



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature  
Fifth Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Community Development

Department of Culture and Community Services  
Consideration of Main Estimates

Wednesday, February 22, 2012  
6:30 p.m.

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**Legislative Assembly of Alberta  
The 27th Legislature  
Fifth Session**

**Standing Committee on Community Development**

Jablonski, Mary Anne, Red Deer-North (PC), Chair  
Chase, Harry B., Calgary-Varsity (AL), Deputy Chair

Amery, Moe, Calgary-East (PC)  
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL)  
Boutilier, Guy C., Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (W)  
Calahasen, Pearl, Lesser Slave Lake (PC)  
Forsyth, Heather, Calgary-Fish Creek (W)\*  
Goudreau, Hector G., Dunvegan-Central Peace (PC)  
Groeneveld, George, Highwood (PC)  
Lindsay, Fred, Stony Plain (PC)  
Snelgrove, Lloyd, Vermilion-Lloydminster (Ind)  
Taylor, Dave, Calgary-Currie (AB)  
Vandermeer, Tony, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (PC)

\* substitution for Guy Boutilier

**Department of Culture and Community Services Participant**

Hon. Heather Klimchuk      Minister

**Also in Attendance**

Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (ND)

**Support Staff**

W.J. David McNeil	Clerk
Shannon Dean	Senior Parliamentary Counsel/ Director of House Services
Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Law Clerk/Director of Interparliamentary Relations
Giovana Bianchi	Committee Clerk
Corinne Dacyshyn	Committee Clerk
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services
Melanie Friesacher	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Philip Massolin	Committee Research Co-ordinator
Stephanie LeBlanc	Legal Research Officer
Rachel Stein	Research Officer
Liz Sim	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 22, 2012

[Mrs. Jablonski in the chair]

**Department of Culture and Community Services  
Consideration of Main Estimates**

**The Chair:** Welcome, everyone. My name is Mary Anne Jablonski, and I'm the chair of the Standing Committee on Community Development. Note that the committee has under consideration the estimates of the Department of Culture and Community Services for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013.

I'd like to remind all members that the microphones are operated by *Hansard*, so don't touch them. *Hansard* will take care of that for us. Please don't leave BlackBerry's on the table as they can interfere with audio equipment.

Prior to going around the table for introductions, I'll ask the minister to introduce her staff at the table as only members and ministers may address the committee.

Note for the record that pursuant to Standing Order 56(2.1) and (2.3) Mrs. Heather Forsyth will substitute for Mr. Guy Boutilier.

Let's start our introductions.

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. Welcome, all. I have just realized that I'm the vice-chair of this committee. I look forward to this first go-round for me. I guess it's the second for this committee. Harry Chase, Calgary-Varsity.

**Mr. Taylor:** Dave Taylor, Calgary-Currie.

**Mr. Vandermeer:** Tony Vandermeer, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

**Mr. Amery:** Moe Amery, Calgary-East.

**Ms Calahasen:** Pearl Calahasen, Lesser Slave Lake.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I'm Heather Klimchuk, Minister of Culture and Community Services. This is Barry Day, my deputy minister; Pam Arnston, my CFO; and Jeffrey Anderson.

**Ms Notley:** Rachel Notley, Edmonton-Strathcona.

**Ms Blakeman:** Good evening. My name is Laurie Blakeman, and I'd like to welcome each and every one of you to my fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre.

**Mr. Lindsay:** Good evening. Fred Lindsay, Stony Plain.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** George Groeneveld, Highwood.

**The Chair:** I'll go into the process review. Government Motion 6 and Standing Order 59.01(4) prescribe the sequence as follows: the minister or the member of the Executive Council acting on the minister's behalf may make opening comments not to exceed 10 minutes; for the hour that follows, members of the Official Opposition and the minister or the member of the Executive Council acting on the minister's behalf may speak; for the next 20 minutes the members of the third party, if any, and the minister or the member of the Executive Council acting on the minister's behalf may speak; for the next 20 minutes the members of the fourth party, if any, and the minister or the member of the Executive Council acting on the minister's behalf may speak, the fourth party being the ND and the third party the Wildrose; for the next 20 minutes the members of any other party represented in the Assembly or any independent members, if any, and the minister or

the member of Executive Council acting on the minister's behalf may speak; and any member may speak thereafter.

Committee members, ministers, and other members who are not committee members may participate.

Department officials and members' staff may be present but may not address the committee.

Members may speak more than once; however, speaking time is limited to 10 minutes at a time.

A minister and a member may combine their time for a total of 20 minutes. Members are asked to advise the chair at the beginning of their speech if they plan to combine their time with the minister's time.

Three hours have been scheduled to consider the estimates of the Department of Culture and Community Services. If the debate is exhausted prior to three hours, the department's estimates are deemed to have been considered for the time allotted in the schedule and we will adjourn; otherwise, we will adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

Points of order will be dealt with as they arise, and the clock will continue to run.

The vote on the estimates is deferred until consideration of all department estimates has concluded and will occur in Committee of Supply on March 13, 2012.

At this time I would invite the Minister of the Department of Culture and Community Services to begin remarks.

Thank you.

**Ms Blakeman:** Madam Chair, could we ask for the introduction of the final two members here?

**The Chair:** Certainly. Would you like to introduce yourselves?

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Thank you. I'm pleased to be in Edmonton-Centre, the beautiful constituency of Ms Blakeman. I'm Heather Forsyth, Calgary-Fish Creek, who lives in her riding.

**Mr. Goudreau:** Hector Goudreau, MLA, Dunvegan-Central Peace.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Okay. We can proceed.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you very much. I'm very pleased to be here along with my staff tonight to review the 2012-13 Alberta Culture and Community Services budget estimates.

As you know, every day across this province thousands of dedicated Albertans are at work in our communities, and while their tasks differ, their efforts are directed towards the achievement of a common goal: to build safe, welcoming, and inclusive communities where every citizen has the opportunity to express, to share, and to sustain the uniqueness of their heritage and their history, communities where local, social, and cultural needs are identified and programs and services are in place to ensure those needs are addressed, communities where talented artists and performers can develop and grow and where the creativity and innovation of Albertans comes to life upon the stage and screen. With Budget 2012 my ministry is renewing its partnership with our province's cultural community and all Albertans to ensure our nonprofit, voluntary, and multicultural organizations, historic places, artists, and creative industries continue to flourish.

Budget 2012-13 demonstrates the responsible, balanced approach the Alberta government has taken in dealing with the challenges of a global economy still in recovery. Through Budget 2012 we'll also recognize the immense contributions of those thousands of Albertans in our cultural community who are working to enhance the quality of life for all citizens.

We also recognize the growing contribution of Alberta culture to our province's economic well-being. In 2008 arts- and culture-related industries were responsible for almost 3 per cent of Alberta's gross domestic product, amounting to \$7.81 billion. The economic footprint of the arts and cultural sector is much larger when you consider the direct economic effects. It is estimated that for each dollar of real GDP produced by sector industries in Canada, there is an additional \$0.84 produced in related economic activity. Our continued investment in our cultural industries, the arts and heritage community, and the nonprofit, voluntary sector will result in economic, social, and cultural returns.

For 2012-13 the total budget for Culture and Community Services is \$231 million. This budget includes a 3 per cent increase in operational funding, to \$174 million. While the overall budget reflects a net reduction of \$10.7 million as compared to the '11-12 forecast, this reduction is primarily due to the completion of one-time capital funding commitments and is not related to the operating budget. The \$4.4 million in additional dollars allocated will allow us to address staffing obligations and services at historic sites and museums as well as higher costs for maintaining our IT infrastructure. With this increase we can ensure that existing services and grant programs administered by Culture and Community Services are maintained.

Our nonprofit, voluntary sector continues to deliver vital community-based programs, programs tailored to the specific needs of the community. We are seeing innovation and creativity within the sector in maintaining and sustaining services. Through the integration of operations with other nonprofits and the development of partnerships with the corporate sector these grassroots organizations are achieving incredible results. Because of their efforts, Albertans have access to programs and services valued at approximately \$9 billion annually. These are efforts that we will continue to support by maintaining service and grant program funding at last year's levels.

Budget 2012 provides \$95 million in funding to our nonprofit, voluntary sector in support of these efforts. The funding allocation includes \$38 million for the community facility enhancement program and approximately \$25 million for the equally successful community initiatives program, programs that continue to benefit communities throughout the province.

We have seen the generosity of Albertans through their support of their favourite nonprofit and charitable organizations, and as a government we will continue to support and encourage the spirit of giving in our province. That would be through grant funding for the community spirit program, which has been maintained at \$15.5 million, with program administration costs moved to a central administration budget.

Along with funding support, my ministry is also maintaining valuable programs and services that help nonprofit and volunteer agencies do their work better. This includes the very popular board development program and the annual Vitalize conference. Beyond fiscal support we want to be there for nonprofits by providing tools that will help them achieve long-term sustainability for their organization and the important services they provide to Albertans.

**6:40**

We are similarly committed to supporting the growing success of our arts and cultural industries. One need only look at the success of the annual Alberta Arts Days, this year being held September 28 to 30, to see the talent and incredible enthusiasm of Albertans in support of the arts across the province in communities large and small.

Budget 2012 allocates \$58 million for the arts and cultural industries, which includes \$27.9 million in support for artists and

arts organizations through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. Every year the AFA funds approximately 70 festivals and supports more than 200 schools in bringing artists into the classroom.

Our investment in and support of the development of Alberta talent is paying big returns as we see continued growth in our film, television, and digital media industries. Alberta filmmakers, technicians, and performers are capturing the attention and admiration of audiences and industry leaders around the world. The tally of Oscar and Emmy wins and nominations continues to grow as our industry competes with confidence against the very best in North America and beyond.

In support of this growing segment of our provincial economy Budget 2012 provides nearly \$19.8 million in funding through the Alberta multimedia development fund. Recent changes in how these dollars are allocated will make Alberta an even more competitive and an attractive place for screen-based productions.

In a changing media world our investment will also help to support the work of our digital media sector – our book and magazine publishers and sound recording industries – to ensure that Alberta stories continue to be told and that the voice of this province is heard and showcased now and into the future.

As we look to the future, we also ensure that we share the history of this great province. Programs and services that help tell the stories and create awareness of Alberta's heritage will receive \$52 million in funding. Of this, \$8.7 million has been allocated to the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, which provides support to the Glenbow Museum, the Alberta Museums Association, provincial heritage organizations, and the Government House Foundation. These dollars include investment in heritage preservation through such successful initiatives as the municipal heritage partnership program and funding support to owners of protected historic places so that we can safeguard these sentinels of our past.

They also include support to Alberta's network of 19 museums and historic sites across the province and the Provincial Archives of Alberta, including additional dollars to ensure that interpretive staff can continue to share the stories of Alberta, past and present, with the almost 900,000 visitors annually. With this investment we will continue to offer heritage programming that meets curriculum obligations so that as Alberta students prepare for the journey ahead, they will know the path that as a province we have travelled so far.

As the world economy continues to rebuild following one of the most severe downturns in history, Alberta remains well positioned to face challenges and to seize the opportunities of today and tomorrow. Through prudent, thoughtful planning we're able to maintain funding and service levels. By also increasing efficiencies through strategic investment in our IT infrastructure, we're able to streamline our grant programs and assure that Albertans have access to the up-to-date information they need. We continue to maintain the high quality of service provided by our public service while meeting the obligations of negotiated agreements.

By listening to Albertans, we have gained an understanding of the needs and aspirations of our cultural partners. We've also learned that the success of our cultural community has and always will be a product of those dedicated organizations and individuals working within each segment of the community. As government our role is to foster, to encourage, and to support that work through programs and services that enable us to achieve, alongside our cultural partners, the outcomes that Albertans expect. With Budget 2012 we continue to fulfill that role. Moving forward, we'll continue to work with our stakeholders to build a secure and sustainable cultural future.

During the Alberta Culture Forum 2012, to be held in Red Deer on February 24 and 25, we'll facilitate discussion among community and policy leaders in the broad cultural sector and the private sector. The opportunity for broader public input will be available online in the weeks following the forum for approximately a month.

My ministry will focus on innovation, creativity, and the power of partnerships in building a strong, sustainable future for our cultural community for the benefit of Alberta families, visitors, and investors.

Thank you. I look forward to all of your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Minister.

We now have Ms Blakeman. Ms Blakeman, would you like to take your full 10 minutes, or did you want to go back and forth with the minister for 20 minutes?

**Ms Blakeman:** I think we can both keep our questions and answers fairly brief, so we'll go back and forth.

**The Chair:** Thank you. You may go ahead.

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much. I'll start out by thanking the staff for coming down tonight. We appreciate that. I know you work hard for the artists and for the nonprofit sector in Alberta, and I appreciate your work very much. It's the sector I came from and I expect to go back to. So keep it in good shape for me, will you?

**Ms Calahasen:** You're leaving?

**Ms Blakeman:** No. But some day. Not so fast there, Pearl. Not so fast.

I do note on page 36 of the capital plan that Culture and Community Services is recognized, although it's recognized for providing community facilities that are central to maintaining a culturally vibrant province, and there's a tip of the hat to the museums, historical sites, rec centres, and buildings utilized by not-for-profits to enhance community life. So we made it into the capital plan, which is just great.

Now, I have to put on the record – and I know that the minister and, certainly, the staff are well aware of this, but for people that are following us in print through *Hansard* or listening to this online, I have to point out that this ministry and Service Alberta were the two ministries that took the biggest cuts when the government decided to tighten its belt, and this ministry has never recovered the funding level that it had in 2009. It's a long way from it, considering that from 1989 to 2006 – I'm looking at former Minister Goudreau, when we did achieve a funding bump under his ministership – there had essentially been no increase there, not even recognizing inflation.

As one of the arts organizations that I am regularly in contact with pointed out essentially they are currently operating at 60 per cent of what the 1992 funding dollars were, not a stunning Oscar for this province in supporting through financial means this sector, which I really think is the backbone of culture and creativity in the province. I recognize that this could be a tough sell for the minister in dealing with her colleagues; nonetheless, I encourage her to continue, to bring this back. I think it's a good argument to bring this ministry back to the funding levels that we experienced in 2009.

There is no reason not to be doing that, particularly when I can see fairly substantial increases happening in a number of other ministries. So I would expect to see this one restored, since it paid the highest price. At this point I think it would take about a 20 per

cent increase for those organizations to actually be able to operate back at a 2009 level. That's not a 20 per cent increase in the whole budget here, but that's what it's like to try and operate one of these organizations. I was there for 17 years, longer than I have been here. They deserve all the credit for managing to produce what they are able to produce.

I want to go through a couple of areas here and give you some questions to react to. We're in the second year of a three-year rolling budget cycle. Is that right, CFO? Yes. She's smiling at me. Okay. I'm wondering if there are any plans to have this budget increase. That's question 1.

Question 2. Has the ministry integrated the effects of cuts or limitations to auxiliary grants or funding opportunities? For example, I don't think we've had an increase in opportunities to raise funds through casinos or bingos, and I don't think that amount of money is increasing. It's likely decreasing for these organizations. So where they used to have alternative forms to pull in more money to operate by, those have either stagnated or dropped off. I'd like to know how that's being included in what you're looking at in your budget going forward.

6:50

The third piece of this that I'd like to know. Last year I had a lot of very public set-tos with the previous minister about mid-season cuts to programs that really affected individual artists. In particular, there were three programs – let me get the titles right – the artists and education program, the postsecondary institutions program, and the municipal affiliate program. I'm not quite sure how to put that one. It was based on place. Actually, almost all of these are based on where the art was taking place. Each time I had to get up in the House and ask the minister why artists were being discriminated against based on where they were actually producing it.

The artists and education program was supposedly cut and then restored as any group that had an affiliation with a municipality was cut and then restored. Finally, any group that was affiliated with universities or colleges was cut and then restored. I'd like to know what has happened to those programs. Are they still there? Are they still there with the same level of funding? Please expand on that.

I will pass it over to you.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you very much. First, I just want to address your initial comments about the funding level. Certainly, when I defended my budget and the ask that I wanted with Treasury Board and my colleagues, it was very important to me that the funding level be maintained from last year's budget, which was something that I worked very hard on, also realizing the challenges with the funding level, exactly what you have alluded to, and the challenges that have happened in the past and what we need to do to fix it in the future. That's something that I intend to work on and look forward to, especially in the area of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, that had already started some excellent work in looking at the challenges that individual artists face and funding some of the challenges there. So we are looking at that as we speak.

I just want to agree with you on some of the things that we need to look back at. I think, too, that the conversation we're having with all of the stakeholders out there will be very important so that we can all be on the same page.

With respect to your comment about the casinos and bingos I guess the challenge is that we all know there are many groups out there forming, and we also know that with more groups forming, whether they're nonprofit groups or friends-of groups, there are

more asks for casinos and bingos. I'm looking at what the current groups have. I think they get almost 18 months or something. We know that's a challenge with fundraising, and I'm definitely aware of that concern. That has been brought to my attention.

With respect to your comments about the three, the artists and education and the postsecondary are both through Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and, I guess, neither were cut or reduced. Whatever happened last year with the former minister, I'm not going to deal with, but moving forward, mid-season cuts, to me, are not the right way to solve problems. Certainly, that will not be happening. I just want to assure you that it's about the respect I have for the individuals that are out there doing the good work that they need to do.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Just so that I'm clear, those three programs still exist? Those groups are all being funded, and none of them had a cut?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Correct.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Good. Thank you.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Except your last one, the municipal . . .

**Ms Blakeman:** It was groups that were affiliated with municipalities.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. If you could get me information on that after, I'd be happy to address that.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, I think the final decision of that go-round was that they were going to require any group that was under a municipal umbrella to form a not-for-profit society and get out from under the umbrella of the municipality, or they'd quit funding them. As far as I know, that's what happened, but you would be able to check that in your department somewhere.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Sure.

**Ms Blakeman:** Somebody is twitching back there, I betcha.

Okay. Touring. Once upon a time we toured a lot. We took our product – our stories, our dance, and Brian Webb at the Catalyst Theatre and the Citadel on Wheels – and lots of different touring quests had lots of different touring opportunities both inside the province and out. As far as I can tell, touring has completely disappeared. Can you comment on that? Is that true? Is there any possibility that it would be returned?

I guess, linking to that, last year I asked about priority initiatives, and here when I look on page 16 of the business plan, I'm seeing some of the same priorities but in a slightly different version, and I'm wondering. I raised a lot of questions previously, from 2009 to 2011, about the corporate initiatives, which is one of your line items. It's 1.7. That budget continued to go up and up pretty substantially. I think that before '10-11 it actually went up by 65 per cent, and I kept asking what the heck this was. The response I got was that it had something to do with Service Alberta no longer providing administration and IT, so it came back to the department to have to pay for this. Once again, that budget has gone up, not by a heck of a lot, \$288,000, but it's still gone up. I'd like to know what this is, and what the previous outcomes were from this corporate initiatives particular line item.

I'll leave those two questions.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. Thank you. Just with respect to your comments about touring, you know, when I visited the Rosebud Theatre in southern Alberta, we had that exact conversation about the challenges of touring and how expensive it is to tour but how

worthy it is to get out into the community, to go to parts of Alberta that people don't have a chance to see.

At our forum on culture this weekend I hope that some of those things come out, that we can have a conversation about touring and the costs and the risks that companies will take to put their resources into touring or to stay put. Now, that's something that I would like to have a further conversation on because, of course, they all have to make decisions about what they can do with the funds that they have.

**Ms Blakeman:** I'm sorry. I just don't understand that answer. There used to be touring money in the budget. My question to you was: are you going to restore the touring money? I got a response back that you're going to ask them, again, at some sort of a forum how they're going to divide the little bit of money they've got left, and it's their choice as to whether they tour or stay. So you are not committed to looking for additional funding into the ministry to support touring.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** No. I'll explain what I meant. My apologies. The touring part of it certainly has – I guess that when you look at what AFA does, there is a component in AFA where touring is part of that. It's approximately \$300,000. In the past it supported artists and their touring plans. That's something that artists will still be able to apply for through the AFA.

Then I'll deal with the other question. You know, you made the comment earlier about Service Alberta and these two ministries and, certainly, challenges we've had. Being in this ministry, I'm certainly aware of the corporate strategy for IT. Part of the challenge is that many departments were not all on what's called the GOA domain. We have started the work of getting departments on. The Department of Culture and Community Services is half on, half off. We're half on the GOA domain, which means that some of the things work with GOA domain; the other part is the iDomain, on which we have to run all the services to support Albertans in all the many things across Alberta. That's where you're seeing that money from because we have to keep supporting the IT costs. It is my intent to make sure that we become fully on the GOA domain moving forward when those funds become available. That's something that I am working on.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Well, then, how does this advantage the not-for-profit volunteer-driven groups and the cultural and heritage and museum sector? I mean, there's a consistent raise every year of more money going into this and not necessarily going into any of the other sectors that this ministry is actually about. Where's the payoff?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, to me, I guess, we know that iDomains are more expensive to maintain than when you're on the whole GOA domain, so you want to make sure those funds can go to better purposes than being used to maintain a system that we have to keep on our own. So I agree with you. I mean, those are funds that could be better used for other purposes.

7:00

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Let's hope we get there.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you.

**Ms Blakeman:** All right. Let's talk about this Culture Forum. I have to say that I'm frustrated with this. I've been the critic for this portfolio for 15 years, and over the last six or seven, I would say, there has been nothing, but every single year there has been some other navel-gazing exercise that has happened here. We had

a new blueprint; we had – I’m losing track of all of them – a vision. There was something else that happened. Now we have the Culture Forum. Honestly, Minister, what new do you think you’re going to get from bringing all those groups together, telling them they get exactly the same amount of money or possibly less? What new is coming out of this other than you get a chance to hear it? What is the point for them, who just keep coming together over and over and over again to tell you, the minister, to tell Dr. Anderson and the AFA what we need in our cultural sector? What is the point?

I mean, this is a weekend of time where they could actually be producing art. They keep telling – I’m going to put in quotes – you people what they need, and you all go: that’s great; thanks. Then a year later we’re involved in another process where you all want to hear yet again about how they are going to use their meagre money, whether they’re going to split it into touring or not. It’s very frustrating. Do you not keep notes? I mean, truly, why do you have to keep doing this to this sector? What new things do you think you’re going to get that you didn’t get when there was a new blueprint or vision or whatever the heck it was you did last year? I can’t remember the name of the one last year. Please tell me.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I appreciate your question. I know that for the Culture Forum all MLAs were asked to nominate two delegates, a youth and someone else from their communities, people who are on the ground running, doing all the work that I indicated earlier across Alberta.

I know that when I looked at this forum, my concern was precisely that. Are we going to have a forum and just rehash the same old same old? What’s unique about this forum is the fact that we’re going to have all the sectors together. Normally when you have the ANSVI or the Vitalize conference, that’s just the nonprofit, volunteer sector, which is great, but when I look at what we’ve envisioned here, it’s everyone. It’s heritage. It’s multicultural. It’s profit, nonvoluntary. It’s creative. It’s everything the arts encompasses.

When I look at having individuals in a room, the approximately 400 people that will be attending, it’s about the conversations that are going to take place. I look at the sustainability of this whole sector. I look at the volunteer burnout that’s happening across Alberta, the support that they provide in many areas, for example in the human services department. We’re looking at the power of partnerships. You know, Alberta is full of incredible creative minds. We have all of these things. We need to tell our story better and get on with it. We all know why we stay in Alberta. So part of it is having the conversation with everyone from all the sectors together.

My perception is that we’ve had individual gatherings, but we’ve not had anything like this where it’s everyone, the corporate sector as well, if I missed that. It’s everyone. Whether you’re from the Crownsnest Pass or from, you know, Grande Prairie, it’s about individuals coming together and having those conversations. That’s why I hope that a number of you have sent people from your constituencies because I think it’s going to be a very important dialogue.

After that, there’s going to be an online part of it. Till March 28 all Albertans will be able to contribute to the online dialogue. We’ll be posting what has happened fairly soon after. Because sometimes you have these events and you don’t hear what’s really happened, it’s our intent to post the information as soon as we can so that we keep the dialogue going.

I’m looking at it as a positive, constructive day and a half, and I think it’s going to be a great conversation.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Well, you know, from someone that’s actually done outcome-based budgeting, I am having a hard time believing that you are going to get any different outcome from 2012 culture than you got from any of the other exercises that have been run by various parts of this department over the last 10 years.

You are going to hear that this sector needs operating money. They need money without strings attached to it. They need money to support their venues, which in many places are crumbling and disgraceful. That’s what you’re going to hear from them. They have no capacity left; they have no surge capacity left. They are losing their institutional memory because the senior people in all of the sectors cannot afford to work there, and I’m one of them because I don’t have a pension from working in that sector because they could never afford to pay me enough to either add in the pension or to pay me enough that I could do my own pension. So eventually our best managers leave because they can’t afford to stay in this sector. The government has been told this over and over and over again, and I really find it quite insulting to ask people to come together and tell it to you yet again.

I’m sure that my frustration is burning off the mike. My apologies to *Hansard*. I wish that you would spend the effort on digging money out of the Treasury Board rather than making my people all come back together to tell you the same thing. I don’t see how you’re going to get a different answer than you got the last five times.

I’m also increasingly suspicious. You have now mentioned partnership four times. “Partnership” is beginning to get the same taint on it that this government has given to “choice” and “flexibility”. They’re all alarm words because the light starts flashing, going uh-oh to anybody that’s working in this sector and is going to be a recipient of the government’s partnership, options, choice, or flexibility. What are you looking for in these partnerships? Aren’t you going to get the obvious, which is everybody going: yeah, we’re all poor; we’re all looking for money, so let’s all look for things together. I mean, honestly, what is it that you expect to get out of this? What is this drive towards the new key word of “partnership”?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I guess just a couple of comments about when you use the word “partnership” or “collaboration” or all of those buzzwords that are out there. When I look at the word “partnership,” I also want to look at – we know that in Alberta there are some groups and organizations that have champions that work with them and can raise them another notch. Correct? There are also groups out there that have trouble finding a champion or don’t know how to solve a problem or work with a group. I think it’s really important to have those conversations.

You look at Big Brothers Big Sisters amalgamating with Boys & Girls Clubs. To me that’s a perfect partnership. Those are the kinds of things that I’m looking for in our community, not to say to someone: you must do that. No. It’s about having the conversation so people can go: “Let’s just look at things differently. What if we did something together versus doing it on our own?” So I’m looking at it not as an empty word but as a positive, empowering conversation. That’s what I’m looking at when I say partnership, not the tokenism or the empty stuff as some have viewed partnerships in the past.

We know that the nonprofit, voluntary sector does amazing partnerships, and they know better often on many issues. We can learn from that as a government, and I believe that. I know that the AFA – we have a partnership grant. We encourage people to do that if they so desire.

I think the conversation we're going to have – and your comment about outcomes, you know: what are we trying to achieve? To me that's the whole challenge when you look at anything, especially in this portfolio. There's so much need, and there are so many asks. How do you determine the best outcome? What are we trying to achieve? Those are some of the things that I'll be looking at as well and then helping people find champions because we know that for some groups it's easy to find a champion; for other groups it's not, because it's not the flavour of the day, not the group that has the most cachet or whatever.

That's how I view the word "partnership."

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. On page 16 of your business plan under your priority initiatives I note that you're going to "work with stakeholders to further develop a strategic plan and policy objectives to address the future direction of creative industries in Alberta." Now, this is almost a word-for-word repeat of the priority initiative from last year except that last year you were going to develop a strategic plan and policy objectives. Now you're going to work to further develop that.

Well, there's an obvious question there. I would like to know what's going on there. I mean, essentially what has happened is that you've lumped a number of the cultural industries, which are delightful orphans, because these cultural industries often generate some sort of profit or cash. So what we're talking about here is the recording industry, the film and television industry, and the book publishers. They've now been thrown in with the film sector. And what exactly? They've all taken a cut. I think they managed to get – what? Was it a \$2 or a \$2,000 increase here? A \$200 increase maybe?

7:10

What exactly is your plan for them? They always need support. They are never going to be able to survive on their own in a Canadian cultural situation. They just aren't. Anyone that thinks they are is sadly misguided. I mean, we've lost most of the book publishers in Alberta now because we didn't support them when we had the opportunity, and they went to Saskatchewan, who did support them. What are you up to here? You developed it, and now you're going to further develop it.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I guess part of it is that when I look about broadening the approach to the cultural industries – I think I'm going to talk about two different things here. First of all, the Alberta multimedia development fund: of course, you just mentioned those three are part of that now. From that fund they have access to about \$1.6 million in funding. Putting them in that area is about, to me, having more of a – I guess I'll use the word "strategy" there. That's really important.

The other part of this is – I don't know if this is in here, but I'm going to talk about it – the creative hub, the conversation that began in Calgary with the folks that were pushing for the creative hub. When I look at the creative hub concept and I look at this, what I'm envisioning is the conversation to have an Alberta Creative Hub, using what we have here in Edmonton where they're working with the digital media, working with publishers, all of those folks, working with what we have in Calgary with respect to the filming that goes on, and having an Alberta-wide approach to specifically working in film but also looking at everything else that we're doing in Alberta.

I may have digressed a bit, but when I look at the words "creative industries," I think we have tremendous talent here in Alberta. The digital media: as you know, we are the fourth-highest in North America with the games that are produced here in Edmonton. I

mean, I'm really proud to share that fact. A lot of people don't know that. How do we have a conversation to make sure that we get better at doing this and get the support to where it's needed, as you have said, so people aren't leaving Alberta?

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, let's talk about that Alberta Creative Hub. Now, \$1.2 million or \$1.8 million was allocated by the previous minister to plan – what the heck is the name of that thing that you do before you actually build something? Some sort of investigative research-based thing. This is a hunk of money, especially in this department. I haven't seen any shovels in the ground. What the heck is going on there? You've got land set aside, or there's agreement from the feds that the province or somebody would get access to land that is part of the Olympic . . .

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Canada Olympic Park.

**Ms Blakeman:** Canada Olympic Park. Thank you.

The city of Calgary was interested in coming in on that, and now nothing. Again, you're talking about a conversation, which isn't productive. It has no outcome as such that is going to move us forward. So what exactly has happened as a result of that \$1.2 million or \$1.8 million?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah, it's a \$1.2 million grant that went to Calgary Economic Development to work on it. So far the discussion has been with Calgary Economic Development, the city of Calgary, WinSport Canada, and then both levels of government. The original plan was to have a creative hub and film studio on the 10 acres of land at Canada Olympic Park. That's essentially how the plan had begun.

What I have done since I took on this ministry: again, moving back to the Alberta approach with the film studio that we have here in Edmonton and with the work that goes on at NAIT with digital media, looking at that, I have asked the Film Advisory Council to look at this and report back to me in June as to how we can resolve this, their suggestions for something of this magnitude to engage all of Alberta. So that's what the Film Advisory Council will be doing to review the project.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. So there's no money allocated to that project in this budget? She's shaking her head. Okay. And you have asked the film commission, the minister's advisory council, to look at whether to go ahead or to dump it and how things could be expanded or used better in Edmonton. Am I interpreting correctly?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** You're right. I mean, part of it is that they're the experts. They're the ones that have a pretty good idea of what's going to go and what's not going to go. When I look at projects and there is huge, huge community buy-in on a project, whether you're building a recreation centre or whatever, that's what is really important to me. I was concerned that there was a lot of pressure on government to fund almost all of it, and I don't think that's appropriate.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Thank you. That's much clearer.

When we're looking at outcome-based budgeting and I look at the performance measurements that are in your business plan – anybody who looks backwards on anything I've ever said about this department will know how much I loathe the performance measurements that are used in this department. Doing a poll by asking how satisfied people are with their experience gives you no management information whatsoever. It would be more useful to find the people that didn't go and find out why they didn't go. That would give you some management information. But what



you've been using with percentage of customers satisfied tells you nothing. You're always running in that kind of, you know, above 70 per cent range, so it's just not useful information.

Now, do you have a project going to turn these around and make useful outcome measurements out of this?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** You know, performance measures – I know when I had them in Service Alberta, too, it was always interesting exactly what we were trying to achieve. I think that when you look at outcomes and what we're trying to achieve, some of these performance measures are actually giving good information. But what are we driving at? What are we trying to determine? I have begun looking at some of these, whether it's using new ones or just making adjustments to the ones we've had before.

We know that 900,000 individuals visit all the historic sites across Alberta every year. There's a lot of interest. People like to go to these places, which is great. The other part of that buried in here, too, is the whole volunteer component of these facilities and what volunteers are expected to do. I mean, they're the ones that are greeting and working with Albertans when they go there.

I am happy to look at the performance measures as an opportunity to make sure they actually are measuring the outcomes that we're looking for, just what you said.

**Ms Blakeman:** I hope you guys understand what you've got yourselves into with that, because I don't think you do. If I might recommend, perhaps the minister could organize a seminar for her colleagues to find out exactly . . .

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** What would you recommend?

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, developing a good performance measurement is hard. You have to work backwards from that, and it takes a lot of thinking to do it. The fact that there's no sort of succession plan here, that you have no plan amongst your administrators about how to develop these, which I just asked you about: you guys are in trouble. You're not going to end up with anything that's going to be helpful to you.

I would work with members of the Auditor General's staff because they have the best grasp of how to develop a useful performance measurement. They can at least give you the technical checklist to use as a way of working your way through developing something.

Okay. This is under section 2, goal 2. "Alberta, with the support of a strong nonprofit/voluntary sector, has resilient, inclusive and engaged communities." It talks about province-wide action for building engaged and inclusive communities. I have heard several times now that the government is moving to no longer accepting part 9 companies as being eligible for grants or for programs and services, and I would like to get that clarified. If you're not able to do it now, I'm happy to have you . . .

7:20

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I'd be happy to clarify that for you. For sure.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Has there been any change anticipated in that? I don't know how many words I have to use to cover all my bases here.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Is that part 9 under the Revenue Canada guidelines?

**Ms Blakeman:** No. Part 9 is under the Business Corporations Act, and it's the way you can set up a not-for-profit company. It has shareholders, a board of directors as such. But it actually lists shareholders. Most of them are in for about a buck. What we would include in a not-for-profit category or a volunteer-driven

category here in Alberta are registered as part 9 companies under the Business Corporations Act. They're the only thing left in the Business Corporations Act because everything else has been taken out of that act and made into something new.

Nonetheless, if you're going to change eligibility or something around that, we need to know it. I think some of the land trusts are established that way. I need to know if that's going to happen.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Sure. We can check into that because it also relates to the Societies Act under Service Alberta, too.

**Ms Blakeman:** It does.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It does. We'll be happy to check into that for you.

**Ms Blakeman:** Good. Thank you very much.

Now, oh, my beloved Turner Valley. Okay. Where are we with this? This is a long saga for me. This is actually where the Blakeman family originates from. My father was born in Black Diamond, which is a mile away from Turner Valley. I've spent a lot of time there. I don't know if you've ever been to the Turner Valley gas plant.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I've been to the farmers' market. I haven't been to the gas plant.

**Ms Blakeman:** Oh, well, that's an experience. Back in those days they really didn't pay any attention, and they dumped the stuff on the ground, and that is a toxic site. I did a lot of work with the departments of culture, health, and environment, and everybody threw the ball to somebody else around that one.

So what exactly are you up to with priority initiative 3.3? You're "developing a website about Alberta's energy resource history and making progress on conserving and interpreting the Turner Valley Gas Plant Provincial and National Historic Site." What exactly is making progress?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I guess one of the things that I've been made aware of is all of the environmental concerns that have been addressed, the remediation that's going on. Of course, you know over the years what's been done with some of the – I'm going to say the wrong things – environmental things we've had to do to maintain the site, to make sure it's safe, and all of those things.

**Ms Blakeman:** The part that says: pregnant women and children shouldn't step off the path? I'm serious. That's a sign that's up there.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Is that the sign that's up there? Is it still up there?

**Ms Blakeman:** Yes. Because if you step off the path, you're in trouble.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. I didn't know that sign was still there.

Things such as the scrubbers and the liner on the Sheep River are some of the things that we've done to make sure that the groundwater and all of those things from the historic site are maintained.

When I look at the Turner Valley historic site, I think there is tremendous opportunity there. I know that a number of departments have been putting money into it every year to make sure we continue the remediation and make it safer and make it a place in the future where people can actually walk around and we don't have to have those signs up. As you know, 2014 is going to be the 100th anniversary. I look at the Turner Valley gas plant site as a tremendous opportunity, but I want to make sure that all of the

environmental things that we've been doing are done and make sure that whatever we do moving forward it's a safe place.

**Ms Blakeman:** How much money is being allocated to that project to fulfill that priority initiative?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I know from the remediation point of view that there was money coming from other departments. It's about \$2.8 million.

**Ms Blakeman:** Coming from which vote?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That would be coming from the nonbudgetary disbursements in Culture and Community Services, page 49.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Just as a reminder, this is the third and final 20 minute period.

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you. Priority initiative 3.4: "Increase the sustainability of the heritage sector in rural Alberta by furthering the development of capacity-building tools for communities and collaboration with museum and archives societies." I'd like to give a prize for creative writing for that because it tells me absolutely nothing about what's going on. My remark beside it is: huh? So what exactly does that mean?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I guess my take on this is that when I began to tour around Alberta, the heritage that we have across Alberta, there are many individuals in their communities who want to celebrate. They want to protect what they have there, the integrity of their buildings. They want to have their museums. They want to keep doing that. Part of it is helping some of those, I guess, probably through using technology and encouraging them to collaborate with other groups around them to maintain the sites that they have. You can't have a museum in every town, not to say that the heritage that they're proud of isn't something. So when I look at that, that's what I see in that paragraph. Again, it's about sustainability: what outcome are we trying to achieve?

**Ms Blakeman:** That would be my question to you. What outcome are you trying to achieve, and how do you anticipate sustaining this heritage sector by development of a capacity-building tool? What is a capacity-building tool?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, I think that when Albertans visit a particular site, that's building capacity. When more Albertans and tourists find out about particular spots in Alberta, that's building capacity. That's the first part of it.

The second part is to develop online access. We know that, for example, in the AFA, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, we have about 60 per cent of Alberta's collection online, which is really important: so those kinds of things, having some of those treasures online so that people know about what's happening around Alberta. That's using technology, and that, to me, is a step in the right direction.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Thanks very much. I'm just picking up on a question I had last year, on page 525 of the debates from last year, taking place on March 23. I had a conversation with the minister about the Cultural Human Resources Council. Now, we did not have Alberta participation in the 2010 consultation because we don't have a provincially designated voice to speak on behalf of cultural workers. There are generalized groups in both Edmonton and Calgary that represent the performing arts or represent

working artists or professional artists, but there is no designated group from the province. If we had a designated group from the province, the feds would pay for them to go to these consultations, but since we don't have one designated, we don't participate, and therefore our cultural worker status and survey is not included in the national survey, which I think is a bit of a loss.

When I questioned the minister last year, he was trying to create – that's a quote – something in the 2011 budget. I'm wondering if the ministry has been successful in trying to create a designated Alberta cultural worker representative in 2011, or are you still trying to create one in 2012.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I'm happy to follow up on this. I briefly read some of the comments the former minister made, but I'd be happy to follow up on that. It seems a bit of a travesty that we're not being included in something that we're very proud of, what we have here in Alberta. I think it would be fantastic to have a designated voice. I think this is great value. This is something, too, that I hope is brought up at the forum. These are the kinds of things that we need, you know.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. On page 48 we have capital investment. I see capital investment for the corporate initiatives, which I've already talked about. There's almost \$1.5 million that's gone into corporate initiatives in three years. That just makes me grind my teeth thinking of what arts' groups could have done with that money, but anyway.

You've got \$2 million going into heritage infrastructure. Could you give me details on what the heritage infrastructure money is for?

7:30

Then I would like to hear what the plans are in this fiscal year: if the government is planning on putting any money into the Edmonton arena, whether there is any money going into the RAM or if you're looking for any more money to go into the RAM, especially to make it less of a box, whether there's money going into the Varscona Theatre, which I've spoken to the minister about a number of times. For those of you visiting or living in Edmonton, it's our busiest theatre. It is programmed 364 days a year, and it is falling apart. They have money sitting on the table from the feds and from the city. We can't get the province to come to the table, and that money is going to come off the table sooner or later. And the venues that Calgary is asking for. So those are the capital budget questions that I have, and then I'm going to go on to FTEs and a few line by lines.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. I'll start with the first up top here, the corporate initiatives. Part of that was for the grant administration. Some of the things we're doing to ensure the efficiency of the grant system that we have are in there as well. The heritage infrastructure of \$2 million includes repair, maintenance as well as capital improvements at our various historic sites, and that typically is what we budget every year to keep maintaining all the 19 historic sites that we have. So that's what that money is for.

With respect to the Edmonton arena, again, there's no money in this budget for the arena.

**Ms Blakeman:** I don't care. It's not in this budget.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It's not in this budget, no. No arena money in this budget.

**Ms Blakeman:** That's all I want to know.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The RAM, the Royal Alberta Museum. If you look at the line, there is currently a budget of about \$7.2 million for the Royal Alberta Museum. With the new one being built, we are keeping the current site open, live, and vibrant for the next three years, so that's moving forward. All of the other funds for building the Royal Alberta Museum are run through Infrastructure.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. I'm sorry; what's the budget line that you just mentioned? Oh, I see. Line 4.2.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah, line 4.2.

Then Varscona Theatre. I had a great meeting with the gang from the Varscona Theatre a while ago. That was before Christmas, I think. Nonetheless, we had a great meeting, and I'm working very hard with them with respect to some of the challenges they have with the age of the building and just looking at making sure the costs that are there are actual, the right costs.

You know better than I how old the building is. But I agree with you. I look at that theatre, and that's one of those partnership groups that's succeeding because there are so many theatre groups in there, and they make it work. To me, they're a real leader for all the companies.

**Ms Blakeman:** That's wonderful. How is the minister going to help them get that building renovated and work?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, that's something that I'm working on. That's all I can say.

**Ms Blakeman:** Is it a secret?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It's a great project. I'm not there yet, but I think it's a great project. I've spoken with the mayor and with Ben Henderson as well about it, and certainly I'm working with Infrastructure right now to see what kind of opportunities are there. There are a couple of other things that we're looking at.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Venues in Calgary?

**Ms Blakeman:** Yeah. Well, I'm not as up to date on the Calgary venues, but I know that there are some that are looking for money there. Is there any kind of money coming from your department or under your leadership that is going to help any of these groups that have been looking for money for an extended period of time?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The only money that has gone out recently was for Calgary as a cultural capital, and that was rolled out in November. There, of course, the feds had put in \$1.625 million, and the mayor put in \$2 million. We put in \$250,000 in seed money, then up to \$500,000 matching. So if the corporate sector is matching that \$500,000, then they'd be eligible for it. I hear the match is going quite well. That's one thing that we did.

In the budget, moving forward, is the Cantos Music Foundation, an additional \$15 million we put into that project.

**Ms Blakeman:** That's the only one that's left. That's the matching federal money.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That's right. That's correct.

With respect to the other asks that are out there, there are some fabulous projects, but they still are at the ask stage. When I look at some of the great projects that are there, it's about viability, sustainability, and operating. I want to make sure projects are going

to be able to operate five years from now, after they're built. That's something I'm working very hard on.

There are a number of different projects. I had a great meeting with Mayor Nenshi when I first got appointed to this portfolio. We talked about a number of projects on I guess you would call it the wish list that Calgary has.

**Ms Blakeman:** Okay. Can I get a breakdown from you, please, of the FTEs that are in each vote, broken down into programs? It's always a bit of a mystery. There's a lovely line in the budget that says: and there are FTEs. Then it doesn't say anything about them.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** What page are you on?

**Ms Blakeman:** It's at the top of page 52, "Full Time Equivalent Employment," blank. If you could just give me the breakdowns on that, that would be great. If you give it to the clerk, she'll make sure that everyone on the committee gets a copy.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I can certainly read it into the record. All the FTEs are here.

**Ms Blakeman:** You could just send the piece of paper to the clerk, and she'll copy it for the committee.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I don't have a problem with that.

**Ms Blakeman:** Great. Thank you.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I'm happy to do that.

**Ms Blakeman:** Terrific. Thank you.

Okay. Now, specific program breakdown. Going back to the line by line on pages 46 and 47, the Alberta multimedia development fund, I think you started to do this, but if I can get you to supply us after the fact with a list of each group that's under vote 2.4 and the amount that they're receiving. Nothing is broken down in this budget.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The Alberta multimedia development fund?

**Ms Blakeman:** Yeah.

The program support under 3.1 for community and voluntary support services: there was an increase there, not a lot, \$200,000 and change. What are the programs that are under that, or is that the administrative support for the rest of the programs?

Community engagement, 3.2, is almost \$11 million. What is that? What are the programs that are under that, and how much does each program get? Community spirit, the matching donation program, is currently at \$15,500,000. Is that fully subscribed, or is it oversubscribed? Are there more people offering matching grants than you have the amount of money to match them with? I'd like to know that.

The other initiatives. Oh, my favourite slush fund in the world, which, I'm sorry for the minister's sake, has diminished to a mere \$4 million. I'd like to know who is going to get money out of other initiatives and for how much, so again that breakdown. I'm assuming, having done a budget, you know who's going to get the money and what for. I'll be glad to hear that.

What is the program support that's under vote 4.1?

Vote 4.6, acquisition of historical collections: what on earth did they do to end up being cut by a million dollars, poor things?

Heritage infrastructure kind of bounces around, and there's no money for it this year. In 2010-11 it had \$700,000, the forecast for the year ending a month from now is a million and something, and

there's absolutely nothing budgeted for next year. I wonder what that's about.

Okay. That's that, and those can be supplied after the fact.

Finally, you've done quite a bit of reorganization, both in the department and in the AFA, but I think we're probably at about year 15 or more for the whole concept of PASO, provincial arts service organizations, and the way they have, air quotes here, partnered with the department. I wonder if there has been a review of the effectiveness of this way of delivering services and funding, and if not, when are you going to have a review of that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** What's the name of it again?

**Ms Blakeman:** PASOs, provincial arts service organizations. You've got four or five of them: Visual Arts Alberta, Theatre Alberta, Dance Alberta. I'm missing something. There'll be two others.

7:40

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That's okay. I'd be happy to follow up on that because, as you said, when you put groups, I guess, working together on something – that's what you're wanting to know?

**Ms Blakeman:** No. This is a process, a function that the department created under the then minister, Shirley McClellan, as a way of being more efficient. It chose existing organizations to make the umbrella organization, which then disbursed grant money out to the groups that clustered under them. Another one would be Museums Alberta, and there's got to be an historical sites one in there somewhere. For that whole structure I'd like to know whether there's been a review of how well it works, and if not, when is there going to be one?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. I know that currently, with respect to the structure and review, that's something I can pursue. I would add that all of this is posted on the AFA website with respect to all of this information.

**Ms Blakeman:** The review of the PASOs?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Just the organizations and how they work in the community.

**Ms Blakeman:** Oh, I know how they work. I just can't remember all of them off the top. I know how they work very well. I want to know whether they're working for the benefit of the ministry and how you guys think they're working because I've heard that you're going to dump them or move away from using them. I wondered if you'd done a review about whether they're serving their purpose or not.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. I'd be happy to follow up on that for you.

**Ms Blakeman:** I must be getting to the end of my time; I can't read my writing anymore.

There were some comments the minister had made. A couple of times the minister has said that she's looking at something, and I'm not sure what that means as I try to read a new minister. What does looking at something usually mean with this minister?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** In what context?

**Ms Blakeman:** Just about anything you've said. If we went back in *Hansard* and looked and read it and I had asked about something and you would say, "Well, yes, I'm looking at that," what does it mean? You're reviewing it?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, I'll be following up on a number of things that you brought forward tonight. I guess part of it for me is that when I look at this portfolio, what's really important is the input that I receive from everyone around me, whether it's to solve a problem, whether it's to support a cause, just like you're bringing up, you know, the Varscona Theatre, being their champion, that kind of thing. So when I'm looking at something, I view it as: I'm open, and let's have a conversation about it. That's what I mean.

It may mean that at the end of the day we may not agree on exactly what you want or what I may want, but it's about having a conversation and learning that maybe I didn't know something in the sector. That's very important to me because, you know, I'm the minister. I'm getting a good grasp on the department, but I rely on the experience of the people around me in the sector. That's what I mean about looking at something. I'm not saying it to be empty and patronizing; I'm saying it because I mean it.

**Ms Blakeman:** Oh, no. I'm sure of that. I just didn't know what you meant, so thank you for clarifying that.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay.

**Ms Blakeman:** Now, along with the PASO, is there any desire or plans on the part of the minister to look at the structure of the AFA or the board appointments or who's appointed to that board, or are you going to leave that as it is?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I think that currently I'm happy with the way it's running. I know the chair, Mark Phipps, is doing I think an excellent job. However, if there's a particular issue or something that you feel needs to be addressed, let's have a conversation about it. I think it's important. The diversity of people that are on the AFA is very important to me, to make sure you have people from all the sectors on it.

**Ms Blakeman:** Did you put any professional artists on that board? They were all amateur before?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Professional artists?

**Ms Blakeman:** Yeah.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That's something I would have to double-check.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, considering that they're the recipients of the funds, if you wanted representatives from all sectors, I would say that we should put in some professional artists.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Blakeman. Thank you, Minister.

The next 20-minute period is for the third party. Mrs. Forsyth, would you like to have a back-and-forth conversation with the minister, or do you want to take your full 10 minutes?

**Mrs. Forsyth:** I will have a back and forth. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** You're welcome.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Minister, thanks. I appreciate you taking the time, and I appreciate the time that your staff is taking. As a former minister I know how hard they work.

Our time is short, so I'll try and get as many questions as we can in at once. I've been listening very intently as you've been answering the questions of Ms Blakeman, and I find that you've picked up on this portfolio rather quickly and seem to be very

enthusiastic about it. That's nice to see. I've been listening to you continually talk about: let's have a conversation. You talk about having a conversation and that you like looking at something. You know, you seem to be open and accountable.

What I've been doing as we go through this budget process is to go through the *Hansards* of last year, read very intently through the conversations in regard to the minister and the conversations that were done previously with other members.

I want to start off with CFEP. I want to share my frustration in regard to CFEP grants both from being in the government and where I am now as an opposition member. That was brought up last year. Minister Blackett explained that the process was fair and that the distribution of the CFEP grants was done fairly. Once a month we get a report in regard to our community leagues or something in our community that has applied for a grant, and I don't dispute that at all.

What I am disputing – I would hope that your ministry will be able at the end of the CFEP year to let everybody look at the grants that were distributed no matter where they were in the province. I'd like to get that commitment on that. I think that one of the most frustrating things for me is when my community league gets a grant and I'm not invited or even told about when the cheque is going to be distributed and I have caucus members, PC members, handing out the cheque to, you know, Lake Bonavista or Deer Run community league.

I can tell you that I meet with my community league presidents every year. We have beer and wings and have a good conversation. I met with them in January. They were actually quite disgusted about the process of the last invitation, where Mr. Cao and Mr. Johnston presented the cheques to them and I was not included, when they know how hard I work. Are you going to look at changing that process?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you for your comments. With respect to the community facility enhancement program and, of course, CIP as well, as you know, all of the money that goes across Alberta is on the website by community, which is really important to me. It's open; it's transparent; it's out there. So that's the first thing, but you know that already.

I know the importance of how we all advocate for our community leagues, and I totally, totally understand that. I advocate for mine in my area like you do in your area. I think that at the end of the day, when those communities do receive those cheques, they know you've been advocating for them. There's no question. With respect to how, certainly, they're presented, that's something I can take as information for sure.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Well, as you said, you know how important it is to advocate, and you take that responsibility very seriously. I think everybody around this table feels the same sort of responsibility. But, Minister, I have to tell you that to me it's quite disgusting when my community leagues are presented a cheque by two of the government members because they think that's going to make them look good.

The CFEP changes have been what I consider very open and transparent recently. So I think if you want to take that one step further and talk about openness and transparency, you can say: "You know what, Heather? We're giving Lake Bonavista a CFEP grant for \$75,000. Here's the cheque. Thank you very much." I look forward to watching that over the next few months because I know some of my community leagues are applying for grants, and I look forward to seeing that happen.

7:50

I want to skip to the Alberta Film Advisory Council. The minister at the time talked about two things that they needed to get the industry back and employing as many people as possible. At that point he said that it wasn't anything to do with incentives; it's the lack of master agreements between unions and guilds and our producers and how to utilize that. So he was making it a number one priority in 2011 to actually have the unions and the members working together. What's happening there?

Oh. Ms Blakeman is shaking her head.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, they did do a new agreement, so she can talk about that.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Can you please tell me what's happening with that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** With what Minister Blackett said before?

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Yes.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. I think that as Ms Blakeman just said – I remember a lot of the questions that were directed towards Minister Blackett from Ms Blakeman on this issue.

I think what's really important to me is that we have been working together, and we are reaching agreements. With respect to the unions the agreements are in place, and the unions and guilds are all represented now on the Alberta Film Advisory Council. That's what's really important to me. They are at the table when we have conversations on the challenges that each sector is facing.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** But were they not at the table last year, and he was going to move that process even further?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I suspect that some were at the table, perhaps, but I don't think they all were. Now, moving forward, they're certainly on that film advisory group. That's something that we've worked very hard on to engage and to bring them into so that we know the challenges, of course, they are facing.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Where are we on the film industry, then, and the production of films in this province?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, I think that with the multimedia development fund what we've done is changed the stream so that it's a two-stream funding model. It's going to encourage more local productions because if you're an Alberta company and you hire an all-Alberta crew, then you're going to be able to apply for up to 30 per cent of the spend. How it works is that when the spend is in Alberta, then they send in their receipts and they get a portion, whether the portion is 25 to 30 per cent or less.

What this is also doing is encouraging films from the bigger companies to come into Alberta as well to hire our crews. We all know some of the crews have gone back to B.C. because there are no jobs, so we're trying to fix that. You probably know this. At McLean Creek the *Bourne Identity 4* was filmed before Christmas, and they were filming for a number of days. There are all these projects that are going on. What's also really powerful, too, are the series that we have. *Hell on Wheels* is in season 2. We have *Blackstone*. We have *Heartland*, which is filmed outside of Calgary, and *Blackstone* is filmed at Namao.

So I think the fact is that we have a lot to offer here in Alberta, and it's gone over very well, the funding stream, just making it a little bit more efficient and making sure that the Alberta crew and Alberta producers have the best crack at it. That's something that we've worked hard on.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** I'm new to this ministry, the new critic to it. The idea of providing some tax incentives or some tax credits to the film industry: where are we on that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, as you know, there's a big discussion across Canada about the tax incentives. The one thing about when people come to Alberta, of course, is that we have no sales tax. We also have a technical workforce, and we have the great locations, so there are a lot of people who will come here looking for that.

Also, the conversation about the certainty of this program is that with the tax credit system sometimes it takes them a long time to get their money or to get their credit back. This system is a much quicker system. The onus is on the film companies to provide the receipts. They have to do the diligence before they get any funding. So the conversation, I think, is an ongoing conversation because a lot of sectors are looking at it. For example, states like New Mexico are looking at reducing their tax credit system because they can't afford it.

I think that when you look at what's happening around us, in the U.S. and eastern Canada as well, we know that with respect to the state that we are in here in Alberta with the jobs and the employment opportunities – there are more people coming to Alberta – I suspect there'll be more people coming here who want to do more filming here.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. I want to touch just briefly if I can in regard to the GATE system. Do you know that that is?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The grants?

**Mrs. Forsyth:** No. The GATE system in terms of equipment. You purchased a GATE system, which is your new computer system.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Right.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** That was relatively new, I believe, last year. It allows online application processes and things like that. Where are you on that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, we know that the community spirit donations are online. That's been under way, and that's gone over very well. With respect to CFEP and CIP we are still fine-tuning. We're not there a hundred per cent yet, but we are moving in that direction. I encourage you, if you have any feedback from any of your stakeholders, especially with respect to the community spirit donation program – I think that's a wonderful program because you can support the charity of your choice in your community. So that's one area.

We know that the time for processing grants has improved over the last two years. Part of it is going to quarterly intake, and that's something that we're trying to speed up out of respect for the organization and out of, you know, respect for the process.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** I haven't had a lot of feedback from my community, I think, and one of the reasons for that is the lack of knowing about it. For example, the community spirit donor program: I really, honestly don't think it's a very well-known program.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I thank you for saying that because when I took over this ministry in October, I had two months to get the word out. We worked very hard getting it out to the nonprofit sector, getting it out to all of our partners. I agree with you that we need to do a better job, and that's something that all MLAs can help on because to me it's a tremendous program. It can empower a lot of organizations, you know, just to get an extra \$20,000 or \$10,000 or \$15,000.

That's very powerful. So I appreciate that, and I agree with your comment on that.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Thanks.

I want to go to the budget, and I want to talk briefly under ministry support services. I find it fascinating, actually, when I look under your minister's office and your deputy minister's office. I don't want to say that this is fascinating; I just think it's very good that you have had no increase in your budget of \$590,000 and \$630,000, but every other ministry that I've had the opportunity to go before has had increases. They say it's because of the contract, the 4 per cent. None of this is reflected in that. Why are you different? It doesn't show anywhere.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Actually, I'm glad you raised that. The 4 per cent is included all the way through where the staff is.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** But you have staff in the minister's office, you have staff in the deputy's office, and there has been no increase. Every other ministry has reflected at least a 4 to 7 per cent increase.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** We have fewer staff in both of those offices. That's part of the reason we've been able to absorb the increase, and that's why those numbers have stayed the same.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. Well, that would truly make sense. How are we on time, Madam?

**The Chair:** Five minutes left.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. Let's talk about the program support under cultural industries. It was \$748,000, and it's gone to \$780,000. Can you explain the increase in that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Oh, line 2.1, program support for cultural industries?

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Yeah.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. That would be exactly what you were talking about before. It's the increase related to the manpower settlement. It's a 4 per cent cost-of-living increase, merit, and increased employer contributions. So that's what that is.

**8:00**

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Oh. That's the 4 per cent program.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. Then let's go to 3.1, program support, from \$315,000 to \$530,000. Is that another 4 per cent? That's way more. What is that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** As we discussed previously with Ms Blakeman, the reason why this number is a little bit different: it is manpower settlements, cost-of-living increases, merit, increase in employer contributions, and the IT that I spoke about earlier.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. I'm just struggling with this a little bit. So in the minister's office and in the deputy's and under your ministry support program it's because you have a smaller staff, and you could absorb it in the budget.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** But then we go into program support at 2.1 and 3.1, and there's a significant increase. You also say that that was the 4 per cent plus IT?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah. The IT: I had a number here; just bear with me. The cost of the IT was about \$600,000, supporting the iDomain versus being on the GOA domain.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Would you mind providing us a breakdown? I know we have a breakdown of the employees, and that's 479, I'm assuming, within the ministry that are full-time. That is somewhere incorporated under 2.1 or 3.1 – I'm not sure – or both for all of the staff.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** So you want a breakdown, or just clarification again?

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Well, I guess I'm trying to understand fully. You have a significant increase in 3.1, from \$315,000 to \$530,000. That's huge. I'm assuming part of that is the 4 per cent on the staff and that some of that is the IT expenditure. Then we go to 2.1, and we're looking at \$748,000 to \$780,000. I'm assuming that is just the increased staffing, 4 per cent. What I'm trying to rationalize is when I go from \$315,000 to \$530,000 – \$600,000 of it is IT – with 479 full-time. That's where I'm struggling. If you can get me some sort of a breakdown to understand that cost.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Sure. Yeah, we can do that for you just to make it clearer. Okay. Good.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Yes, so that I can understand.

Then we go down to the next budget item, 4, which is heritage. If you look at the total increase, it is 11.5 per cent totally, at the bottom, from \$38.7 million to \$40.5 million. Does that increase also include the 4 per cent in the full-time, or is it for grants and things like that? You see, you've got program support at \$1.21 million to \$1.485 million, and there are adjustments. There are increases on all of those line items.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah. Again, all of those items there, from 4.1 to 4.5, relate to the manpower settlements, cost-of-living increases, merit, employer contributions, supplies and services for operations to maintain existing levels of services. When I talk about supplies and services, I indicated earlier that the 3 per cent increase that I managed to get to support all the historic sites across Alberta: that's where that comes out of, the staffing.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. I can understand the 4 per cent. I can really understand the 4, but where I'm struggling is under 3.1, program support, when you go from \$315,000 to \$530,000, and that's 4 per cent plus the IT. I just need to understand where the breakdown is. Is the majority of it for IT and the other is the 4 per cent? I mean, we understand the 4 per cent. I'm not questioning you on that.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. Well, I'm happy to get that for you.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** I'm assuming that the majority of everything under the budget lines under program support is all the 4 per cent increase, that if you go 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, it is the 4 per cent. Then we go to, say, the Alberta Film Commission. It's \$462,000; it goes to \$485,000. Does that mean that's another 4 per cent? If you could, Minister.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah, we can clarify that for you. No problem. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mrs. Forsyth. Thank you, Minister.

At this time we'll take a six-minute break, and we'll be back.

[The committee adjourned from 8:05 p.m. to 8:12 p.m.]

**The Chair:** We can continue now with the fourth party, and I believe that Ms Notley is here to represent the party. Would you like to go back and forth with the minister for the 20 minutes?

**Ms Notley:** Sure.

**The Chair:** Thank you. You may continue.

**Ms Notley:** Thanks. All right. Well, who knows? Maybe I won't even take 20 minutes. You never know.

Thanks again as well to all the staff for being here tonight. I know it's, again, late. I barely notice anymore since it's pretty much every night for me, but I know it can be disruptive, so I appreciate that.

I want to just start with a couple of things that arose from previous questions. There had already been a discussion about the Varscona Theatre, which I had planned on raising again after having raised it with the minister a year ago. At that time, one of the things we talked about was ensuring that the advocates for the Varscona Theatre be given an opportunity to make a presentation to the Edmonton government caucus, and that's still not happened, notwithstanding the minister's assurances in that regard. So once again I'm hoping that maybe it can happen. Our expectation when he said that it would happen was that it would happen within the year, not sort of, you know, hypothetically at some point in the next undetermined period of time.

As well, I was aware, of course, that you had met with the folks from there. I guess my question is this. You know, we got lots of great-sounding assurances last time, but we really haven't seen a lot of movement on this. For all the reasons that I'm sure you're aware of and that you've heard about from a number of different quarters, this is an extremely deserving project and one that is long overdue, and it's one that has received a commitment of \$2 million already from the city.

I'm told that after having even received money, initially a small grant from the province several years ago, to do a needs assessment and having come up with that needs assessment and having then obtained a significant commitment from the city, what they're hearing from your ministry now is that they need to revise and update their business plan and get more numbers on the business plan. So I'm a little concerned about that. Given that the city is prepared to say in principle, "The money is there," how much longer is this going to go on for the Varscona Theatre? What are some timelines and some particulars and some deadlines that these folks can rely on?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you very much. It was really important to have conversations with the mayor and with Ben Henderson and with Ms Blakeman as well when I met with them before Christmas. We had a great conversation, and that's very important to me.

The follow-up that we've asked for and your comments about the business plan and sustainability: we know that the project is really important. We also know that costs go up. I mean, that's just life, right? I want to make sure that if the costs have gone up a little bit or not at all or a ton, we know exactly moving forward, going into it.

As well, related to this is the vision after the operating. Personally, I don't think operating is going to be an issue because all the theatre companies share it. It's just a wonderful model, and I think that's the model that we would kind of like to champion around Alberta. What we're asking for with the infrastructure in my department is real information. It's not my intent to play games and just say, "Oh, yeah, just send us this," because there are so many projects that are out there, the asks that people want,

so I want to make sure that what we do on this is real and it reflects what are the actual costs of today, not because the project's been on the hopper for what, you said two, three years now?

**Ms Notley:** Oh, much longer.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Longer. Five years, 10 years? I don't know.

What I'm asking for from them is just the diligence on their side, and we're working very closely with them.

**Ms Notley:** Can I get a timeline on that? The passed time is a function of the provincial government's delay, so to then say, "Well, too much time has passed for us to rely on the numbers that you diligently collected . . ."

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That's correct.

**Ms Notley:** ". . . several years ago," the same numbers that were successful at convincing the city that it was a worthwhile investment – what's the timeline that you're looking at?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** What would you like the timeline to be? Tomorrow?

**Ms Notley:** Yeah. This year. That would be fabulous.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, I think sometime this year is reasonable. I think it's something that – you're right – we need to have the conversation on.

Again, it goes back to the community support for the project. I know it's very strong community support. When I look at the projects that are coming across my desk, you know, groups come and say: government's got to put in their money first before I can do my thing. In this case, because Varsona has been working so hard, that's not an issue. I would like to do it, hopefully, by the end of this year.

**Ms Notley:** All right. Okay. Excellent.

Just before I move on to sort of larger things, I would like to use this opportunity as well to raise another issue following out of the conversations that the member from the Wildrose raised and that had been raised previously last year. I don't get consulted at all on grants that are being considered as a result of applications coming from my riding, but there is one that I believe is under consideration right now that I would like your ministry to give due consideration, which is the bronze statue that's being considered for Brother Anthony park, which is attached to Faculté Sainte-Jean.

First of all, they've already come up with private funding, which was well in excess of what they are requesting through the grant program. It is an opportunity for them to celebrate the life of a brother in the order which basically laid the foundation for the faculté in terms of providing French language instruction through to the university up until the time that the university took it over.

My understanding is that the faculté is unique or one of two places in the country outside of Quebec where one can get a full degree in French, in any discipline, but the whole thing given in French. That very unique fact, along with everything else that the faculté contributes to the city, is a function of these brothers. Of course, obviously, it would be centred in the midst of what's easily the only urban French quarter, with all due deference to the member for Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley, in the province.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Right. Well, I'd be happy to follow up on that and let you know.

**8:20**

**Ms Notley:** That would be good.

Okay. I'd like to flip over quickly to the issue of the performance measures. I agree with the comments made previously, that in large part the performance measures that your ministry is using are quite hopeless, really. I would suggest that you either get some advice from the Auditor General, or don't come back with all of the, you know, per cent of people that were lucky enough to get a highly politicized grant who feel satisfied survey results, because they are of no value. Frankly, I think you're wasting money doing the survey, so reporting on it is also a problem.

There are one or two more objective measures, however, in the performance measures, so those were a couple of the ones that I wanted to ask you about. One was with respect to the performance measure of the line item 2.4, the Alberta multimedia development fund. That is a good performance measure, this notion of generating a certain amount of additional investment in the province as a result of the work of that fund. Now, on page 16 of your business plan, you talk about \$63.5 million being "spent in Alberta as a result of film and television productions supported by" the fund. In your annual report the target for this year was to have been \$104 million; now the target is simply \$60 million in your business plan, and it's \$60 million for the next two or three years. My questions to you are: why has the target been dropped by 40 per cent, why is it lower than the actual performance that we saw a year and a half ago, and why is there no expectation that you would increase your target?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That was with respect to the target for . . .

**Ms Notley:** Money spent in Alberta as a result of film and television productions supported by the Alberta multimedia development fund. So, you know, economic generator measures, legitimate measures.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah. The result was \$41 million less than the target of \$104.5 million, correct?

**Ms Notley:** Right.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I think what happened, then, is that with the world economy tubing, as it did across the world and in Alberta and Canada, there were a couple of dramatic series that were cancelled, that were not filmed here. There's the irony. We know it's tenuous when they make the choice to come here. If things tube for them in the States, in their country, then they choose not to come here. That was merely a factor of the series not choosing to shoot here. I don't know where they chose or if they did not shoot. I'm not sure.

**Ms Notley:** You're right, and I did read that as well. I understand that that was something that happened that particular year. My questions are: why is the target lower than what was actually performed prior to that, and why is there no expectation of the target growing? Certainly, there is an expectation of our economy growing otherwise. Why would there be no expectation of that target growing?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. The current targets are based on the estimated spending of currently committed productions to be completed in the various fiscal years, so that's 2013-14 and 2014-15. The targets for those, '13-14 and '14-15, will be revisited as new commitments are made.



I think, again, it's going to be influenced by cancellations or new commitments made during the year that will come across the desk as well as the switching of the Alberta multimedia development fund to the two-stream grant system. That has increased the eligibility for more local productions and for foreign productions. It's based on all of that. The funding stream: I think we're going to see some greater uptakes. I think those numbers are going to change moving forward.

**Ms Notley:** Okay. Well, then that goes back to my original observation about the merits of your targets, that you should be sort of shooting to potentially improve your performance somewhat as opposed to setting a target that is easily met based on the current situation.

Another target that I think is somewhat valuable is the percentage volunteerism target. As you know, I'm sure, last year we saw a drop of 10 per cent, to 72 per cent. I am sure you're aware of the studies that have come out recently commenting on the fact that Albertans perceive themselves to be less connected to the community than any other province other than Quebec and that the level of volunteerism is also lower here than in other provinces.

You know, just as an aside for the purposes of performance measures, interjurisdictional placement is a slightly more objective measure if you're going to look at people's satisfaction levels and things like that. Nonetheless, we clearly have an issue with our volunteerism coming down, and we have an issue that was identified in a couple of reports, most recently released last week, that particularly in Alberta we have a problem. So my question to you is: what are we going to do about that?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I know that the good work Volunteer Alberta does and some of the engagement capacity building that they are going to be working on is very important to me. I am, too, very concerned about that. I think that's something about the forum on culture, having that conversation about how many of those groups depend on volunteers because they can't afford to pay in some of those. We also know the volunteerism rate is affected by the job market, by the economy, people's families, where they are in their family life, whether they're having children or they're not, or they're retired. I know that the retired individuals who are moving on, I mean – they're tired and they want to move on to something else.

I think some of the things we need to do is work with organizations like Volunteer Alberta and use technology to reach out to other groups and empower groups. That's youth as well. There's a really cool website where youth can choose to volunteer for groups. One of the best things we've done is that program through Advanced Education where students in university for a thousand-dollar scholarship can go and work with a nonprofit and learn how to work with a nonprofit. Then at the end of the day, when they've graduated from university, maybe they will volunteer for a nonprofit when they've finished their education.

There is a new program that we've got going, and it's capacity grants. There have been a number of organizations across Alberta that we've asked for their input because some of those main drivers are the people that you want to reach out and mentor some of these other groups to help find volunteers.

**Ms Notley:** Maybe the capacity grants are related to the next question I have. I don't know. Last year the minister talked about, within the volunteer sector, the fact that he was engaged in a human resource strategy process to come up with some concrete measures to address the chronic disparity in pay for people who

are employed in the voluntary sector versus other areas. I'm wondering: is that something that came from that, or are there concrete plans that have come up as a result of the human resource strategy process described by the minister last year?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** You and I have known about the disparity with some of the PDD wages in the Human Services sector under Minister Hancock. I mean, those are areas where we're working hard to address that.

With respect to the nonprofit and volunteer sectors that is certainly a conversation that we need to continue. The point I'm at right now is that there is nothing on my radar for that, but to me it's about human resources and having people work with you and all the great things you need to do. You know, it's tough, and we need to have that conversation.

**Ms Notley:** I guess my concern is that last year the minister said that you were having that conversation. Conversations are good, but he actually said there was a conversation and that we could expect concrete measures to flow from said conversations. So now I'm asking about the concrete measure stage, the process.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I can certainly add one of them. I guess the recruiting that the nonprofits face, recruiting staff and staff returning: often staff will start there, and then they don't come back. But I know that in the last three years through CIP about \$14 million has been provided to help cover staff wage and benefit costs, then as well through the community spirit program individuals who apply can use that towards staffing costs. So I think within CIP we've made a bit of headway in that. That's something that I want to watch and make sure that we address because they are serious issues: volunteer burnout, organizations that have to close the doors. They're very serious issues.

**8:30**

**Ms Notley:** Indeed. We seem to not be doing as well in this province as is the case in almost every other province. I'm just looking at the studies. That's what the studies say. So there you go.

Because I think I'm going to run out of time fairly quickly, the next thing I want to ask about is a conversation we had, you and I, a few months ago where I had a community member from my riding come and we had a meeting. Subsequently, I asked you a couple of times with personal notes for the response to that. Before we get into the substance of that meeting, just following from the comments made by the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek about her community leaders telling her that there's a cheque being delivered and she's not invited and they generally find that to be quite offensive, I will say that having been at the meeting personally and having asked you twice personally for the response, it was really quite disrespectful when the response was sent directly to my constituent with no copy to me, nothing sent to me about it. I need to tell you that, certainly, there were no political points made by that process; quite the opposite.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, it was my understanding that a copy was sent to you, so I apologize if that didn't happen. I had fully intended to send a copy to you.

**Ms Notley:** Yeah. I mean, I have a copy of an e-mail that you sent to them that was CCed to the Minister of Finance but not to me, and it apparently was written by you, so it was a personal one. So I will say that that kind of thing, particularly from a ministry that has been subject to as much controversy around the allocation of grants, is very problematic and doesn't make your case.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms Notley. You'll have to wait.

Thank you, Minister.

Now we'll go to Mr. Taylor. I think that you're next in line. Would you like to take a full 10 minutes, or would you like to go back and forth with the minister for 20?

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you, Chair. Well, it's always tempting to take the full 10 minutes, but nobody wants to hear me for 10 minutes, so let's go back and forth.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you, Minister. You and I have not had a chance to chat since you got this portfolio, so I'm looking forward to this. I'm going to be interested in your answers to my questions. I probably want to spend a good deal of my time talking about the film and television industry or lack thereof in this province.

I want to start by bringing you back to some of the comments in the back and forth between you and the member for the fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre in regard to the Alberta Creative Hub. I'm tempted to read between the lines of what you said, and I'm tempted to hear that what you've said is that Calgary is not going to get its Creative Hub, that there's already a studio in Edmonton, there's a minister from Edmonton, and even though 85 per cent of the film business is done in and around Calgary, it's coming to Edmonton come hell or high water. I hope I did not hear that.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I did not say that.

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Do you want me to address that?

**Mr. Taylor:** I would like you to address that, please. I'd like to know what the status of the Creative Hub is because the city of Calgary, as you know, has already put \$10 million on the table.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah, and I've met with Luke. I've met with the mayor. I've met with Bruce Graham. I've reached out to all the tremendous visionaries behind that project, which is really important. I want to make it very clear that when people look at our province, they look at Alberta, and they look at what we have all over Alberta. Calgary has tremendous opportunities with the scenery and all of that. Edmonton has other things that we're working on. To me it's about Alberta. So the project is on the table. The project is not dead.

It's not about Calgary/Edmonton. I've worked very hard as a minister to dispel that because that offends me. I think an Alberta-wide vision is what we need, and I've made that very clear to Mayor Nenshi and Mayor Mandel. I wrote to them recently updating them on what's happening.

Then, I'm working with the Film Advisory Council. They're the experts and they're the ones that are going to be able to say: yeah, we can do this here; we can do that there. So to me it's about the greater dialogue.

If we are going to put, you know, the different amounts of money, the \$13 million or \$15 million or \$20 million of taxpayers' dollars, I want to make sure the studio is vibrant, that it's going to be operationally efficient, that it's going to create jobs and it's going to keep those jobs here in Alberta, and that they're not going to go running away to B.C. when things get bad here. I know the scenery. As I said, with *Bourne Identity 4* filming around McLean Creek, they're not going to film around Edmonton. Of course, they'd be at McLean Creek.

To me it's about the broader discussion about what's at stake here when the world is watching us, and that's what I'm trying to achieve here. I totally respect the vision that started with Bruce Graham and Luke Azevedo and Mayor Nenshi, totally.

**Mr. Taylor:** I'm glad you clarified that.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. Good. I wanted to get that in *Hansard*. Thank you. A bit passionate about that, aren't we?

**Mr. Taylor:** Yes, I am passionate about that. I'm passionate about it because, you know, of course, I defended my home turf of Calgary, but I'm also passionate about it from an Edmonton point of view, too, because we've got the Film Alberta Studio here. It strikes me from the investigation that I've done that that is a fine facility which is woefully underutilized right now.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It is. I can tell you that *Blackstone* has their production studios out of there. I've met with some of the folks from *Blackstone*, and there are some pretty exciting things that are going to be happening at that film studio that I can't talk about yet, but that's the vibrancy we have here. When you think we can have the vibrancy in both cities, that's pretty exciting stuff. So I just want to make sure moving forward that we look at it. That's why all those experts and the councillors are going to advise me, because it's got to be a decision that's holistic and strategic and smart.

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay. Given that they're going to advise you but the guidance in terms of how they're supposed to go about their investigation is coming from you and your office, I presume that their marching orders are to look at ways to go ahead and build the facility in Calgary because Calgary lacks a sound stage altogether. If we do this right, I'm convinced that there is enough potential movie and television business that will grow up here in this province and come to this province from elsewhere, whether that's full relocation or just coming up from Hollywood to shoot big-budget pictures, to keep both studios humming 24/7.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** To keep them humming.

**Mr. Taylor:** Exactly. But they need to complement one another because they won't be able to do the same things.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That's right. The beauty of a model like this is that they complement each other. Also, what I've asked the committee to look at is the whole funding model that we have. There is a huge emphasis on way more government funding. I want to see who else is going to come to the dance, who else is going to be part of this vision. I mean, Mayor Nenshi, the city of Calgary: huge contributions from the city and from Calgary Economic Development, but not so much from the sector. I know the sector has funding issues.

There have been conversations about people who would be the tenants of the building, which is great, and there are names that I've heard, and it's kind of ebbing and flowing. Those are the kinds of things so that operationally five years from now it's viable and it's working and it's employing Albertans and these Albertans are working on all the films.

**Mr. Taylor:** What are the parameters for making the judgments on some of those calls, then?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, that's why I've asked the experts to give me the advice, all the people who have been working so hard on it.

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay. If the total build at Canada Olympic Park is \$31 million – and that’s what it’s been budgeted as, you know, plus or minus 10 per cent contingency and whatever inflation does to it, yada, yada, yada – and if the city of Calgary has up to \$10 million for it already and if through Calgary Economic Development, I believe, there is some quasi-private sector money in there, the ask from the folks who are the proponents of this to this level of government is \$10.5 million. Do you have a figure in mind in terms of if the private sector – studios, producers, production companies, whatever – ponies up X number of dollars, then we’ll be satisfied that this is viable, and we go forward from there? Can you give me a figure?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I don’t have those figures. I think Albertans would expect us to do our due diligence and to make sure that there is support from all partners, whether it’s government, whether it’s film, whether it’s the city, whether it’s other organizations. That’s what their job is, to figure out how to solve that and who will be putting what in. I mean, Albertans are going to be the final test when you fund a project like that. I just think that the film council is going to give us good information. A number of the key players that are involved in this project are already on the Film Advisory Council, so that’s one of the reasons why I did it. Keeping the two mayors informed is very important to me as well.

8:40

**Mr. Taylor:** That is important. It’s also important to make sure, whether you get the two mayors or the two cities or the two economic development authorities or the two film commissions, that they’re talking with each other on a regular basis.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It’s about NAIT as well, with digital media, all the great things they’re doing up at NAIT. There are many discussions and dialogues that are going to have to go on.

**Mr. Taylor:** There will need to be some money going into some upgrades in the Film Alberta Studio here in Edmonton as part of the package.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I’ve not had a chance to tour it. I’ll be touring it, hopefully, sooner than later. I agree; it’s a well-loved studio, and it’s an old studio.

**Mr. Taylor:** It’s still a very functional studio.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It is very much so, yeah.

**Mr. Taylor:** It’s still a very versatile studio. You can do a lot in there. You maybe cannot shoot the biggest of the big-budget films in there, but you can do a lot. It’s sad to see it sitting there as underutilized as it has been over the last few years.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I agree.

**Mr. Taylor:** Here’s the thing. We’ve been talking about this for – well, you and I haven’t, obviously. This is the first conversation you and I have had about this, but this buzz has been going on and this conversation has been going on in Calgary-Currie, for instance, where a number of people who work or at least try to work in the film and television industry in this province live. In Calgary in cultural circles, in show biz circles it has been going on the whole time I’ve been an MLA, the need for the sound stage, the developing idea behind the digital hub and so on and so forth, and we’re still not there.

I get it that it’s better to do it right than do it fast, but there’s a best-before date on doing it right, too. There you are, doing your due diligence, and I think that’s good. I don’t think that you’re redoing diligence that’s been done before because you are incorporating the Film Alberta Studio and Edmonton’s needs into this as well, which wasn’t always done previously.

Can you give me a timeline, a date, an approximate, you know, decade/century when we may expect a decision on this?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I like your comment “best-before date.” I don’t think we’re there yet. I think we’re in a good position right now.

**Mr. Taylor:** If this was cream, it would get a little lumpy poured into the coffee.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I’ve asked for the report back from the Film Advisory Council for June.

**Mr. Taylor:** Good.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** That’s my first deadline. I just want you to know that I take this seriously. When I told Mayor Nenshi and Mayor Mandel that’s what I was doing, they were happy with that deadline because everyone wants to get on with it.

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay. Yes, please.

Now I want to talk to you about the motion picture business or the film and television production business province-wide more generally and the amount of business that we are attracting here and, again, getting back to what a couple of other people have raised before me, the projections for dollars spent in Alberta as a result of film and television production supported by the multimedia development fund and the fact that it’s pretty much stuck between \$60 million and \$65 million a year.

It was \$63.5 million in the last actual year that you have, which is 2010-11. The target for this fiscal year coming is \$60 million, for next fiscal year it’s \$60 million, and for the fiscal year 2014-15 it’s \$65 million, so I think we can agree that it’s not moving much either way.

Back in 2008 or 2009 – I believe it was 2009 – all of the Alberta film development program money, which totalled about \$20 million at that point, was awarded to some 65 projects, and that generated, according to the information I have, an estimated \$80 million of economic output within the province.

By comparison, that same year – I’m making this comparison to do the best job I can of comparing apples to apples, so let’s leave out where we were in terms of the economic crash or the economic recovery and so on and so forth. I know that every jurisdiction that competes to try and get film business has had some challenges over the last few years. But by comparison, in 2009, when our \$20 million Alberta film development program, direct spend, was generating \$80 million worth of economic output, four times, British Columbia was giving out \$178 million in tax credits and generated \$1.3 billion in work as a result of that, which is nearly 10 times. So those number are out of whack. I think and the people I’ve talked to in the business say that the direct spend approach is brilliant for local producers, small producers, people making comparatively small projects because they don’t have the deep pockets that, you know, Stephen Spielberg has, and they need the money quickly. So the direct spend works.

It’s a disincentive to Hollywood to come here, and I can’t help but suspect that our program is not competitive with what British Columbia and some other jurisdictions are doing. I’m not

comparing here with jurisdictions like New Mexico or Michigan, that completely bollixed the film tax credit approach, which ended up costing them far more than they ever made. I think we can make comparisons to jurisdictions like British Columbia, who, obviously, have been really quite successful at it. Comment?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah. You know, your comments, I guess, about the disincentive to come here are interesting. As I indicated previously, we've had the discussion about tax credits, that some jurisdictions want it and some don't. The beauty of this fund with the two streams is that it's just one of the incentives for people to come here along with what we have: the skills, the talent, and no sales tax. But we also know that part of this is, you know, reducing the grant streams from three to two and then allowing applicants to include funding that is pending from other grant sources as part of their funding plan and then rebalancing the budget allocations.

Part of this multimedia development fund is a project script development program, that we are pretty excited about because now we're starting to see more Alberta-grown projects, and I expect that to grow as time goes on. Now, when a big studio comes into Alberta, we know that typically – when *Bourne Identity* filmed here, they spent millions.

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay. Minister, that's the third reference to *Bourne Identity*. Respectfully, I think that speaks to the problem that I'm trying to identify here, that that's the only one you can talk about right now.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Right. Recently. Correct. That's right.

**Mr. Taylor:** *Brokeback Mountain* was many, many years ago.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** *Brokeback Mountain* was many years ago, yeah.

I guess my vision of this is that this should help more of the larger companies come to Alberta to film. I would think that it would encourage them to hire the Alberta crews so that they can get a higher percentage back on their films. I guess time will tell exactly which big projects are coming to us in the next six months or year.

**Mr. Taylor:** What are you doing with the cap on single projects?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The cap on . . .

**Mr. Taylor:** Previously, anyway, the maximum funding available for any single project was capped at \$5 million, was it not?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It was, yeah.

**Mr. Taylor:** And the total pool of incentives to draw from is \$20 million roughly; \$19.8 million I think is the exact figure.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah, \$19.8 million; that's correct.

**Mr. Taylor:** That's four productions of any size and it's gone.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The \$5 million cap: there's been no change. That has stayed.

**Mr. Taylor:** And there's been no change in the overall pool of incentives available.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** No. The \$19.8 million – we've maintained what we had last year. Again, maintaining was important to me to send the message.

**Mr. Taylor:** So that does restrict the number of projects that can take place in any one year, doesn't it?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Correct. Yeah.

**Mr. Taylor:** And it further restricts big projects because they obviously are going to need far more than \$5 million in direct spend in order for Alberta to appear as a jurisdiction that's competitive with Vancouver or Toronto or Montreal.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Right. Yeah. That's why the conversation about the Alberta Creative Hub is really important, how we make it that much more vibrant and that much more attractive for people to come here with just this fund and then looking at other ways of doing it as well.

**8:50**

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay. Let me refer you back to those comparatives from 2009. For us \$20 million in direct spend generated \$80 million. For B.C. \$178 million in tax credits generated \$1.3 billion, and those tax credits would not have had to appear as a line item in your British Columbia counterpart's 2009 budget. You have to put it in here because it's direct spend. A tax incentive is not direct spend, and it potentially can generate a great deal more revenue for the jurisdiction that offers it. So why aren't you going down that road?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, again, you know, the discussion we've had about tax credits or tax incentives, however you want to define them, I think, looking around at what's happening around us – and, obviously, B.C. has used it very effectively – the conversation we need to have is: is it something worth while? I look at the Film Advisory Council as a good example of a group bringing something like that forward. I think that's a really good conversation to have, see what's out there, and do the comparison of where it's working and where it's not working.

**Mr. Taylor:** Okay. Final question in the area. This is probably going to pretty much gobble up my time, too. As the Minister of Culture and Community Services with responsibility for film and television in the province of Alberta do you, Minister, personally have a vision for how big you'd like to see the industry get?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I guess the vision I have for this industry when I look at my whole portfolio of Culture and Community Services, when I look at all the sectors – all the sectors are connected; there's just no question – those Albertans that have gone to B.C. I'd like to come back to Alberta and be able to do their craft.

**Mr. Taylor:** And they'd love to be able to come back.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** And they'd love to be able to come back. I don't know how long that's going to take. I mean, that's probably the really optimistic side of me speaking, but when you look at the individuals who choose the profession of being in the film industry – it's their craft, and they're passionate about it – we have to make sure that what we have here in Alberta is viable and that we can mentor in the future all the youth that are coming up so they can go into these jobs.

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Taylor. Thank you, Minister.

Now it is the 20-minute period for a government member. I understand Mr. Amery has a few questions. Would you like to go back and forth?

**Mr. Amery:** Sure. Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, thank you very much for answering all the questions.

I have a couple of questions. Years ago we had two programs in your department: one is the CFEP, which we talked a lot about today, and the other one was the Wild Rose Foundation. I remember that under the Wild Rose Foundation we had what we called the international branch – okay? – where community members here in Alberta collected some money to do some charity work in different countries, like, sometimes doing a water well or building a little school or a library in southern Sudan. They can collect some money, and they'll be matched up to \$24,000, I think.

Now Wild Rose has kind of disappeared, and the CIP was created under Mr. Blackett. Can you tell me what happened to the international branch? Does it still exist, and where is it hidden?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** The Wild Rose Foundation is still on the books. It still exists on the books, and you're going to see it in the budget. There is money allocated in that foundation, just about \$8.5 million. What happens is that with the money from that we support Vitalize Alberta, the volunteer conference that takes place in June this year in Calgary.

With respect to the international grants – and it's funny – I've been going around and people are saying to me: "Well, what are we doing? We're not doing anything." Most certainly, we definitely are. They are funnelled through the community initiatives program because of the granting program and the efficiencies we found by funnelling it through there. In 2010-11 about \$1.3 million was given out for international grants, in 2011-12 it was about \$1.226 million, and in 2012-13 the budget is \$1.2 million. So International grants are going out; it's happening all the time.

It's interesting that some would say: well, why don't we know about it? In the past, I gather, news releases were done: we did this and this. We need to broadcast that better because I believe that the Rotary clubs, all those international clubs, all those students – like, at my kid's junior high school they raised money for a well in Ghana, and he was so excited about that. So when I think of the opportunities there for our youth to become engaged and become better global citizens, I think that we need to raise this up and do a little bit better job of it. We are funding international projects from the province of Alberta, and I'm very proud of that.

**Mr. Amery:** Good. Thank you.

When I'm looking at the FTEs, that sheet that you distributed around, I see that you have six people for communications. Right? Where are they? What do they do? Where are they located? If something like this international branch and, as the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek mentioned, the community spirit program are not really well known or advertised or not too many people know about it, isn't it part of the job of your communications people to make these programs known to the people?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Part of the communications – and I see six there. I've got one person sitting behind me who does communications, works with my ministry office. There are about five. The thing about this ministry is that we are always on the forefront communicating different initiatives, whether it's our historic sites, whether it's our museums, all the things that we're involved in. So the team, of course, does all of those things – strategic council, emerging and current issues, analyzing information – for consistent and clear messaging. I think it's really important to have the messaging.

The second part of this is the use of technology. When we had the Heilongjiang ice sculpture festival at the Legislature and we

twinned that with the Ice on Whyte festival in Old Strathcona, that was fantastic. We did a lot of stuff, put it online and put it on Flickr with pictures and such. I think that it's really, really important to leverage that out.

The forum on culture. We're going to live stream the opening on Friday night with the Premier speaking. On Saturday we'll live stream the closing, and then there's going to be an online component. That's all in there as well. It's just using technology to communicate with Albertans. We know the amount of Albertans that go to the Culture and Community Services website; it's pretty great. That's part of it. That's why there is a team there preparing for Alberta Arts Days. That's a huge part. We are in huge preparation for that as we speak because that's a huge event to coordinate across Alberta.

**Mr. Amery:** Going back to the CFEP and CIP, do you know exactly how many people you have working in these two programs?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** It's about 24. It's in the community engagement part, and there would be about 24 people that work there.

**Mr. Amery:** So 24 out of 86?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yeah.

**Mr. Amery:** Can you tell me, Minister: what is the time frame for an application submitted by a community from the time that it's submitted to the time that it is either approved or declined?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** We have cleaned up that system. We know that there were delays, that it was taking a long time to process applications. As you know, we've gone to the quarterly, where at the end of each quarter we then decide on those applications. I think that we're moving those through much quicker. As well, it gives an opportunity sometimes if an application is held over for the next quarter – that happens, which is a good thing because it gives an organization a chance to get what they need. I think that the numbers that we're processing – when you look at the number of grants that were given out in CIP and CFEP last year, we're talking 600 to 800 in those kinds of grants. So it's a lot of grants to process. We're doing our best. We have great staff. We have great individuals working on the front lines, and I appreciate that.

**9:00**

The other thing, too, is that the community spirit donation grant is online, and as I indicated previously, we are moving to get the rest of the CIP and the CFEP online as well. I think that's going to help a lot of organizations. The challenge, to me, is what I call the professional grant writers. It's tough writing a grant application. I want to get rid of that barrier so that people can write the application, and if they have a few questions, they can go online and ask the question, and our staff can support them rather than it becoming a mystery.

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you, Madam Minister.

One more question. I see that the Glenbow Museum in Calgary sees about a \$3 million increase. Can you tell me what value we get out of that \$3 million as Calgarians?

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** We get tremendous value. The Glenbow Museum stores a lot of the artifacts for the government of Alberta. It's a tremendous museum. Part of it is the upkeep to look after our collection, and it is very important to support that. We know that the Glenbow Museum is totally accountable through its annual report for the dollars it receives. The care they provide and assuring public

access is what the \$3 million is provided for in the budget. I was happy that there was an increase for them in that area.

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Amery and Minister.

I understand that we now go back to the opposition and Mr. Chase.

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. It's more of an observation than a question. My background: I have a double major, French and art. In terms of my experience with the arts when I taught elementary school, I wrote plays in both French and English. My students performed them. The project that I'm most connected with and most proud of is an 18-foot totem pole – that is currently in the school in Varsity, in Jerry Potts – that my grades 5 and 6 carved.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** My mom used to teach at Jerry Potts. There's a totem pole there?

**Mr. Chase:** Yes. It's now a French bilingual school. I just hope that the totem pole will remain an artifact in that school for ages to come.

Art and culture are attitudes, and having taught art for a number of years, promoting it is extremely important. Performance is one aspect, but appreciation is another. That's where education and teachers play an extremely important role in creating that climate, allowing children to experiment. I'm grateful to the province for the artist-in-residence programs throughout the schools because that has created quite a buzz. Students have created murals on the outside of their schools and so on, a very worthwhile, hands-on appreciation.

Another sort of general comment is that Alberta is much more than backdrop. It's much more than scenery. The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie talked about promoting and engaging individuals. We've had a series of very interesting, primarily western films in Alberta for obvious reasons, especially in the Longview area. But we need to have the professionals on stages, as the hon. member mentioned. We had a sound stage at the Currie Barracks, in the hon. member's area.

My last observation is the importance of clarity of language. I just want to give you an example of what I heard tonight, if I put various bits and pieces together, and that's that I lost my accessibility tool in the uptake of the funding mainstream. The jargon that has been used tonight needs to be refined, and a clarity of message needs to be created, particularly with performance measures, as has been brought up before.

In education, in language arts for example, we have taxonomies, where we evaluate something by very definitive measures, and you know whether the project fits into, say, one of five categories. I would encourage, in terms of whether it's grant applications or any type of evaluative circumstance, that you have a very definite taxonomy so that you know if things have improved or if they've fallen apart. The last thing you want to be accused of is being "artsy fartsy" because when people don't understand the deeper benefits of art and culture, they write it off. I know how hard it is for cities to set aside grants for sculptures or performance art or pieces of art. Therefore, within the ministry itself, in order to promote art and culture, your objectives have to be very clear. They have to be definable and defensible.

That's my little – I don't think it's a rant, but it's an observation for tonight.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Well, I just want to add something. I appreciate your comments about clarity of language and jargon. I just want to add that arts and culture in the whole breadth of what I've talked

about, what we've talked about tonight, are absolutely intrinsic to everything we do. When I look at this portfolio and how, you know, it's in the Human Services portfolio, all the nonprofits that we fund through there, it's a huge part of the social policy framework discussion that we're having. I look at it as kind of the thread that's through every department, so that's something I'll be pushing all along.

**Mr. Chase:** As has been noted by numerous members, the importance of deadlines. People can hang on and hope for only so long. We know that investment in art – I think that every dollar invested has up to a 10- or 12-fold return. Arts and culture is a key part of the livelihood, the *raison d'être* for this province.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Chase, and thank you, Minister. Mr. Chase, you have completed your comments? Thank you.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? Mr. Goudreau.

**Mr. Goudreau:** Thank you, Madam Chair. A couple of things. I really don't have formal notes in front of me, but in your earlier comments you talked about the support for archives, and you've got that identified in your budget. I know that a few of us have archives in our communities. One in my particular community has been going on for just about 30 years, and they've got a tremendous collection, especially on francophone heritage, aboriginal heritage, the development of the Peace Country, but they're struggling now. In the local paper – and I brought it here – it does identify the fact that municipal officials said that it is crucial to inform Dunvegan-Central Peace MLA, Hector Goudreau, Frank Oberle, and Pearl Calahasen that it's crucial to keep this archive centre and society preserved and operational. In your comments about the support to archives I'm just wondering what you had in mind.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** So do they have a storage issue?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Just a financial issue.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Just a financial issue. Yeah. You know, it's fascinating. As our population ages, now we want to give our stuff away, right? We want to downsize. There are tremendous, tremendous collections, historical collections, whether they're papers or documents or cars or trucks. You look at the Reynolds museum. You know, it's just astounding what they have there.

I guess my concern is what you're actually trying to archive and keep and to make sure that the records of your community are maintained. I think it's a very important discussion we need to have, Hector.

**9:10**

**Mr. Goudreau:** Okay. Thank you.

The other one is on page 47. Certainly, you've identified some budget dollars there for support for cultural infrastructure. You've identified the Cantos Music Foundation, the Mount Royal Conservatory of Music, Canada's Sports Hall of Fame, the Citadel, GO Community Centre, Fort Calgary, and the Ukrainian archives and museums. Again, I'm really disappointed to see that there's absolutely nothing there for northern Alberta, yet we account for probably 10 per cent of the population of the province of Alberta. Even in other initiatives, other things, it seems to be extremely difficult to get some money channelled to the northern part of the province. I'm just wondering what your plans are to accommodate that.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** I guess part of the discussions I've had with you, Hector, and our colleagues is to make sure that I'm aware of the

projects that are out there that need to be done, whether they're recreational facilities, whether they're performing arts. I know that the Pipestone Creek group came and met. You probably saw all that with respect to their vision for the Dr. Philip Currie museum. That's a project that's certainly up in northern Alberta.

When I look across Alberta – as I said before, you have to look at what's happening across the whole province, right? Yeah, in the larger urban centres there are things happening, but then you look at things like the 19 historic sites that we have balancing that off. I think we need to talk about that.

I know of some of the recreation complexes in your area, some of those things that you've been able to do there. Again, there are probably going to be issues. Everyone has a vision; Pipestone is the most recent one. If there are more in the northern area, I think that's also part of the northern Alberta development vision that's going to be brought forward. That's an important discussion we need to have because you're looking at cultural facilities, recreational facilities as well as all the other infrastructure we need. So I've made sure that the cultural/recreational is a big part of that.

**Mr. Goudreau:** Thank you.

I have no more questions, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Very good questions, Mr. Goudreau. Are there any more members wishing to speak?

**Mr. Groeneveld:** If I could, I'd just like to make one comment.

**The Chair:** Go right ahead.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Minister, congratulations on doing a great job tonight. I think you did wonderful. I just want to make one small correction. You did say that *Heartland* was Calgary. *Heartland* is 99 per cent shot in Highwood.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Okay. I'm sorry. My apologies. Please correct *Hansard*.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Admittedly, they do a little bit in Currie Barracks. They still do as well.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Yes, they do a little bit.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** It's unbelievable what that does for a community and what it brings to a community.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** When you get series being filmed, that's when the magic really happens in the film industry.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** I don't mind the fact that they sometimes pay me a couple of thousand dollars just to move my cows so they can shoot a scene.

Congratulations. A very good job.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you, George.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Groeneveld, and thank you, Minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak?

Seeing none, Minister, you have done an excellent job tonight. The questions have been really good, and I've learned a lot. Actually, I'm pretty excited about culture in Alberta. So, Minister, thank you very much for that.

Seeing no other questions, then pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5) the estimates of the Department of Culture and Community Services are deemed to have been considered for the time allotted in the schedule.

I'd like to remind committee members that we are scheduled to meet next on Monday, March 5, 2012, to consider the estimates of the Department of Tourism, Parks and Recreation.

Thank you, and goodnight, everyone.

[The committee adjourned at 9:14 p.m.]







