

**Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
Capital Budget—Dept. of Health and Social Services
Long Term Care Beds**

September 26, 2017

... **MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to start by asking a general question that relates to page 5, which is the multi-year plan for each of the departments.

Although the Minister has an ambitious plan to create new long-term care beds in each region as well as healthcare facilities, I notice that the investment goes down next year and the year after. I'm wondering how it's going to be possible to build all these additional beds when the investment is going down. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, on page 5 what you see is basically a summary of previous years' projects that carry over in to multiple years that have already been approved by this Assembly, plus proposed projects for this fiscal year or 2018 fiscal year and the results of those projects moving forward.

It certainly doesn't include everything in our capital plan. For instance, if you look in this capital plan, in Inuvik you'll see one sum of money that we plan to use for our planning study this year because we have to do some permafrost tests, we have to do some site determination that will help us determine the cost of that facility, at which point we would be coming forward for a capital ask to get the full cost of construction included into the capital plan and then it would carry for subsequent years.

This basically just shows what was approved by this Assembly in previous years and what's proposed this year and their carryover costs. It does not include any additional costs related to future projects, or some of the costs for things like the construction of Inuvik, because, frankly, we don't have those costs at this point. We need to do our work that the money is allocated for in 2018-2019 to help us actually build the cost and understand what that project is going to entail. This only shows approved and hopefully approved items and their carryovers.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Green. Mrs. Green. Ms. Green, sorry.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mrs. Chair. The question I have then relating to page 5: does that spending represent what's already been assigned to the hospital? Is that what that money is about? Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that is included in there, as well as the costs of the projects that will be approved as a result of the 2018-2019 budget.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. I'd like to turn now to page 36. The extended care facility, this is the one in the current facility expanded to 18 beds. When is this project going to be completed, please?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the plan for the extended care beds is that, once the new hospital is completed and the services are moved into the new building and the old hospital is vacated, we will then work with the property manager of that building, who will do the capital asset retrofits on that building to meet our specs and our needs.

Our costs on this would be structures and beds and other medical equipment, which is a capital purchase, but not necessarily the cost of doing the changes on that building. That should start, design is expected to start, in early 2018. Construction is expected in late 2019 after they move out of there, and we're hoping to be in there by --

MR. HEATH: Eighteen months.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: -- eighteen months after we start the retrofit of that building to meet the extended care needs.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you very much for outlining that schedule. What I don't see here is the 72 beds that have been discussed for long-term care that I understand will also be part of the old hospital. Could the Minister elaborate on when the equivalent work will be done for the long-term care beds as there are for the extended care? Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the scenario for those 72 long-term care beds is pretty much exactly the same as the scenario for the extended-care beds. We have to wait until they get out of the old hospital, then the property manager will do the retrofits on the building to meet the needs that we have identified for 72 long-term care beds, which will be funded through O and M. I think it's best to maybe go to Mr. Elkin for just a little bit more specifics on the technicalities around that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Elkin.

MR. ELKIN: Thank you. The negotiations with the property manager are such that we will end up paying any of the equipment costs, but all the costs of the 72 beds will be paid through O and M, so you won't see it in the capital plan, and as the Minister said, it'll be roughly 18 to 24 months after opening day of the new hospital.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. That tells me why we don't see the 72 beds in here. Now, a number of years ago Avens did some site preparation to build a building that they called the pavilion, which was going to include long-term care beds, so how does that work into this plan? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we had a number of discussions with Avens on the 48 beds, but in light of the fact that we have to accommodate or come up with a plan to address 258 beds across the Northwest Territories, not just in Yellowknife, and we wanted to be able to roll those out across the Territories as a whole as opposed to putting the 200 beds in Yellowknife immediately and then having a significant deficit across the Territories, we have decided to move forward with a plan, or we're proposing to move forward with a plan, that puts the 72 long-term care beds in Yellowknife with designing starting in January 2018, construction in fall 2019, and we're hoping those beds are available as soon as April 21.

We're looking at 48 long-term care beds in Hay River for the South Slave. We're hoping to get that in the capital plan for this capital plan. Planning is going to begin immediately; design, March 2018. We're hoping to see construction in 2019 and beds available as soon as 2020. The money that's in here is the planning money for 48 long-term care beds in Inuvik. What we're hoping is to see that work done, permafrost studies, all those types of things done. Capital plan submission March 2018 for the 2019-2020 budget; designing 2019; construction 2020. Beds available as soon as April 2023.

Then we are looking at 48 long-term care beds, which is a net new 28 to replace, to move into as part of a long-term care facility and health centre. Feasibility study in October 2017. Capital plan submission, March 2019. Planning could start as soon as 2020. Design 2021, construction 2022. Beds available by 2026.

Then, the last in line, because we had dealt with Yellowknife first with the 72 beds, is 48 beds in the Avens compound. The project is required to meet the remaining 2026 bed requirements for the Northwest Territories.

Recognizing that we are moving forward with Avens later in the plan as opposed to the front of the plan, we have put money into this budget to construct a laundry facility and a kitchen facility to help them be sustainable over that time. Also, they approached us indicating that the cost of that site that they have blasted is proven to be difficult, and we have agreed to cover their cost, \$1.1 million for that site, so that they are no longer financially on the hook.

In discussions with Avens, it has become clear that they are certainly interested in exploring that site for other purposes, other needs. Avens is still part of the big plan.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Ms. Green?

MS. GREEN: I will read Hansard to just make sure that I know exactly the dates that things are happening on. That was a whackload of information, but that is all good.

At the bigger level, was there any consideration given to putting the pavilion, what they call the pavilion, 48 beds, online first and retrofitting the hospital second instead of the other way around? Would that have been more cost effective and put the beds online sooner? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. There are 20 seconds left to

answer this, and I will remind everyone that we do have the details to consider after the general comments. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I will do my best in 20 seconds, but with no guarantees. Bottom line is, we are trying to get value for money here, and trying to get as many beds in place as quickly as we can, and the opportunity of utilizing the old Stanton Building presented a significant opportunity to get a large number of beds in a very affordable manner, and increased a number of beds available to residents in the Northwest Territories.

The Avens, we did give them some planning money. The costs came in significantly higher than we anticipated, which was problematic, and was not going to move us necessarily much faster along on getting beds. We get more beds with the hospital than we did with Avens in a quicker time, and more affordable.