'll alternate 15 and 15 and then 10 and 10.

The minister can introduce herself and her staff, if she wishes –

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Okay, certainly.

CHAIR: – or they can introduce themselves and then we'll go from there.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: I'll let them introduce themselves.

I'm Minister Sherry Gambin-Walsh.

MR. MEADE: Brent Meade, Deputy Minister, Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

MR. JONES: Mark Jones, Assistant Deputy Minister.

MR. BENNETT: Derek Bennett, Parliamentary Secretary.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: John Ottenheimer, Chair and CEO of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation.

MR. LAWRENCE: Tom Lawrence, Chief Financial Officer, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

MS. HAYES: Robyn Hayes, Departmental Controller, Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

MR. SCAPLEN: Roger Scaplen, Director of Communications, Seniors, Wellness and Social Development.

MR. KENDELL: Dennis Kendell, Executive Director, Regional Operations.

MS. MOFFATT: Kate Moffatt, Executive Director, Programs, Policy and Research.

MS. WHITE: Kelly White, Executive Assistant to the minister.

MS. BOWRING: Jenny Bowring, Communications Manager, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

MS. PERRY: Tracey Perry, MHA for Fortune Bay – Cape La Hune.

MS. HAYDEN: Veronica Hayden, Executive Assistant to Paul Davis.

MS. HALEY: Carol Anne Haley, MHA, Burin – Grand Bank.

MS. PARSLEY: Betty Parsley, MHA, Harbour Main.

MR. LANE: Paul Lane, MHA, Mount Pearl – Southlands.

MS. WILLIAMS: Susan Williams, Researcher, Third Party.

CHAIR: Thank you.

When you're speaking, just say your name right at the beginning for the purpose of the Broadcast Centre downstairs.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: As Minister Responsible for the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, I am pleased to appear before you to discuss this year's Estimates for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation.

We are very proud of the work we have been doing through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation to develop affordable housing programs and options to assist persons with disabilities, persons with complex needs, seniors and families with low incomes, as well as provide supports to help address homelessness throughout the province.

Through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation the province is partnering, once again, with the Government of Canada to deliver the 2014 to 2019 \$68 million investment in affordable housing. Agreements this year, the provincial investment in the program will be \$2.7 million. Over the past 10 years approximately 1,117 new, affordable units have been created through this program.

The latest agreement will invest \$27 million over five years to create approximately 466 more units, bringing the total to 1,583 by 2019. The Affordable Housing Program assists primarily seniors and households with low incomes throughout the province. The remaining \$41 million from Affordable Housing Agreement will help fund Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's home repair programs, the Provincial Home Repair and Home Modification Program.

This year's continued provincial investment of \$8.2 million will enable us to annually assist households with low incomes. About 86 per cent of the program recipients are seniors and these options enable them to continue living independently in their own homes, close to their family and friends.

Budget 2016 will enable Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation to invest another \$1.7 million in the Residential Energy Efficiency Program to assist lower income households, 85 per cent of whom are seniors, with energy retrofits that will significantly improve affordability by reducing heating costs.

This year's budget also provides \$10.3 million for the Rent Supplement Program. This program supports individuals and families on low incomes and individuals with complex needs by paying the portion of their rent that exceeds 25 per cent of their net household income directly to their landlord. By partnering with private landlords, the program enables lower income households to avail of increased housing options. Approximately 54 per cent of rentsubsidized housing units are occupied by seniors. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation will continue its Rent Supplement Pilot Project, which enables us to provide rental subsidy to 20 applicants living in the private sector rental accommodations of their choice. All units funded under this program are required to meet health and safety standards and have a monthly rental rate of \$800 or less. The pilot is only one year old and more time is required to determine the feasibility of continuing the program long term.

Budget 2016 has provided a \$2.5 million increase to the Supportive Living Program, bringing the total annual funding to \$7.6 million. We will invest \$2 million of the increase to provide operational funding for the newly established Out of the Cold homeless shelter in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The additional \$500,000 will be allocated to other group projects. The Supportive Living Program enables 37 non-profit, community-based groups operating 50 projects across the province to maintain long-term housing stability for individuals with complex needs.

We will also ensure options are available to help prevent homelessness through a continued \$1 million investment in the Provincial Homelessness Fund, which is administered by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. This program provides funding to non-profit organizations enabling them to provide on-site and outreach services, designed to promote housing stability and greater selfreliance among individuals and families at risk.

In keeping with the long-standing government directive, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation will continue to divest of its remaining land holdings. Such land asset sales can generate revenue as well as economic spinoffs of private residential industry and help create increased employment opportunities.

Also, the vacant surplus infrastructures now being sold are in areas that there hasn't been any demand for these properties in many, many years. Government cannot justify investing money to renovate properties likely to remain vacant. The sale of this land and surplus properties will also enable Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation to refocus solely on its primary mandate of assisting low-income households.

In recent years, the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has extensively upgraded over 77 per cent of its housing portfolio resulting in a substantial decrease in annual maintenance costs. While there has been a \$1 million reduction in Newfoundland and Labrador Housing's modernization and improvement spending, the budget is actually being restored to its traditional investment of \$10.9 million annually.

As the detailed expenditure reductions for *Budget 2016* indicate, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's total budget for this year has been reduced by 40 per cent. However, this is almost exclusively due to a one-time \$15.1 million return of funds to the provincial government.

Since 1967, when Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation was first incorporated, the province has made capital investments in Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation in the amount of \$63 million. This investment was made to acquire Newfoundland and Labrador Housing capital assets such as the social housing fund infrastructure and includes \$15 million for land assemblies and development, which was formerly part of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's mandate.

As of 2016-2017, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation will have liquidated its land assembly portfolio and is returning these funds to the provincial government. This transfer of funds will have no impact on programs and operations. The grant reduction is a one-time transfer for 2016-2017 only. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's budget remains essentially unchanged.

As an organization, the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation continues to develop housing initiatives in consultation with community stakeholders. It is that approach which has enabled us to review housing policies and revise housing programs to ensure they provide safe and affordable housing to people with low incomes and families and individuals most at risk of becoming homeless. It is our intention to move forward by continuing to build on our current success.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Now the first responder has 15 minutes.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

My first question pertains to the line items, and we only have one item, number 10, Grants and Subsidies. Why is there not a breakdown and line by line? For example, can we get a written breakdown of the Salaries for each division, and a written breakdown of the Operating Accounts for each division, including travel, office supplies and furniture, purchases, contract services? And can we have a breakdown of the Grants and Subsidies for each division?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Okay.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: In response to the question from the Member, absolutely. This is information which, obviously, as a part of the budgetary process, has been shared with Treasury Board, Treasury Board ministers. That information will be made available, and Members opposite will be provided with the information as requested.

MS. PERRY: Okay, thank you so much.

On the website, the lists of all the cuts are itemized in that 10-page document. It says line by line and other operational savings of \$15,160,000. Of course, we don't have the lines to be able to try and decipher where those savings are. So can you give us some elaboration on, specifically, what those reductions are?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: That is the issue the minister had referenced in her introductory comments with respect to the grant reduction, and the details of which I'm going to ask my CFO, Tom Lawrence, to elaborate.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you very much.

What this basically is, over the years the provincial government has invested \$15 million in the corporation's land development structure.

Over the years this land has been sold and it's now completely paid off, basically.

So this \$15 million represents cash that we have in our bank account that is the province's money. We are going to return that to the province this year as they requested. It won't have any impact on our operations because it's a transfer from our bank account to the province's, basically, right.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: They wanted us to do this this year, which we've done.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: If I may just add to that, just by way of analogy; it's not an exact analogy but I think it helps explain.

It's much like a corporate dividend. These are monies that are owned by the Treasury of the province, owned by the shareholder, the people of the province, and are now simply being returned to the public Treasury after a number of years.

So, as Mr. Lawrence indicated, it's simply a one-time transfer. It only happens this year. It's a one-time event that is simply retuning to the province what is, essentially, legally owned by the province.

MS. PERRY: I fully understand. The same way that we'll get dividends from organizations like Nalcor.

Again, going back to my original question: Can we get a written breakdown and a list of the Salaries, Operating Accounts, and Grants and Subsidies for each division?

OFFICIAL: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: As indicated, that information will be provided. I will ensure that the information, as requested, is provided to all Members. As I say, it's public information and it will be provided. That will be gathered, as it already has been, throughout the Treasury Board process, but we'd be happy to provide that at our earliest opportunity.

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

In the savings sheet breakdown for each department, it shows that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has the Southlands sale of \$5 million, the sale of the vacant social housing units at \$590,500, and then your line by line and other operational savings at \$15,160,000.

When you add it all up, you see a savings of \$20,750,500, but when you look at your Grants and Subsidies line you have \$21,333,500 budgeted. So there's a difference of \$583,000. Where is this?

MR. LAWRENCE: Those numbers that were provided on that sheet that adds up to \$21.8 million?

MS. PERRY: Yes.

MR. LAWRENCE: Actually, if you look at the detail, it really only adds up to \$20,750,000.

MS. PERRY: Yes, that's what we have. We have a total savings of \$20,750,000, but when you look here in the actual budget document the number we're seeing is \$21,333,500. That's a difference of \$583,000. So I'm just wondering what that is.

MR. LAWRENCE: That's made up out of a whole bunch of different items. For example, attrition savings is the major part of that. We have six positions that are vacant. They will not be filled, and it's pretty well right on that number, around \$560,000; I think \$590,000.

MS. PERRY: Okay. So we'll see that in the breakdown of the line by line when it's provided?

MR. LAWRENCE: Absolutely.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Can we have a list of all the vacant social housing with addresses that are for sale?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Yes, that will be provided. We have identified the communities. In fact, the minister may want to speak to this as well because I see the list before her. The exact addresses, that can be clearly identified and provided, and the minister may want to speak to this as well.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: I'll actually read it out for you and table it if you wish.

MS. PERRY: Sure.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Marystown, 19 units, Atlantic Crescent; St. Lawrence, one unit, 46 Fairview Avenue; Grand Bank, one unit is sold, 25 Jamieson Avenue; Burin, five units, 52-60 Topsail Road; Burin land – it's land – 31-39 Topsail Road; Burin former group home, one unit, Crescent Boulevard; Stephenville group home, one unit, Tennessee Drive; Southlands, area eight. That's the sale of the social housing units and land.

MS. PERRY: Okay, I would appreciate that written copy.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: You certainly can.

MS. PERRY: Thank you so much.

In terms of the sale of the Southlands residential development, how are you going to divest of the land? What process are you going to undertake?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Do you want to speak to that, Tom?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, it's a very good question. What we do is – and we did this last year – we'll go to public tender. At this point in time, we have a preliminary estimate of what the value is, but we have to do a full market study. Once that's done, we will then go to a public tender. It's a public-open process. Anybody, whoever wants to bid on it, can.

What this is, it is vacant land. It's not developed. It's not building lots. It's just pure vacant land. It's the last block we have left. Once this is sold, that will be all the remaining land infrastructure that we have. It's all in Southlands.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

What are the time frames that you're looking at?

MR. LAWRENCE: We'll be looking at, I suspect, probably around late summer, very early fall.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: I would just like to say that because this is a public tender process, we're a bit reluctant on trying to say what the exact value is because that could impact –

MS. PERRY: I understand that. I appreciate that, absolutely.

MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you.

MS. PERRY: Now, again, trying to get back to the Salaries. How many full-time equivalents or temporary positions at Newfoundland and Labrador Housing have been extended to September?

MR. LAWRENCE: We haven't extended any, actually. We don't have any temporary positions right now.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: So we wouldn't be extending any to September.

MS. PERRY: Now, you alluded to this a little bit earlier, so my apologies if there's some repetition here. Are you implementing the attrition plan that came in last year?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Did you meet the targets for 2015? What are your target plans for 2016?

MR. LAWRENCE: Our target is six positions a year for five years. That's 30 positions. So last year, we met our target. We will meet our target again this year, and there's no reason to believe we won't meet it in the next two to three years as well.

MS. PERRY: What specific positions are being eliminated?

MR. LAWRENCE: This year, for example, there's three management and three union positions. The management positions would be in our finance department. The other positions are clerical staff.

MS. PERRY: What part of the Island are they located in?

MR. LAWRENCE: They're mostly in St. John's.

MS. PERRY: Where outside of St. John's are they?

MR. LAWRENCE: That question, I can't remember exactly but I would say five of the six are in St. John's. I'm not sure –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. LAWRENCE: Oh sorry, one might be Gander.

MS. PERRY: One in Gander? Okay.

MR. LAWRENCE: I can verify that.

MS. PERRY: Yes, if we could get the actual locations –

MR. LAWRENCE: We have that, yes.

MS. PERRY: – and actual jobs to be eliminated that would be certainly greatly appreciated.

CHAIR: Before we continue, the Broadcast Centre downstairs is having difficulty picking up some of the names. So I would ask the minister or Mr. Ottenheimer, before you refer to a person to speak, just say their name. It will help them for the purpose of Hansard.

MS. PERRY: The last question I had – but I think that is answered because the Revenue line for the sale of assets is going to show up somewhere else in the Treasury as opposed to within Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, if I am to understand what you said earlier about the dividends.

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, that's right, exactly.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

These are my questions –

CHAIR: Ms. Rogers, I understand, is running late, but plans to be here. So you can continue, Ms. Perry, or that is it for that section?

MS. PERRY: That's it for that section. I'm not as bad as you thought I was, hey?

CHAIR: I'm going to ask for a consensus from the Committee. Would you like to defer the vote until Ms. Rogers –

MS. PERRY: Oh, I do have one more question, very important one actually.

CHAIR: Okay.

MS. PERRY: In Estimates last year, of course, the binders were provided to our Committee, so I would like a copy of your binder. Can I get that now?

Thank you.

CHAIR: So is it the preference of the Committee that we call a vote or that we defer the vote? Would anybody like a five-minute break? Are we too early into the morning for a break?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: No, keep going.

CHAIR: Keep going?

All right, so I'll ask the Clerk to call the subhead.

CLERK (Ms. Hammond): 1.1.01.

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, subhead 1.1.01 carried.

CLERK: The total.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, total head, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Housing Estimates carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

CHAIR: Carried.

On motion, Estimates of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation carried without amendment.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: My Housing staff is going to leave.

CHAIR: Yes, you are free to leave.

Thank you for coming.

OFFICIAL: Thank you very much.

CHAIR: I apologize for the 10-minute delay in starting.

Okay, so we're ready to go again on the Seniors, Wellness and Social Development subhead, Executive and Support Services. I'll ask the minister if she would like to start with a few words – I should call the subhead before the minister says a few words. Okay, I was doing that next. We need to do this procedurally correct. I'll ask the Clerk to call the subhead.

CLERK: 1.1.01.

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 carry?

Go ahead, Minister.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: The Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development was established in September of 2014. For 2016-17 the department has a total budget of just over \$20 million and a total of 41 full-time employees. The department has dedicated focus and efforts in the areas of seniors, adult protection, wellness, recreation and sport, poverty reduction and the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Seniors, Wellness and Social Development takes a proactive, preventative and integrated approach to living well and living more equitably and inclusively in the province by addressing social and economic factors from the earliest stages of life and across the lifespan.

Seniors; with respect to seniors we aim to promote healthy aging across the lifespan and foster a healthy society which honours, listens to, and includes seniors in building stronger, more dynamic communities. We are also committed to protecting adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect.

In the area of wellness we provide leadership and focus and progressive measures to help all people in the province adopt healthier habits and more active lifestyles, from birth to seniors' years through initiatives which provide support and reduce barriers to healthy, active living. To further strengthen our work in this area work is now underway on the development of a new wellness plan which will further encourage all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to work to improve their personal health and wellness and that of their communities.

We are also focused on reducing, alleviating and preventing poverty and ensuring that every citizen is provided the opportunity to share fully in our society and economy. As was noted in the Budget Speech, our government aims to ensure the impact of the fiscal reality is lessened on the most vulnerable, including low-income seniors, individuals, families and persons with disabilities. The Budget Speech also highlighted the fact that, as a province, we must foster a supportive and inclusive environment which ensures all residents are able to live, work and participate in their communities. Our aim is to enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society, including across economic, social and cultural opportunities on an equal basis with others.

In 2016-2017, Seniors, Wellness and Social Development will receive funding for three new important initiatives. The first initiative is the establishment of a new Director of Adult Protection position. A new *Adult Protection Act* was proclaimed on June 30, 2014. This legislation impacts all adults, regardless of living arrangements, who lack capacity to understand and appreciate risk and may be abused, and/or neglected. The act also includes an outline of the role and responsibilities of a provincial Director of Adult Protection.

The provincial Director of Adult Protection is responsible for the care and custody of adults who lack capacity and are abused or neglected, as well as having responsibility for consultation and reports, evaluations and investigations and overall administration of the legislation. Since the new act was proclaimed in June of 2014, the Director of Aging and Seniors has assumed the role of Director of Adult Protection. Other Atlantic provinces have a full-time provincial director.

During the first 12 months of implementation of the *Adult Protection Act* there were 258 reports with 22 proceedings to investigation. Responsibilities related to the *Adult Protection Act* have increased over the past two years and are expected to further increase as the population ages. And the legislation continues to raise awareness and increase accountabilities at the regional level. In addition, we are seeing more complex cases which require substantial assessment and attention. The establishment of the Director of Adult Protection position will provide better protection and reduce risk to adults who may be or are in need or protection.

The second initiative is the establishment of an office of the seniors' advocate. Our Liberal government committed to establishing an office of the seniors' advocate. The need to establish a seniors' advocate office has been broadly identified from individual members of the public, seniors organizations such as the Seniors Resource Centre and the 50+ Federation. The need for senior's advocacy has also been raised by the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors. The advisory council also raised the need for awareness and education of existing resources available to seniors in this province.

Budget 2016 has committed \$250,000 in 2016-17 to establish an independent office of the seniors' advocate with an annual budget of \$500,000 beginning in 2017–18. A hundred thousand dollars of the \$250,000 allocated in 2016–2017 will be used to raise awareness of existing services to seniors, and the fact that the office of the seniors' advocate is being established. The seniors' advocate will be a strong, independent voice for Newfoundland and Labrador seniors and their families.

Our third new initiative for 2016–2017 is the establishment of an anti-smoking campaign. During the election our government committed to implementing anti-smoking actions and providing support for organizations that offer smoking cessation programs.

Significant progress has been made in the area of tobacco control in Newfoundland and Labrador. Smoking rates have declined for various age groups, particularly youth. Secondhand smoke bans in public places are extensive. Retail compliance rates restricting the sale of tobacco products to underage youth is high in the province. And display and promotion bans of tobacco products at retail decrease the visibility and advertising of tobacco to youth. Despite these successes, Newfoundland and Labrador continues to have one of the highest smoking rates in the country with approximately over a hundred thousand people continuing to use tobacco.

Smoking rates among vulnerable populations, such as people living on low income and with mental health issues, are generally double that of the general population. And youth are still experimenting with tobacco and starting to smoke. Many individuals continue to be addicted to tobacco costing our health care system millions of dollars annually. Tobacco use remains the most preventable cause of disease and premature death. Our government is committed to protecting people, particularly children and youth, from the proven health risks of tobacco use. The rationale for such a priority is clear; therefore, further action is required to prevent and reduce tobacco use in our province. These actions will be based on evidence, provincial data, research, best practices and monitoring trends and emerging issues. *Budget* 2016 has provided \$250,000 in annual new funding for anti-smoking initiatives which will fund expanding and/or enhancing the delivery of current products.

In closing, with a budget of just over \$20 million and a staff of 41 full-time employees, this department is strongly committed to addressing some of the very important issues we face in society today. We are working to ensure that all people in the province are equally included, supported and empowered to achieve their full potential and well-being. The importance of this department's mandate is surpassed only by the dedication of its staff.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Minister, for the overview.

I have a lot of papers on this one. I have more questions this time.

In section 1.1.01, Salaries for 2015-2016 in the revised budget were over by \$153,000. Can you explain why that is?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: The increase of \$153,000 was due to severance and paid leave payouts for outgoing political staff.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Then when we look to 2016-2017 we see a drop from an annualized expenditure of \$214,000 down to \$62,600. Can you explain which positions are being cut here?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Yeah, well, not being cut; a decrease of \$151,000 due to a CA being allocated to the House of Assembly, and the

salary for the minister and EA being allocated to the Child, Youth and Family Services budget.

MS. PERRY: I didn't hear that.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Oh I'm sorry.

It was a decrease due to the CA being allocated to the House of Assembly budget. The salaries for the minister and the executive assistant are allocated to the Child, Youth and Family budget because I do have two full departments.

MS. PERRY: So we'll see that when we go into Child, Youth and Family Services.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Child, Youth and Family Services, yes.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

In Transportation and Communications, where have you made cuts? It's about \$10,000 less for the upcoming year.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: What happened was we did a line-by-line review with Treasury Board and there were decreases based on historical expenditures.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Can you explain last year where the drop in Transportation and Communications came from, from the original budget to the revised?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: There was less travel.

MS. PERRY: Were there any conferences that were cancelled or any initiatives that you had planned that you didn't do?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: No, it was an election year and it was less travel.

MS. PERRY: Okay. So your staff didn't travel with the mandate of the department?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: That's right; that the Minister's Office.

MS. PERRY: Oh, we're in the Minister's Office here.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Yes, we are.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

In terms of line item 1.2.01, \$45,000 less was spent in 2015-2016 for Executive Support. Where is that decrease accounted for?

MR. MEADE: The question is the reduction in the 2015-16 budget the revised number is lower, that's due to the assistant deputy minister position being vacant for a period of time and the secretary to the assistant deputy minister being vacant for a period of time.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

When you look then, going forward, the number has increased. Are you anticipating hiring more or that these positions will just be filled for the full 12 months?

MR. MEADE: Right now, what has happened is both of those positions remain vacant, both of those positions just mentioned; however, they have been budgeted for in '16-'17.

MS. PERRY: So that's the ADM and the -

MR. MEADE: An ADM position and an ADM secretary position. So right now, the secretary in our department supports both the ADM and the deputy minister.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

This year you've increased Employee Benefits by \$1,000. Why is that?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Which one?

MS. PERRY: 1.2.01.01.

MR. MEADE: That would just again be historical review. So what occurred across the line-by-line review is historical spending would have been looked at across all activities and, in several, they would have been reduced due to historical spending; but, in some, they also would have been rightsized and there would have been slight increases, and this is an example of where that would have occurred. So what that would have showed is that historically over the years we've been spending slightly more than 2,000 - 3,000 was the average, and that's what would have been budgeted.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

What is the Transportation and Communications budget allocated for, for 2016-2017? What travel do you anticipate?

MR. MEADE: So that would be travel for the executive team. That would be travel for any number of things. It could be FPT meetings; it could be other meetings we would attend.

MS. PERRY: So your travel for FPT is not accounted for in 1.1.01 above?

MR. MEADE: No, in the Minister's Office, 1.1.01, this would be only the minister's travel and minister's officials' travel up there. So the only thing that will be charged to 1.1.01 for travel would be if the minister travels or any of her staff, such as her EA, travels on SWSD business. That's when her travel would be charged off there.

MS. PERRY: So the \$46,800 is ministerial only?

MR. MEADE: Right, or ministerial political staff, like the executive assistant.

MS. PERRY: Okay, so that -

MR. MEADE: But then down in Executive Support –

MS. PERRY: Right.

MR. MEADE: – that would be the deputy minister, the assistant deputy minister, the director of communications, any of those positions that would travel.

MS. PERRY: So it's just three positions with a budget of \$33,200 and, above, two positions with a budget of \$46,800? Is that what I'm hearing?

MR. MEADE: That's what you're hearing, yes.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

In terms of Purchased Services, can you account for why the budget last year was \$7,700 and only \$2,500 was utilized? What was intended to be done, and what was actually done?

MR. MEADE: So purchased services are things like meeting expenses, printing, those types of things – copier costs, and things like that. So what would have happened last year, our expenses would have just been lower than anticipated. You can see it in this year there is, because of the historical spending, a rightsizing of the budget back to \$3,700.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. MEADE: If I may add, because this will be a common theme as you go down to the revised, two things would have impacted revised budgets last year. One would have been the transition of government, and two would have been the immediate measures that were brought in in December.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

I have some generic questions, but I'll keep going through line by line and then ask on the section as a whole. In terms of section 1.2.02 now, because I'm just following along, Transportation and Communications for Administrative Support, why was there a significant increase in 2015-2016 from \$36,000 up to \$58,000 for Transportation and Communications?

MR. MEADE: Transportation and Communications would have had a revised budget of \$58,000 versus the budget of \$36,000 because when we created a new department – and previously it would have been under Tourism, Culture and Recreation. For many years, we've been historically paying for the postage for three organizations: Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador, Sport Newfoundland and Labrador and School Sport Newfoundland and Labrador. That is the postage related to those. That's what drove up that line item.

Through the budget process, we've now determined or decided that we will no longer

cover their postage costs. That was a longstanding arrangement based on the way that they used to be housed in government buildings at one point. But we will discontinue that practice. Then for 2016-17 the number has been brought back to, if we take that into account, what our historical spend should be.

MS. PERRY: So the \$26,500 is a drop of \$10,000, how do you expect to achieve these savings? If the increase was explained by postage and it's discontinued that \$26,500 for this year, what would that expenditure be for primarily, do you think?

MR. MEADE: It would still remain to be for the things that are normally covered under Transportation and Communications. In this item of Administrative Support, it wouldn't be travel. This is where you are primarily covering things such as telephones, postage, those type of administrative expenses related to transportation and communications.

The \$26,500 if you look at historical spend, if we were to reconcile the postage issue that I've mentioned before and looked at what we would historically spend in a department around telephone, postage, et cetera, et cetera for the core department, then that would be the amount that's left.

As well, there was a reconciling across the system around some telephone features and blue-page advertising that was done that removed small amounts from department budgets.

CHAIR: Ms. Perry, I'm going to move now – Ms. Rogers has joined us. So we're reviewing the Estimates of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development. We're under heading of Executive and Support Services.

MS. ROGERS: Gerry Rogers, I'm the MHA for the good people of St. John's Centre. Thank you very much for coming this morning. Also, thank you very much for your incredible creative and innovative work on behalf for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I know the task ahead of you in this particular fiscal environment can, in some ways, be daunting in terms of the resources we have and the great needs of the people of the province, and to ensure that everyone is well and has what they need to thrive and to fully participate in our province.

Thank you very much for your work. Thank you for beating these snow odds and getting in here. You did a much better job than I did in terms of getting here on time.

I'll just continue with some of the line-by-line issues. Recreation and Sport, 2.1.01; I see there's been a cut to Grants and Subsidies of \$1.185 million. Can you explain these cuts and how you think they may be affecting the programs and/or community groups and/or individuals and/or regions that might be affected by these cuts?

MR. MEADE: Grants and Subsidies; the vote of Grants and Subsidies in Recreation and Sport will fluctuate from year to year depending on one-time funding that we put into the account. What you're seeing this year is a combination of two things: you're seeing a combination of onetime funding that would have been removed; and two, there are some reductions related to the Government Renewal Initiative.

For example, things that would have been in the vote last year but then would be removed because it would be one time would be \$500,000 for the Labrador Winter Games and \$250,000 for the Special Olympics. There's money that rolls in some years and rolls out other years for regional playdowns regarding the games. That was \$75,000, and as well around Canada Games funding. Canada Games funding goes up and down every year, depending on the Canada Games cycle. So last year there would have been \$80,000.

Also removed, then, related to the Government Renewal Initiative is a total of about \$740,000. These would have been published on Budget day. So it would be money related to the \$160,000 –

MS. ROGERS: Can you say that again, please? I'm having a little bit of a hard time – if you could slow down just a little bit for me.

MR. MEADE: Okay.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you.

MR. MEADE: There would have been reductions related to the Government Renewal Initiative. They would have been published on Budget day. They do total \$740,000. There was \$160,000 for the cancelation of certain sport and rec initiatives. There was a net of \$230,000 around Jumpstart. There was \$75,000 regarding a recreation grant that was given to the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation Band Council and another approximately \$275,000 related to sport initiatives.

So that would explain, I hope, for you the variance. Then, what remains in the \$6.2 million is money for the Community Healthy Living Fund, the provincial sport organizations. Over \$1.4 million remains there for provincial sport and recreation governing bodies and amputee initiatives. There's almost \$1.7 million there for physical activity and recreation development in Start Right Now, Healthy Students, Healthy Schools and rec and sport for persons with disabilities, for example. And there's almost \$2.5 million still in there for sport development, the Labrador Travel Subsidy Program, Canada Games, Athletic Excellence Fund, coaching, et cetera.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

The Jumpstart program: that's cut by \$350,000. Can you tell me how many children were able to participate in that program, and also how much money was leveraged by government's participation in the Jumpstart program? How much money will we not leverage?

MR. JONES: Jumpstart is a program of Canadian Tire. The province provides a grant, money grant, to Canadian Tire to operate Jumpstart and it goes into the general pool of funds available. They produce an annual report and they would have the robust numbers on the impacts.

The last report we have is expenditures around \$900,000, total, for the province. That would include our \$350,000. And the impacts vary from year to year, but suffice to say that hundreds of children and youth avail of the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program.

MS. ROGERS: Mark, can you just explain to me, then – so government would contribute \$350,000 or allocate \$350,000 for that program. Then, Canadian Tire would allocate \$550,000?

MR. JONES: Correct, however, it's not a direct contribution, a matched contribution. The funds that are pooled for Canadian Tire Jumpstart come from contributions from clients of Canadian Tire. So when you make a donation at Canadian Tire, when you make a donation at Sport Chek, they have a partnership agreement between various companies.

The dollar value varies from year to year. The \$350,000 from government was each year. Then, depending on the sales at the stores and the donations from the stores, extra monies would be donated and go into that pot.

MS. ROGERS: So the money from Canadian Tire would then come into government coffers for government to –

MR. JONES: No.

MS. ROGERS: No? So the \$350,000, how would that be administered? Where would that go?

MR. JONES: So the \$350,000 from government goes directly to Canadian Tire Jumpstart Foundation which is a separate corporate entity from Canadian Tire. They administer the funds. It's a fully operated program by Canadian Tire. Here in the province it's operated through a series of networks of Jumpstart groups that take in the applications, process them, put them up to corporate and then the monies gets disbursed by Canadian Tire Jumpstart.

MS. ROGERS: So the \$350,000 that will not be going to the Jumpstart program, is that being redirected in any way? Is there anything being done to help children who are disadvantaged to be able to be involved in sports activity?

MR. JONES: I'll continue with the Jumpstart. Jumpstart will continue. It will continue to exist in this province as it is a Canadian Tire function.

MS. ROGERS: Yes.

MR. JONES: They will continue to process the applications. We've been in touch with Canadian Tire Jumpstart officials. They are certainly aware of this decision through budget, and they've indicated that they're going to do their best, through their corporate partners, to continue to meet the need. Jumpstart will continue to meet the need of children and youth who are applying through that program.

MS. ROGERS: I guess my question is not so much now Jumpstart. We see a loss of \$350,000 to help disadvantaged children to become fully involved in sporting activities. That's not going to Jumpstart so we're seeing a loss of that amount of money helping disadvantaged children. Are we making it up in any other way is my question.

MR. JONES: An additional program that we support through our partner in Sport NL is KidSport, which is a similar type of program where children and youth can make application there and receive funding for their registration fees and equipment. So that continues. That budget was maintained.

MS. ROGERS: Can you tell me how much that budget is for the KidSport?

MR. JONES: The KidSport allocation, if memory serves, is \$75,000. It might be \$85,000. I have to confirm that number.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, so a big jump from \$75,000 plus \$350,000 to simply \$75,000, in terms of assistance for disadvantaged children to be able to participate in sports.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: The cancellation of the funding from the provincial government to the Jumpstart program was a very difficult decision. Given the fiscal reality, we had to look at all our programs and determine what we were going to do. Our objective was to focus on our in-house programs, and this was a corporation program.

MS. ROGERS: Yes, I understand that.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: That's what happened.

MS. ROGERS: I can understand that, but it means that's \$350,000 that is not going to help disadvantaged children. So my question then is, how are you going to help disadvantaged children besides –

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: We are focusing on in-school programs.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: There is a reduction of \$350,000, yes.

MS. ROGERS: Yes.

So I guess my question then to follow-up on that, is any of that reallocated anywhere? Because I think a lot of our –

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: There was a reduction of \$350,000. So it is not allocated, it is reduced.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, great; just great clarification.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: So, Ms. Rogers, we'll come back to you again. Right now I'll just pass it back to Ms. Perry.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Back to line item 1.2.02. Why is there no allocation for Salaries? We see Employee Benefits, but there is no allocation for Salaries. Can you tell me how many positions are in this category, what the budget was last year, what the revised was for last year and what the Estimate is for this year?

MR. MEADE: Administrative Support does not have Salaries attached to it. It's an activity that supports the corporate activity of the department. Again, as I mentioned around – so Employee Benefits would be for any claims around workplace health and safety that we would have to make to the commission. Transportation and Communications is the corporate support of telephone and postage. Supplies would be the same thing. It's the corporate support of general supplies in the department. Purchased Services would be the general support of the corporate copiers and things like that. So it doesn't have a salary attached to it. It's a corporate service element of the department.

MS. PERRY: Employee Benefits is like training programs or conferences or something you'd be sending them to?

MR. MEADE: No, in this account it wouldn't be. In other accounts, Employee Benefits would be for people availing of training or conferences or something like this. In this account it is actually allocated for the purpose of any payments we would have to make to Workplace Newfoundland and Labrador regarding work health and safety claims in the department.

MS. PERRY: Workers' compensation.

MR. MEADE: You'll find that common, hon. Member, across all departments. They would have the same structure. They would have an Administrative Support activity, and their Employee Benefits would be around Workplace Newfoundland and Labrador. That's a common way that it's done across the system.

MS. PERRY: Is EAP underneath that too?

MR. MEADE: No, EAP is a budget program. I think it's under the Public Service Commission. It may be under Human Resource Secretariat but I believe EAP is a Public Service Commission. It's one of those.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

In 1.2.02.02, Revenue, can you explain? Last year there was a budget of \$3,000 and actual revenue of \$8,200, and this year you have a budget again of \$3,000. Can you explain what that's for?

MR. MEADE: Yes, I can.

Revenue here is again understanding the function of Administrative Support being a corporate support activity. This is where things like trip advances or petty cash accounts are moved in and out. So this would show here. What happened here was there would have been a grant issued at some point that was never drawn down, so it was actually returned. What happens here is any old year returns, any ins and outs of petty cash accounts, trip advances and stuff like that, that's what works in and out of this account. That's what generally happens.

MS. PERRY: Can you provide us with a list of all grants allocated in the General Administration component of the budget?

MR. MEADE: There would be no grants administered. If you would like the detail of the grant that was returned, we can certainly provide that because I believe that's why the number was somewhat higher. It was because I think there was a \$4,000 or \$5,000 – something was returned in that regard, but I can get the details on that for sure.

MS. PERRY: From another division but allocated here?

MR. MEADE: Yes. So what would have happened is because something returned, you may not have a revenue account somewhere. They would allocate it into the – particularly if it's an old year. It's almost something like back in general revenue.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

What is your budget for petty cash and what would you use petty cash for?

MR. MEADE: I don't know the exact budget for petty cash, but petty cash would be used primarily in the operations of our pools. They would need small amounts of money to handle floats around admission prices and stuff like that, but they also may have small petty cash accounts to pay for a small amount of supplies. So that would be the exception.

Petty cash accounts are not extensively used. They are generally only used around operating of certain facilities or whatnot. In our case, I think it's largely in our pools where we would have petty cash accounts.

MS. PERRY: Would we be able to get an itemized list of petty cash expenditures?

MR. MEADE: Sure.

MS. PERRY: So before leaving this component, how many full-time equivalents and temporary positions in this section of the department are extended until September?

MR. MEADE: You're asking in terms of -

MS. PERRY: Salaries.

MR. MEADE: – extensions across the department, generally?

MS. PERRY: Yes. I'm talking Minister's Office only, section 1.1.01. That would be page 23.3 and page 23.4, just that component alone. How many full-time equivalents and temporary positions, if any, do you have extended until September?

MR. MEADE: None in the Minister's Office, but I might as well answer the question for the department.

MS. PERRY: Yes.

MR. MEADE: For the department overall, we have three positions extended to the end of September.

MS. PERRY: Three?

MR. MEADE: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Well, let's stick with the department overall then. Are you implementing the attrition plan that came in last year?

MR. MEADE: Yes, we are. All departments are, yes.

MS. PERRY: Did you meet the targets for 2015? Specifically, how many positions were eliminated through attrition and what is the plan for 2016?

MR. MEADE: Our target is five positions over five years for a total of \$400,000. We met our target of one position last year. It was a position in the Recreation and Sport division. We would

have a target of one in each of the next four years.

We have a series of retirements that are coming up this year. So while we haven't specifically identified it, we anticipate we will meet our attrition target again this year.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

So what you're saying is you have three layoffs in addition to the attrition model?

MR. MEADE: Three layoffs? No, we had no layoffs.

MS. PERRY: Oh, possibly three layoffs. I'm sorry about that.

You have three FTEs extended until September.

MR. MEADE: Yes, but there's no determination there will be layoffs. There are three temporary positions; all temporary positions were extended in government until the end of September. So we have three of those positions.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

At this point in time you can't speak to whether or not they will be renewed because that decision hasn't been determined.

MR. MEADE: No, we cannot. No, a decision has not been made.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

What positions are they?

MR. MEADE: The three temporary positions in the department; there is a word processing operator. It's really a receptionist-type position. That is a temporary position. It has been extended to the end of September. There's a policy analyst in our strategic planning division that is extended to the end of September. There is a clerk position in one of the divisions, that has been extended to the end of September – clerk/secretarial support-type position.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

I'm going to come back later with more of my policy questions and keep to the line by line going forward.

Moving on then to 2.1.01, page 23.5, under Recreation and Sport, line item 01 for Salaries; last year there was a decrease from the budgeted amount to the revised amount of \$69,600, but then when you look forward to the Estimates for 2016-2017, you see that the new budget is \$1,266,500, so that's up \$46,500 from the revised expenditures of last year. Is there a new position in there, or can you explain what that increase from your actual of 2015-2016 is to the new Estimate for 2016-2017?

MR. MEADE: The variance in '15-'16 of being down by approximately \$69,000 is because of vacancies in the recreational sport consultants for a period of the year. And we also had an employee on unpaid leave for a period of the year, so that would have led to a reduction there.

In number one, there are a number of things there. There is the position that I mentioned earlier about attrition management. This is where this came out, so we are down one position there but we also then would have funding for the implementation of the Job Evaluation System, JES. There was money put in here for that, some employees moved to higher steps –

MS. PERRY: Hang on now; you're going too fast for me too.

MR. MEADE: There are things in and out, I guess, is what I'm saying. So the net result, in terms of positions – there's only one position, and what you're seeing in \$1,266,000 is just a number of things going in and coming out. There's a position coming out of \$64,000 but going in there would be things: employees moving to higher steps of approximately \$8,000; additional funding added to the base for the Job Evaluation System, JES.

MS. PERRY: What's the name of that position? What position is that?

MR. MEADE: That's not a position. That was where across government there was a review of the classification system. It was called the Job Evaluation System, JES. You will come across this, I would think, in your Estimates as you move through. Depending on what occurred in departments and what the JES results were, some positions were classified slightly higher or brought up and that will lead to some variances in salaries.

And, for this division, the net result of it was that the salaries would have to go up by \$21,000. There's also a small amount of money put in there for the Corner Brook pool, for additional programming.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

And the title of that one job which is eliminated through attrition was what?

MR. MEADE: The technical title of it was industry development officer, an IDO was what we called it but the more explanatory term is a rec and sport consultant.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

CHAIR: Ms. Perry, did you just have one more thing on that line or will I move to Ms. Rogers now?

MS. PERRY: She can go ahead.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you very much.

If we could go back to 2.1.01, Grants and Subsidies, can you please explain to me again what might be some of the effects of the cancellation and cuts in some of the programs? I know the Stars and Legends that government attended that Saturday night to help celebrate the Stars and Legends from our province – was that an annual grant of \$40,000 that is now cut entirely?

MR. MEADE: When we looked at the Government Renewal Initiative and looked at how we could find savings, we did look at how we supported the federations; the three federations being Sport Newfoundland and Labrador, Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador and School Sports Newfoundland and Labrador. Over the years, we have had a very long and successful relationship with the three federations. What occurs with Sport Newfoundland and Labrador and Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador in particular, but also School Sports, but in particular for those two, are they deliver a number of programs and services in conjunction with government. Over the years, they would have come in and there might have been things that we wanted to do that they would be a delivery agent for, but there were also things that they would have come forward and asked if they could receive funding for.

Stars and Legends, Sportfest and coaching were the three areas that would have been impacted in Sport Newfoundland and Labrador. There was \$40,000 removed across that. There was \$15,000 given to Stars and Legends and we cancelled that contribution. It's an event where they have other means of raising money around it. It has strong corporate support.

It's an event that has grown in size over the years. And, yes, it is a great event and one that recognizes sport excellence but when it came down to difficult decisions, we felt it was a program that we would – we tried to keep for us what were the things that were most important to the support system and to the recreation system and to the school sport system to maintain the integrity of the system in terms of how we could achieve the objectives of getting people active, getting kids active, how we could continue to pursue athletic excellence through elite sport development, how we continue to support our provincial sport organizations, et cetera, et cetera.

Our contribution to Sport Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, overall would be over a million dollars. So this is a small cut in comparison to what we provide to them overall. In Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador, we eliminated the funding around some leadership development. So they've developed a number of programs and components that they've delivered over the years. Much of it is developed. So they already have I guess, in some respects, the infrastructure and curriculum and program development done around it, and they will continue to deliver it.

It does mean there may be some costs associated for participants, but we felt again in the context of everything we did with Rec Newfoundland and Labrador that was an area – and I don't know the full amount we give Rec Newfoundland and Labrador, but it is again a substantial – this would be a minor cut in the context of things, to what Rec Newfoundland and Labrador would get.

MS. ROGERS: Leadership training, okay.

MR. MEADE: So \$650,000 is the amount we give Rec Newfoundland and Labrador on an annual basis. We reduced our contribution by \$45,000 in that one area.

The other areas that we would have looked, again, would have been we reduced the program area in sport hosting. So that's where we would give money to provincial sport organizations, largely, to host national events here, international events here. That was a \$100,000 program, and then we reduced that to \$50,000, cut that in half.

Then there were slight cuts to Canada Games and slight cuts to some of the money we had for research, et cetera, et cetera. That's how it was done. It was, in many respects, in those areas a trimming of the budgets. We still feel the integrity of the system has been kept and that we will continue to be able to provide support across the continuum of sport development and recreation.

The other area where there would have been a reduction overall was in the Community Healthy Living Fund. That's a fund that provides support for capital grants or physical activity grants, but also programming grants. So it has the area of a supportive environment, which is how we support capital development of rec facilities and sport facilities; programming; so how you run recreation and sport programming; and capacity building, so those areas of whether it's coaching or professional development, those things. Again, when we looked across, we kept the integrity of the system intact and we trimmed \$268,000 from that.

Some of the allocation in that program would have actually been around electoral district allocation. That's how some of it was designed. It was around how we looked at that. With the reduction in the electoral districts, it actually enabled us to reduce some of that as well. So some of the program was based on X amount of dollars per electoral district.

MS. ROGERS: Although the number of districts has changed, the number of people has not changed –

MR. MEADE: No, it has not.

MS. ROGERS: – and the number of programs has not changed, except –

MR. MEADE: No, that's right. But again, if you're going to look for ways where you could look at reductions and try to keep the system intact, that's how we determined some of that.

MS. ROGERS: So I understand that the focus will be more on the delivery of programs through the schools?

MR. MEADE: We've always taken as a department, and we've done a lot of work in this area, that school-based programming is absolutely critical to active, healthy Newfoundland and Labrador. Personally, I have a strong conviction in this area, as many people know. I think schools are the epicentre of how we will change this in Newfoundland and Labrador. So we do a lot of work in schools. We do a lot of work through all of our organizations, all of those mentioned, not just school sport but the others do work in school base as well.

In the reduction of the Jumpstart funding, there is \$120,000 that is going to be reallocated for a program that we're working on developing now to support participation in local sporting events, school-based sporting events. We're working on that now. That will be announced in the weeks ahead once we finalize that, but that was a budget decision that there would be \$120,000 put towards how we could further support participation in school-based sporting events across Newfoundland and Labrador. That will be something we're looking at there as well.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, I guess that was sort of the question I was asking about when the cut to Jumpstart.

Brent, what happens – I understand looking at channelling and supporting more school-based activities, but, for instance, in my district, Holy

Cross Junior High has just been closed and the kids are bused back and forth. A lot of kids come from families that don't have vehicles. They will not be able to stay for after school activities. So would a lot of these sporting activities be outside of the regular school hours? I would imagine.

The school, Holy Cross, the kids could walk back and forth to school. Anybody who wanted to be on the basketball team could be. That's going to be gone for them now as they get bused to a more distant school. So can you tell me – the focus on the school makes sense in some ways, but if children can access to it and avail to it. Are most of these activities that will be reinvested into the schools be after-school activities?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: As it alludes to school curriculum and education, we cannot speak to that. You'll have to ask the Department of Education.

MS. ROGERS: I know that, yes.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Also, we know that many programs are delivered at lunchtime. So I'm sure the school will work to the best of its ability to do that. Again, you will have to ask Education how they're going to deliver programs.

MS. ROGERS: Yes, except it is a question here, because you're saying, well, what we're going to do, philosophically, we feel it's better delivered through the school. Then, in fact, do the children actually have access to what we know because we have that high rate of obesity, diabetes, et cetera, and we need to get our kids more active.

We've already looked at the cut, the reductions in money for children who are more disadvantaged. We may be making it more and more difficult. I'm just wondering if that's been considered.

MR. MEADE: You raise a very valid issue and a very valid concern, but it's one we're acutely aware of as well.

We work very closely with the Department of Education around healthy school planning and

how the programs in that – in trying to address that – are done within school time and within the parameters of when transportation options are available to kids. This is a long-standing challenge around ensuring that kids in schools have the balance between what their education curriculum teaches them, whether it's math or English or whatever, and the amount of time we're able to allow for us to promote healthy living and wellness, including recreation.

We've had long-standing work in the community around how we could better use schools for community, and community for schools. So how schools become the place where we could deliver a lot of this programming is something that has been an ongoing discussion. We've made substantial headway in that.

I was the deputy of Tourism, Culture and Recreation eight years ago, and I came back to the department and one of the very first issues I heard about was community use of schools. That was something that continues, but we've made headway. I've seen it in schools that I interact with, that there's more time being used in the gym, in the school environment for that activity.

Transportation will continue to be something, and that's where we'll continue to work with Education around how we could work around busing and other things. It's not only an issue -Iwould suggest to you - in the inner city of St. John's, it's also an issue in rural parts of the province.

MS. ROGERS: Absolutely.

MR. MEADE: So it's one that we're acutely aware of, but we have a number of program areas, and we could provide these to you, how we do things in schools, around after schools, Participation Nation, et cetera, et cetera. We are, to be honest with you, trying to entrench in the school system more this time because we know there is the natural tension of trying to deliver educational curriculum and educational outcomes with allowing the school to be a place where we do create healthy environments, and teach and promote healthy living, and active living. We have a number of programs that we deliver that are done. There are ways now of delivering educational programs by use of physical activity, and we're even trying to integrate that into the classroom. So there are many, many different ways we're doing that. We could certainly provide briefing material to you that try to explain how we're trying to break that down.

MS. ROGERS: And I really appreciate it. Also, I'm very, very aware of the issue of busing of our children in rural communities when we see that schools are closing.

In St. John's Centre alone, five schools in over five years have been closed. So schools become a focus of being able to deliver more and more; yet, the schools are closing and children are being bused. It's a difficulty, it's a challenge and it's the children who lose out because it's the children who are bused; unless children have families where they can transport their own children or there's a parent who has the time. I think the reality is glaring.

Thank you.

CHAIR: I'm going to suggest that we take a five-minute break now.

Recess

CHAIR: Order and get started again.

Ms. Perry, I'm going to ask you to start again.

MS. PERRY: Okay, where are we.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm going to come back to Health Promotion, Wellness and Sport, page 23.5.

CHAIR: Pardon me. I didn't hear the number.

MS. PERRY: I'm coming back to 2.1.01, page 23.5.

CHAIR: Okay.

In line item 10, Grants and Subsidies, the budgeted amount for 2015–2016 and the revised amount, there's a difference of \$156,400. Can

you explain what cuts were made or what was not done that was budgeted for in 2015–2016?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MS. PERRY: 2.1.01.1.10.

MR. MEADE: That would have just been funding that we never got out the door. Some of it would have been due to immediate measures. I mean it's a very small variance in the scheme of \$7.392 million. It's \$156,000 and we just didn't get it out the door because of immediate measures.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Going forward the budgeted amount is quite significant, it's less \$1,028,600. Can you tell us which specific grants and subsidies are being cut?

MR. MEADE: That was a question that was asked earlier by Ms. Rogers. There are things in and out. As I explained earlier, the Grants and Subsidies vote under Recreation and Sport does fluctuate year to year because of one-time funding.

MS. PERRY: So some of it is the district realignment and whatnot.

MR. MEADE: I can quickly try to summarize again what's in and what's out. What would come out – part of the variance is because of forecasted adjustments around one-time events. For example, last year we would have had \$500,000 in for the Labrador Winter Games. But that was last year; we don't need it this year so that would come out. We gave \$250,000 last year to Special Olympics in Corner Brook because they had the national Olympics there, the Canada Special Olympics. That wouldn't occur this year so that would have come out.

We have money that fluctuates from year to year for Canada Games and for regional game playdowns. Last year, there would have been \$75,000 in there for regional playdowns. That's not in there this year. There would have been money there for Canada Games funding last year. That's not in there this year. So that goes up and down year to year. Then, the other part of the variance would be the amount that we've gone through on the Government Renewal Initiative reductions totaling \$740,000, of which \$160,000 was the cancellation of some sport and rec initiatives; the \$230,000 net on Jumpstart; \$75,000 to the Innu Band Council in Sheshatshiu; and a \$275,000 reduction in some sport and recreation initiatives.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Can we get an itemized list of all of the grants and subsidies and programs and their allocated amount for 2016–2017?

MR. MEADE: Yes, we can provide that to you.

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

Can you explain for me what the anticipated sources of revenue, provincially and federally, are? This year we're seeing an increase over last year from \$315,600 up to \$337,500. In particular, I guess, what additional revenues do you anticipate this year over last?

MR. MEADE: The federal revenue is related to a bilateral that we have with the federal government. The provincial revenue is the swimming pools.

So the increase is anticipated because we've sat down and we looked at what programs are going on. We do anticipate some additional programing at the Corner Brook pool. That would be the increased revenue projected there.

MS. PERRY: So fees from swimming, especially Corner Brook.

MR. MEADE: That would be largely attributed to the variance, yes.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. MEADE: That would be for all of our pools, that \$337,000.

MS. PERRY: Okay. So that's increased fees.

MR. MEADE: No, it's not increased fees.

MS. PERRY: No. Increased programs?

MR. MEADE: No, increasing the programming in amount of time – increased programming. You have more programming; you have to pay people more.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. MEADE: And people will pay for it more.

You may recall, I mentioned there was an increase of approximately \$12,000 in the Salaries vote for Recreation and Sport to account for increased programming at the Corner Brook pool. We would also reflect that in the Revenue because people pay for the use of the pool.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Line item 2.1.02, Grants and Subsidies; the budgeted amount for the new fiscal year is less \$168,000. Can you explain where those cuts are?

MR. MEADE: This is the capital program I mentioned, as an element of the Community Healthy Living Fund, where we provide assistance for the repair or maintenance for sport and rec facilities, and also the purchase of equipment, physical activity equipment, and things like that, sport equipment.

So there was a reduction of 168,000. That was again related back to – I mentioned earlier about how some of the capital programing was done by district. It would have been an amount by district. Because the number of districts is reduced from 48 to 40, we took that money out there. So that's what that would be.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Can we get an itemized list of the allocations in specific programs for Grants and Subsidies for 2016-2017, what you have budgeted?

MR. MEADE: Yes, we can.

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

Moving ahead, then, to the following page under 2.1.03, can you explain why Salaries was over last year and why there is a \$10,000 decrease moving forward for 2016-2017?

MR. MEADE: The increase last year was related to the retirement cost for one of the staff members who left. So the \$24,000 increase was related to the cost of their retirement, leaving. The reduction is just that we have a new employee – actually it was a replacement. She's on a lower scale.

MS. PERRY: A lower scale, okay.

Why have Purchased Services under 2.1.03.01 been increased for 2016-2017?

MR. MEADE: That's, again, due to line-by-line review. When we looked at historical spending – though, it didn't occur last year, that's understood.

MS. PERRY: Yes, last year it was only \$6,000.

MR. MEADE: If you look at the historical spending that we do under Purchased Services in this division, it is around the \$27,000, \$28,000 range.

MS. PERRY: Can we get an itemized list of what services you expect to purchase in the coming year?

MR. MEADE: Yes, we can certainly do it to the best of our ability at this point in time.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Again, on the Grants and Subsidies line, we see an increase of \$450,500 allocated from last year's budget. So moving forward now to 2016-2017, you've added close to \$500,000 – well, \$450,000, \$500,000 – can you explain what that increase is for, or does that increase relate to last year's actual?

MR. MEADE: Again, there are a few things in here and there are a few things moved from other areas, and also then the new initiatives. Here we would have – there was \$262,000 actually in the activity below that. See Support to Community Agencies?

MS. PERRY: Yes.

MR. MEADE: There would have been \$260,000 in that account. I can explain why it still flatlines there because there was money

moved into that as well. That was moved up because it wasn't considered to be core operating Support to Community Agencies. It was support to our Regional Wellness Coalitions. That was moved in.

There's \$100,000 that was added into this Grants and Subsidies account for the renewal of the Smokers' Helpline. You'll actually also see that offset by federal, because that's a federal partnership we have. There was \$100,000 for a renewed agreement on the Smokers' Helpline.

The \$250,000 that the minister referenced in her opening comments around the Smoking Cessation Program, the new money that we will use is in here.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. MEADE: And there would have been a reduction related to the Government Renewal Initiative. So there are some in and there are some out, but it nets out to be that amount.

MS. PERRY: What was the reduction for the Government Renewal Initiative, specifically?

MR. MEADE: Approximately \$180,000 or \$190,000 in this account. So that's where we would have just trimmed some of the support we would have done around healthy living initiatives, any number of things we would be doing in terms of nutrition programs or wellness promotion programs, stuff like that. It's a general vote that we would have done a number of things and we trimmed it by approximately \$180,000.

MS. PERRY: What type of nutrition programs and how much specifically? Let's take the nutrition program, how much was budgeted last year and how much are you budgeting this year?

MR. MEADE: Mark Jones will answer that question.

MR. JONES: The Healthy Living budget there of \$1.2 million breaks down in various ways. The allocation that is essentially allocated for a variety of healthy living activities – not already attributed to something – is around \$300,000 this year. It varies.

If in '15-'16 it was \$350,000, now it would be \$250,000. It is from that, that we support initiatives like Eat Great and Participate. It's a program that we partner with Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador to work with communities' recreation facilities around encouraging healthy eating in recreation and community settings.

It's from there that we would provide support to Food First NL, formally known as the Food Security Network. They just released a wonderful new online resource around healthy eating for seniors and brought together a bunch of resources.

Those activities fluctuate from year to year. What we'd do on an annual basis, using our wellness plan as the baseline of what are our priorities, we work with our partners, we communication with them, what's in the work plan, and from year to year different activities are supported to different levels. So it's not an allocation per se to each activity year in, year out. It's based on the activity that is planned and what is needed from year to year.

It is that pot of money that was \$350,000ish, would now be \$250,000ish.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Can we get an itemized list of the actual Grants and Subsidies that were spent in 2015-2016, and the programs and category allocations for 2016-2017?

OFFICIAL: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms. Perry.

We'll move to Ms. Rogers.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you very much.

I'm sorry I missed your introduction, Minister. I'm very, very happy that there is a smoking cessation program.

Did you explain at the beginning what shape and format that would take? How it would be delivered?

If you already have, I wouldn't expect you to repeat it.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: We haven't rolled it out yet. We are looking at some technology. As we roll it out, we will give the details.

I explained the amount of money that was going to be attached to it for this fiscal year.

MS. ROGERS: That was \$250,000?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Yes.

MS. ROGERS: Province-wide.

The actual design of the program and how it's going to be delivered, we will hear about that –

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: When we have it designed, yes.

MS. ROGERS: All right, great. Thanks.

Also, some other departments in this session of Estimates provided briefing books. Would we be able to have the briefing book as well?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Yes.

MS. ROGERS: That's great.

You know what would have been ideal too, I guess, is to be able to have it before Estimates. We'd be able to have that information before the actual Estimates session, would be great as we go forward.

The Healthy Living, 2.1.03; I believe my colleague already asked for a breakdown of the programs in the Healthy Living Division.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Yes.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, great. Thank you.

Can you tell me the status of the Healthy Living consultants? Do we still have five? Are they full-time, permanent positions?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Yes, we do.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

Could you just give me a list of what those positions are?

MR. MEADE: We can provide a list of the consultants, but that division is fully staffed right now

MS. ROGERS: It's fully staffed?

MR. MEADE: Yes.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, great. Thank you very much.

I would like to move on to Seniors, Aging and Social Development. Under Salaries, we see there is an increase in Purchased Services. What would that be for?

MR. MEADE: What has been voted in there is the \$100,000 that the minister would have alluded to in her opening remarks around – in the establishment of the office of the seniors' advocate, there's \$250,000 allocated for that this year; \$100,000 of that will be used to raise awareness of the establishment of the office, but probably more importantly, of the existing services and programs that are available to seniors, not only through government but other community-based organizations.

One of the things we did here in our consultations around the seniors' advocate office, and generally with senior groups, is that seniors don't know enough about the programs and services that are out there. So we determined that a good opportunity, a good time to do that would be around the establishment of the office of the seniors' advocate. That would be a good time for us to raise awareness about the programs and services available to seniors.

MS. ROGERS: What kinds of services are available that you think seniors don't know about?

MR. MEADE: It would be any number within government.

The Seniors Resource Centre, for example, is an organization that we now make a contribution of \$300,000 a year to. It is primarily to play the role of an information and referral service. Our analysis and our evidence were saying to us that

seniors were having challenges navigating the government system. This is something that government is constantly challenged with is how people can find out about programs and services and how they can navigate the system.

We determined that a very sound approach to do that would be with a community-based organization like the Seniors Resource Centre, peers helping peers, in many respects, leveraging their volunteer capacity and their reach. That's what we've done with it.

So that's an example of – but it may be any number of services, Ms. Rogers. It may be services in health or in our department or other departments that people are wondering about.

Primarily, it is the health system where seniors are trying to navigate, particularly, but it may be also in the area of financial assistance or even understanding the income tax and how they can apply for the supplements. What do the supplements mean to them? Those kinds of things are the things we find people will ask about.

MS. ROGERS: We get those calls to our office as well.

MR. MEADE: That's right.

MS. ROGERS: Particularly because of the high number of seniors in our province who are living in poverty.

MR. MEADE: Right.

The other thing we heard was people don't even understand about established systems that are available in government like the Office of the Citizens' Rep, for example. Those are the kind of things that we would try to promote, make awareness of. This is the infrastructure that's there, those are the services that are available to you and, in particular, it would be around promoting the navigation systems that are available to them like SRC, the office of the seniors' advocate and whatnot.

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: I just want to add, when I met with the Seniors Resource Centre and the 50+ Federation and my provincial advisory council, this is what they told me. They

told me they want an investment in the resources and supports and services that were already out there, an awareness investment, and then we would move on from that.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

Can you tell me how much the Seniors Resource Centre has asked for, for a grant this year?

MR. MEADE: They asked for the \$300,000. When we increased it from \$100,000 to \$300,000 last August or September, that was based on many months of consultation and evaluation of the Seniors Resource Centre.

You may be aware that we funded an evaluation of the SRC, which concluded – there were a number of recommendations but its main conclusion was your core service, your bread and butter, what you should really focus on is information referral. That's your strength. That's the service you're best positioned for and the evaluation concluded is in most need of being met.

It was based on that then that they also did some analysis on what their operational requirements would be and that's where the \$300,000 came from. So they're receiving what they asked for and the understanding we have with them to provide that service.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

In Grants and Subsidies, 10, we see a reduction of \$592,300. Can you tell me where those reductions would be applied?

MR. MEADE: It's not a reduction; it's a transfer. So there is \$200,000 that was actually moved from there to support the community agencies, which is activity 2.1.04 for SRC. We now consider the Seniors Resource Centre as a community agency that we're providing core operating support to, so we felt it best to move it into the activity that does that for all of the other organizations. So that's what we did.

There was \$87,000 transferred from this account to go to Western Health around Adult Protection. When the *Adult Protection Act* was proclaimed, there were positions put in each of the health authorities, social work positions, to deal with Adult Protection. Western was the last one to fill the position and draw down its funding. So it was still in our account. The others had long been transferred out. That was transferred out this year.

To fund the Director of Adult Protection, a decision was made that we would fund it. We were asked to try to find it internally and we found it through the Grants and Subsidies vote there. So there was money moved from Grants and Subsidies to Salaries to cover the Director of Adult Protection. And there was a reduction of \$200,000 through Government Renewal Initiative; \$100,000 was reduced in healthy aging transportation project, it went from \$400,000 to \$300,000; and the senior rec grants, which were actually brought into the Community Healthy Living Fund, that was reduced.

Essentially, what happened several years ago is senior rec grants were introduced as targetspecific rec grants out there but, as a department, we're ageless in our program delivery. We are ageless and seniors' groups can come in and access any of the programs. So our view is that the Community Healthy Living Fund is fully able to fund all of the activities that were being funded under that target program at that time. That's what occurred there, so that's a reduction.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

Is there a reduction to others as a result of this because we see a reduction in money – what kinds of grants and subsidies would this have covered before that it's no longer covering? Because now \$200,000 is going to the Seniors Resource Centre, which I think is a good thing – so what are we missing? What would have traditionally been funded here?

MR. MEADE: There would have been a couple of things. One is it would have been one-off projects on a year-by-year basis. But to be totally transparent and honest, there were slipped balances on the Grants and Subsidies vote here for several years.

MS. ROGERS: What does that mean?

MR. MEADE: There were slipped balances, there were balances – they were not spending all

of the grant subsidy money. So if you looked at the trending, the historical expenditures in Grants and Subsidies and Seniors and Aging, they were dropping money every year. They were not spending all of their grant and subsidy money.

MS. ROGERS: Why do you think that might be when we know that there's such a need?

MR. MEADE: It would be a number of things: maybe not being requested for and the system, the government, were meeting the needs through other programs and services. That's the reality of it. That's where we see it being. But again, some of this is moving money around as well. For example, the Seniors Resource Centre was getting – well, \$200,000 was a jump. They were getting incremental money at least two prior times of that of \$50,000 to \$60,000 as one-time funding as well. So it was being used for those kinds of things.

CHAIR: Ms. Rogers, we can move again now; the time is up on the clock.

Ms. Perry.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Going back to line item 2.1.03, Healthy Living, under the Revenue section federally, can you tell us what that \$100,000 in revenue is?

MR. MEADE: It's the Smokers' Helpline.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Section 2.1.04, we see a very slight increase of \$5,300 for the new year. Can you explain what that is?

MR. MEADE: There are a number of things in and out of that account, but it netted at that. There was \$200,000 moved into that account for the Seniors Resource Centre; I referred to that earlier. There was \$100,000 for the School Lunch Program that was actually transferred from the Office of Public Engagement, so that moved into here. We moved \$262,000 out of this up above to Healthy Living, and that's why they were up in their Grants and Subsidies, for the Regional Wellness Coalitions. Basically, at the end of the day, it is stuff being moved in, moved out, but it ends up netting out at that.

MS. PERRY: Okay, can I –

MR. MEADE: The important thing to note here – this is where I should note. A commitment was made in this activity to community-based organizations that their funding would remain whole this year. So that's why there's no change. For all intents and purposes, this is money in and out. There's no change in the core support in this activity because of that commitment.

MS. PERRY: Can we get a list of all the agencies and the amount of funding provided to each under this section?

MR. MEADE: Not a problem. We will provide all our Grants and Subsidies listings for 2015-2016. I will say now because I know you've asked a number of times, for all our Grants and Subsidies accounts here, we can give you the '15-'16 expenditures.

MS. PERRY: Yes.

MR. MEADE: Because they're disbursed, we can tell you the groups that received them. For '16-'17, if they're not already allocated but they're categorized, as you already asked, we can do that for you. We can show you in '16-'17, if it's not already a targeted expenditure to different groups, it will be in these categories and we can provide that information to you as well.

MS. PERRY: Okay. Just to save that question then you will provide that for me as well, and Ms. Rogers, section 3.1.01.10 and –

MR. MEADE: Anywhere we have Grants and Subsidies, we will provide that for you.

MS. PERRY: Okay, thank you so much.

Moving now to Seniors, Aging and Social Development, section 3.1.01, we saw an increase in the revised amount spent last year over the actual budget. And then from last year's budget amount of \$382,500, this year we're seeing an allocation of \$515,700. Can you explain both those increases?

MR. MEADE: The variance last year would be due to – we hired a grad student to work in that division and it was funded actually from salary savings in other areas of the department, but it was reflected in this area. As well, the director was reclassified and would receive retro pay. That's what leads that small variance there.

The \$515,000 from the \$382,000 or from the \$415,000 – however you would like to view it – would be the Director of Adult Protection.

MS. PERRY: The Director of -

MR. MEADE: Adult Protection. They're now budgeted for there. The increase there is because of that position being created.

MS. PERRY: That's a new position?

MR. MEADE: Yes, it is.

MS. PERRY: Director of Adult Protection, new position.

MR. MEADE: Yes. The minister spoke of that position in her opening remarks.

MS. PERRY: Yes.

Under Purchased Services, that \$168,100 speaks to – Gerry just asked that one – the seniors' advocate, right?

MR. MEADE: Right, \$100,000 for the awareness campaign.

MS. PERRY: Yes. So you'll be going to tender, of course, for that advertising campaign?

MR. MEADE: What was the question, I'm sorry?

MS. PERRY: You'll be going to tender for that advertising campaign? How is it done?

MR. MEADE: Well, we haven't determined that yet but, yes, we would most likely need to procure marketing and communication assistance. That would normally go to market, yes.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Moving down now to 3.1.02, section 01 for Salaries, can you explain the differences there, please?

MR. MEADE: The variance in '15-'16 would be because we had delays in filling one of the positions, so that would be a variance here, the program and policy specialist position. We were in three months maybe before it was filled. So that would be the variance there.

The really very minor variance from \$271,000 to \$274,000, you're budgeting for the salaries that are there now so that's just based on what they are.

MS. PERRY: Reflecting actions.

MR. MEADE: What they're getting paid.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

What would you purchase services for under this section? Last year, there was almost \$50,000 less than budgeted and this year you have allocated \$80,000 again. What would you consider expenditures? What happens here?

MR. MEADE: The Purchased Services here would be for the normal things that purchased services could be for: meeting expenses, printing, things like that, but also a substantial amount of this money – because this is a fairly large Purchased Services, given the overall vote in that activity. We purchased data from Stats Canada. That's actually why there was a variance last year, because the data was not ready from Stats Canada in terms of before yearend. So we'll be purchasing it this year.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Can we get a copy of that data as well?

MR. MEADE: It would be published data, Stats Canada, but we can certainly provide it to you.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

The Professional Services budget has been cut in half. What type of professional services did you

incur last year and what do you expect not to do this year?

MR. MEADE: We didn't incur any expenses for professional services last year, as indicated there. Professional services are where you would hire consultants or expertise to evaluate or research a particular issue that you may be looking for. So the poverty reduction division has over the years from time to time hired external consultants to look at a particular policy area or a particular issue. We did not last year.

Because of the historical spending in that area, so they have not normally drawn down the \$50,000, they were given \$25,000 on a goforward basis.

MS. PERRY: So it's a contingency for unforeseen consulting?

MR. MEADE: Yes, it is.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Then moving into Seniors, Aging and Social Development, in line item 10, page 23.9, the Grants and Subsidies allocation is \$150,000 less this year. Where specifically are those cuts?

MR. MEADE: The variance here is, due to the Government Renewal Initiative, we have two grant programs in this area. We have several grant programs in the Disability Policy Office, but two of them would be inclusion grants and capacity grants. What they would have done, inclusion grants would support, for example, community-based organizations looking to build accessible features to their buildings, ramps, stuff like that. We may assist with assistive technologies for community-based organizations in carrying out their business, et cetera.

Capacity grants were grants that we were using to partner with community-based organizations to deliver on particular elements of the Disability Policy Office and particularly the inclusion action plan. So that was a total of \$600,000 between those two programs. We combined the two programs and we've reduced it by \$150,000 down to \$450,000.

MS. PERRY: Through savings and administration?

MR. MEADE: No, through savings in terms of we've reduced the amount of money.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

MR. MEADE: It's a government renewal reduction.

All other grants and subsidies – and that's the only variance. All other programs and services in Disability Policy Office have continued including Accessible Vehicle Program, Accessible Taxi Program, our Para-Transit Grant with the city, et cetera, they remain intact.

MS. PERRY: Of the 650 positions announced in the budget that are being cut, how many of them are here in this department?

MR. MEADE: None.

MS. PERRY: None?

MR. MEADE: We have no layoffs.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

How do you think persons with disabilities are going to be impacted by the increase in the client share of paid home supports over at the Department of Health? Is there anything they're going to be doing through this department to help offset some of that?

It is a Department of Health program. They help subsidized home care. There's going to be an increase in – the financial assessment model is being revised and the clients will be expected to pay a higher share. Are you going to do anything to offset the impact that will have on seniors and persons with disabilities?

MR. MEADE: It's a question that I would refer to Health and Community Services. We do not have any programming here that is meant to directly address any of the – the issue you are raising would probably better be directed when you have Estimates with Health and Community Services.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

Madam Chair, I think it's now Gerry's turn.

CHAIR: Ms. Rogers.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you very much.

I would like to just go back to the age-friendly transportation program being cut from \$400,000 to \$300,000. Can you tell me why that was cut, and was the money being used? Will the cut affect people?

MR. MEADE: It's been used to date – though we did not have any expenditure in it this year – to fund pilot projects in several areas of the province. Those pilot projects are under evaluation now. We're hoping to complete the evaluation in the next short time period, the next few weeks, of which then that will inform how we go forward.

There is \$300,000 allocated for seniors' transportation, or healthy aging transportation project as we go forward. So depending on the results of the evaluation, we will have \$300,000 to deliver on the next phase of that.

MS. ROGERS: There were four or five pilot projects? How many?

MR. MEADE: There were, yes.

MS. ROGERS: How many were there, Brent?

MR. MEADE: I believe there were five. I apologize; I don't have those details with me –

MS. ROGERS: That's okay.

MR. MEADE: – but I know there was one on the West Coast, there was one in Central, there was one in Clarenville. I can get you those details, but there were four or five of them –

MS. ROGERS: That's right, yes.

MR. MEADE: There were five of them over a period of four or five years, over three years that were funded. Like I say, they are under evaluation now.

So what we're hoping to do is to create a model out of this, that based on the learnings – there were some variances amongst them in terms of their approach and whatnot – is to draw from the best practice of what we think a way forward would be.

MS. ROGERS: Are they continuing now?

MR. MEADE: Yes, they are right now. That's part of the reason why there was no expenditure last year. They didn't need money last year.

What happened was the way it rolled over on a year-to-year basis; they had their funding to carry them through to now.

MS. ROGERS: Yes.

MR. MEADE: It was really funded in the previous budget, in the '14-'15 budget. That's the way it's been working.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, so they're continuing and the evaluation is being done now.

MR. MEADE: Yes.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, great. Thank you.

Under the Grants and Subsidies under the Disability Policy Office, we see there's been a reduction of \$150,000. How is that rolled out in terms of the different groups and organizations that have asked for money?

MR. MEADE: I just responded to this issue with Ms. Perry. We're taking what were previously two separate grant programs: inclusion grants and the capacity grants.

MS. ROGERS: Yes, I heard that.

MR. MEADE: We're going to combine it. Our thinking is when combining it we will work with the community now in how best to use that money to leverage the things we want to do.

There were really two things that were going on in those grant programs. Inclusion grants were being used to support community-based organizations in ensuring they had inclusion services and facilities. It might have been from assisting to build a ramp or an accessible entrance to a building, to assistive technologies, to what have you. The capacity grants were largely driven by the Disability Policy Office in partnership with community to deliver on the inclusion action plan. That's where we would have done things like the accessible election work that we would have done with COD-NL. The blue zone parking initiative we would have done with them.

There are a number of things we would have delivered; a visual alarm program that we would have delivered with the Hard of Hearing Association. So there are those types of things we would have done that would have been delivered in partnership with – they will continue. Those things will continue.

Like I say, it's really where we're trying to bring that money now, that was at one time \$600,000 in total, down to \$450,000 and how we can best work with the community to leverage that and continue to deliver the services we're delivering, and meet the needs of the community organizations that are looking for funding for particular initiatives.

MS. ROGERS: So, in fact, it's \$150,000 less available to community groups who are providing services in the community?

MS. GAMBIN-WALSH: Our fiscal situation demanded that we look at all programs and determine need. Based on experience and based on some programs that we're going to be moving forward with the community, there was a \$150,000 reduction.

MS. ROGERS: Okay, thank you.

I only have one last question I would like to ask and that's going back to Seniors, Aging.

Can we have an update on the *Adult Protection Act*? What kinds of reports, referrals, the types of abuse, et cetera? How that has been rolling out.

MR. MEADE: For the period of June 30, 2014 – that's when the act came in – to December 31, 2015, we've had 418 reports, 23 of those have gone to investigation.

What we are finding is the longer the act is in place, the more awareness is around it, particularly, in the regions and through the regional health authorities. We are starting to see slight increases on a quarter-by-quarter basis in the number of reports.

I don't know if that answers your question.

We are seeing some complex cases come forward. That's really what led to the need to create a full-time position in a Director of Adult Protection where Dr. Suzanne Brake, who is Director of Seniors and Aging, was also carrying out the responsibility of Director of Adult Protection.

There are eight individuals who are in the custody and care of the Director of Adult Protection right now. That number has held now for several months. So that's where we are right now.

MS. ROGERS: Has that position been filled or is it going to be filled?

MR. MEADE: No, it will be filled. Right now, Dr. Suzanne Brake fulfills that role, quite ably. A dedicated position will be created and filled in the coming months.

MS. ROGERS: Okay.

I would like to thank you very, very much for your work. Again, I realize, we all realize, the incredible financial strain that the province is under and the difficult decisions that have had to be made.

Today, we can see some of the very difficult ones that you've had to make, particularly, when we really look at the rollout and how it might affect some of the more vulnerable people in our society. It's not good news.

Again, I thank you for your work and I thank you for your time this morning.

MR. MEADE: Thank you.

CHAIR: No further questions from the Opposition and Third Party?

I will ask the Clerk to call the subheads.

CLERK: 1.1.01

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subhead 1.1.01 carried.

CLERK: 1.2.01 to 3.1.03 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 1.2.01 to 3.1.03 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subheads 1.2.01 through 3.1.03 carried.

CLERK: Total.

CHAIR: Shall the total of the Estimates from today carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

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

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

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

CHAIR: I will now need a mover from the minutes of April 18, Fire and Emergency Services and Municipal Affairs.

MR. LANE: So moved.

CHAIR: So moved. Thank you.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

CHAIR: Now we'll have a mover to adjourn.

Our next meeting will be on April 26 at 9 a.m. when we will be covering the Estimates of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Do we have a mover to adjourn the Estimates from this morning?

Carol Anne.

Thank you everybody and safe driving when you head home at whatever time you do that today.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.