

Yellowknife South Constituency Meeting
Minutes – May 17, 2021

1. Welcome

- Thanks for dialling in.
- Last two weeks have been honestly the busiest two weeks I have had since the election. I actually think that is good, that folks were thinking to connect with us if they were struggling with systems or concerns that they come to us. This riding is big on finding their own path forwards.
- Called this meeting because Session is next week. Have check-ins, short session, and supplementary appropriations when needed.
- Isn't usually a heavy session, it is only 7 days. The bigger thing for having this meeting, and the impacts on this riding with closure of NJ and impacted with the cases at the high school, so we pushed to have this meeting set. Wanted to make ourselves available for you to ask questions and comments at the end.

2. Update

- a. Just had a youth meeting last week, was good to hear their views, looking at the possibility of talking directly with classes
- b. Status of Flood – what is the GNWT doing?
 - has been a lot happening over the last few months, MACA leads the response for GNWT. Bottom up structure, starts within the community to declare state of emergency, they all have their own EMOs. They then feed in to the EMO of MACA.
 - The communities have said don't send more food. They need specific supplies.
 - GNWT said they would match donations to the United Way, which then can doll out to the communities will allow communities to spend it where it is needed.
 - Checked in with MLA Thompson, he is volunteering on the front lines daily, the response has been when the need is there we have provided.
 - There have been some people in Fort Simpson that didn't want to evacuate, as it has turned out the waters raised higher than the have. Some of those people have now decided to evacuate.
 - A lot happening on the ground, it is just not being communicated. Move to make more communications a priority so that people can stop worrying.
 - There is still some expectation of flooding. Just not the same level of impact
 - EMO in MACA is in contact with Safety and Rangers, and Joint Task Force North, last resource. Not because they don't want their help, but it does impose a different structure, the communities have their way of doing it with their EMO
- c. Vaccine Clinics in school (see your handouts from Green)
 - There are pfizer vaccines clinics, the schools will be having them on Wednesday, there will also be mobile clinics, there will be some evening clinics so parents can be with them, date has being sent, we'll share that info and I am sure media will pick it up.
 - We are currently at 70% in Yellowknife for first dose, and 60% for full, Youth will be at a first vaccination rate for over 65% for Yellowknife, Dettah and N'dilo, bonus for this past week is the surge in the vaccine uptake.

- Emerging Wisely, document about how we evolve through the pandemic, but you will see that we are past a bunch of that, so the OCPHO has been revamping that document, it was a bit delayed in the last couple of weeks, because of the NJ.
 - Emerging Stronger, the socio economic document, run out of EIA with the Premier as it deals with the whole of government. There is drafts already circulating, within the GNWT, and certain stakeholders, YKDFN, other indigenous governments, and municipalities.
 - A lot of challenges before the pandemic, so we are even more pressed to find solutions, challenges are only felt more keenly, put mental health at the top of the priorities, and the difference of socio economic status, such as access to the internet. Not so much as a response to new challenges, but how we are going to move forward.
- d. Just started contract negotiations with NWTTA
- e. What the Yellowknife South office has been busy with:
- Helping folks wade through all the information during the NJ Outbreak
 - First line of communication, Sarah and I have been working hard with folks, if you are not understanding what HSS and Public Health is saying, feel free to message us.
 - Continuing to help individuals with personal concerns with the GNWT like Medical Travel, Human Resources, Mental Health access, Justice issues, or business concerns.
 - Meeting with the City of Yellowknife to discuss zoning by-laws, day shelter, tourism centre.
 - School Board meetings.
 - Helping people with government paperwork, whether with their immigration documents, notarising documents, or just helping them with the forms they need to fill out.
- f. Session starts next week and live stream will be shared on FB for those who would like to watch. Can also watch on Northwest Tel, YouTube, and the Legislative Assembly website. To go as scheduled, on the 27th. There was some uncertainty on that because of the outbreak, and there is no community spread, and no known cases outside of the NJ Outbreak. The measures that were put in place helped elevate that. Although it has been a tough couple of weeks, and what we did worked. And because of this Session will happen.
- We are just finalising dates on financing, in June this year. It is a lot of talking at computers and a lot of questions, and people were very responsive, we can do them in June so that way it can have a better impact for budget planning and financing, more influence on the other departments from those budget dialogues. There will be some public session for different interest areas and how you might get involved.
- g. Status of Women, all FTPs have been hosting presentations with respect to our responses on MMIWG, NWT turn this week, MLA Semler, and she is one of the family liaisons, status of women's council and native women's society, and impacts and experiences here in the north. Can check to see if it is accessible to the public, and if it is we can share that link.
- h. Art strategy coming out, film strategy coming out – you have strategies coming out but no money to go with them. Maybe we can't fund all of them but we can fund some of

them. Having a plan on how we want to spend the money is not a bad idea. But the view of why make a plan that you can't fund in the first place.

- i. Started work on a new agriculture strategy. Largely South Slave driven, but there are some YK South folks involved.
- j. BDIC is pretty busy. Do a monthly meeting with them as the Minister of responsible. They are working on some interesting stuff. They have done strategic plan, their corporate plan, new business plan, a lot happening over there, for the economy. Exciting for residents.

3. Open to hear from Constituents – questions & concerns

- How will the GNWT balance the loss of revenue from a mass exodus of residents (have heard more whispers)
 - There is a dollar value transfer from the Federal government in to maintain equitable level of services to provinces, formula funding provides that. But then the GNWT needs to incur the costs to provide the services. One issue with residents with leaving is that residents contribute as employees, volunteers, consumers; the general economy of the north is aided by having a wide participation of people in a community, vibrant community, keeping a look at numbers. I have heard rumours, keeping an eye on residents, but I am also hearing that some people are looking to come here because of our health care. We will keep a look at it.
 - We are still experiencing higher expenditures, and little revenues. We had a huge deficit before COVID. Will be cautiously optimistic, we need to examine how we do govt budget and spending, which may mean shuffling how we spend it. We need government renewal; you need to look at what works where. It is underway. Procurement, what are we doing that the dollars that we are doing to spend here are staying here.
- COVID Communications
 - 4 more cases – we get the same amount of information that you do.
 - Only because not everyone sees it in the same sources, some follow GNWT, some our Facebook page or media like cabin.
 - All of the things we had in place to stop the spread, but we were impacted in our ridding, my kids were contacts, but we have had rules in place to prevent transmission, but kids from every school winds up with all the other kids. The cases that are being found are the residual. Probably found with that second round of tests. This is why we had to go back as there would have been a handful of asymptomatic carriers. These cases were probably expected, not to minimise what people have been going through, the big picture overall did pretty well considering the circumstances.

4. Wrap up – thank you. Regular spiel on you can continue to contact our office....

- We will be knocking on your door again this summer
- It was such a positive thing to check in. Probably starting June – July
- Looking at doing a July meeting outdoors so we won't have to speak at screens.

- I do have travel that I need to do within the territory, owe the Sahtu and South Slave. All of cabinet is going to have to make a trip to south slave to get eyes on what we need to do with response to the relief. I need to continue to travel in the territory is with respect to procurement review, always been a topic that has come up in the meetings in the last year, and we get. A lot of inquiries in the offices, with ideas. The public process has wrapped up, people submitted things in writing, and the panel is creating a report next month. But as of course when this unfolded, with the territory, also means that we will probably require an aboriginal procurement policy. Some outreach, with modern treaty holder governments, and others, and looking to do that in a more formal fashion, ITI and finance, and now for more discussion directly with me and them. Public government and indigenous government policy.

- Human resources perspective, from constituents, HR questions seem to pretty popular. Good segue to remind everyone how we run the office. Both she and I check the NT Assembly, Facebook, Gmail. Sometimes it is Sarah talking to them, me to talking to you, but when it comes for one of my portfolios, where the information from an MLA comes to me... process... when it comes back to me, nothing goes out without me approving it. If I need to respond to an email to myself, I tend to not edit it. I do it for two reasons; no one in this ridding should get less access to a minister's office than anyone else. Also importantly, keeping my ministers hat on I have the most effective way of helping. We keep a firm line on that. If someone needs advocacy help on that, so we get a surrogate MLA.

- Where I was going was with the HR Living Well Together, training piece for HR that has put out. It is Mandatory training.. I was at first hesitant that people are online. If we use teams it would take a long time to train everyone. Online everyone can do it right away. Encourage teams to work together to do the training. Learning partners... not right term, but you have a learning teammate. I started doing it with my senior advisor, and it is available to the public <https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/services/diversity-and-inclusion/living-well-together>

- Constituent – Cool for kids at age 12 to get vaccinated. I see this being problematic, legally speaking. How does it affect the cohort under 12 that is unable to be vaccinated? They would have to do 14 days. Will we see a reworking of our travel restrictions?
 - I am surprised that we went 49 minutes before this happened. I've got two kids under 12, and family down south. Haven't been out since January 2020. Yes things are changing, I just don't know when. Active clinical trials with kids under 12, Sarah keeping on top of the science end of it. HSS has not been tooting their own horn. First to do 12 and under. Lots of ample access to vaccines, and early access for the 12-18 cohorts. When the vaccines are medically approved for under 12s, I think we will get the early access. We have many families with high risk in the North.
 - Canada manages the vaccines as an Asset... we're hoping that the last two times are the same with the 12.
 - Half the question – other half reworking of travel restrictions. Slight changes to that one cohort. Doesn't change anything for those of us with under 12s. I've seen the socio economic emerge stronger doc, but not the wisely, for the medical. Sense of where the OCPHO is planning to go with it, but it's not mine

to guess at or to guess to what it is going to say. I know that they are conscious of the fact, that we want to give a carrot to those that have vaccinated, it's a reward because it reduces risk levels, but what may or may not be able to be done to families with children.. I just don't know. I am aware of it, others are aware of it. We raise the issue. People can ask publicly in the house, I suspect, it doesn't mean that we don't have those conversations in cabinet.

- Constituent - I know Alberta is doing cohort year, like 2009, I don't know what other jurisdictions. People are aware, political answer. If we get information we will put it out publicly. There are individual exceptions being made for some people. This outbreak could provide additional data, for the risk. No transmission outside of the school.
 - We had similar questions on the adults for access. Like Yellowknife when we had to wait for communities. OCPHO, has said that it was approved for 12 and up. Part of the balance is vaccine availability. Early days, if you have particular circumstances, of transmission or impacts, and call your doc or public health, do not hesitate to contact them, they are making rules to work for the general population, but can talk to see to exemptions. If in doubt call PH and your doctor and let them make the decision medically.
- I would like to end with – please don't hesitate to ever get in contact with Sarah and I. Email, Facebook, @ntassembly, host of options. Don't hesitate. If we can't answer, we will find where we can send you to get more info. Comments, observations, feedback. Always happy to have it.