

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Wednesday, December 2, 1981

Chairman: Mr. Mandeville

10:05 a.m.

MR CHAIRMAN: The minutes of November 25 were distributed to you yesterday. Were there any errors or omissions? If not, could we have a motion to file? Mrs. Cripps. All in favor?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR CHAIRMAN: I would like to indicate to you that Mr. Rogers is not going to be with us this morning. He's at another meeting, but he said he would be available at any time if we needed him. I told him I thought it would be satisfactory to the committee for him not to be here.

Could I now call on our Sergeant-at-Arms to swear in our witnesses.

The witnesses were sworn in

MR CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Minister, on behalf of the committee I want to welcome you and your staff. I'd like to introduce the staff. On the minister's right is Barry Mitchelson. To his immediate left is Dave Rehill, Don Cline, and Julian Nowicki.

Mr. Minister, we'll turn the meeting over to you, if you want some opening comments on your department.

MR TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Possibly I could run through some of the programs we have within the department, and then see if there are questions. I'd like to start with our major cultural/recreation facilities. Just to bring you up to date, it is still \$100 per capita, over a 10-year period. There is approximately \$200 million in the budget. We provide that. We're in our sixth year and, I believe, 60 to 70 per cent of the funding has been used at this time. Within that program is also Project Co-operation, which provides 50 cents per capita grant to municipalities throughout the province, and of course these are matching dollars.

The next one is our operational assistance grant. I believe for the year we're speaking of, they were \$1 per capita. They've now been increased to \$3 per capita, and a minimum amount of \$3,000 for any village or town. We have some 98 recreation associations throughout the province. Just to name a few: the Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Soccer, Alberta Baseball, and so on. That totals some 98 associations, and we provide grants as high as \$30,000 per year to these associations. These grants are made up of three categories. There is a category for administrative assistance, \$5,000; leadership assistance, \$5,000; and program development, \$20,000 -- which have to be matched.

We have 18 regions throughout the province, with regional staff at each location which help provide information and assistance in filling out grants throughout the province. They are situated in the 18 regions. To name one in my area would be Edson, which takes care of the west area: Stony Plain,

Barrhead, and so on. I guess you are familiar with them because you have them in your own constituencies.

We provide funds for the Alberta Games, and this has been going on for some years now. I believe we're in our fifth or sixth games. The upcoming games are the Winter Games of 1982, to be held in February at Lloydminster. The Summer Games will be held in the county of Mountain View, where five communities have banded together. That will be held some time in August 1983. We are now requesting bids for the 1984 Winter Games and for the 1985 Summer Games.

We have a development at Hinton called Blue Lake that I think you're familiar with. It's where we provide training programs such as for recreation leadership in the communities, cross-country skiing, hiking. If there are questions on that, I'll have some of the other people help me go through them.

We have another program that has just started, Outdoors Alberta, where we have a bus go through most communities in the province. That provides leadership programs to recreation boards and recreation people in the municipalities.

We have another program, Athlete Development, where we provide special funds to those athletes who will compete in some of our larger games, such as the Pan American Games, Western Canada Games, Canada Games, and the Olympics. We provide \$330 per athlete, and we fund some 560 athletes each year.

I believe that covers some of the major things in recreation. I'd now like to turn to our parks department. We have initiated the urban parks, which you're all familiar with. I don't know if they were initiated in the year we're discussing, but just to give you an outline: we have the five cities -- Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Lloydminster, and Grande Prairie -- which are just starting to develop their parks. Of course, that ties into what we've had done in Edmonton at Capital City Park, and in Calgary at Fish Creek Park, and of course the large provincial park at Kananaskis Country. We are moving ahead on a program of developing provincial parks at one park per year. We are well ahead in construction at Carson-Pegasus. We're now moving with Whitney Lakes Provincial Park, we're planning for Buck Lake, and the fourth one would be Long Lake, just out of Edson.

We have developed a new program, which you're familiar with: the recreation areas, where we've started this last year with 10 recreation areas in the province. Possibly for information of the group here, I should outline the areas they're in. The 10 areas in the province this year are Wadlin Lake, at Fort Vermilion; Goose Lake, at Fort Assiniboine; Open Creek, at Rimbey; Fox Lake, at Hanna; Golden Sheaf, developed by Seven Persons; the Snye, at Fort McMurray; Lac Sante, at Two Hills; Battle River, at Wainwright; Jubilee Park, at Calmar; and Ridge Reservoir, Raymond.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that pretty well outlines the programs we have available in Recreation and Parks. I would be happy to answer any questions members have.

MR BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, I'm very happy with the programs Recreation and Parks have had over the last number of years. I think they're functioning very well, and I don't really have any objections. But I wonder whether the minister could advise whether there has been any consideration on the major cultural facilities. It was a 10-year program of \$100 per capita, which is all right but everybody was not able to participate in the program the first, second, or third year, because maybe some communities were not ready at the beginning or the funds were not available to be taken out the first year. Has consideration been given for that extra inflationary costs for those who

applied for the seventh, eighth, and ninth year? I know the Minister of Transportation has made provision in his department on the street improvements grants, that those on a five-year program who would be making application and granting at a later time would have a little amount provided for that extra cost. Could the minister advise?

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, that has been considered by me for some time. The hon. Member for Vegreville is right in saying that in 1975, \$100 was \$100, and in 1981 it is something like \$47. So inflation has hit pretty hard. I've had a number of requests from communities across the province for additional funds. I will be going forward to my colleagues with a package, to try to build in an inflation factor. In short: yes, we're considering it. Just when, I'm not sure. Of course, we're all aware it ends in 1984, and I'm also looking at what happens after that. But that's down the road a bit.

MR STROMBERG: Mr. Chairman, the minister indicated that perhaps the urban parks were not in the estimates before us here. If they are, does the minister have any intentions of expanding the urban parks into the cities that are perhaps not 30,000 in population, down to, say, 10,000?

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, the urban parks I mentioned -- and possibly I shouldn't have -- are in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. That's where the funding comes from. They're not in these estimates. But yes, I would say that once these five parks are developed the same as the first two, whoever the minister of the day will be would consider further expansion throughout the province. But I can't make that commitment today, and I guess we shouldn't even have raised it. Now that you have, I would encourage whoever takes over that possibly -- you know, it's a six-year program we have. Shortly before that ends, I'm sure the government of the day would be looking to expansion.

MR STROMBERG: Of course, looking into the future is difficult for the next minister. The cities that might be eligible for this type of park, it would be very advantageous if they could be given some funding to acquire the land for the park, not the development. This land that is running through the river valleys is escalating in price, just going right through the ceiling. If there were some type of funding made available that the land could be acquired and held in trust until the day the park was developed.

MR TRYNCHY: I would ask the hon. member to keep that speech handy when we sit in the fall with our heritage fund estimates.

MR GOGO: Mr. Chairman, we're not talking about urban parks policy, but I certainly want to congratulate the minister for what he has done, particularly as regards Lethbridge West. The question I have comes under the topic of operations assistance for the 98 recreation associations in Alberta. I've long felt, as I'm sure many of my colleagues have, that amateur sport in Alberta is a very, very essential, integral part of the involvement of volunteers. I'm sure the minister would agree. I've had concerns for some time that, on the one hand, we encourage amateur sport at all levels, yet each year we see throughout the province baseball teams, hockey teams, these teams, those teams, that are in interplayoff positions. They haven't won provincial championships, and in some cases they have and have to go on to national championships, and there's a constant lack of funds. I would like to get the

minister's views as to how he sees the role of his department, because I believe most Albertans look to Recreation and Parks as a catalyst that provides funds for amateur sport and as a champion of amateur sports, as opposed to, say, Culture, to get his views on how he feels his department should assist those groups, other than through these 98 programs under recreation associations in the province of Alberta. With all respect, baseball, hockey, and so on, if we grant funds to those organizations and they are used exclusively for administrative costs, particularly if they're located in Calgary and Edmonton, these funds just do not reach. These volunteer and athletic groups in the Cardstons and even Whitecourts, I'm sure; certainly the Drayton Valleys.

Would the minister respond in two ways: one, his philosophy as minister as to how he thinks the government of Alberta should act with regard to amateur sports; secondly, whether he has given any consideration to ensuring that this filtering down of these funds he now grants to these provincial associations to the level of the actual sandlot baseball.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, that's a very good question and one I've had considerable interest in myself and considerable concern. I have to agree that the funding we provide, and I've mentioned a \$30,000 figure, is not that great. That goes to, say, the Alberta Soccer Association, and they use it for administration, leadership, and programs. But no funds are available through Recreation and Parks for travel. I've had a number of requests from teams across the province who wish to go here or there. Right now, we're in the process of developing a new sports policy for the province. Intersport 5 is available now by Dr. Van Vliet, and we have developed a paper ourselves, from the division of recreation, which will come to me. Some time in March, I hope to meet with all the groups across the province at a convention in Edmonton, where we'll lay the two thoughts together and see if we can come up with a consensus on how it would work.

The matter of dollars is important. I suppose what I'd like to see happen, and I'll be asking for support there, is the Western Canada Lottery funds will be coming for review and renegotiations on March 31, 1982, which is just a few months from now. I would hope, and I watch the TV advertisements which say if you buy a Winsday or Provincial ticket, all the funds go to recreation. That is somewhat misleading, because if you consider where the funds go -- and for the members here I might just outline that 30 per cent of the funds go to the Calgary exhibition board, 30 per cent to the Edmonton exhibition board, 20 per cent go to Culture, and 20 per cent go to Recreation and Parks. I have a breakdown of where our funds go, if the members wish. But that might be a time when we should consider more grassroots funding to our associations across the province. When I say grassroots, that can be for travel, but for local recreation directors or sports directors, people who can really get out there and teach the young people what sports is all about, develop them into athletes that I hope in 1988, when we see the Olympics, we would have a number of Alberta athletes there. Possibly in 1982, and the review of the lottery funding and the split of it, we might have some consideration there. But there is no easy answer outside of more dollars. It's pretty tough to get those sometimes.

Of course, the associations as a whole have options where they can have casinos, bingos, and we encourage them to raise these kinds of funds, and then fund it down. If there is a mosquito baseball team that is going on a provincial championship to Quebec or someplace, these funds would be available to them. Of course, the private sector is picking up a great share of the

load, and I appreciate what they're doing. Dollars are always something we're short of.

MR GOGO: Thank you very much. I not only appreciate your feelings, but your commitment before this committee this morning. I'll certainly pledge my support. In my view, certainly in Lethbridge, about 99 per cent is from the private sector. Maybe the 1 per cent is in the form of postage. In the interim, could the minister give consideration to such a minor matter as providing crests of the province of Alberta for each member of a team who travels somewhere? As you know, we've had the plastic pins to provide; great difficulty getting other things. I would think there are other ways, prior to the funding -- if you could provide baseball caps, for example, or crests to wear on jackets, with Alberta on them, maybe even Wild Rose Country. I don't care if it has Whitecourt on it, but as long as we could provide those kinds of crests, so when our young people go out of our province they become visibly good will ambassadors of the province. Notwithstanding what your good wishes are, what you'd like to do with your colleagues, in the interim perhaps you could find a few dollars to produce crests that would be available to MLAs, that they could provide to those teams.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, that's a good idea. I'll certainly take that under consideration and see if we can come up with something. I just want to say one more thing before we leave that topic. We have a recreation, parks, and wildlife foundation, which is the Crown corporation. I would encourage all MLAs to write them letters and see if there is extra funding, because they don't duplicate the funding we do but they try to add to the concerns such as you have. Whether they provide for travel or not, you might want to check out. But funding is there, and I think if you worked closely with that board, you might have something that would be very beneficial to areas in the province.

MR McCRAE: Mr. Chairman, I'll just make a couple of comments, and then ask a question. I want to comment on the recommendation the minister develop a crest or a baseball cap or something. I would just urge the minister, if he does that, to consider the color combination we used on the hopper cars. I think they're very attractive and would probably suit the crest as well.

When he's looking at reallocation of the lottery fund moneys, and I know there is some feeling that the two major exhibitions have a disproportionate share of the funding, I hope he will be mindful of the fact -- I know he is -- that the two major exhibitions had other lottery arrangements that they forewent or gave up to establish the basis for the present Western Lottery foundation, or whatever the appropriate name is. I share the view that there should be some reallocation of the funds, but I hope the two major exhibitions would be considered with regard to what has gone on in the past rather than just looking forward. They did give up something very significant to establish the very successful lottery operation they have right now.

Mr. Chairman, my question is: the minister referred to Blue Lake. I've been up there and saw what I thought was a very significant, worth-while pamphlet outlining the program you have there. I wonder if you could comment on the participation you're getting. Is it widely used? Are there lots of people in the different programs? I have thought of going up there a number of times myself, and never had the time to do it. I wonder if you could comment on what kind of use there is.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, before I turn it over to Mr. Nowicki, yes, Blue Lake is used very extensively. At times, we have waiting lists. But to get you the exact figures, I will turn it over to Mr. Nowicki. I'm sure he has those figures for us.

Just before we do that, I appreciate the comments in regard to the exhibition boards. I've never said we should take away what they've started. But when you see the advertisements on TV, maybe that's what we should stop. It's misleading when they say that if you buy tickets -- it doesn't say it goes to Calgary and Edmonton. It says it goes for recreation and sports, and that's not happening. So I think we can work out a split of the funds, so to speak, in a way that everybody could be satisfied and would be beneficial. But certainly, I do not say we should exclude the people who started years ago.

MR NOWICKI: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I don't have the exact figures, but they would be in the order of 3,000 to 3,500 participants for the year. You have to consider the multiplier effect, that these are leaders we're training. Once they take an advanced course at Blue Lake Centre, they would go back to their respective communities and, in turn, pass their skills on to people within the communities. So you can increase that perhaps by 10 or 20, assuming they run one course per year and have 10 or 20 participants. That is the objective of the centre.

MR TRYNCHY: We insist very strongly that the leaders who go to Blue Lake, when they get back home they put their education to work with their community groups. We don't like to see that you would go to learn something and then keep it to yourself and not pass it on. It's a sort of rule of thumb that if you go to Blue Lake to learn, we expect you to teach somebody else when you get back home.

MRS CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to re-echo John's concern. I really believe that once a group has won the right to represent Alberta at some games, they should be supported in some way. I had the opportunity two years in a row to work with a softball team that was going to represent the province. It's very, very difficult. I might say that I couldn't find anything anywhere in the department that was of assistance to them, even the hats that John mentioned.

Can you give me a rundown of where we are on the Buck Lake park? You mentioned Blue Lake, but I notice there is no mention of Crimson Lake. Have we done any funding at all at Crimson Lake?

MR TRYNCHY: Blue Lake is completely different from Crimson Lake. Crimson Lake is a provincial park and Blue Lake is a leadership training area.

MRS CRIPPS: I'm talking about the leadership training centre that is at Crimson Lake.

MR TRYNCHY: I'll have Mr. Cline answer that question, along with where we are with regard to Buck Lake. I understand we're still premature in budget to see what we have for next year. But the planning stages of the park are being done for Buck Lake, and I think some dollars have been spent.

One more thing I should mention to the members that you might think about. Our Seniors Games, which will be held every second year, will be held in Camrose in 1982. So if you have some thoughts on that.

MR CLINE: Thank you. With respect to Buck Lake, it's presently funded for planning dollars. We anticipate continuing the planning through until next spring. Our process at the moment is to have put together a report which outlines the various policy options for the kind of park that would be provided there. The next step, as we see it, is to go to a consulting firm to do all the planning for us. We're investigating that now. We have made some commitment to go to the public there, and we'll be orchestrating that as soon as the consultant comes on stream. One of his first tasks is to take the state of the art of the plan out to the public so they may give us some feedback. We hope to begin some detailed planning beginning in the spring, and we should be in a position to have it in our development budget either later in the year, or certainly start construction in '83.

MRS CRIPPS: Supplementary. I certainly hope you're not using the term "orchestrating" in its normal sense. I would hesitate to try to orchestrate the people in that area. You say construction in '83. I understood that construction would begin in 1982.

MR CLINE: You're right. It is anticipated some construction in 1982, but it will not be in full swing until '83 that you'll see a lot of activity. Most of the '82 construction will be clearing of roads, rights of way, and that type of thing.

MRS CRIPPS: Further supplementary, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to say that I will also be on your side when you're talking about reallocation of the funding for recreation. I've already written a letter to the minister, indicating that I believe those funds should be up for review. And we heard the representation on behalf of the majors from the member from Calgary.

MR TRYNCHY: I presume you're talking about lottery funds.

MR STEVENS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister would identify for the committee, particularly me as Member for Banff-Cochrane: when a student seeks assistance in an education matter, he or she has access to bursaries, private assistance, public assistance through scholarships, particularly the Heritage Savings Trust Fund scholarship program. But when an individual or a parent wants to develop themselves further in recreation and sports, my impression is that they are encouraged by the organizations to be members of the various organizations, members of a group, to seek assistance. I wonder if the minister would indicate what our government's position is with regard to financial assistance for activities, events, competitions, and so on, not just to organizations -- and you mentioned administration, leadership, program development, and so on -- but to individuals or parents. I'm thinking particularly now, with the 1988 winter Olympics ahead of us, many of the Albertans who are 11 and 10 years of age today, or 13 years of age, perhaps will be competitors. Are they obliged and required to be members of particular organizations to receive assistance?

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, before I turn it over to Mr. Nowicki, we ask the associations themselves to pick the athletes they feel should receive our athlete development funding. That's where we get the names. Let's assume we need 12 figure skaters. They would pick the 12 top provincial athletes, and we fund them on that basis.

MR NOWICKI: We provide our programs in terms of dollars directly to provincial associations or municipalities. Those are our two "agents" that we use as deliverers of programs. When it comes to athletes and sports, the provincial association is the umbrella group to whom we channel the dollars, and then the individuals, through their local clubs, access these dollars from the provincial association.

MR STEVENS: Supplementary. If I understand correctly, no individual can seek provincial financial assistance unless he or she is a member or is sponsored or is chosen by the particular sport group.

MR TRYNCHY: Basically, that's right. We don't have a means of providing funds to an individual on an individual basis that I'm aware of. If I'm wrong, I'm sure my colleagues will correct me. That's how it works. As I answered a question in the House the other day about extra funding from now to 1988, certainly -- and that's what I referred to again this morning when I said we should be looking at something else in regard to split of lottery funds so we can get these funds to athletes who want to become our superstars in 1988 or participants in that event. But I'm not aware of any program we have that would fund an individual, unless they go through an association.

MR STEVENS: How does Alberta's position on this compare to sister provinces or to Canada?

MR TRYNCHY: I did have that figure here with me. I forget where we stand in regard to individual athlete funding. I believe we're about in the middle. But when you take all the programs that Recreation offers, from capital expenditures down, we lead all the provinces in Canada by quite a ways. As far as athlete development, we're about fifth or sixth I believe, the last figures I looked at.

MR MITCHELSON: Just a response to the initial supplementary question. I guess the position is, number one, if we were put in judgment in relation to the expertise of a particular athlete or developing athlete, it would be a horrendous responsibility on our part. We don't have the expertise on a sport by sport or activity by activity basis to be able to make that judgment. We just don't have that kind of expertise in the department. What we do is seek out the expertise that is throughout the communities and at the provincial level; in other words, say an Alberta basketball association. These are the people who are responsible for leadership development, program planning, at both a provincial level and throughout the province, as well as administering basketball. Who better has the expertise to make some kind of judgment in relationship to the developing abilities of an athlete or a participant? This is the criterion as far as saying who should make that judgment as far as the developing athlete. A similar strategy is used by other provinces, where they will say if there are moneys going to be given to developing athletes from the entry position through, it would be done through the provincial association for that particular activity. It is also the criterion used by the federal government, where they, in their carding program for national and international athletes, have two tiers. That money is given to the national association -- to use the same example, the Canadian basketball association. They would identify their top 20 people, and the money is then through the association to that developing athlete. So it's consistent throughout Canada.

MR STEVENS: I appreciate the minister's answers and the assistance of the deputy minister. Would the minister consider, if there is any other province or if the federal government supports individual athletes, in addition to programs that are directed toward organizations for their selection, would Alberta consider, and subject to budget, matching such programs to provide for individual initiative, and possibly competition, training development, or whatever, may be available in the funding, rather than limiting it at this time only to organizations? If there is another program in Canada, would we at least examine that and consider, subject to budget, whether or not we would match that?

MR TRYNCHY: That's a good question that needs follow up. I would certainly support looking at such a program if I could see where somebody else in Canada was doing it, or the Canadian government. We have some difficulties with our federal government in that when a team is picked to represent Canada, and they are athletes from all the provinces and some from Alberta, they don't really pick up the total costs, so we have to come in and help too. My theory always has been that if it's a Canadian team, representing the country, the Canadian government should pay for it. But that's an aside.

I was corrected by colleagues. We have provided individual funding in the past, through my own office, where they can show hardship cases. If you feel somebody is out there that needs some help, certainly we would look at that on an individual basis.

Yes, I would be willing to look at any type of program that would provide funding for these people who want to learn. I know what you're talking about, because I've seen it many times, where they just don't have the dollars and they don't continue. Then again, we have the great fund administered by the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, which provides scholarship funding for athletes. Once they reach a university stage, that funding is there. But what I'm hearing is that there is nothing between the grassroots and university. Certainly, I would look at that. If there is a total Canada-wide program, we'd certainly be involved, subject of course to budget.

MRS CRIPPS: I didn't get an answer to the Crimson Lake question, the leadership development centre there.

MR CLINE: I'm not sure what centre you're talking about at Crimson Lake. There is not one there run by the government. There is a private one there.

MRS CRIPPS: That's what I'm asking. Are you assisting with the funding there on a matching or any kind of basis?

MR CLINE: We certainly aren't.

MR TRYNCHY: If the question is -- can you give us the name of the organization? If it's Goldeye Centre -- is that the one you're talking about? Yes, Goldeye Centre has come forward with a request for funding from the provincial government. It's in the works now, and I should have an answer for that some time in the near future. But the one I'm thinking of is the one at Rocky Mountain House, and it's a separate issue. There is a request for funding from Goldeye Centre to the provincial government, and we're looking at it right now.

MRS EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, first of all I'd like to commend the minister, even in relation to this year, the budget, but for his co-operation and enthusiasm for any ideas that are brought forth on behalf of constituents. I'd also like to commend the people who work in the Department of Recreations and Parks, particularly out in the field areas, because I've found them to be very friendly, extremely co-operative, and very helpful with regard to the type of work they're doing. Thirdly, I'd like to commend the minister for his participation in helping Calgary to win the Olympic bid.

I'm extremely fortunate to represent an area, Calgary North West, which has, directly to the west of it, one of the finest playground areas. I'm not referring to what we always thought of as the federal national parks, but of course Kananaskis Country. I would like to take one moment to reprimand, I guess, or bring to the attention of my colleagues this morning that we really are talking about the estimates for 1979-80. I only do this because I tend to take exception to members of the opposition when they take leeway with looking at futuristic plans. So I would like to bring people back to the estimates we're discussing.

One overall question I have, and it flows from page 18.4 and 18.5, and it's a general question to the minister. I see a lot of words such as development, planning, support services, and I realize that the dollars the minister has to work with are very, very precious because they are well-utilized throughout our province. I know a lot more dollars could be used. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you could please relate regarding this year of the accounts, '79-80, what evaluation and accountability you have in your department to ensure that all the items listed in this budget are well spent.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, before I turn that over to Mr. Rehill for comments, leadership development is what we were talking about at Blue Lake and our people in the regions talking to the recreation directors and groups, anybody who is interested in any type of program. We have leadership courses in cross-country skiing. We have people going out and helping the local ice arenas make ice, teaching them how to do it right. We have a number of things that are available to the people of Alberta. There is an ever-increasing demand for more of this. We feel our budget is very well spent in that. As a matter of fact, we could use more funds to do that because there is a need out there. If there is any specific the hon. member is talking about, I'd welcome her comments. Otherwise, we feel we've done a really good job, except we don't have the dollars we'd like to have so we could do a better job.

Maybe we could have our deputy minister on that.

MR MITCHELSON: Mr. Chairman, assessment of dollars spent is a difficult question. I'll try to direct it to a number of our different funding areas. I would acknowledge that we are attempting to improve cost expenditures and reviewing them. As far as association grants are concerned, we think it's extremely important that an association come to us with a plan, basically indicating to us what they're going to expend those dollars on. We give some direction how those moneys are allocated, whether it be for administration, program, or leadership development. They come to us with that plan. We review it and ensure there is some indication the dollars they are budgeting for each of those are legitimate causes and the projection of costs are as accurate as we can measure them. But we're trying to balance program with the moneys they're suggesting they would expend.

At the end of a particular year, they must table with us an accountant's statement of expenditures; in other words, that the moneys they said they were

going to spend on a particular thing were expended in that area. That is required before we would consider their grant application for the next period. Most grant programs in the department are handled that way. I'm encouraging the department that we even have to be more thorough in our review of both applications and, at the end of the year, what they have done for that year.

As far as capital development is concerned, again it's an area I'm encouraging the department to be more thorough in, both in our projections, if we're talking about park development. One strategy I'm encouraging now is that we don't come forward with an RFD for a park, but we come forward with planning money. It would relate back to the question this morning. We would then take a plan for any particular park to the community to get the people's opinions, and modify them as we sit in review with the community, however large a park is that surrounding community for. Only then would we go forward with an RFD for a particular park. Again, there would be a program statement of development of the park in relationship to the cost. We're doing our best that way. At the end of the year, we do that. So there is a process, obviously. From our perspective, we can improve on that, and I'm encouraging that. Obviously, we're trying to monitor to the best of our ability.

MRS EMBURY: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could have the dollars in this year that went to Calgary in the recreation/cultural grant program. As I understand it, Mr. Minister, the program is set up that the large cities could be penalized if they have rapid growth in the areas. I'm just wondering if I could have a comparison of dollars from either the year before this one and this year, just to see how Calgary actually came out in regard to these recreation dollars.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I assume the member is talking about the major cultural/recreation facilities program. No city, town, or community is penalized because of rapid growth. Every year, they can take those people into consideration. When they make their application for grants, they use all the people there. They can upgrade their grants on a yearly basis. In the past, Calgary and Edmonton could only receive 10 per cent of their funds each year. This was changed, if members recall, by me just a year ago, whereas this year they could apply for the funds they felt were necessary as long as they matched them. In this case, Calgary has applied for considerably more funds than they have ever done before. We have some difficulty because I don't believe we have funds available at this time.

We can't give you an exact figure of what they got last year. I believe \$22 million was available to Calgary, let through the program, and they could either apply for it all in one year or over the next two or three years. They chose now to accelerate their programs and have applied for some \$10 or \$12 million more than in the past. That's about as close as we can get. We accept that, and I encourage it. As I said before, the inflation factor is such that they might be receiving less for their dollar in the years ahead. But they're not penalized in any way. I don't know if I have the right drift of that question. As a community grows .#.#. Let's assume that Calgary was 500,000 in 1975 and 800,000 at the end of the program. They could apply for 800,000 at the end of the program and receive their \$100 per capita. So they would not be penalized in any way.

MR CHAIRMAN: A further supplementary, Mrs. Embury?

MRS EMBURY: Yes, I have one more, Mr. Chairman. I thought that program allowed for \$1 per capita up to a certain population, then over and above that.

MR TRYNCHY: No, I guess the member is now talking about the operational grants. I want to review that again.

MRS EMBURY: I'm sorry, I didn't mean [inaudible]. So it's straight \$1 per capita?

MR TRYNCHY: One dollar per capita. But the operational grant in the past was \$1 per capita for the first 20,000 people, and 20 cents thereafter. That has just recently been changed by me and my colleagues. They now receive \$3 per capita straight across the board, and no community would receive less than \$3,000.

MRS EMBURY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sheila, for getting us back on the 1979-80 track.

MR BATIUK: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to go back to the 10 recreational areas approved in the spring session. I will really ask about one, Lac Sante, near the town of Two Hills. The town of Two Hills and its organizations have done a remarkable job over the past two years in upgrading the area, with very little or no financial assistance. I spoke to the fellow in Lac La Biche. I don't know if his title is regional recreation consultant or director. He told me Lac Sante was advancing very well. I wonder whether any funding has already been provided to these 10 recreational areas. No doubt as they worked they had to either borrow the money or defer payment, which may cost interest. I wonder whether any funding has been provided to any.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to be very careful in answering this, because you told us to stick with 1979-80. If I have the permission of the Chair .#.#.

MR CHAIRMAN: You do, Mr. Minister.

MR TRYNCHY: Three communities have applied for funding. The grant applications are in. The grant application the member is speaking about is in, and funding should be going out to them very quickly. Three communities have applied; the other seven are in the midst of applying. Hopefully, we'll have all these on stream very shortly.

MR BATIUK: I'm sorry for asking this, Mr. Minister, but this was with regard to the program discussed earlier.

MR CHAIRMAN: I have to agree that I've been lenient as far as getting off the '79-80 estimates is concerned. Knowing there is nothing controversial in the department, I have been lenient and I hope that will be excused.

MR STROMBERG: Mr. Chairman, over the years, consumption of alcohol has been a major problem in some of our provincial parks. I realize that policing has been stepped up, and it's certainly helped in some areas. I want to know if consideration is being given to the total banning of alcohol in some of the

parks near to the larger urban centres, where alcohol privileges have been badly abused. You have to give consideration to quite a number of people who visit our provincial parks on the weekend with the idea of holidaying and not drinking, especially our senior citizens.

MR TRYNCHY: A few years ago, Mr. Chairman, liquor was not acceptable in provincial parks. With the change in legislation, this is now permissible. On the whole, across the province, we have found that we have less alcohol problems this year than we had when liquor was totally banned. Certainly if there's an occasion or area where we have some abuse, I would appreciate hearing about it. We'd look at it on an individual park basis.

It's interesting, because I don't believe I've received a letter about alcohol abuse in a park. Last year, I received two. On the whole, we have better enforcement by the RCMP. We have a better-educated public out there. Unless Mr. Cline wants to add anything, at this time we have less difficulty with alcohol in parks than we've ever had. I hope that will continue. But I want to make it very clear that if there is abuse and we feel it's necessary to change, of course I'd have to come forward to my colleagues and suggest that we might have to have some changes. At this time, we don't see that happening. Mr. Cline, do you want to comment on that?

MR CLINE: I could just say that last year we had a particular problem in one provincial park near one of the urban centres. At that time, we undertook a public relations campaign. The results of the campaign were so good that we've tended to believe perhaps that's the more appropriate way to go at this time.

MR STROMBERG: Mr. Chairman, my supplementary would be: was this success in cooling down or toning down the consumption of alcohol in the parks due to the Parks Watch program implemented a couple of years ago? How successful was Park Watch?

MR CLINE: The success of Park Watch is a little difficult to measure in finite terms, because it's all you prevent that is a success. Park Watch was not the one I was referring to, but we feel it has been very effective in reaching the public. We're looking at ways of making it even more effective. We also had a very specific program in one park. We ran ads in local papers and on radio stations for a short period of time -- a saturation campaign, I suppose you could call it. But the Park Watch program itself has given us a positive image which the old enforcement kinds of attitudes didn't do. So we're very pleased with the Park Watch program.

MR BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have three questions this morning. I just wanted to comment, perhaps facetiously, to the Member for Camrose: perhaps he should approach the Member for Lethbridge West with regard to the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission and apply to have a special park set up where alcoholic beverages are not consumed.

Other than that, I have three questions. The first has to do with the accountability procedure with regard to grants to organizations within municipalities. Dr. Mitchelson briefly commented on it. My understanding is that organizations or municipalities are not only required to have an accountant or auditor audit the expenditure of funds by these groups or organizations which receive grants from the province, but there is also another requirement that the municipalities themselves are requested to verify

the statements these organizations bring forward. Is that a necessary requirement? I've had some concern expressed by some municipalities about this new requirement, that they in fact are requested to verify the statements which an accountant or auditor has already verified or approved for these organizations.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, certainly we have to have accountability. Another way we do it is in a master plan which accounts -- and an audit, of course. But I wasn't aware that we're asking for anything different. As a matter of fact, we've changed some of the regulations that made it easier and simpler for local groups. I know what the member is getting at. I wonder if the Auditor General has been asking for things we have to provide. I have to check that out, but the Department of Recreation and Parks is not asking for anything new. If we're asked by the Auditor General's department to provide figures, we must get them from somewhere. I'm not sure I totally understand. Could you give us an example? That would probably help us.

MR BRADLEY: I don't have the specific, but I can get that for you and I will bring it to your attention. The fact is that the municipality was being requested to verify a statement which had been provided by an organization which had had some accounting firm provide that information.

MR TRYNCHY: It's a good question, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to make this comment. I have some deep concern that we ask for too much accountability, because we will then kill the volunteers we so desperately need in these communities to do these things. As a recreation board member and as a volunteer in days past, you tended to get the work done. You really didn't worry about accountability because you didn't have that many dollars to work with. If you got a dollar, you made sure it did two dollars work. That's how important our volunteers are. I would sure appreciate the concern of the hon. member to us. If we're doing something that doesn't have to be done, we'll have to look at it. But if it's something we must have because of instruction from, say, the Auditor General -- and I just use that example because I don't know -- then we might have to consider that in a different way.

MR BRADLEY: The concern was that if an accountant has already looked at the expenditures, approved them, and said it has been expended on the purpose, how is a municipality put in a position to judge or verify a statement which has already been made? They were concerned how we pass judgment on somebody else who is an expert in the field and has said the expenditure has been made.

My next question has to do with page 18.4, vote 2.4.4, under the heading, Recreation to special groups. I wonder if you might provide the committee with an outline of exactly what that expenditure was and which groups were assisted in that program.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Nowicki will get that. It's probably the handicapped, disabled. There are a number of associations out there that we fund on a special basis yearly.

MR NOWICKI: If you can just give me a moment, Mr. Minister.

MR BRADLEY: I have one other question. To ensure I'm on the right track after the Member for Calgary North West has directed us in this direction, I would like to ask with regard to an outdoor education centre or a centre similar to

Blue Lake being developed in southern Alberta, and whether any funds under this vote have been expended to explore or develop the idea of setting up a similar centre to serve southern Alberta, particularly the southwest corner.

MR TRYNCHY: There has been nothing in the funds we're looking at for such a project. It has been discussed in a minor way. Of course, all this hinges on future budgets, but there is none in the estimates we're reviewing now for a facility such as Blue Lake in the southern part of the province.

MR BRADLEY: I'm just trying to make a representation and still be in the context of what the Member for Calgary North West has brought to our attention.

MR TRYNCHY: I understand exactly what you're driving at.

MR NOWICKI: Mr. Chairman, in answer to Mr. Bradley, in 1979-80 I'll give you some examples of what the special group section did in terms of programming. They co-sponsored with the Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association, Alberta section, and the University of Alberta a national conference on sport and training of physically disabled athletes; provided in-depth consultation to the Canadian Association for Young Children for the planning and hosting of a major conference in Calgary in 1980; co-sponsored with the University of Alberta two workshops on play program for moderately mentally retarded children; continued to sponsor provincial level conferences such as recreation leadership, and senior citizen and cross-country skiing for the mentally retarded -- in total, 12 provincial leadership opportunities were provided; sponsored or co-sponsored 39 clinics, workshops, and seminars on a regional area basis; 19 disabled athletes received financial assistance from the new Alberta athlete development program through this particular section; continued development of recreation for special groups, such as part of larger projects such as Intersport 5, the provincial aquatic workshop and summer playground courses; continued pioneer courses, which are designed to expose the older adult to outdoor skills and leadership -- a number of these courses are run at Blue Lake Centre for developing senior citizen leaders. That's a capsule summary of some of the programs that were done.

MR TRYNCHY: If any hon. member would like any information, a breakdown, of what is in the estimates, certainly just ask us for it and we'll get that to you in writing so you can be familiar with it and use it in whatever way you see fit in your own constituency or with your own groups. Certainly, that would be a request we would follow up on.

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stromberg, did you have a supplementary question to Mr. Bradley's first question, or was it a point of defence?

MR STROMBERG: No, a new point.

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. Campbell, followed by Mr. Gogo.

MR CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I too would like to commend the minister and the department for the job they're doing and the co-operation I receive. It's really excellent.

My question was brought up in regard to Goldeye Centre by the Member for Drayton Valley. Nevertheless, I have another question. You say you're

developing a park at Buck Lake. Do you have any interdepartment contact with, say, Transportation in order to make sure roads are available so people can get to the park?

MR TRYNCHY: Certainly. When we develop a park, we work with all departments involved: Energy and Natural Resources, Public Lands, Transportation. Certainly, that would be one of the first steps we would do in our planning. I hope I'm not wrong. If I am, I'm sure Mr. Cline will correct me.

MR CLINE: Specifically with roads, there is a specific budget in the Department of Transportation to provide access to provincial parks. Definitely we are co-ordinating with them the access to parks program. As well, we have regular contact with such other departments as Energy and Natural Resources, and Environment, I think are the two major departments we contact in the planning for these.

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gogo, followed by Mr. Stevens.

MR GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to make a comment and then ask a question. I guess it's really a policy question. This year, we had the Alberta Summer Games in Lethbridge, and they were extremely successful. While the deputy and others are here, I want to say that my impressions of people who have been associated with you or agencies of yours, such as Max Gibb, certainly Marty Rolof who is now with the Games Council but for several years was with your department; Rick Schott of Lethbridge, and Brian Gardner -- they've been so extremely helpful to citizens of the community. I'd like that to be on the record for the deputy to be aware of. They show up at various meetings at all hours. I think they're a great reflection on your department in my community.

One concern I've had, and I don't know where it is in terms of policy. I don't notice many females with your department around the province, other than at the end of a typewriter. I think it would be an extremely good exercise, particularly in view of what is happening in Ottawa this afternoon in terms of the constitution, to see a higher presence of females with regard to young people involved in sports throughout the province. I think it would set an excellent example for the 50 per cent of the young people in our schools who are female, and would do a lot to encourage things like the federal program Participaction, and the active involvement of people. I really don't know what number you have. I could ask the same question regarding native people. But just with regard to females, Mr. Minister, do you feel there are now sufficient in your department so they can carry out in an active way in the communities of Alberta that young females should be involved in programs?

MR TRYNCHY: That's a tough one. I certainly would encourage everybody to become involved in our department. In my term of office, we have never excluded ladies, young or otherwise, to become part of our team. We have some tremendous ladies who are working for us in a number of different capacities, who have proven they are a valuable asset to our team. Do we have them come forward? If we do and we've turned them down, I'd be disappointed. But if they haven't come forward on their own, I really don't know how we could encourage it outside of suggesting to the ladies that they should take an active part in applying for certain jobs. I think equal pay for equal employment is there, and we haven't discouraged it in any way. I don't know if any of our people want to comment. We have a number of recreational

directors in the province in the regions that are ladies. Mr. Nowicki, would you like to add to it?

MR NOWICKI: Mr. Chairman, that's a very good question. In terms of the division, we have 15 managers and three ladies who are managers. Two have become managers in the last year and a half. We have some sections where a lot of our professional staff are females, to a point where some of the males are complaining that they're just hiring females in that particular section. We hire on the basis of the most capable people we can recruit, and we have some very, very capable females. We certainly hire a lot of them in the division.

MR GOGO: I very much appreciate that, and I'm pleased to see that in the past year -- I'm not saying this has changed or never was. Sometimes I think in the job description for various positions, almost by inference the assumption is made that you have to be a male because of traditional roles. I notice the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration is here. He's actively encouraged females to apply for these positions. I simply make the point, Mr. Minister, that to involve our young people in Alberta with amateur sport and other recreational activity, I think it is essential that we as a government show there is not only equal opportunity but equal display, to encourage, because of the peer pressure and role modelling system of our young people today, if they see more females involved, then I think more young girls will participate in our programs.

MR TRYNCHY: Mr. Chairman, there are some good comments. I might add that we find within our provincial parks system, we've had some young lady park wardens who have just been tremendous, have commanded a lot of respect from the public, and we encourage that, equal opportunities. Hopefully, the message can get out that no way would we do otherwise.

MR CHAIRMAN: A supplementary by Mrs. Cripps.

MRS CRIPPS: My supplementary is directly related to Mr. Gogo's question. It relates to recreational directors, regional directors, and managers. I believe in your job description, you have certain degrees which are necessary. Sometimes that eliminates people who have worked their way up through the system over the past number of years and don't necessarily have the degrees but certainly have the experience and capability, and have been in the system for a number of years and are unable, because of new regulations which have come out within the department which tend to tie these positions to degrees in recreation. Is that happening?

MR TRYNCHY: I hope that's not right. We'll have a look at that and see if that is factual. I've always said, and I want to say it again, that I would sooner have a person who is willing to work, with maybe a little less knowledge, than somebody with all the knowledge in the world who doesn't want to work. I just toss that in there. Certainly, if we're discriminating in the way that people who don't have the degrees but have the experience, I think you have to take that into consideration. If we're doing it, we'll have our people look at it. I hope that's not the case.

MR CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stevens, followed by Mr. Stromberg.

MR STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to, first of all, acknowledge and express appreciation as the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration the exchange between the Member for Lethbridge West and the minister and his officials and the Member for Drayton Valley. I think the exchange was wonderful. I think it reflects well on the department, and I'm confident it's across all departments, the attitude for the best candidate, all men and women.

I also want to express to the minister and his officials my appreciation for assisting a number of deaf Albertans attend the world games for the deaf in Germany, although, as the Member for Calgary North West indicated, that is not in this year's review, which is last years, but it was an event that took place this year. I do appreciate. In the case of my own constituent, I think the department came through with assistance roughly 20 per cent of the eventual costs of one of the participants. She and her family made up the other 80 per cent, with assistance from private enterprise.

For a moment, I'd like to go back to the hobby horse I was on in the beginning. It's been touched upon by the minister and his officials and other members of the committee here today. The larger urban centres throughout Alberta, but also smaller centres too, have larger populations. They have access to private enterprise, private industry. They have a greater potential for gaining public support for development of programs, development of recreational activities, even though those activities may take place away from the urban centres, in areas where the mountains or lakes may be, and so on. The deputy minister indicated it was preferable to deal with the organizations and have the organizations' expertise called upon so the department did not have to have that expertise, did not have to make those judgments.

My question to the minister is: what steps does the department follow, or what procedures does the department have in place to assure the government that the grant moneys are made available to organizations that reach out to all Albertans? I'm concerned about the citizen from Cyprus or the citizen from Peace River or the citizen from Canmore who does not have access to the large urban centres and its support. What are you as a department doing to make sure those organizations you rely upon in fact are reaching all Albertans?

MR TRYNCHY: If we're speaking about our major cultural/recreation facility program -- is that what we're speaking about?

MR STEVENS: The support the department provides for the individuals and organizations to attend and participate in programs. I think the answer you and the deputy minister gave was that you look at the organization and they make recommendations. But how do you reach the individuals on provincial programs, and so on? How do you assure yourselves that that organization represents all Albertans?

MR TRYNCHY: We never would be sure that the organization represents all Albertans. That's unfortunate, but that's the way it is. We work with the organizations that seem to reach the most people in the province. Whether they reach the total group or not, I'm sure that in many cases they don't. So when we provide funding to organizations -- let's just take the Alberta Soccer Association, for example, which receives the largest amount of funding. We ask that they make sure they have a province-wide membership. I suppose if you had some young people in a community who didn't want to pay their 50 cents, they wouldn't be a member of that association and of course they

wouldn't participate in some of their leadership programs, or what have you. I don't know how you would make certain that what we provide funds for covers all Albertans. We try to reach the majority of them. We have a group that works for us and the associations, and Sport Alberta is one of them. They function with a number of associations. They have their own meetings. Recreation, parks and wildlife association have their meetings. They bring in all recreational directors from across the province. They just met in Jasper. It is this type of communication. We provide the information to them, and they try to disperse to all people.

There are areas we don't reach. It's unfortunate, but it will happen. I don't know. What is that old theory: you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. I guess that's it. Mr. Mitchelson would like to expand on that a bit.

MR MITCHELSON: Just to expand on that a bit. It does relate back to the plans the association would table with us, which would indicate the amount of granting they would receive. We talked about three areas. One is administration. The others are leadership development and program. The criteria we use when we evaluate those two areas, program and leadership, is the breadth in which their leadership development program is expanding throughout the province; in other words, they would put in their plan that we will be providing, for example, the Alberta Hockey Association. We will have coaching clinics and officials' clinics, and they will designate where they're going to be throughout the year, which indicates the dispersement we would consider, up to the maximum, to help support those; similarly in the program area. So there is a conscious effort on their part, I guess you could say through our encouragement, to reach out to, if you want to say, the hinterlands of Alberta. But those are in their plans. They table their financial statement which would reflect the expenditure to pay for those kinds of things throughout the province.

So there are some criteria, and they're all very aware of it, of how we assess their applications. One obviously is that we do encourage them to go to the smaller communities, et cetera, throughout Alberta, to provide both program and leadership.

MR CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Mitchelson.

MR NOWICKI: Just in answer to the question, one of the directions we'll be moving in in the coming year is we will be requiring associations to demonstrate a regional structure as part of their constitution, to demonstrate they are reaching out to all Albertans and not just concentrating on one part of Alberta.

MR CHAIRMAN: It's 11:30. Our time has expired, but we have one more questioner. It appears to the Chair that we're almost complete with Recreation and Parks. Possibly the member could ask his question.

MR STROMBERG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In view of the rather narrow interpretation placed by the Member for Calgary North West, my remarks would have to be -- I believe a year or two ago, the minister implemented a policy for communities and villages that needed and wanted campground facilities. I wonder how successful that policy was and how many towns and villages have availed themselves of that policy.

MR TRYNCHY: I think the hon. member is talking about the recreation areas.

MR STROMBERG: For example, the village of Edberg requested a campsite to serve their community, and you replied that there was funding to put up the facility but they would take care of the garbage, police it, haul water, clean the washrooms, gravel the roads, pound the nails, put up the signs, cut the wood.

MR TRYNCHY: That is on the subject of recreation areas. We have 10 of those throughout the province. I listed those 10. Of course, there are about 90 requests on my desk now for further consideration. I think that answers the question. We also provide small communities that have a park of their own that is used by the public, a grant on a yearly basis, a limit of \$2,000 grant, for a community that can prove that this park is used by the public and not just their own local park. We provide \$1,000 or \$2,000. We have some \$50,000 in our budget for just that purpose. I think that covers both types of funding we have to that question.

MR CHAIRMAN: It appears from the Chair that there are no further questions to the minister. Our time has expired, so on behalf of the committee I would like to say thank you very much, Mr. Minister and your staff, for answering the questions very thoroughly and covering your department very well this morning. Thank you.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Hyland. All in favor?

HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.