



STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE

Hansard Verbatim Report

No. 26 – May 14, 2018



Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

Twenty-Eighth Legislature

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

Mr. Fred Bradshaw, Chair
Carrot River Valley

Mr. Buckley Belanger, Deputy Chair
Athabasca

Mr. Ken Francis
Kindersley

Mr. Hugh Nerlien
Kelvington-Wadena

Mr. Eric Olauson
Saskatoon University

Ms. Laura Ross
Regina Rochdale

Mr. Corey Tochor
Saskatoon Eastview

[The committee met at 18:30.]

The Chair: — Well good evening everybody, and welcome to our committee tonight. And I know there's tons of people watching this on television tonight rather than watching the hockey game. I am Fred Bradshaw, Chair of the committee. We have Warren McCall substituting for Buckley Belanger. We have Ken Francis, Hugh Nerlien, Eric Olauson, Laura Ross, and Corey Tochor.

This evening the committee will be considering the estimates for Tourism Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. We'll also be considering two bills this evening: Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*; and Bill No. 90, *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017*.

**General Revenue Fund
Tourism Saskatchewan
Vote 88**

Subvote (TR01)

The Chair: — We will now begin our consideration of vote 88, Tourism Saskatchewan, subvote (TR01). Minister Makowsky, could you please introduce your officials and make your opening comments. And also the officials, when you speak could you please say your name for *Hansard*.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, I'm pleased to have this opportunity this evening to talk about tourism in our province and updates on developments and projects led by Tourism Saskatchewan. I have some brief opening comments and then we will see if anybody has any questions. Of course my officials, to my left, our CEO [chief executive officer], Mary Taylor-Ash. And CFO [chief financial officer] Kathy Rintoul is here this evening.

In 2017 more than 2.37 billion in travel spending was recorded and the number of visits to and within the province reached 13.6 million. Tourism-related jobs accounted for employing over 67,000 Saskatchewan citizens. The tourism sector is 95 per cent small or medium-sized operations, with 79 per cent of these situated in communities outside of our two major centres.

I'll abbreviate it to TS's [Tourism Saskatchewan] '17-18 fiscal year is one that saw the organization's Canadian marketing efforts consistent with the province's tourism brand, consisting of three pillars. This brand speaks to the qualities and characteristics that set Saskatchewan apart from other destinations: land and sky, time and space, and community.

Last year TS began implementation of a new contact marketing strategy, a digital-first, visitor-centred, always-on approach. Digital and social advertising is already driving consumer recall of TS advertising. In '17-18 TS social media following grew by 22 per cent over the previous year.

One of Saskatchewan's primary tourism sectors is the hunting and fishing market. TS will be spending approximately 750,000 in the US [United States] to promote fishing and hunting in '18-19. Sales of hunting and angling licences to US residents

were up 28 per cent in '16-17 compared to the previous year, indicating strong growth across all key US outdoor markets.

TS works closely with tourism operators, destination marketing organizations, and communities. In '17-18, 101 tourism operators participated in a co-operative advertising program. CAP [co-operative advertising program] is a cost-shared provincial program that supports partner activities that promote a tourism attraction, event, or experience. The event hosting program supported a total of 33 events in '17-18 with impressive economic returns. Twenty-two of the events were selected for economic impact assessment last year. From an investment of just over 346,000, those 22 events supported nearly 146 jobs and produced a gross output impact of 10.76 million.

Upcoming events for '18-19 include the 100th Memorial Cup, LPGA [Ladies Professional Golf Association] Women's Open, the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences hosted by the U of R [University of Regina].

TS is currently in the process of completing a product development strategy. This strategy will identify the tourism products and experiences needed to respond to tourism trends and meet demand.

A strong, professional tourism industry is dependent on a trained and skilled workforce. In '17-18 the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council delivered industry training and skill-development products to 10,807 participants, 45 per cent over the target of 7,500. This was partially driven by the new requirement for responsible service of alcohol training. The ready-to-work program, which focuses on training to find long-term careers in hospitality and tourism, was delivered to 150 participants in Loon Lake, Regina, Onion Lake, Meadow Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Shell Lake with five different indigenous nations.

A lot is happening in the tourism industry in Saskatchewan, and we continue to see growth in this dynamic sector. Thanks for the opportunity to speak to the committee this evening. I'll open up to any questions.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister. Are there any questions? Mr. McCall.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister, officials, welcome to the consideration of TS estimates this fine evening. I guess just a question off the top, in terms of the fiscal restraint, the austerity measures that have been put out for different arms of government, what are the specific goals that have been set for Tourism Saskatchewan and what are the impacts that will be experienced?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — In the budget there was a reduction of 344,000, roughly 2.6 from the previous budget. A lot of those savings will be found internally. And, you know, I think Mary has a good handle on that. I'll ask her to expand on that area.

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Mary Taylor-Ash. Yes we are able to find those savings through vacancy management and we are doing that as people retire or anybody leaves our organization. We do

a full assessment of the position, whether we need it in the form that it currently is, and we've been able to not fill all positions that way.

We've also been very mindful of savings in our administration area, you know, things as simple as postage sometimes. Our travel budget, we've been able to cut back a little bit in that area as well. So we've been able to absorb the savings.

Mr. McCall: — Okay. How many positions are currently within the Tourism Saskatchewan envelope and the division between in-scope, out-of-scope? And are they members of a particular bargaining unit? Again, how is the drive for austerity being absorbed by the different components of the workforce at Tourism Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I have here for the '18-19 budget the number of in-scope employees at 53, out-of-scope, 19.6. And the bargaining unit is SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union].

Mr. McCall: — And just for the record, they're part of the broader public service SGEU bargaining unit that said no thanks to the memorandum of agreement? Am I correct in that understanding or are they part of a different bargaining unit?

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — They are part of SGEU but we negotiate separately with them.

Mr. McCall: — So you're your own distinct bargaining unit?

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Yes.

Mr. McCall: — What is the state of affairs in terms of the collective bargaining agreement that applies to the in-scope workers of TS?

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Mary Taylor-Ash. Our agreement ends September 30th of this year, of 2018, and then we will be negotiating with our union.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you for that. And again in terms of the positions, is there any sort of anticipated number of FTEs [full-time equivalent] that will be impacted in terms of, identified for how many people have you got coming up for retirement? And is there a ballpark expectation that six or ten . . . Is there any sort of that, any of those calculations, have they been made?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Again, Mr. McCall, the 72.6 is the total number of FTEs in '18-19.

Mr. McCall: — Okay, so how many of those are up for retirement in the year to come?

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Mary Taylor-Ash. That's the number that we anticipate having next year. We are not anticipating any retirement that we would not fill the position, if that answers the question.

Mr. McCall: — It does and thank you for that. And then certainly it begs a follow-up question which is, in terms of the reduction to the Tourism Saskatchewan budget currently

experienced, does that already include the expected savings on workforce, maybe to ask that a different way?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — It does.

Mr. McCall: — Okay. Thanks for that. I guess one last question on the matter of the good men and women that do the work at Tourism Saskatchewan. In terms of the expenditure under consideration tonight, the 13.1 million, how much of that is payroll and how much of that goes to third parties or vendors or what have you?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So the total compensation budget for '18-19 is 7,001,256.

Mr. McCall: — Thanks for that, Mr. Minister. And the remainder of the allocation under consideration here tonight, how does that break out?

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Mary Taylor-Ash. The breakdown is . . . Do you want just broad categories? Because it's marketing . . . We have industry development, education and training. Those would be some of the major areas . . . visitor services as well.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — And you want the totals for those?

Mr. McCall: — That'd be great.

Ms. Rintoul: — Good evening. My name is Kathy Rintoul. I'm the CFO with Tourism Saskatchewan. In terms of breaking down the costs further in our budget, so we have the just over \$7 million that relates to our total compensation, and then we have a number of other costs that include professional services, advertising — and advertising is certainly one of the more significant pieces of our budget. We also have a number of costs that relate to promotions. We have some print and some travel-related costs in there, rent and equipment purchases, supplies and services, and some that relate to our capital, so our depreciation. And I can certainly go through each of those specific amounts with you if you want. And then on top of that is our grants.

Mr. McCall: — I'll thank the official for that response and certainly, given the precious time that we have in front of us, we'll see if we have something to come back around to at the end to maybe get that greater detail. But certainly just the difference between . . . And I don't lay this at the doorstep of Tourism Saskatchewan, but in terms of the difference between the detail that's provided and the annual plan and the annual report, and then what's on offer with the subvote. And again I appreciate you're a treasury board Crown and all those things, but there are just some things that are good to get on the record in terms of the estimates we're considering here tonight. So we may come back to that yet, but thank you for the answers thus far.

In terms of the challenges in the year ahead, and this is I guess as good a place as any to get into it . . . And I'm not trying to curry favour with the Chair of the committee, who's a pilot and interested in these kind of matters. But today there was a story in the media about the Air Transat ceasing operations for the year to come out of Saskatoon and Regina, which puts in relief a broader question about air connection to Saskatchewan, and

then the way of course that impacts tourism.

And would but that everybody came by car, but that's not the case. And I guess with Air Transat obviously it's more folks going out, but I guess the question is, how much of this occupies the time of Tourism Saskatchewan in terms of working with other levels of government, other branches of the provincial government, to try and improve the air connection equation for the province of Saskatchewan?

[18:45]

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I'll offer a few comments and then I'll turn it over to Mary. I think you've brought up an important thing for not only the tourism sector but the greater economy in general. We talked in my earlier statements about how we market in Texas, for example, for hunting and fishing, and having an easier commute up to Saskatchewan is certainly a factor. I know there's a new CEO at the international airport here in Regina, and my understanding is that's an important piece for himself as well. And we also talked about trying to attract European visitors to Saskatchewan, particularly from the UK [United Kingdom] and Germany, and those are certainly important markets as well. And air travel is key to that area.

I think, as I mentioned, it's fair to say that this is definitely on the radar. And I can think of a few years ago, there was direct flights from Regina to and from Denver, Chicago, and Minneapolis. And as you mentioned, that has dwindled down. I believe there's still a direct flight from Saskatoon to Minneapolis as well. But you know, I think Mary can add on to my initial comments so I'll allow her to do that.

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Access is always an issue when you're talking about tourism, and air access makes a big difference in terms of getting visitors to come here. The more convenient it is, the lower the cost, you know, the easier it is to attract people. What we are doing, and the minister had alluded to this with the airport authority, we do work closely with the airport authorities.

And I'll just give you an example. With the new CEO of the Regina Airport Authority — and they're working very hard to attract carriers, especially from the US — we work with them to provide the statistics that they need about what these markets look like, where we are travelling to promote, and we work closely with them on this so that we are in partnership. We also meet with other organizations like the destination marketing organizations, and one of those that we work closely with is the economic development group in Regina. And they have Tourism Regina, and so meeting with their senior people to strategize a bit of how we can work together to attract more people.

But this issue also is part of our federal-provincial-territorial talks as well. And so a lot of the issue around air access in Canada, therefore in Saskatchewan, is really the federal government's cost and how . . . We have a very high-cost system of air transportation. And so we also work at bit with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada to keep that dialogue going with the federal government to say, okay, you know, are there ways that costs could be reduced so that it could be more attractive for carriers to come here?

And just recently — I think it was in February — we hosted a Transport Canada session with our stakeholders and had one of the director generals responsible for air transportation in Canada come here to talk about what the, you know, what the system, how the system is designed and maybe us understanding it better so that we could look at influencing especially the federal government around changes.

Mr. McCall: — Is there anything that we can do as either a committee or as a Legislative Assembly in terms of, you know, strengthening the call? Because certainly, as is recognized, this has an impact that goes beyond tourism. It goes to, you know, the functioning of our economy and helping or hurting. And again, this seems to be a problem that . . . I appreciate there's a new CEO at the Regina International Airport, but it's a problem where the trajectory that seems to be headed in a concerning direction.

So are there any specific efforts that, and I don't want to be here with the opposition chequebook signing off for things — I know the Chair will hold me to this — but if there are things that we can support or, you know, add our voices to, just let us know where to show up. Because this is important for the economy and not just the tourism sector.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes, well I appreciate it, Mr. McCall. I think anyone that . . . As legislators, you know, we talk and we send letters and discuss with our federal counterparts those types of things. I certainly don't have a list of all that's been done but I think previous ministers, I understand, have looked into this and have worked hard on it.

And I'm sure that that effort will continue because, as you stated, it is important. And I've heard that . . . I'm certainly not an airline expert or that sort of thing, but I've heard things like the Canadian dollar might have an effect, just those costs that Mary had mentioned that are imposed upon airlines at the federal level. The, I imagine, taxation, a carbon tax, those types of things all go into the equation whether it's profitable or not to come into Saskatchewan.

So those are important links to outside markets that rely on the tourism sector. And if you want to attract business to Saskatchewan, people want to get here in a reasonable effort. So I understand and I hear your call.

Mr. McCall: — Thanks. And again, if you need us, just let us know or show up. We'd be happy to lend our voices. But again this is a, I think, cause for concern.

And I guess the other broader question following on the heels of this in terms of the great work that Tourism Saskatchewan does . . . And again, it's such a great organization and must be so much fun to work with. Like, what a great job. But in terms of all the great things that happen in the province and the way that Tourism Saskatchewan's got a mandate not just to showcase them but to invite people in, you know, again, what a great job. But what's the . . . You know, you want to get people to it so, as you point out, access is always a concern. What are the other concerns that Tourism Saskatchewan faces as it pursues its mandate of showing off the province?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Just on your first part, I'll maybe let

Mary get the other. Tourism, they're great folks. They're very creative. They're enthusiastic. I was at the Tourism Awards, and just the energy in the room. They love their job and they love being there. They love Saskatchewan and they care about doing well. And I agree those folks are certainly an asset, and it shows in their enthusiasm and passion. But Mary would certainly know more in this area than I would.

Ms. Taylor-Ash: — Yes. It is great to work at Tourism Saskatchewan, but we do have challenges and that's really what you're asking. We have a great team but we are challenged. Access, you spoke about access — you know, that's a challenge, a challenge for a number of destinations.

We are a bit of an unknown destination as well. So what we have found is that when people do know us and they're familiar with us, they love us. But if they don't know us, we haven't created . . . It's hard to create that sense of urgency that you must come to Saskatchewan, you know, to visit.

The other challenge that we have is just pure competition. And that is something that, as the world has gone more online in terms of getting the information, the competition is just incredible because you can find out . . . Years ago you'd have a hard time finding out about all these different destinations unless they, you know, kind of advertised to you. And that's very costly, to do TV advertising and that kind of thing, and consumer direct advertising. But now online, you know, you can find out about anywhere and so there's a ton of competition for the visitor's dollar. So that makes it . . . You know, that's challenging and you have to constantly be more and more creative.

And so the language has changed. Over the many years that I've been involved in tourism, the language is changing now. So we have to talk about how can we engage people. So the challenge is to start a conversation with the visitor and get them intrigued about coming here and have that kind of, you know, storytelling, what we call brand journalism where . . . And we're all — there's so many destinations in this game — trying to engage the visitor.

So yes, there are lots of challenges. What is great is that we have a great product. We have some of the best product in the world in certain areas, like certainly our hunt and fish. We are highly competitive in that area in the US. And as the minister pointed out, we've seen growth in — and this is very, very promising — we've seen growth in the sale of licences from the US market. So we're starting to see a bit of a resurgence there. So there's lots of opportunity but some challenges.

Mr. McCall: — I'm always taken with . . . I think a couple of years ago we talked about the targeted initiative around Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where they'd really like to, you know, get a fishing licence and come on up to northern Saskatchewan and chase the walleye or the whitetail or what have you. And it is, like I appreciate it's not the three-channel universe anymore; it's Netflix and Shomi and Lord knows.

So again the smarter initiatives, the more targeted initiatives like that, you know, good luck with those and keep trying to find those faster, smarter ways to get to the audience. Because when you connect them with the tremendous experiences we

have in this province, I think that engages all by itself.

But I don't know that I've got many more questions than that at the moment, Mr. Chair, but just, you know, we'll keep looking to you for continued good work. And I thank the minister and officials for sharing this time with us here this night.

The Chair: — Well thank you. Minister, do you have any comments before we take a recess here for changing your officials?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — No, just I would like to briefly thank the committee and the officials, Mary and Kathy, for your information. And I'll echo Mr. McCall's sentiments — your hard work and passion in this area, it's important to our province.

The Chair: — Okay. Seeing no further questions, we'll adjourn our consideration of the estimates for Tourism Saskatchewan. We'll recess for five minutes while you change officials.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

General Revenue Fund Parks, Culture and Sport Vote 27

Subvote (PC01)

The Chair: — Welcome back, everybody. We will now begin our consideration of vote 27, Parks, Culture and Sport, central management and services, subvote (PC01). Minister Makowsky, would you please introduce your officials and make your opening comments, and officials would you please remember when you're speaking to say your name for *Hansard*. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It's a pleasure to be here to answer any questions we have regarding the estimates for the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. I have a few introductions, a few opening comments if that's okay.

I have officials here obviously, beside me and behind me. Yes, Twyla MacDougall to my left, deputy minister; Scott Brown, ADM [assistant deputy minister], stewardship division; and Jennifer Johnson to my right, ADM, parks division; Darin Banadyga, executive director of sport, culture and recreation branch; Bob McEachern, executive director, parks management services; Leanne Thera, executive director, strategic and corporate services; Byron Davis, executive director, infrastructure and capital planning; Lynette Halvorsen, director of financial services.

Mr. Chair, through you, I'd like to thank you and all the committee members for your interest, your view, and I'm sure questions we will hopefully answer.

This government's prudent actions in the last few years have worked to see us through some of the worst of the downturn in non-renewable resource prices and now continues working forward with this budget to keep this progress on track, with the goal of returning to balance.

For our part, the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport will continue to operate programs in support of provincial parks, heritage, and the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. The ministry also will continue to fund and support our partners and stakeholders in the promotion of the value of arts, culture, sport, and recreation. We'll maintain this focus as we continue our ministry's part in transforming government's delivery of programs and core services in order to be more cost-effective and sustainable. In our case we also strive to be more inclusive, impactful, and continue our contribution to the cherished quality of life we have in our province.

Our government will continue and invest what's important to Saskatchewan people while controlling costs in order to work toward a balanced budget. We're confident the programs and services both supported and offered by the Ministry of PCS [Parks, Culture and Sport] are of significant value to Saskatchewan citizens and its tourists. We know this through feedback from ministry employees and because of record visitation levels, client feedback, and increased social media followers and engagement.

Mr. Chair, visitation at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum has been on the rise recently. Total visitation during the summer of '16 increased 30 per cent compared to the same period the year before. I am told the RSM [Royal Saskatchewan Museum] hosted 139,122 visitors in '16-17. In fact, that year visitation hit a 20-year high. It was 19 per cent higher than in '15-16 and 38 per cent higher than the 10-year average. As well the RSM has maintained that increase and I'm proud to say that the museum welcomed over 140,000 guests in '17-18. The increase in visitation is credited in large part to the launch of new exhibits, programs, popular science-based and family-friendly events, and important research performed by RSM scientists.

In 2017 the RSM launched a new exhibit titled *We Are All Treaty People*. The exhibit showcases the Chief Paskwa pictograph, a two-panel graphic drawing that depicts the only known historical indigenous perspective of Treaty 4. *We Are All Treaty People* exhibit also features a reproduction of the original handwritten version of Treaty 4. RSM staff consulted with elders and members of the Pasqua First Nation over the course of a few years until the exhibit was ready to launch. The exhibit has created interest and a visitation increase and has also brought back the questions and ideas of treaties back to the minds of people who visit.

Very soon another exhibit is set to open on May 17th, just days away here. The newest artisan exhibit, *Zoom*, will allow visitors to zoom in on nature using cutting-edge imaging systems. Nine interactive stations will show bugs, skulls, feathers in a world that you never imagined was around you. The exhibit will also highlight some of the internationally recognized research happening right at the RSM.

The RSM has also had three major infrastructure projects recently: a new elevator, a fully accessible washroom, and the installation of free Wi-Fi for an improved visitor experience.

As well we're gearing up for the summer season at the T.rex Discovery Centre in Eastend, Saskatchewan. It opens on the May long weekend and goes to September long weekend. And visitation at the T.rex Discovery Centre was also up 5 per cent

higher than '16-17.

Speaking of attendance, Mr. Speaker, provincial parks and rec sites have also hit attendance record recently with nearly 4 million visits in '16 and '17. Visitation to provincial parks has grown 32 per cent since 2007. Provincial parks are a popular destination each year and it's not hard to see why. Our parks are the perfect place for family and friends to come together, and their beauty and diversity showcase much of what makes Saskatchewan's quality of life so enviable.

Sask Parks works hard to provide high-quality and safe visitor experiences to park guests. In 2016, the ministry successfully piloted a life jacket loaner program in certain parks and these efforts aim to improve water safety and awareness for visitors.

In order to reduce barriers to participation and provide improved citizen service, last summer beach wheelchairs were introduced in provincial parks. Following a surge of positive feedback and demand, the initial purchase of five beach wheelchairs doubled to 10 before the end of the summer. Beach wheelchairs are free for park visitors and can be made available in any provincial park.

These services and fantastic programs and events like learn to camp, learn to fish will continue to be offered this summer. The 2018 season will also bring the addition of new and exciting offerings.

Sask Parks works to attract new markets to provincial parks in order to build up new campers and outdoor enthusiasts. This summer will see the launch of the pilot project, easy camp, announced just Friday. Camp-Easy is a fully equipped campsite, offering newcomers to the province, millennials, and families, where equipment is a barrier, the opportunity to go camping. Camp Easy will be offered at three campgrounds: Pike Lake, Echo Valley, and Buffalo Pound.

Further parks have requests for semi-permanent campsite rental shelters that enable users to have camping experiences and upgraded accommodation. Enter the yurt pilot project at Great Blue Heron, at that park, you'll have a reservable yurt that will save guests time and expensive purchasing, hauling, and setting up their own camp units, allowing them to spend more time visiting and enjoying the experience of nature. We also continue the option of fall camping and this will expand from six to nine campgrounds in '18.

It's important to note the government is ensuring provincial park facilities and infrastructure systems meet the growing needs of our park visitors. The ministry's capital program balances the need for park facility growth initiatives to meet changing visitor needs with the requirement to upgrade and renew existing park infrastructure systems.

This year's budget includes 9.5 million for capital projects, an increase of four and a half million or 88 per cent. This represents a return to base capital funding after two years of fiscal restraint. Returning to a nine and a half million base budget will allow parks to address safety risks and consumer experience as well as aim to get ahead of any infrastructure breakdowns.

It's important to note that park visitors welcome enhancements to provincial park facilities and infrastructure systems in order to make our parks one of the best places to experience and connect with nature. We can go through the list if so requested from . . . The proposed list of capital projects, if the members so wish to.

Despite the increases to base capital funding, there have been no changes to camping fees in '18-19. A Saskatchewan camping holiday remains affordable. In fact a three-night non-electric camping trip for a family of four is less expensive in Saskatchewan than anywhere else in the country.

'18-19, the Government of Saskatchewan will be investing 13.9 million in Saskatchewan's creative artists and arts organizations through our annual allocation to the Arts Board and Creative Saskatchewan. This investment is unchanged from the previous year. This funding is part of the government's commitment to all people of Saskatchewan to be fiscally responsible and continue to make our province a great place to live, work, and play.

The Ministry of PCS will provide 6.6 million to the Arts Board to keep our arts community strong, investing in the arts, artists, and arts organization. I'm sure many know the Arts Board has a long history of supporting Saskatchewan artists so they can engage with the larger art world. It's also celebrating its 70th anniversary this year and you can see a number of the works throughout the building, this building.

PCS will also invest 7.3 million in Creative Saskatchewan. This investment will help grow a creative economy and expand the commercialization of creative products. Creative is dedicated to growth and commercial viability of Saskatchewan creative industries including visual arts and craft, publishing, music and sound recording, live performance arts, screen-based media, and digital media. Creative facilitates the expansion of a business environment advantageous to the growth of the creative economy in Saskatchewan, the integral new employment invest and production opportunities in Saskatchewan.

Pleased that we're able to remain funding at the '17-18 levels for a number of our heritage institutions such as Wanuskewin, Western Development Museum. I said Wascana, I think and the Science Centre. The Heritage Foundation has maintained the same funding level as '17-18. The ministry's heritage conservation branch continues to support heritage property owners and community organizations throughout the province with expert advice on how to protect and conserve their heritage.

The province of Saskatchewan has announced that the city of Swift Current will host the Western Canada Summer Games in 2019 and is investing 1.5 million to bring the games to the province. In '18-19 the ministry will make the first of two \$750,000 payments. It's exciting. The 2019 Western Canada Summer Games will mark the fifth time Saskatchewan has been the host.

The province has been in a series of bilateral agreements over time with the federal government since 2003 which fund federal-provincial-territorial collaborative actions developed in support of the Canadian sport policy. Sport Canada recently

extended and provided additional funding to the Canada-Saskatchewan Bilateral Agreement to cover new investment for indigenous youth and support the '17 to 2022 agreement. It renews access to federal funding of 2.2 million for five years. The budget season increased funding of 22,000 attributes to federal flow-through funding for that bilateral agreement. Sask Sport will invest 6.6 million during the five-year agreement, more than matching the requirement of the agreement.

The purpose of the funding is to advance reconciliation with indigenous peoples by responding to the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] Calls to Action around sport and reconciliation, no. 87 through 91. The programs will increase sport opportunities for youth within Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal leadership will be strengthened, and coaching and officiating and community sport development will be enhanced through programming that introduces new sport skills to children.

[19:15]

This provincial budget and my ministry's budget sets the course of returning to balance for the approximately 1.17 million people who call this province home while investing in services, programs, and infrastructure that citizens care about. This budget stays on track with our fiscal plan to return the budget to balance in '19-20.

With that, I will turn it over to the Chair as we'd be happy to answer any questions that may be put to us by the committee. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you very much, Minister. Are there any questions? Mr. McCall.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Welcome, Mr. Minister, officials, to the consideration of these estimates. I guess right off the top, can the minister clear up, is there any preferred access to the yurt that has been put in place for the member from Carrot River Valley? Can the minister clear that up for the committee?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — There's certainly no preferred access, but you can call Great Blue Heron Provincial Park to reserve your yurt. I have not been in a yurt, but I was at the Camp-Easy opening and they have some nice tents that people can take advantage of. I believe a yurt is a much . . . a little more substantial building that folks can take advantage of. I believe it's been used in other jurisdictions across the country but also in other camping jurisdictions in North America, is my understanding. And so sort of a pilot project here in Saskatchewan, and we'll see how it goes. Certainly the member from Carrot River has equal chance as anybody else in Canada to order his time in one.

Mr. McCall: — Well I certainly look forward to the reports. In terms of . . . I was very interested to see in the Camp-Easy announcement, I guess, and I think it's a smart program in terms of, I think there was some learn-to-camp programs that have preceded this, especially with new Canadians that maybe don't come with the full basement of old camping gear to deploy. So, you know, hats off to whoever thought that one up

in terms of improving access to our beautiful park system. And I guess, can the minister clear up for committee, did you in fact chop your own wood? Or did you have an ADM prep the wood for you?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — There were several intact pieces that were not prepared, but I think . . . I couldn't resist. I took a swing at one of them and actually only did damage to the wood. And so yes, that worked okay. But yes, I appreciate the comments.

I think this is another project that was piloted through Sask Parks. I think, as you mentioned, there is . . . I guess it would appeal to somebody who hasn't camped before and maybe wants to try it out. You don't have to put the . . . I guess, fairly, it depends on how far you want to go with it, the capital output and the capital outlays, to see if camping is for you before making that, maybe making that investment.

So it's a pilot project: two sites in three provincial parks around the province. I don't believe those were available in the online booking segment, but you can call each of those parks to reserve one of those. I think it's obviously at Echo Valley where the announcement took place, and Buffalo Pound as well as Sask Landing were the three parks that you can take advantage of that new opportunity.

Mr. McCall: — Well thanks for that, Mr. Minister. Always glad to see a minister doing his own chopping. Good to see. I guess a third sort of question on this theme: is the learn to fish program still going on with the ministry? And if so, have you acquainted the member from Carrot River Valley with the terms of that program?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I can't speak for the member from Carrot River. I guess in this forum I can say, Mr. Bradshaw. We're in the committee stage. It's the third year of learn to fish. And again, particularly the folks that maybe are new to fishing — new to Canada or what have you, whatever your situation happens to be — get a chance to learn and get hooked, so to speak. This is the third year of that program, and that will continue in this camping season as well in select parks.

Mr. McCall: — Sounds like it'll really catch on. All right.

I guess to some more routine kind of questions, Mr. Minister, in terms of what is the total expenditure that we're considering here tonight on the part of the ministry. And what percentage of that is payroll?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — 65.2, but bear with us while we find the payroll.

Okay. I'll get Ms. MacDougall to . . . Sorry about that. It's fairly straightforward, but it's not quite as simple with the Commercial Revolving Fund in there. There is a subsidy included in that, so the percentages change a little. I'll let the accountant in our midst answer that.

Ms. MacDougall: — Hi, it's Twyla MacDougall. I'll try my best to answer your question, but it is in two phases. So the ministry has their general operating fund that comes out of the GRF [General Revenue Fund]. And the percentage of salary on

that is about 15 per cent of the 65.2 million, is of the budget there.

Now the Commercial Revolving Fund also has received some subsidy money that's identified in estimates, but it also brings in revenue. And so the total expense budget for all of Parks is just over \$28 million estimated. And of that, just about 15.6 million is salary dollars, so about 55 per cent, which makes sense because that's all of your front-line staff in all of the parks and recreation sites.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you for that. How many full-time equivalent positions does that entail? And how many of them are in scope, how many are out of scope?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. McCall, those FTE numbers, we include in the annual report. Again, with Ms. MacDougall's answer, I think government in general is moving away from the FTEs in terms of the full summary statements, similar to what is happening in other provincial jurisdictions. So we feel that reporting on those actual FTE usage in terms of the dollar amount is a better analysis or look. So those FTE numbers will be included in the annual reports and not part of the estimates.

Mr. McCall: — I guess I won't belabour the point about, you know, the taking them out of the estimate documents. I disagree with the government on this point and have certainly, you know, said as such in every estimates I've been part of to date.

[19:30]

And I particularly disagree, for a government that said it was going to be the most open and accountable and transparent government in the history of the province. But if this government thinks it's a great measure to take how many full-time equivalent employees are in a given ministry out of the estimate documents is somehow a step forward for transparency, I don't understand that. But you know, I don't think the minister is going to convince me of that here tonight.

So in terms of what the ministry has been targeted for, in terms of savings to be contributed around the \$70 million over two years, how is that going to be made up out of the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — All right. Yes, we've got that. To your previous comments, I appreciate your thoughts. The actuals will be publicly presented, rather than a budget, but in Public Accounts. Then we know what those numbers are. So again that's in a public forum that will be seen by all who wish to see.

So in terms of reductions for the salary target of 15 million, in the Ministry of PCS it will be 260,000. Twenty-five per cent will come from executive management . . . 25,000 from executive management, 40,000 from provincial parks programs, 160,000 from the Commercial Revolving Fund, 35,000 from operational support in the stewardship division.

Mr. McCall: — I thank the minister for the answer. Obviously the great majority of the workers at Parks, Culture and Sport and the associated entities would be in scope. A great majority of them, if not all of them, would be in the largest public service

unit of the SGEU. Can the minister update the committee in terms of what the situation is as regards their collective bargaining agreement?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Parks and Sport doesn't directly deal with the negotiation of any contracts. So that is handled through the Public Service Commission. Those questions might be best put to that ministry. They would know, have a more fulsome answer.

Mr. McCall: — So in terms of, again I don't think it's like wildly out of the blue to ask what the status is of the collective bargaining agreement that covers the majority of the workers for Parks, Culture and Sport. Is the minister sure that that's an answer better sought from Public Service Commission or is there an understanding as to what the status is for Parks, Culture and Sport?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Well again, Mr. McCall, the process is ongoing. The negotiation is under way from what I understand, but we don't participate in that directly in this ministry. And so I think I'd leave it at that. I believe that should . . . Whatever negotiations are happening should be done between the two sides and come up with agreement they feel is acceptable. We don't really have any . . . I think it's a long-standing process that we don't negotiate in public certainly and on the floor of the Assembly or in committee, so respect the process as it goes through what I'm sure is back and forth for both sides.

Mr. McCall: — As the minister and as the leadership of the ministry, I'm sure you plan for various contingencies in terms of different things that might happen in the workplace, in the ministry. You know, I can recall a different time when the essential services law that was eventually found to be unconstitutional had, you know, pretty much everyone in Parks, Culture and Sport declared essential and thereby, you know, taking them away from their right to strike, which was then in turn upheld by the constitution, by the Supreme Court. In terms of, I imagine this is something that the minister would have operational contact with. Have there been any plans made in terms of what happens if the public service unit of the SGEU goes out on strike, as to how that affects the Parks, Culture and Sport complement of workers?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks for the question. Yes, the ministry has, in general, continuity planning in case of some unexpected event — evacuations, emergency planning, operations — if something happens, if there's fire, flooding, etc. So those are part of the things you want to be prepared for. And so there is a continuity plan that the ministry has for changes or things that happen outside of normal operations.

Mr. McCall: — Thank the minister for that. In terms of the subvotes under consideration here tonight, under parks (PC12), a question I'd have for the minister in terms of the parks capital projects subitem under the allocations, has there been . . . What all is involved in that particular line item, and does that line item cover the sale or the privatization of any Parks assets in this fiscal year?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Just to clarify, Mr. McCall, are you looking at all of (PC12), just parks capital projects, all within

that vote?

Mr. McCall: — Sure. All of (PC12).

[19:45]

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So I'm told for vote (PC12), these are expenses for accounting rules. Of course we enter into lease agreements with . . . I think if I could sort of see where Mr. McCall is asking. We've done that for many years. Under many different governments, we've come into lease agreements for operations within parks, for a wide variety of services that folks are interested in, in opening up a business, for example, within a park. But again all the land stays with . . . Those are public assets that aren't sold.

Mr. McCall: — Well let me give the minister, for example, in terms of what happened with Chitek Lake last year, is there anything on that sort of scale going on in this year's budget that would be, you know, showing up in (PC12), or not? Or if it shows up somewhere else in the budget, that would be great to know as well, but thanks.

Ms. MacDougall: — I can try to tackle this. I think I know where you're heading, and it is a little bit more difficult because estimates are just the expense side. And when we talk about park assets, a lot of that activity that I think you're asking about is funnelled through the Commercial Revolving Fund. So for example, Chitek Lake was a commercial lease that was entered into last year with — now I might get it wrong — the Chitek Lake . . .

Ms. Johnson: — The resort village.

Ms. MacDougall: — Resort village of Chitek Lake. So we enter into long-term leases on some of our properties. But again it's not evident in the estimates. It would be evident if you looked at our Commercial Revolving Fund annual report. The activity is there.

Mr. McCall: — So are there any properties that are currently under the purview of Parks — writ large — where the status is changing and they're moving from being managed by the ministry into management by a private entity?

Ms. MacDougall: — So we had . . . Sorry. We had one change in ownership this past year. And what we're doing in '18-19 is we constantly review our rec sites to see if there is potential for somebody else to operate it more efficiently than government. But there are no plans to date for any further activity in '18-19.

Mr. McCall: — Thanks for that. So this is an ongoing thing. There's a big review that was done in 2013-14. What follows from that? Of the ones that were identified as a potential for moving the management model from the ministry to a private vendor, how many more would remain as part of the sites that were identified out of that review?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks for the question, Mr. McCall. So what you're referring to, 74 potential sites have the potential to be better utilized under another model. In this past year, 16 or 17 of those rec sites will be looked at. Before we do anything, of course, there is consultation with the community, hopefully

finding what's in the best interest of all involved. So again I believe there's 127 rec sites within the province of Saskatchewan, some with varying uses and potential for better usage. Some might be better used in a different manner. And so those will be looked at, and again consultation is important to that. And again best use for the people of the province of Saskatchewan is what we're looking at.

Mr. McCall: — The sort of baseline review that was conducted of the rec sites, has that been made public? Can the ministry point me to where I might find that in the public domain? Or if not, could that be made available to the committee?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Those documents are part of a budget program review and generally not public.

Mr. McCall: — So in terms of the number of rec sites that are under consideration for this year, could the minister restate that for the record?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So 16 or 17 is what is the thought there, and we'll see how far along we can get as we go through the review.

Mr. McCall: — Can the minister or officials describe what constitutes the criteria by which you assess a better model might be utilized as opposed to the ministry overseeing the 16 or 17 sites that you've referenced?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So, Mr. McCall, just in a sort of a general sense, I think we're looking at situations where we can enhance the experience available for park users, people who want to use recreational sites. And you know, I think you also look at the current utilization, if that area is being used to what it possibly could be. And of course based on that, if it is not being utilized, I guess the cost effectiveness of continuing to maintain a certain area.

So we've seen, I think you mentioned Chitek. I think that has been generally a positive experience for the local area, where their resort village took it over. My understanding, that had a good year last year, with lots of folks using it. They enhanced that experience for their people who enjoy that particular park, and like I said, that was one that was identified, and again, the resort village was able to take that over. Still public land, but that's gone well. So those are the things we've looked at.

And we've also, I should . . . we've done that but we've also enhanced certain rec sites throughout the province from the ministry. So I guess, what's again best usage and the ability for each rec site to have its best utilization and best customer experience.

[20:00]

Mr. McCall: — Can the minister state for the committee how many dollars in capital were put into Chitek Lake recreation site and the Shell Lake recreation site before they were handed over to the third party?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So the figures we have here, it was in the neighbourhood, in the last several years, in the neighbourhood of \$191,000. Electrical expansion and safety

upgrades, I think there was a safety component there as well, cost 132,000, and some small upgrades to the service centre in the neighbourhood of \$40,000.

Mr. McCall: — And that, is that Chitek Lake, not at Shell Lake, just to be clear for the record? Tell you what. The minister referenced earlier on the list of capital. If the minister could provide that to the committee in terms of what the list is, we'd appreciate that very much. If there's a list of the preventative maintenance list, if there's a list of that, that could be provided to the committee as well to save us time.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — For the upcoming year, Mr. McCall?

Mr. McCall: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes, we've got that. We can table that.

Mr. McCall: — That'd be great. Just a broader question on park preventative maintenance generally. What is the required . . . or where are we sitting at in terms of urgent need, and where are we sitting at in terms of the overall deficit?

Just to be very clear, we've got the minister's undertaking that he'll provide those lists of preventative maintenance and capital projects to the committee. That's correct?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — For '18-19.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So I think when we talk about infrastructure renewal for the ministry's base capital program, I think it's fair to say industry standards at 2 to 4 per cent of total asset replacement value should be allocated to try and manage the existing infrastructure. The ministry's using 2.6 per cent of the estimated 373 million value of the park asset replacement value, and I believe that was a 2009 valuation. So approximately 9.5 million is base funding for the renewal to keep pace with those existing park assets.

So there has been significant effort in the last several years to improve the overall condition of those park assets, partly to keep people interested in continuing to attend our provincial parks. And I think over 100 million over the last 10 years has been put into parks capital by this government.

And again we've seen substantial increases in park visitors over the last decade. Certainly the natural assets we have in our province are part of that, but I think some of the amenities we've been able to provide and also the safety aspect is certainly important for our park visitors. In certain parks we have thousands of people attending at any given weekend for example, and essentially become a small municipality. So we've made significant investments in safe drinking water, in sewage removal. You know, those sorts of amenities are important to parks visitors. So again, with that capital plan and that preventive maintenance, there's been certainly a lot of work done in our parks.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Moving on to regional parks and the expenditure that is the same from this

year to last, for regional parks generally what's the relationship between the ministry and the regional park sector?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So in terms of regional parks, Mr. McCall, there's several, many throughout the province. They are self-governed. It's part of our legislation in *The Parks Act*. But certainly we have a very good working relationship with SRPA [Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association]. We give \$523,000 as you can see in the documents here. They allocate that, the SRPA. Their board allocates that funding and certainly, I think, leverages different capital projects within each regional park.

So again working with those, the SRPA, their board, and also the grants . . . That money I think is, although down in recent years, certainly is a large bit more than they received certainly 10 years ago. And again we think they do good work and they're part of the suite of different activities and opportunities for people in the province to enjoy our great outdoors.

I know certainly we talked about the member from Carrot River. He lives very close to the regional park of the year, and I know he's very proud of that. And you know, several of them have amenities that people all across rural Saskatchewan and folks that visit certainly appreciate, I know: golf courses, swimming pools, play areas, and the such. So that money that the ministry's able to provide is some seed money for some good work and again good activities for people of the province to enjoy.

Mr. McCall: — In terms of the oversight relationship between the ministry and regional parks, I guess as relates to what's happening in Suffern Lake regional park, and I guess in terms of the volume of correspondence that I have been copied on, in terms of people that are concerned about the way that the regional park is being run, the ministry's involvement or lack thereof or, you know . . . The minister and officials are certainly familiar with the situation and the correspondence, the voluminous correspondence that's gone with it.

Could the minister or officials describe for the committee how they see what's happening at Suffern Lake, and what are the potential solutions? What do they hear from the people that are very . . . that are raising significant concerns about their, in some cases, the way that their nest egg was invested in properties? Can the minister describe the situation? What's happening, and is there a potential way to move forward here that satisfies the different parties?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes. Thanks. I appreciate the questions and we've got, certainly in our office as well, some correspondence coming from Suffern Lake Regional Park. Certainly we think the ongoing governance and the operations of those regional parks, as we mentioned earlier in my previous response, is . . . Certainly the jurisdiction is with the local park authorities and the participating municipalities. I think we'd like to see that hopefully, you know, work itself through their concerns at that level.

Some of the things we've done since we have heard from that where officials are certainly aware of it, and we're always looking at possible solutions for addressing the concerns out there. What we have done, Mr. McCall, is have had a general

survey, and that's available to all regional parks if they so wish to determine overall satisfaction with the regional park authority, and that's being done between the ministry and the SRPA and the Suffern Lake Regional Park Authority. So that work is ongoing, and of course, I think we've offered some mediation to help with that communication between the parties that have a dispute at the current time.

[20:15]

So my understanding of those is that they haven't, either party — some of the local cabin owners and the regional park authority, Suffern Lake Regional Park Authority — those have not been followed through with. And so I guess we'll continue to monitor the situation, but again, hopefully there is a way forward at the local level to have those disputes or the concern of certain cabin owners dealt with with the level of government that is in charge of that.

Mr. McCall: — Could the minister clarify . . . He'd stated that certain undertakings were not followed through on. What were those undertakings, and who's not following through on those undertakings?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Again the dispute resolution was offered by the ministry to try and mediate some of those, you know, sort of get the two sides, if you will, talking and try and come up with solution but those . . . I believe both parties declined that.

Mr. McCall: — So what now?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Hopefully, maybe the survey that I mentioned will show something that maybe can be done in terms of what those specific disputes are, and I think there's a fairly long list based on the correspondence I've seen.

So I guess based on those results, we continue to monitor the situation and continue to offer mediation in that certain area of the province. And hopefully those parties can come together to find a solution to those concerns that are happening at that local level. I think we have different levels of government that deal with those things and we'd want to see that happen at the local level.

I think there's a AGM [annual general meeting] coming up at Suffern Lake. The regional park authority will have that survey results released publicly at that point, and maybe from that point on there might be a road or a solution based on what's seen there.

Mr. McCall: — So the process is . . . Again if I'm misunderstanding this, please correct me. What is the date of the AGM at which the survey will be released?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So the summary of the results we believe, we think, we're fairly confident it will happen this month but we believe May the 20th.

Mr. McCall: — The summary of results or the survey itself? What is slated to be released?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — The summary of the results.

Mr. McCall: — So in terms of the survey itself, it's between the regional park association provincially, the ministry, and Suffern Lake Regional Park. That's correct?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — At this point yes, but the same type of survey will be available to other regional parks if they so are interested.

Mr. McCall: — So what will the survey accomplish that hasn't been to date?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Well hopefully the survey will show that there is representative feedback from the entire park, and all of the concerns might not be widespread among all the folks in the park within Suffern Lake. And there's some suggestions, I believe, or some of the questions that might yield some path forward as the process unfolds.

Mr. McCall: — So if this is to be a process that holds out some hope of pointing the way to a resolution, as with mediation . . . It's hard to mediate two parties that won't agree to mediation, you know, I think is one thing I'd infer from what the minister is saying.

In terms of the survey being conducted, who's conducting the survey, the terms of the survey? Is the minister aware of whether or not there's agreement between the parties as to the fair nature of the survey, of who's conducting the survey? Are the parties agreed upon that the folks conducting the survey are fair brokers in this circumstance? Or were there concerns registered about who's conducting the survey, and that diminishes the likelihood of this serving as a good path forward as a result? Is the minister aware of any of that?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So in terms of, I believe, just from memory, some of the correspondence was concerned that the survey process might be slanted or what have you. I can't remember the exact wording.

But the regional park association, the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association, they led the survey. The responses have been confidential. The ministry, I understand, it provides some . . . assisted in some of the questions to ensure it was neutral and fair. I understand that some individuals might be concerned with it. I'm not sure how we'll alleviate that completely. I think, again from some of the correspondence I've heard, there's some folks in that park that have some long-standing concerns about things that have happened in the recent past.

And so again, I think hopefully there may be a path forward here. And again, we don't have a direct stake or direct involvement. We'd help out whenever asked, but again, that level of government, the regional park association, they know best how to handle local concerns, I think, of that nature. So that will continue, and hopefully again, if asked, and if there's a chance to come up with a solution that all parties can deal with, we'd certainly aid and assist in that if we hear anything that's reasonable and able to alleviate concerns. Again, but as I said before, the SRPA is the lead on that.

Mr. McCall: — What is the cost of the survey?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — We don't have the exact number. We

think it is fairly low in terms of all the costs that are involved with government. But we'll have to get back to you on that.

Mr. McCall: — I'll await that information. Was there any consideration of bringing in someone, I don't know, from the mediations branch in Justice or somebody outside of the ministry?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — That is in fact the mediation I mentioned earlier. That was from Justice. They're experts in that area and I personally don't know exactly . . . I can't speak to that process, but that's what in fact was offered to the situation.

Mr. McCall: — Was there any thought given to bringing someone from outside of the ministry to conduct the survey?

[20:30]

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Again, Mr. McCall, we don't govern regional parks, but where possible we have been able to give hopefully some support. Again the SRPA, that'd be up to them if they wanted to go to an outside agency to get some sort of survey done. The cost would likely grow quite a bit from there though.

Mr. McCall: — So you're responsible for the Act that governs the regional parks. That's correct?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — We're responsible for the legislation. It goes through the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. But again, the governing of regional parks is done by each municipality and the association that corresponds with the park.

Mr. McCall: — So in this budget you're forwarding \$523,000 to the sector. That's correct?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes.

Mr. McCall: — Can the minister tell me, how is the board struck at the Suffern Lake Regional Park? Do you have an AGM where people vote and you establish the board as such? How does that board come into being?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So again, Mr. McCall, the regional park authorities are formed by adjacent municipalities around the park. So they ask for establishment of that at whatever point they want to form a regional park. Here in the legislation, part 3(2)(a), the representatives appointed by the municipalities, organizations apply for the establishment of regional parks.

So again, we don't have direct involvement in regional parks, but they have to have an annual AGM, I understand. And they appoint . . . Each municipality appoints members to those boards.

Mr. McCall: — So if I'm a ratepayer or a leaseholder in Suffern Lake Regional Park and I pay, you know, X dollars and I see my fees go up by 70 per cent in one year, what recourse do I have in terms of, I don't know, the principle of taxation should beget representation? What representation does that leaseholder have?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So my understanding, I've been told, is the regional park board is the one that would deal with those questions and concerns. I guess similarly if, you know, there was questions at a different level, you'd go to the people that set those rates: city council and the city of Regina, for example, or whoever that may be.

So again, those are municipal taxes and similar to any other levy on property owners. So that's what we believe is the process.

Mr. McCall: — So as a leaseholder, that's my recourse. Is the minister 100 per cent certain that these leaseholders have votes in those municipalities and in turn have accountability with the people setting their taxation levels?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So, Mr. McCall, you have to live within the municipality to vote. And I think in the case with some cabin owners, they live outside of that municipality or even in a different province, is what I understand. So their recourse is with the regional park authority board, I believe.

Mr. McCall: — But the vote doesn't necessarily attach to where they pay the lease. They don't have a vote for that board. Am I understanding that correctly?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — That's correct.

Mr. McCall: — How many individuals would be affected as such in the Suffern Lake Regional Park situation?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. McCall, we're not involved in that level of government. So we don't have that information, nor do we know.

Mr. McCall: — Is the ministry currently party to any legal actions arising from the situation at Suffern Lake Regional Park?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I'm told PCS is not involved in any legal action at this regional park.

Mr. McCall: — Well thank you for that, Mr. Minister. Moving on through to subvote (PC18), resource stewardship. In terms of . . . Pardon me. Just one last question outstanding around parks. There was a response provided by your predecessor to questions around what's happening in the Churchill, Otter Lake, Devil Lake, Missinipe, Grandmother's Bay area of the Churchill River.

And I guess what I'd ask the minister to think of is this: in terms of the discussion we'd had previously under Tourism Saskatchewan, one of the marquee areas of the province showcased by Tourism Saskatchewan in the campaign last year was right in the middle of the area that I'm talking about. It's around Mosquito Rapids. It's a beautiful part of the Churchill River system. It's an amazing part of creation.

[20:45]

There are questions that arise around the proper use of that territory, whether or not it's being overused in terms of there being a lack of washroom facilities, in terms of there being

firewood on hand, in terms of the general stewardship of the region. And it's popular for very good reason. It's, you know, some of the best whitewater paddling a person could find in the world. But the infrastructure isn't there to support that activity.

Now I know for a fact that the local communities have been calling for some kind of better approach for years now. And we discussed that last year in estimates, in terms of your predecessor. And the minister assured me that work was ongoing, that there was engagement with the community, and that it was definitely on the radar and was a priority for the ministry.

Can the minister or officials provide an update to the committee as to what has happened with that work? What has been done? What has been accomplished? And what better approach to the stewardship of this beautiful part of creation might be arrived at?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you for the question, Mr. McCall. So the Lac La Ronge park management plan, that is being updated. We've started the review process and with that we consult with the park advisory group. The park advisory group has consulted with stakeholders in communities such as the town of La Ronge, northern village of Air Ronge, Lac La Ronge Indian Band, La Ronge Métis Local 19, Lac La Ronge Cottage Owners' Association, Napatak, and Wadin Bay Resort, subdivisions, commercial fishers, recreation parks, and so.

These plans will guide management and the conservation of our parks, the path forward of that park to see what is in the best interests of that park. And so that is currently under way, and we will of course listen to what that management plan, that updating that is going to occur. And they will review, and then we will take that into consideration for any future infrastructure needs in the Lac la Ronge area.

Mr. McCall: — To clarify for the minister, the area is . . . certainly the Devil Lake campground, or the Missinipe campground of the Lac La Ronge Provincial Park are certainly part of the area that I'm referring to, but that's certainly not the whole of the area in question. So again in terms of Barker Lake, Otter Lake, up into Grandmother's Bay, which is obviously one of the fundamental communities of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, the community of Missinipe, these are the . . . This is what is involved right alongside or in the centre of what was under consideration last year, and what I'm asking the minister about this year.

So in that advisory process that the minister's talking about, is there any special recognition or focus being brought to bear on the territory that I'm talking about?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Well, Mr. McCall, we recognize that that area is certainly important. I haven't been up there personally myself in that area of the park, and I believe you mentioned maybe some areas outside the park as well. But certainly we'll continue to work with the local stakeholders on the park management plan and again the park advisory group. And certainly we'll listen to what they have to say in that area and, as resources allow, we can certainly look at what is needed in that area. And again I think our government's done some significant work on the capital side in our province in some of

our provincial parks.

Every year you can't get to every project you'd like to do, even with the substantial amount of dollars we've put towards that capital, as I mentioned. So again it's not always a case of, you know, this project is good and this is bad. There's a lot of good projects and a lot of good potential in many, many areas of our province and if . . . Again we'll listen to the local stakeholders and, as finances allow, there's I think some opportunities there, as you mentioned.

Mr. McCall: — I thank the minister for that. Noting the hour and noting how things are moving along here, and there being so many interesting things that the minister has oversight of and critical institutions for our province . . . I know that we'll have a conversation that will touch on the Heritage Foundation coming up, in terms of the legislation before the House.

I guess one particular question I'd like to ask the minister is around Creative Saskatchewan, and it's twofold. I guess the first question is in terms of the changes that were made around the terms of publishing grants. Creative Saskatchewan, as I understand it — and I thought it was a fine step forward — was to help commercialize all these great creative talents that we have here in the province of Saskatchewan. The change that was made to publishing grants seems to have been made over the express concern of folks that are in the industry. Like Creative Saskatchewan is to be there to work with folks in the industry. And in the case of this particular change, you know, it seems to be acting over the express concerns of the stakeholders. Does the minister have anything to say on the record as regards to that circumstance?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks for the question, Mr. McCall. So basically in my understanding of the publishing world is there's sort of three streams that someone would use to publish a book. There's traditional publishers. One of those some might be familiar that I understand is the U of R Press. There's what's considered somewhat hybrid publishers who provide services to people who want to bring forward a book that they have an idea for. And then there's self-publishers where you take on yourself . . . You want to publish a book and you want to, whatever it might be, you want to handle all of the printing, the marketing, the editing, etc., yourself.

And so the change that Creative Saskatchewan did, supported by their CEO and their board — they're certainly the experts in this field — my understanding is the change they made is the best sort of best practices across the industry across Canada. I believe Saskatchewan was the only jurisdiction in Canada, through its creative agency, that supported book publishers who accepted author contributions. So I think the idea that was explained to me that traditional publishers have the best chance, with the limited funds available, to commercialize books published in the province. I understand that that's sort of the best way to increase GDP [gross domestic product], people that work in the industry, is to help with the traditional publishers. The hybrid publishers, they'd use money from Creative Saskatchewan as well as from the authors themselves, and so they'd take on very little risk for any sort of project.

[21:00]

I think it's important to note that those that . . . anyone has availability to Creative Saskatchewan grants for their, again, for their marketing campaigns or their editing, etc. Anyone can, as long as you're not taking author dollars towards a project. So again, anyone who had a business model that happened to be a hybrid publisher, if, as long as they don't take that author, again thereby taking very little risk, is my understanding, they are still eligible for Creative Saskatchewan. They'd have to change I guess their business model a little bit, but again Creative thinks that this is the best way forward for the limited dollars available to that sector.

Mr. McCall: — If the minister could comment on, there's an article in the *Leader-Post* of April 19th, 2018, "Creative Saskatchewan changes terms of publishing grants." And just the following quote is from Brenda Niskala, executive director of SaskBooks, long, you know, great contributor to the industry in Saskatchewan, very well respected, great writer. But her assessment is that:

"It pretty much eliminates any of the new emerging publishers," . . . "It certainly eliminates all of the self-publishers, many of them are award-winning people like Parkland Publishing who have won the Tourism Award for many years."

Niskala called the substantial changes "harsh."

It goes on to say:

"Creative Saskatchewan has done so much good," . . . "They are our main funder as an association . . . We were just starting to see the industry start to flourish."

Again I'm sure the minister is familiar with the article. But someone with the expertise of a Brenda Niskala saying what's happening, or what the impact of this change will be, for an organization that its strength has been working co-operatively and productively with the sector, does that not give the minister cause for concern?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes, well I understand. I appreciate those comments. And I guess when there are changes or adjustments that, you know, there will have to be adjustments in the sector as well. Again I think from what I understand, Creative Saskatchewan, that they'll continue to work with SaskBooks to improve some of their long-term planning. I think the CEO of Creative has reached out to SaskBooks to, you know, see what can be done to help the groups that are impacted, to help them on their path. Hopefully, there's some engagement in that process. I understand that that is under way.

I guess it comes down to, again, with certainly limited dollars within that sector. Creative, I believe as it was explained to me, thinks this is the best way forward for the commercialization. That's their mandate — not to fund all books, but again the best that can again help with that commercialization and those jobs and GDP and those sorts of things.

It's not to say all projects aren't good books. I'm sure they all tell valuable stories. I was at the book awards and, you know, there was . . . I'm not sure the nature of all the funding that was available to all of those books and all those publishers but, you

know, I point to that some of the books . . . There's some aspects to the Arts Board that might help in that sector that maybe aren't on the commercial track.

And so again certainly there are changes and there are concerns and I appreciate that. But again Creative thought this was a reasonable direction, a reasonable way to go in the sector. And again they pointed to that Saskatchewan is the only place that still had this model with author-subsidized services and thought this was the best bang for the buck, so to speak. Again all publishers are able to access Creative funding, just not be able to have that aspect of author payments to those publishers. So again I think Creative is there to help minimize the risk or overcome some of the financial hurdles in commercializing projects in not only books but the other sectors we talk about in the creative area. But it's not there to take away all the risk.

Mr. McCall: — So I don't know how that, you know, that reach-out from Creative Saskatchewan's going to look. The CEO's on record saying that it's about best practices. From what the minister's saying it's more about, you know, scarce dollars and you've got to allocate them the best you can. The industry says that this is a harsh set of changes that will kill the stream that we've talked about here. You know, is that the idea of engagement with the sector, is to make a change and then respond to them after the fact when you've already placed their livelihoods in jeopardy? Is that the idea of engagement on the part of Creative Saskatchewan or of the minister?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I appreciate your comments. My understanding is, number one, Creative meets with the industry associations frequently. And the other aspect I would mention is that Creative Saskatchewan, part of their board — a good part of their board — is industry representatives and so they are experts in the field. They understand the industry best. They understand, I believe, what is the best practice right across Canada. All the other provinces have moved in this direction.

And so SaskBooks wasn't informed of the total decision until the decision was made. I understand that, but certainly from my understanding, that decision was made but Creative will continue to, you know, be engaged with them, help them in whatever aspect they can. But again, there's industry representatives on the Creative Saskatchewan board, and that board along with the CEO meets with those industry associations.

Mr. McCall: — Thank the minister for the answer. Creative Saskatchewan has oversight of the Saskatchewan sound stage. When the Minister for Central Services was discussing publicly the future of the sound stage, despite the future of the sound stage review and study that had been conducted by the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport and then finally came to light — I think it was June of 2016 — that urged that the efforts be redoubled in terms of using the sound stage for the anchor industry that it is for the film and television industry in the province.

When the Minister for Central Services was publicly discussing the future of the sound stage, what involvement was there of the Minister Responsible for Creative Saskatchewan that has oversight of the sound stage and arguably is there to try and make sure that this critical infrastructure is there for the success

of the film and television industry in the province? Among other initiatives, but what involvement was there of the minister in that question — or of Creative Saskatchewan — when those deliberations were being made about the future of the sound stage in the public?

[21:15]

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Well, Mr. Chair, certainly we talk about the sound stage. You mention it's a dedicated facility for film and TV and the digital on-screen area. So I know the sound stage has been used in . . . I've been to a couple of events there myself right after I was first named minister. The arts now event occurred there. I went to an event during Film Week that took place there. I believe Fashion Week has occurred there as well and that was the second time it's been there just recently I believe. Right? But maybe the third time as well. I'm not offended that I wasn't invited to Fashion Week based on my sartorial skills. And I know there's educational events that happen there. There's a film camp that happens there each summer.

Again the Ministry of Central Services is the owner of the facility, and we have accommodation costs that we provide to the industry. That's in one of the estimates, the votes in one of the estimates as accommodation services. And so they are sort of the landlord and they decide.

And of course we point to all the activity that's happened in the last year. Certainly the couple of feature films that also happened in the space. *SuperGrid* I understand there was . . . was done by a couple of Saskatchewan guys, the director Lowell Dean — he's been involved in the *WolfCop* 1 and 2 as well — as well as Hugh Patterson. Again they're two good Saskatchewan guys. I had a chance to talk to them as well. And then *A.R.C.H.I.E. 2* was also a feature film that was going on, and they used that facility as well as other shooting locations within the province of Saskatchewan. So those are some of the highlights that we talk about.

And of course we'd like to see it used more often as well, and so we'll continue to engage with Creative and look for opportunities there whenever they may present themselves. And certainly the primary purpose . . . And we've talked, or you mentioned rather, sorry, the consultations that have been done with people within the sector, that they talked about keeping it primarily for the use of film and that sector — television production as well — and of course continue to be able to use that facility to its full extent in the needs of the arts and culture community.

And certainly we mentioned, not the part that PCS provides accommodation costs for, but the second level where Creative Saskatchewan is located, as well as other industry associations who have moved over there. So again we'd like to see that facility used more and we'll continue to explore those options.

Mr. McCall: — Just one very last point of clarification, Mr. Minister. So Creative Saskatchewan is more in the role of property manager. It's not the landlord; it doesn't own the property. That's Central Services.

Does Creative Saskatchewan or the minister have . . . What sort

of opportunities do they have to make the case that you shouldn't be selling off the sound stage to — I don't know — do something else as opposed to the purpose-built facility that you've got there and trying to bolster that? What opportunities does the minister have to make the case that that should continue on? Or does the landlord have to ask him?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I think it's safe to say Creative Saskatchewan continue to look at any opportunity. They're certainly the experts in the sector. I'd point to a creative — I don't know how recently ago, not that long ago — change, the rate card, to hopefully find more usage for smaller entities or groups to be able to film commercials, for example.

So those are some of the things that — again, the experts in the field — Creative might be able to come up with. That's one of them. I also know there are three new grant programs within Creative Saskatchewan: the web-based, the digital, and the micro-budget. Those are things that I think Creative Saskatchewan is looking at to find a niche, a sort of a sweet spot, I think Greg Magirescu talked about finding, for film within the province.

The large-budget Hollywood features, although they do occur in Saskatchewan — maybe not to the extent that they hadn't in the past — but looking for those opportunities, I think, Creative has their ear to the ground. They have the knowledge in the sector to be able to hopefully attract a little more usage for the sound stage, keeping in mind that there are, you know, in the last several years have been large changes in the film and television sector. You touched on them earlier. Digital content seems to be the wave of the future, and again they're looking at opportunities that may come up within the future.

We understand Creative has worked hard on that area. We know the Motion Picture Industry Association, we've heard from them and we understand from them that the sound stage is important to that sector. We've heard that as well. So we again look at options to hopefully increase the usage of that purposeful-built facility that the taxpayers pay the accommodation costs for industry. So that work will continue.

Mr. McCall: — I thank the minister and officials for the time that we've spent here tonight discussing the estimates for Parks, Culture and Sport, and the associated entities there too. I would thank the Chair, thank my committee colleagues for letting us slide past the agreed upon hour of consideration for these estimates. I appreciate it very much.

And with that, Mr. Chair, I'd urge you to do what you need to do to move us on to consideration of the two pieces of legislation remaining on the agenda here this evening.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes, I appreciate the committee's time and their indulgence. There's a few questions in terms of regional parks that were . . . We did our best to answer them, keeping in mind that a different level of government is charged with handling those happenings within regional parks. So some of the answers took a little longer than we liked, but I appreciate the indulgence of the committee to try and get those answers right.

The Chair: — Well thank you, ministers and committee.

Seeing no further questions, we'll adjourn our consideration of the estimates for the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport. And we'll take a five-minute recess here before moving on.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

Bill No. 107 — *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*

Clause 1

The Chair: — Okay. Well welcome back everybody. We will now be considering Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*. We'll begin our consideration of clause 1, short title. Minister Makowsky, do you want to introduce your officials and make your opening comments please.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes, sure. Thanks, Mr. Chair. We're considering Bill No. 107, as you mentioned, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2018*. From the estimates, Twyla MacDougall and Scott Brown are still here. New to the committee is John Snell, manager of exhibits at the RSM; Major Jason Quilliam, chief of protocol and secretary of the Saskatchewan Honours Advisory Council are here today, as well as Carlos Germann. He is from the heritage branch of the ministry. And they would join us here this evening.

And I will keep my initial comments very brief. The purpose of this amendment is to establish the Tyrannosaurus rex as the official fossil emblem of the province. We have other official emblems. This adds to the list. Fossils are a tremendous value to science, scientists exploring the history of life on earth, a great source of fascination for our residents and tourists, and fossil discoveries are a source of pride for many Saskatchewan communities. Designating a provincial fossil would help bring attention and recognition throughout the province, as well as nationally and internationally, to these aspects of Saskatchewan's natural heritage.

So I would also note that there was a contest where the naming of the official provincial fossil took place. There were several options considered. Ultimately obviously Scotty the T. rex was selected. Other provinces and states have provincial fossils, but Saskatchewan's the first province or state with the T. rex.

So at this point, I'm pleased to try to answer any questions any committee members may have.

The Chair: — Well thank you, Minister. Are there any questions? Mr. McCall.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, Mr. Minister, officials. Those who have joined us, welcome. Just a quick question. How many ballots were cast in the great fossil discernment election?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — There were 14,208 votes cast.

Mr. McCall: — 14,208?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Yes.

Mr. McCall: — Minister, you've lulled me into a state of almost sort of unpreparedness. That was a very prompt answer and I thank you for it.

A Member: — We had this one.

Mr. McCall: — In terms of just so we can put this to rest — and this is largely for my colleague, the member from Carrot River — how many were cast for Scotty, and how many were cast for Big Bert?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — We have the numbers here. Scotty received 4,923 votes, 35 per cent of the votes cast. And Big Bert total . . . They're broken out into in-person votes as well as online votes. Big Bert got 3,326.

Mr. McCall: — So Big Bert was pretty close but no provincial emblem status. Just for my own curiosity, so Scotty got 4,000-odd. How many did Mo get?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — So total online and in-person votes for Mo . . . Now I listened to your second reading speech. I think you were trying to make a point around this but I'm not quite sure. But the vote was 1,379.

Mr. McCall: — I thank the minister for the information. I'm glad to know the ballots had not been destroyed and you're able to relate this to us here this evening. Certainly I would hope my colleague from Carrot River sleeps easier knowing that there was a clear decision, that he won't have to demand a recount. I won't preclude his attempts at amendments coming up here.

With that, Mr. Minister, as a kid who had a, you know, shoebox full of fossils under my bed, was a long-time attendee at the RSM, I think this is great. So I'm glad to see it. Long may Scotty roar. And with that, Mr. Chair, we have no further questions from the opposition.

[21:45]

The Chair: — Well, thank you. And seeing no more questions, clause 1, short title. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 and 3 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*.

I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*, without amendment.

Mr. Nerlien has moved. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

Bill No. 90 — *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017*

Clause 1

The Chair: — We'll now be considering Bill No. 90, *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017*. We'll begin our consideration of clause 1, short title. Minister Makowsky, you haven't changed any officials. Do you have any comments on this?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Just briefly introduce what the bill is about here this evening. There's two proposed amendments. The first will implement an operational separation between the review board and the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation in order to avoid any perception of conflict of interest between the two entities. The review board serves as an impartial tribunal that conducts public hearings to consider formal public objections to proposed designations of heritage property, the repeal of existing designations, and the alteration or demolition of designated property. It then makes non-binding recommendations to the designating authority.

The second proposed amendment will provide an efficient and cost-effective process for amending existing Provincial Heritage Property designations, such as alterations to designation boundaries or name changes. Unfortunately at present, even the simplest changes can only be made by repealing the entire designation and redesignating the property with the desired changes, which can be a lengthy and potentially costly process for those involved.

So those are the two amendments being proposed to Bill 90 this evening. I turn it over to the Chair to see if there is any questions.

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister. Are there any questions? Mr. McCall.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, again, Minister, officials. In terms of this particular piece of legislation, the changes in and of themselves would seem to be fairly common sense, fairly straightforward, would seem to improve the operations of the Act and of the foundation.

I guess the main sort of question, or comment and then a question, is that it takes place against the backdrop of cuts to the foundation in the budget preceding and before that as well. It's commented on in passing by people like Bill Waiser, the historian who literally wrote Saskatchewan's history, in terms of a cause for concern around the importance we place on heritage, and on our history generally, but built history and through the relationship of the Heritage Foundation to the preservation that built history

And it also comes alongside an editorial in and op-ed piece written by Dr. Merle Massie who's, of course, a former Heritage Foundation director from Biggar. Dr. Massie raises a number of concerns in her opinion editorial piece that is available in the November 1st, 2017 edition of the *Regina Leader-Post*. It's entitled "Province needs to prove that heritage

matters. Government must back preservation, conservation, writes Dr. Merle Massie.” The letter itself goes through the different cuts that have been made, but it makes a number of fairly pointed criticisms around the quote:

The current government has allowed its middle and upper management to run roughshod over the SHF, trying to dictate what by law should be an arm’s-length foundation as a personal fiefdom.

After years of growing tension, the government saw fit to quietly let all of the old board members go, and appoint an all-new board, no doubt hoping that they would be better at bowing. But the new board members are just as smart — smarter — than the old. They have formally cut all ties with the ministry, and have hired their own manager and their own grants and finance officer. The board and the staff are dedicated to serving the province of Saskatchewan, as is their mandate.

Mr. Minister, what does the . . . What is your reaction to that letter? Is it an accurate depiction of what has gone on with the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation? If not, are there any corrections you’d like to state for the record? And how does the legislation before us tonight relate to the concerns contained in this letter from Dr. Massie?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. McCall. In terms of the first part of your comments or question, certainly we know that the Heritage Foundation does good work. There’s no limit to the amount, I’m sure, of dollars that could be spent, but the amount of money, certainly in the last few years it’s been down. When there was more revenue to the government, there was certainly an uplift in the amount of grant money available to the Heritage Foundation. In the last few years under some tighter revenue circumstances, the amount has sort of levelled off at historic levels. I certainly understand that more money would be able to leverage more projects and that, but again decisions are certainly needed in order to deal with what we talked about earlier — the ability for the Government of Saskatchewan to get back to a balanced budget, which is a priority for our government. Some tougher decisions have to be made.

So in regard to the article that you mentioned from, I believe it’s the *Leader-Post* here, yes, *Regina Leader-Post*, certainly I appreciate the time served by the doctor on the Heritage Foundation. I think in terms of the board structure at that time, I believe most of the members at a certain point were due for . . . They had termed out. At the same time, the board Chair was asked to continue but that person declined the offer to continue serving, so as a result there was a new board and that was sort of ongoing operations.

I’m not sure what Dr. Massie is referring to in terms of a personal fiefdom. I think there were some changes made at the Heritage Foundation, included in the bill under consideration, that was asked for by the foundation in terms of the conflict of interest piece. But again they’ve wanted to operate, for some time I understand, as a sort of an arm’s-length entity, allowing them to possibly lever some outside funding from whoever it might be — the feds or the private sector, etc. And so that has led to them . . . The previous minister allowed that situation to occur where they are considered an arm’s-length entity. I

believe they have used somebody to help them administer some of the granting and the administrative part as well. So they get the funding from the GRF, and any other monies they may be able to leverage. And so that’s again, the article again, everybody is . . . I know they referenced some of the money that was clawed back, and I appreciate that. That was referenced in the article as well, and again there is choices in government that we have to make with the precious dollars we have available to us.

Mr. McCall: — I have no further questions at this time, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Well thank you, and seeing no further questions, clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 13 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017*.

I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 90, *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment. Mr. Olauson has moved. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This concludes our business this evening. Minister, do you have any closing comments?

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — I’d just like to thank the committee for the questions and for officials being here to aid in providing answers. Thank you.

The Chair: — Mr. McCall, have you got any closing comments?

Mr. McCall: — I’m just thankful, generally, Mr. Chair, to everybody. So thanks.

The Chair: — Okay. Well thank you, everybody, for being here and missing the hockey game and watching this on television. This concludes our business this evening. Anyway, I would ask a member to move that we adjourn. Mr. Nerlien has moved that we adjourn. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This committee stands adjourned to the call of the Chair.

[The committee adjourned at 22:00.]