



# **CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT**

Appropriation (Financial Years 2022 and 2023)  
Bill, 2021

Prepared In Accordance With Section 12  
of the Public Management and Finance Act  
(2020 Revision)

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FOR THE YEARS ENDING  
31 DECEMBER 2022 and 2023

**APPROPRIATION (FINANCIAL YEARS 2022 AND 2023) BILL, 2021  
UNDER SECTION 12 OF THE  
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE ACT (2020 Revision),  
WITH RESPECT TO THE FINANCIAL YEARS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2022 and 2023**

Verbatim transcript of the Standing Finance Committee meeting held Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021, at 9.32 a.m. in the Chamber of the House of Parliament; George Town, Grand Cayman.

**Present:** Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, MP, *Chairman*  
Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP  
Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MP  
Hon. Bernie A. Bush, MP  
Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, MP  
Hon. André M. Ebanks, MP  
Hon. Sabrina T. Turner, MP  
Hon. Johany S. "Jay" Ebanks, MP  
Hon. W. McKeever Bush, JP, MP  
Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, MP  
Ms. Heather D. Bodden, JP, MP  
Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, MP  
Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, JP, MP  
Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MP  
Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MP  
Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MP  
Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, JP, MP  
Mr. David Wight, JP, MP

**Witnesses:** Mr. Kenneth Jefferson, Financial Secretary/Chief Officer  
Mr. Matthew Tibbetts, Accountant General  
Ms. Lizette Yearwood, Chief Executive Officer, Health Services Authority  
Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism  
Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and Chief Executive Officer, Cayman Airways Limited  
Mr. Stran Bodden, Chief Officer, Ministry of Tourism and Transport  
Mr. Sean Glidden, Finance Manager, Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre  
Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning  
Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Drivers' Licensing  
Mr. Troy Whorms, Acting Director, Public Works Department  
Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure  
Ms. Milissa Webb, Financial Accountant, Health Regulatory Services  
Mr. Richard Simms, Director, Department of Counselling Services  
Mrs. Judith Seymour, Director, Department of Counselling Services

**Absent:** Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP

**Finance Committee Clerk:** Mrs. Zena Merren-Chin

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Undertakings and Output Groups are reported in [blue text](#) for ease of reference]

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*(Hon. Christopher S. Saunders - Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Presiding)*

**The Chairman:** Good morning. I would like to call this Finance Committee to order and I ask the Minister of Financial Services to lead us off in prayers.

**Hon. André M. Ebanks, Minister of Financial Services and Commerce and Investment, Innovation and Social Development, Elected Member for West Bay South:** Good morning, let us bow our heads.

Oh, Heavenly Father, we pray dear Lord, as we deliberate, discuss, consider, and approve the appropriations for the Financial Years 2022-2023, that you grant all Members in this honourable House wisdom; You grant us collaboration; You grant us prudence, as we deliver a budget for our people, to do all that we can to serve you Lord, and to serve the people of the Cayman Islands.

Give us strength; give us calm and give us intelligence. The offices that support each of the honourable Ministers, grant them wisdom also, as they help to articulate their words to support the appropriations. We pray, dear Lord, and say the Heavenly Father's Prayer:

*Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever.*

*Amen.*

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Minister.

Please be seated. Morning Members; the House is now in committee, specifically, it is in Finance Committee mode. The purpose of this Finance Committee is to consider the items shown on the Schedule to the (Appropriation Financial Years 2022 and 2023) Bill, 2021.

Given that the number of Members of Parliament is 19, the quorum for Finance Committee is 10 members excluding the Chairperson of the Committee. The Committee is now quorate and we can proceed with the meeting.

Honourable Members, I am going to ask and I am going to appeal for none of the long preambles when asking the questions. I know sometimes there it is tempting, but we can get more questions answered if we avoid the long speeches, so I would ask Members to be prompt.

I am going to say something to Members right now: Something that has never been done in Finance Committee before, but [that] I think is important to re-establish the seriousness of the business that we are doing, is that for this year we will basically ask every witness to give their testimony under oath. I discussed this with my colleagues already, and as much as this may be something that probably benefits the Opposition—making sure that no one comes here and pretty much misleads them—I think it goes to show the seriousness of this.

We want everyone to be as truthful as possible. If you do not know, you do not know. Do not try to guess the answer. That was something I found very frustrating when I was on the other side, and I said if I was ever in a position to do something about it, I would. I think this is something that the Opposition Members will actually welcome from that standpoint; to make sure.

The Government Members are already familiar with the budget, we have already had our questions, et cetera; but for the public, it is important that they be given the truth at all times. I will just leave it at that.

We will go through the Bills, but just a bit more housekeeping, is that you would have received a separate page that was prepared by the Ministry of Finance that shows the Schedule, but on the far right it gives you the page numbers that you can refer to. That will make it much easier to go along with, in terms of getting more details that you may wish.

As usual, we can either vote for an item on an individual basis or we can vote for items in block; again, that is mostly up to Members on the Opposition side. In that vein, in accordance with Standing Order 64(3), I shall ask Members' approval for a particular item by posing the usual question: "All those in favour of items so and so, standing part of the schedule to the Bill, please say, aye and against, No." I just wanted to put that out there and you are all veterans to this now so, we should be fine.

With that said, we will start with the Ministry of Tourism; for the revised schedule that has been provided to Members, it starts on page 21, and then you can see in the Plan and Estimates, the reference pages start from roughly 180 onwards, and it will have more information there. With that said, I am going to start with:

## **Ministry of Tourism and Transport**

### **DAT 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister of Tourism and Transport for the Financial Year 2022**

**The Chairman:** The appropriation amount is \$2,310,950 and for 2023, \$2,314,165. Are there any questions?

[Pause]

**The Chairman:** Okay, seeing that there are no questions.

All those in favour of DAT 1 – Advice and Support to the Minister of Tourism and Transport for \$2,310,950, and \$2,314,165 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **DAT 14 - Public Transport Services for the Financial Year 2022**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to DAT14 - Public Transport Services for 2022, \$901,978; for 2023 \$904,891. Are there any questions?

[Pause]

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Elected Member for George Town North:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could give us some insight as to what the plans are for public transport, whether this includes any sort of mass public transport studies or any future plans to streamline and to create efficiencies within the public transport.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Minister of Tourism and Transport, Elected Member for George Town Central:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, I want to thank the Member for the question and [say] good morning to all Members of the House and all those who are visiting.

To answer the Member's question: As he heard in my budget contribution, the overall plan for transport for these two years will focus mainly on research and analysis of what are the best practices that we can use to create efficiencies with the public transport. Most of the next year and a half until the next budget, will be focused on legislative changes, as we do a report on how we can strengthen the laws, because most of the problems that we are having in transport relate to inappropriate practices within the transport offerings.

I intend to travel to some of the neighbouring Caribbean Islands that have efficient, eco-friendly, bus transport and meet with other jurisdictions' Members of Parliament to see what corresponding legislation they have that can help us tailor what we may bring to this Parliament; I also intend to have a research committee formed for the necessary reform.

As you know, we are limited in our cash amounts for these first two years, hence the reason there has not been a large portion of monies put aside for any fundamental changes. These two years will be focused on the legislative, regulatory, and enforcement arms. In the next budget, we hope that the country's finances will be in a better position to allocate the necessary monies for improvements; for example, one of the hopes is to have a national public transport system that is governed by the Cayman Islands Government in partnership with the private sector.

That may go as far as ordering major buses and the like, but we will do that in the next budget. For now we are going to focus on the organisational elements of the transport system—and I must say not on the taxi and tour operations, but more so the public transportation that the average person takes every day, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, can the Minister say—and I apologise; I was listening intently, but I did not hear whether or not there were any plans within the next two years to do any form of studies.

He said that he would be visiting other Caribbean islands to see what they are doing, but are we carrying out—there were plans, and I think we got as far as a request for proposal (RFP) being prepared to do a mass public transport study. Is that part of the two years of research or are we looking at three years down the road?

**The Chairman:** Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you.

Mr. Chair, through you, the simple answer is yes. We have no intention of breaking down what was already there, but to follow through.

If the Minister is saying that there were plans for studies, we would definitely work with whatever was already collected. Analyse that and add more to it if necessary, based on the results of those studies; so the simple answer is yes.

**The Chairman:** The Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the honourable Minister for that response.

I will say to him that the work that had been done was being driven by my Ministry, but [as] it was a joint ministerial effort between my Ministry and Ministry of Tourism, there may be some residual overflow there.

As we see, tourism is starting to return; we saw it this week in the increase in traffic on our roads with just a few tourists on island [and] a few returning residents. When we get back to the numbers that we used to have, I think it is going to be important to have proper public transport in place as well, and we will get to that later on.

I think it is important, and relevant to tourism, if perhaps in the funding for the Ministry's sustainability, there might be efforts [for] things like complete streets, where we make it safe to encourage people to ride bicycles and scooters, et cetera; because otherwise we are all going to be sitting in traffic for weeks.

[Pause]

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I do have another question.

**The Chairman:** Sure. Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Can the Minister say whether or not they are issuing new public bus and taxi licences?

**The Chairman:** Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

At this particular moment, with the low levels of tourism, I am not of the view for the board to be issuing any new licences.

All it would do is add pressure to those who are in the industry now. Obviously, the numbers granted for tour and taxi operators before were based on the number of persons available to take those tours and taxis. We are not even close to that yet, so adding new ones would only make the piece of the pie smaller for the current ones.

[When] we see the numbers start to stabilise—which we will continue to monitor every other month—then we go from there and, on information given, the board can direct whether or not they think it is timely. Whether or not they should start adding taxi or tour licences.

**The Chairman:** Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the Minister for the response.

My final area of questioning is on the public buses. It has been an ongoing issue that some routes are not as profitable as others; some bus drivers say some routes are not sustainable whatsoever, [therefore:

- a) Are there plans to help subsidise those routes that may not be profitable for the bus drivers; and
- b) If over a period of time a person is operating on a route that is known to be not as busy as others, and a slot opens up on one of the more successful routes—is there any consideration for a policy to move into the more profitable routes, perhaps on a first come/first served basis?

**The Chairman:** Minister of Tourism and Transport.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chair, and I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for that question, because that is exactly my line of thinking. There seems to be no true logic as to the way it is allocated hence, the reason for the necessary overview of how transport works.

To be honest with you, this problem has gone on for quite some time now (not only in this administration), where some routes do not make money like the others so why not rotate the members so you work one month in a profit-making route and the next month you go to one that is not as profitable. Again, I am not of the mind to change very much because, if you change it in the market as it is now, without being sure of exactly what the effect is going to be, you may end up making it worse.

Though I recognise that those problems are there, it does not make sense to try to change until you understand the flow of things—and that is constantly changing; because, if you were to keep the numbers exactly as they are now, you can probably fix the problem, but add another 5,000 people to the mix, and you have a totally different problem all over again.

Therefore I agree with you; outside of the overhaul itself, switching bus routes amongst bus drivers is one of the things I am considering, but we have to look at that very carefully because as you know, bus drivers get accustomed to their routes. They know the spots where people live; where they normally get picked up...

You get familiar with that, so before I agree with that suggestion, I want to have a deeper conversation with the stakeholders, the bus drivers themselves, to see how that would play out, but that would allow a fairer opportunity for the bus drivers to make a profit.

**The Chairman:** Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the Minister for the response and I will just say that in my discussions with some of them, it would appear that some people are willing to do their time, in a sense, but when the opportunities arise for them to move to a more profitable route, they would like that opportunity.

There is also the concern that perhaps the routes are not being equitably distributed between those persons who have multiple vehicles and independence. I have no answers for you, but it is something that I do think needs addressing so, thank you.

**The Chairman:** Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, Elected Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman:** Thank you for recognising me. That was going to be my question as well. It was extremely well-answered, by the Minister. My question was going to be was there a short term strategy and you have explained it, so thank you for that.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. I will take the vote.

DAT14 - Public Transport Services for the Financial Year 2022, \$901,978 and for the year 2023, \$904,891. All those in favour, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**DAT 17 - Tourism Support, Training, Promotional and Advertising Activities for the Financial Year 2022**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to DAT 17 - Tourism Support, Training, Promotional and Advertising Activities for the Financial Year 2022, \$24,614,891 and for the Financial Year 2023, \$25,356,784. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I recognise that we have not had tourism in a while so this is a very important line item for re-establishing ourselves.

Under this line item, provide tourist accommodation inspections and licensing—one of the questions that we get quite often is, there seems to be some grey areas in inspections and licensing. Maybe the Minister could bring us up to date as far as what the charges are.

Do we pay tourism tax now for the inspection, hotel licensing fees? Where are we with that for the community and the tourism sector?

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am going to ask my Chief Officer to come and support with the answer, but to give him a preliminary before the Chief Officer takes the mic:

Right now we are examining the best way of collection as we think the system of collection of those revenues that belong to the Treasury or through the Department of Tourism is not done in the best way possible, but it is difficult to reform and address that [during a] pandemic, when everybody is...

Right now, we just want to make sure that they can actually have clients, rather than asking them about the money that they owe [to] the government that they are not even [earning]—so that is not a top priority; as you have heard from the Ministry, our announcement for not charging room tax until the start of the New Year, is efforts to continue to help the industry. I think it was a good thing that my colleagues supported the Ministry not charge them any fees at all over the Christmas period.

We are hoping that it will be a bit of a rebate for them to make some money throughout this period, and then the government can start collecting taxes in the New Year. As per the fee structure, I will ask. I think that may have answered your questions; if you have anything specific more, I would be happy to assist.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you for that.

You say the time period will end at the end of this year, 2021. Is there a consideration to review this, based on how tourism recovers in this country? The example being, as you have given: If you are not making money and you are trying to stay on board, if the first quarter does not return the results that we all hope it

will, can you review and see if you are going to come back to the industry and say we are going to work with you?

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Of course. The PACT-Administration is going to do everything it possibly can to support the business community, particularly that in tourism, but we have to be mindful that the government has to earn its revenues to pay the bills; I mean, your Leader of Opposition quite succinctly highlighted the dangers of not collecting enough revenue, so we are going to have to balance that.

Obviously, if we see that things are not moving as fast as we hoped, though I am very confident they will based on the numbers and figures over the last three weeks, we will examine that. It is part of responsible government, and my team will support me on that so the simple answer is yes, we would review, but we think there is no reason that those numbers will not reach our projections.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I thank the Minister for that answer. May I ask another question?

**The Chairman:** Absolutely. That is why we are here.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I think we can move on to the overall vote.

If I read how this is laid out, this actually helps us put together our strategy of how we are going to recover and how we are going to bring the tourism numbers back to the country; the example being in this next year, as you put together the recovery guideline and graph so to speak, the country enjoys one of the highest guests' return rates in the region. Just under 50 per cent of people will return.

My question is: When you put together the strategy—were the return guests included? I give you the example that if we did 520,000 in 2019 and we hope to do 210 or 220,000 as you recover the first year back the truth is, if the marketing is done correctly, the return guests should be waiting to come back.

I just wanted to get an overview of the strategy. There should be a division between return; new; high net worth; 3/4 stars.

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Forgive me if I do not answer the question specifically because there is a lot in it, but I think you are basically asking us how we plan to market and who we hope to get back to the country.

As you have said, 50 per cent of the people that normally travel here will want to come back and our projections are 40 per cent of the overall numbers from 2019, so you are talking about 50 per cent of 40 per cent, which would be 20 per cent returning passengers. You may see that a substantial amount of our monies for this allocation is in respect to promotional and advertising activities which, as I highlighted in my budget contribution, will be focused on high-net worth individuals and more affluent persons.

Our projections are that though we are not going to get past 40 per cent (and we hope we do), those other 20,000 people that do come will spend more money so ultimately, it will be the same equivalent revenue for the country and the economy and businesses and employment to be way past the 40 per cent, so we are looking at quality rather than quantity.

In effect, this administration's 40 per cent would be 60 per cent of the last approach to tourism, if that answers the question.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. I thank the Minister.

In 2018 and 2019 we enjoyed the highest average daily rate spent, so quality has always been a target for stayover visitors. [On] the issue of how this money is broken down and [the] markets [where] it is going to be spent: In your contribution you talked about diversification of your market. Do you know that by percentages?

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** I do not have that off the top of my head, but I will ask my Director of Tourism to assist if she has that available.

**Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Madam Director, thank you very much. When answering the first question, please state your name and title for the record. Thank you.

**Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism:** Good morning. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism. Thank you for the question.

Our target for 2022 is 201,702 passengers. The most difficult aspect of reopening has been securing air seats into the destination because we came on later in the winter season and many of the airlines are gauging their global employee shortages and returning to destinations, but we are confident that tourism will deliver 40 per cent in 2022.

Our relationships are prioritised with the travel trade. Travel agents and wholesalers; these are the persons that sell the destination. Our budget has been reduced slightly, however, we still feel confident that 40 per cent is very achievable in 2022. The second key to achieving this goal is our relationship with the airlines. We have [been] shifting because Q1 is impacted by the most recent announcement of the new variant and travel confidence will be directly associated [with] ongoing COVID and how it impacts travel decisions moving forward.

To the Member's question about the return rate: We do have a very high return rate and we do have a strong demand to get to the destination, but as we move into the holiday period over the next three weeks, getting to the Cayman Islands in truth, is a difficult task—finding an available seat; but this will start to recover mid-February with the return of American Airlines from two of their hubs—Miami and Charlotte.

We also have the return of West Jet on the 16th of this month and two important Cayman Airways hubs returning to us as well in December, but it will [take] month to month monitoring and being very connected with our tourism—hoteliers, condo, guesthouse and villa property owners.

[We] want to ensure that everybody understands what they have to do to apply [for] approval to travel to Cayman and [that] those travel requirements can change because of the impact of COVID.

Also, in most recent weeks we have had connections with the accommodation sector and our national airline, Cayman Airways, to ensure that we prioritise the scheduling for the festive season and for the hoteliers to fill those seats for Cayman Airways.

The strategy, therefore, is to ensure that we are fully connected with the distribution channel—those who sell the Cayman Islands and those who fly to the Cayman Islands. That will be the sweet spot for success in the coming year, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. I just want to say to Madam Director that the Opposition and I know and understand that the Department of Tourism (DOT) is the gold standard. You are fabulous with the work you have done and you have done [it] through a pandemic. We understand that and we appreciate everything you and your team do.

In the previous debate, it was mentioned that our diversification was looking at South America, Central America and other places besides the United States. Our concern on this side is that core market for us should be the United States and Canada. They have almost 400 million people and we are looking for 500,000 over a couple of years out of slicing that up and we are also looking at understanding how we make it

as easy as possible for them to get here which is what you are struggling with now.

I think that when what you are doing is looked at and identified, it is evident that we are attacking our core market, North America, going back to where we get the most people and where we can dictate and look at how we market to high net-worth individuals because basically we have the information of how we can attract them digitally and know what their income is in high net worth individual areas or areas of high dollar—North-east United States.

What I am hearing from you then is [that] our core market continues to be our strategy. We continue to look for high net-worth individuals. We understand that until children are allowed to travel, we are going to miss the multi-generational tourists that are [the] bread and butter for this economy, and this tourism product, and you will continue to try to match the person who is coming to the seat they sit in, to the hotel room they stay in, to the attractions that they visit. One swift flow. That is what you said.

**Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism:** Yes, sir, that is what I said and I thank you for mentioning one really big piece of information that I may have neglected to share.

DOT has collected information over the years that we have recorded visitation from our core markets. We know right down to the neighbourhood and which house we should place TV into and which house we can skip because their preferences and interests are very different.

Our investment of these promotional dollars will shift from very traditional print [and] radio, into a full digital mode and the reason for that is COVID; because it changes so often, we have to be able to change our investment with very little notice and place our dollars in longer lead mediums—meaning print or others that take a long time to place. For example, print has a three-month lead time. If I wanted to place an ad, I would have to place it now for three months from now.

Most of our monies will go into Addressable TV—television that can address the household. It takes your viewing profile and it can tell me the channels that you love, whether you love hot weather destinations, whether you like to fly or you look at luxury cars, or luxury goods which tells me the type of spender that you are; and we can place the Cayman Islands ad in that household and skip your neighbour who is into hunting and probably would not come to the Cayman Islands.

You are very accurate in saying that data will drive the strategy. The tourism data that we collected up to—well, we still collect it, but of course, visitation has been scaled since reopening—would have given us interests, meaning the exit survey gives us interests of what they want to do on island; and the Embarkation/Disembarkation (ED) card captures their zip code. That data, [which] we get from Customs and Border

Control (CBC), is sanitised and we look at it by how we invest our dollars.

That is for all source markets so USA, Canada and the UK. I understand that there may be concern about possibly moving away from core markets, but as the old saying goes, you cannot put all of your eggs in one basket. Diversification is the key to flattening seasonality, diversification meaning the times of year Latin America has winter, is opposite to our core markets.

The up and down that we see in tourism over the course of a year, even now with 2020 data being on a very low level for 2020, we had the first three months which were strong, and then it tapered off but it follows the exact same track when you look at it as a line graph so our seasonality, even though we have been closed for 20 months, follows the same pattern, which means we have the same goal of ensuring we can bring those slower months up to higher performing months.

When Europeans want to travel and for how long they want to travel, adds to the visitor spend and the value of the visitor; so being able to expand our reach into Europe and the Latin America countries is equally important as our core markets.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. I thank her for the answer. Very well done.

Just so I can understand this, the core market continues to be what we have done before, what we have driven forward, what has paid dividends and brought many people here. September, October, November, which is a switch in the season for Chile and Argentina, will be viewed as an opportunity that we would try to bring people in that slower part of the season for high spend?

**Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism:** Yes, sir, that is correct.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I do not think this—

Maybe it is a question for Cayman Airways. Are we looking at gateways and connectivity out of that area to build a core around a hub?

**Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism:** I would say that currently we have been charged with providing recommendations on the current service for Cayman Airways and look at short to medium range destinations. We are in the final stages of our recommendation for the honourable Minister of Tourism, which I guess we will present to him after Finance Committee has concluded. As a Member of the Cayman Airways board, we also intend to share this data with the board so that their commercial committee can examine opportunities.

What I would say is [that] any decision that we make will certainly look at profitability and our ability to fill the plane. Is that destination a critical destination or



is it just a nice to-have and we have been able to identify through our ED Card and Saber Data (that zip code data), we can tell you just like in the case of Denver, how many people had to connect and did not have a direct service to the Cayman Islands—and there are about seven US cities where there is priority for Cayman Airways to consider new routes.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, very much. I think the last question. There is probably another place to ask about how the overview fits into Cayman Brac and Little Cayman with marketing and domestic.

Is Dream in Cayman still our baby and going to be rolled out after the pandemic?

**The Chairman:** Director.

**Mrs. Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism:** Thank you. Thank you for the question.

As we speak, we are preparing for our Dream in Cayman 2.0 shoot. The Cayman Islands can witness production crews across Grand Cayman and Little Cayman this coming week into two weeks. We have an Owen Island feature this year—in the first shoot, it was Cayman Brac and The Bluff; but we have our creative agency along with team members from our New York team on the ground shooting video this round.

The last round we only got still shots, which was mainly for print or billboard or online display so we will be happy to transition our investment from our budget from just seven executions and expanding the suite of Dream in Cayman to digital video which will give us versatility for our television marketing as well.

As for connectivity, I know that the direct service through Cayman Airways continues to Cayman Brac and the consideration is always for connectivity in Grand Cayman to ensure that passengers can be onward to Little Cayman or Cayman Brac.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you.

I would just like to thank the Director for her answers and a job well done [and] thank the Minister for allowing her to answer those questions.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, through you, I thank the elected Member for Cayman Brac West.

As you know, this administration is willing to work with the Opposition; therefore when the Department of Tourism is ready to present the strategic data analysis about the South American market or any other market, I would be happy to have you involved in that.

You have been in the game a long time and I still trust your guidance and advice, so I will add some other points that were highlighted for your knowledge.

Obviously safety has become a big issue with respect to printed media—from connectivity of picking up print and the like; one of the main studies has shown that online media is not only the way forward for the next generation but it also has COVID-19 concerns and as you heard the director say, it allows us to move our marketing quicker [over] a three-month period.

You also highlighted the fact that the circumstances with children not being able to be vaccinated is a key factor in our way moving forward and we hope that we can get the necessary medical advice to the Cabinet and to the Caucus to allow us to put in provisions to allow families back.

Obviously, it is unfair when you are accused sometimes of not keeping the country safe but then also say, you know, we are not allowing kids and families to come. It is not an easy balance, but safety has to be the top priority; we are just hoping that there will be enough medical breakthroughs to allow us to invite all the families because we are family jurisdiction.

Also to say that South America may not seem an attractive jurisdiction sometimes, but there is a large, large, percentage of affluent visitors there in the South American markets and I think the fleet that was purchased under your tenure allows us many efficiencies from a distance; from cost savings on fuel, and more rounds, so that fleet will be able to do a whole lot more while still doing the core [routes] that were there before and were profitable to us by the American market.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I want to thank the Minister for that. I think that what gave me comfort this morning and going forward, is that you are not in any way moving away from core market; you are strengthening how we get high net-worth individuals and looking for the months that are the valleys to bring them up towards the peaks—and I thought it was very well explained by the Director.

Part of why I mentioned the issue of children being allowed to come, is because our success was brought on by an under-promise and over-delivery [approach] for tourism when they came by making it easy for them to get here. When you compare us to any other destination, you can see the sophistication and the level of confidence and compliance on how we get people here, which is continuing. I mention that because we talked about some of the burden and costs that tourism operators have, going into the first quarter.

The first quarter is going to be hard again because of the multi-generational tourists that we depend on; and you well know, that if you bring the child, the parents and the grandparents, the grandparents' heart

is, “I will buy anything for them while I am here” so for us, the under-promise and over-deliver is—

Not to think that we are targeting them, but the first quarter is not going to be a big recovery period for that and it will be 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter if we are extremely fortunate. That was my only point, but thank you.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions to the honourable Minister? If not I will put it to the vote.

All those in favour of DAT 17 Tourism Support, Training, Promotional and Advertising Activities in the amount of \$24,614,891 in 2022 and \$25,356,784 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**BLOCK VOTE**  
**CAL 1 - Strategic**  
**Domestic Air Services**  
**CAL 2 - Strategic Tourism, Regional**  
**and Core Services**  
**EI 1 - Cayman Airways Limited**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to CAL 1 – Strategic Domestic Air Services in the amount of \$3,134,000 in 2022 and \$3,134,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman if it is okay with the Opposition, do you mind taking those two in a block vote, because I know that the questions will probably be around the same area for both.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Block vote on what?

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Oh, sure. I do not have any problem with that.

**The Chairman:** We will have the questions, then vote simultaneously on CAL 1 and CAL 2. Are there any questions on CAL 1 and CAL 2?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair just before the Member asked that question, I wondered if he was okay with taking EI 1 as part of that block vote as well, because it is associated with Cayman Airways Limited.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** You are asking for a block vote on CAL 1, CAL 2...

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** CAL 1, CAL 2 and EI 1.

*[Cross-talk]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman, through you, to the Minister, that is fine. We can wrap it all together

and free up some very knowledgeable expertise that is here to help answer questions.

**The Chairman:** That is fine. Just to do a bit of house cleaning, we will be looking at:

- CAL 1 - Strategic Domestic Air Services in the amount of \$3,134,000 in 2022 and \$3,134,000 in 2023;
- CAL 2 - Strategic Tourism, Regional and Core Services, \$15,435,000 in 2022, \$15,435,000 in 2023; and
- EI 1 - Cayman Airways Limited, \$9,100,000 in 2022 and \$9,100,000 in 2023.

Are there any questions?

*[Pause]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would ask the Minister if he could give us just a quick overview on the Domestic Air Service.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank the Member for Cayman Brac West for the question. Not much has changed since the last administration in respect to it, outside of the fact that we are reopening.

We will continue to have air service to Cayman Brac; obviously we are focusing heavily on trying to have more tourism [through] island hopping, so we are hoping that the number of flights to Cayman Brac will increase. I must say that I am concerned about the use of the smaller aircrafts; eventually we want to move away from the Saabs, but that cannot happen anytime soon until we have the Little Cayman airport matter rectified.

In respect to continued travel to Cayman Brac, we intend to service Cayman Brac not only from a tourism perspective, but local transportation between Cayman Brac and Grand Cayman as usual, so inter-island travel is going to be the same.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I thank the Minister for that. What is being presented here is basically the same amount of money that was in the 2021 budget and the truth is that the pandemic did not affect the number of flights into Cayman Brac and Little Cayman; if anything, the peak of it had more than less demand.

The comfort of this is that we are funded; we do not have to worry. We would be prepared to make sure that we support enough funding in this budget that we do not get calls, six months from now, that flights for Cayman Brac or Little Cayman cannot be [added] because there is no funding there for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman to continue on the road—which they have gained some ground. As you well know, both islands are fabulous places to be, but are totally dependent on airlift; so if airlift is not consistent and continues to improve like it has, then we have problems.

My question today is to just ensure that you are satisfied that this will continue to give us the demand we need.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think the question was to ensure that this year's level will happen next year and [that] the funding is available for it. I can confirm that the funding for the appropriate amount of travel to Cayman Brac is available, but we have to recognise the amount of travel to Cayman Brac over this year may not be exactly the same because, when the borders were closed, inter-island travel was much higher—I am very happy to see that many people were doing staycations in Cayman Brac.

Now, as former Minister, you would know that there are two different types of travel to Cayman Brac and Little Cayman—one for vacation purposes and one for local travel. We do not know what the figures are going to say as to whether there is going to be a dip in persons travelling to Cayman Brac for staycations. I hope that is not the case, because Cayman Brac and Little Cayman are amazing places for you to do your staycations, and spending money at home is always better.

We do not know what the numbers will be like now that the flights are available to go to other jurisdictions, but we will continue to support that if the need is there. In respect to other flights that are necessary for business and continued travel, just for local purposes and family connections, we will definitely make sure that they are operating as efficiently and regularly as possible.

Now, you can have a flight every single day on the jet if the money is available, but sometimes that is very costly. I have had many conversations with the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), as well as the board, in respect to this and they will try their endeavour best to plan the scheduling in a way that makes it most efficient from a cost-benefit perspective [so] that Cayman Brackers have the luxury of these beautiful new planes that we have, but sometimes it is just not enough to fill a jet, so we have to go to the middle sized jets.

I know that there is always the question about more and more flights, but sometimes that costs a lot of money. The commitment from the PACT-Administration

is that we will continue to make as many flights available for the Cayman Brac community as long as the money is available.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. There has been a review. The 34-seat Saab Aircraft was [the] right size in the fleet for Cayman Brac at the time of the purchase and there was a thought that it is not the right size airplane now. As you just mentioned, it is hard to go from 34 seats to 160 seats in a time slot.

The review of an ATR [72] or the Dash [8 Q400] to put a 50 or 60 seater in the market would not come out of this line item; that would be a separate line item that would have to be reviewed. Okay; we would be supportive of that, should you need to bring it back.

I guess we can wrap everything together. Mr. Minister, if we could go into CAL 2 which would bleed back into CAL1 as it flows, maybe we could get an understanding of what is the ask or the requirement. It is 2022/2023.

[Pause]

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member, was there a question a while ago?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Just an overview. CAL 2 is in the budget in 2022 for \$15,435,000 and in 2023 for \$15,435,000.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As the Member highlighted, I want to make one amendment to the Plan and Estimates. In 2021 the number of direct, one way flights per annum—4000 to 5000—was just a carry-over from the previous year. It is actually 500-800 with a guesstimate of 60 to 75,000 persons.

This output has to do with the air service to strategic US and regional gateways identified as key source markets, for instance, Denver, which was one of our high output gateways [and] which we will be bringing back very shortly, so it is the standard focus on the US market like we spoke about and we have no intentions of shying away from that; as a matter of fact, expanding it.

You would have heard me say in my budget contributions that we are considering San Francisco; obviously I have to make sure that the figures and the numbers show a benefit, either by way of airline tickets or benefit to the local markets by way of our film industry direction, or our continued focus on technology. You heard we are planning to go to the West Coast, which

those new jets will allow us to, so unless there are specific questions to this area, it will be the main focus as we have always done.

As I said in my contribution, no need to reinvent the wheel, just improve it a little.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. I thank the Minister for that answer, so I can be specific in the question.

We are extremely fortunate to have Cayman Airways. I believe it has total support from every Member in this House and every day we understand that it is on the front line and what it does and the hundreds of millions of dollars that it has contributed to the economy of this country over a period of time. We are very grateful for that and the truth is, it is a bragging right for all of us because as you well know, as you travel overseas and talk to people, [they] always want to know how we are able to have an airline that has been rated the best in the region.

I think it is a fair question, considering that we are looking at two, three or four [Boeing 737] 8s—we do not know if there has been a final decision, but: Where we are from the standpoint [that] we no longer own planes. Have they been sold or are they waiting to be sold? What is the situation with the 8s? Are we going to keep two, three? Are we going to take the fourth one? I know some of this is sensitive, but whatever you can share with us, I think it would be very helpful for the country itself considering that, in theory, every person here is a Cayman Airways shareholder.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am going to ask the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to give feedback and I am glad that the Member highlighted that some of this is sensitive. I know he can give an update on where we are with the 8s and what planes we will sell; it is still timely, and we want to save as much money as we possibly can but be mindful of that there are some areas, I think, he may be reserved about.

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Mr. CEO. Good morning [and] welcome. Before answering the first question, can you officially state your name and title for the record, please? Thank you.

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Fabian Whorms, President and CEO at Cayman Airways Limited.

**The Chairman:** The Member for Cayman Brac West wants an overview and update in terms of CAL 2 - Strategic Tourism, Regional and Core Services, which is roughly almost \$31 million over for 2022-2023. Just a broad overview. Thank you.

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Thank you. Through the Chair:

The first update shall be on the disposition of the 737-300s that we retired. The last two remaining aircraft in that fleet, and a spare engine that is used to support that fleet, were all put to public tender and we have successfully completed final negotiations in selecting a vendor.

We have a contract in place with a deposit and we are now working to satisfy the delivery conditions that we need to meet for the purchaser, because their offer was contingent on the aircraft being supplied to them in certain configurations and conditions, none of which is overly major, so it is all moving fairly smoothly at this point and we expect that by the end of this month the two aircraft would have been delivered and the spare engine would be delivered in January. There is nothing sensitive about this.

I can share that the price the three assets were being sold for is in the region of US\$2.7 million, which compares favourably with our book values as well as current market values. That is the update on the 77-300 fleet.

The 737-8 fleet currently comprises three aircraft that are in service; a fourth one has been built but is not yet ready for delivery from Boeing and the delivery, apart from Boeing's position with respect to where they are, has to be contingent on us accepting certain terms and this has to do with the fact that the aircraft is being delivered late.

It is incumbent upon the supplier—which is both the leasing company and Boeing—to make it worth Cayman Airways' while to take an aircraft that is being delivered late. That part is sensitive because the actual negotiations will not conclude until the aircraft is actually ready for delivery; we have not been given any formal notices yet, but we understand that the aircraft will be ready for delivery in early 2022.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. Through you, [Mr. Chairman]: So the \$2.7 is the gross amount of the total sale of the engine and the two aircraft?

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Correct.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** And that will go directly to Cayman Airways as cash flow income?

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Correct.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** To be shown that way?

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Right. Working capital.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** So you to have to make a decision in early 2022 about the fourth plane.

The other part of this vote that we are going to take as a block, is Cayman Airways' Limited Equity Investment to cover debt servicing and operating expenditure of \$18,200,000; I am assuming is lease payment for three or four planes. Is that debt servicing because, if it is a consideration for your board that it might be four planes, this might not be the right amount. If you cannot answer it, you cannot answer it.

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Through the Chair.

All our budgetary projections are based on somewhere between three and four airplanes because we were never sure.

One thing I should point out about the \$9.1 million (x2)—which would be \$18,200,000—is that it represents some movement from CAL 2 by way of a reallocation going to EI 1. Finance Committee may recall, that the last time we visited was to have an appropriation where monies were taken from EI and put into CAL 2, so that we could actually count it as revenues and improve Cayman Airways' financial performance.

What has happened in this instance, is that the monies have been put back into EI 1. You will notice the nomenclature in the Annual Plan and Estimates refers to it as "To fund losses". Thus, now we will have losses, but it will be funded by this EI so the EI is not just to cover debt, but also to cover the losses that we are projecting—and it will be with the four airplanes.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you, Mr. Chairman: So that is to cover loss? Not lease payments, but losses on a route? Is that what you are saying?

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Through the Chair, losses at the bottom line, which would be after lease payments are taken into consideration. Routes—all of the airline's performance.

**The Chairman:** I think this may help: If you look at page 63 of the ownership agreement, you will notice that for Cayman Airways' 12-month budget period 2022 and 12-month budget period 2023, we are looking at a loss of roughly \$7.16 million and \$6.5 million respectively, so we figure the equity injection of \$9.1 million in both

years will actually cover the losses. To put your mind at ease further, when preparing the budget and signing off on it, we invited both Cayman Airways' CEO and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and went through the results and compared not just 2020 but 2019—what would have been normal.

What we saw, in terms of benefits, is that the planes' fuel efficiency did help in terms of fuel costs going down overall. We also noticed that revenues went up as a result of having more seats and a more efficient plane, so we were actually very happy with the metrics and the direction in which the airline was trending from that standpoint.

Now, while it would be nicer for Cayman Airways to make a profit, in the eyes of the government we see it more as an economic accelerator where there are other benefits that it brings to the market, so a conversation that was entertained was trying to break down the actual operations of the airline versus the strategic benefits that it provides to the country.

While we may look at that internally, something [else] that we wanted to focus on was making sure that, at a minimum, the airline itself is efficient. There are some services and routes it provides, that we know will not break even; but it is an economic enabler and accelerator for the country.

We actually went through Cayman Airways in great detail because, like I said, we know that it is a loss leader, but [that], while losing money on paper, the benefit to the Cayman Islands as a whole, is almost priceless to some extent.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with what you have said and thank you for bringing my attention to where some of these answers can be found.

Where I was trying to go with this is very similar to where you are going—you kind of read from the back of the book on me there. We (the last Government), have been in Finance Committee a couple different times talking about the Public Authorities Law and compensation for the Caymanians employed by Cayman Airways, and our move was to make sure—if I try to use this in the right way:

A person who works at Cayman Airways is compensated in the same way as a person who works at the Government Admin building or whichever building we say and I know that there was a move afoot by the management of Cayman Airways and the Ministry to bring that on par, right? If it is going to need more funding to do that, I wanted to make sure it was reviewed and looked at and [that] the thought process was there, because we would be supportive of continuing with the policy we had started to put in place; especially now, with the number of front-facing CAL employees that were at the ticket counter and on the ramp.

It is a time that we would really support the recognition and I know your heart is in the right place with it; that is where I was going—to try to understand

the funding for it. It seems like it has been considered and I am sure you are considering the employees and where they are from a salary standpoint because I say, for all of us in here, the ability to compensate them for the work they do, continues to help us through this economic hard time.

The review of the policy of how CAL will implement flights based on requests from the Ministry? That is well in train, is what I am hearing?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving forward, the necessary steps on how we are going to be handling flights and which ones are selected, will be based on an approach with the board and the Department of Tourism working together, on which ones are considered to be tourism-related strategic locations which may potentially have a loss, as opposed to the traditional ones that are profitable.

We are kind of trying to break Cayman Airways into three parts, but not actually breaking it as such, so we can have a level of accountability; because it is very unfair to the Cayman Airways' CEO and management staff to constantly be seen as operating at a loss, when in fact the principles on which their goals are set are not based on a profit [but rather,] like the Chairman said, an economic accelerator for our tourism product as well as for our people in times of emergency.

Thus, we are trying to put them in different buckets: Which ones are constant travel locations that the CEO would make a decision on to say, *I would go here because I know I can make a profit*, but then the Department of Tourism may say, *well I think I want you to go to this gateway because I know it can bring in...*

And we start to build in that location slowly, but surely, until we get it to where it is a constant number of people coming in—which you already know; so, trying to break it into different parts so that when we look at the accounts, the CEO and his team are not looked upon as a failing company because the company does not operate on the same principles.

I think that would answer your question.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that, Minister.

I think Denver would be a perfect example of what you just explained—the partnership, and how the Department of Tourism spent money marketing it. We agree with that. We certainly do.

Can I ask the CEO of the company to give me his views on the aircraft that would be the next step to right-sizing Cayman Brac? The Minister said that it will come under a different line item as far as funding, but he is looking into the Little Cayman situation.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, just for clarity before the CEO answers. I think I may have mentioned the

Saab as opposed to the twin-auto, but I am not disagreeing with what you propose either.

In my contribution I said that eventually we want to get away from the twin autos by upgrading the Little Cayman Airport rather than having to service three different types of aircraft using three different types of maintenance; but that cannot happen until the Little Cayman Airport is sorted out, which we will start to look at, but it probably will not happen until the next budget when the country's finances are in a different position.

You are also right to say that the current Saab capacity may not be in perfect lining with the constant travel between Little Cayman and on that part I would take the advice from the CEO, to offer his thoughts on whether or not we can go down that route of getting a bigger Saab.

**The Chairman:** Mr. CEO.

**Mr. Fabian Whorms, President and CEO, Cayman Airways Limited:** Through the Chair.

The question of what type of aircraft would be a good replacement for the Saabs cannot be answered until we have completed the necessary analysis. Many factors, including our future plans with respect to the Little Cayman Airport would need to be considered, so I am not able to answer; but I can give an opinion that we probably will be looking for something in the 50-seater class and at the end of the day, as usual, we will select the best 50-seater aircraft that suits us.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the CEO for that.

The reason I ask is because I am trying to get comfort with the budget for the service that we hope you will deliver. It seems like we are all heading in the right direction, but I give you an example:

You have 34 seats in the market now, you book 32 and then you have to roll over into another flight two hours later, but that flight books at 8 or 9 and then a day before it is supposed to fly, they pull the flight and move everybody three hours later and you go on an 8 that is put in there at the end of the day.

Making it easy and providing the proper air service for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman is one of the ways that they will continue to grow; and I just want to make sure that we have done our work in giving support to government—that you have the tools needed to continue to help Cayman Brac and Little Cayman grow.

That is the reason for the question. If the 50-seater is going to throw, in theory you would be running 8 o'clock and 5 o'clock flights and you have enough seats for it; now with the flights you have, you need to throw another flight in there sometime in the day—do not be scared to throw the other flight in. Please.

I say that to the Minister as well.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chair, and thank the Member for his statement—I think—more so than a question. I would like to give him the comfort of knowing that we are on the same page in respect to that.

I think he also tried to suggest that we do move forward with the bigger size Saab. It is a commitment of this administration to do so, but we also have to be mindful that we are in a difficult position financially, and that dream may not become a reality until the next budget; but I can promise you that service to Cayman Brac will continue at an efficient rate and as often as possible.

Yes, you may be right to say it would have been better if we had the 50 now rather than having to jump between those two Saabs twice a day, but we are not in that position. As soon as monies that allow us to move in that direction are available—for inter-island travel to be more efficient and profitable—we will do so; and I will be happy to work with you in that respect, because I agree with your analysis.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the Minister. Is there any representation here from the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the board?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair. Unfortunately, no; [there] are no members here.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. It would have been good to hear from the board what their policies and insights would be going forward. I know that quite often they may not align with the Ministry. We have seen in here where they did not even align with the airline sometimes, so it would have been nice to have some representation here—and on such a major budget item...

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair.

I thank the Member for his question; I promise that the board's capable members are in line with the Government's position in respect to ensuring that Cayman Airways continues to be an economic accelerator, while simultaneously providing emergency services to the people of this country.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I am happy to hear that, Mr. Chairman, and thank the Minister for the answer; I did note that he said earlier that they were not reinventing the wheel, but going

along with what the overarching policies have been over the last few years, so thank the Minister for that.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to ask the Minister: In your debate you discussed some of the programmes you were going to put in place in reviewing for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. I am assuming that part of that will be involving Cayman Airways as well?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can I ask the Member to repeat the first part of the question please?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Your Ministry, I assume in conjunction with the Department of Tourism and Cayman Airways, was looking at different initiatives for Cayman Brac and Little Cayman; an example being whether there is a CARIFTA game over there or a football match—that type of thing.

Are those some of the things that you will be doing in conjunction with CAL?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, through you.

As this honourable committee knows, Cayman Airways has always been a sponsor of any kind of event in Cayman Brac in some capacity, because we see the need for it.

I can say to this honourable committee that the honourable Minister for Sports and I will be working to help sponsor by way of funding or even Cayman Airways flights; but we have to ensure that the Ministry's intent and goals do not affect Cayman Airways' funding. It cannot take on the debt of what are Ministry's responsibilities, so if necessary we will buy those supporting seats from Cayman Airways.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you, Mr. Chair.

People or groups that have ideas for initiatives in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman should contact you?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Correct.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of CAL 1 - Strategic Domestic Air Services in the amount of \$3,134,000 for 2022 and \$3,134,000 for 2023; and all those in favour of CAL 2 - Strategic Tourism, Regional and Core Air Services, \$15,435,000 for 2022, \$15,435,000 for 2023; and all

those in favour of EI 1 – Cayman Airways Limited, \$9,100,000 in 2022 and \$9,100,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**The Chairman:** Colleagues we are now moving on to TAB 1 which is...

*[Pause]*

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, I want to offer apologies on behalf of the Chairman, Mr. Jude Scott. He intended to be here this morning but unfortunately an emergency arose.

#### **BLOCK VOTE**

**TAB 1 - Management of Pedro St. James' National Historic Site**

**TAB 2 - Management of Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park**

**TAB 4 - Management of the Cayman Islands Craft Market**

**TAB 5 - Management of the Hell Geological Site  
EI 39 - Tourism Attraction Board**

**The Chairman:** Okay, thanks much for that, Minister.

Okay colleagues, with the support of the Opposition, we have decided to do the next four together, so I will call them out before we open the Floor for questions:

- TAB 1 - Management of Pedro St. James' National Historic Site - \$950,000 in 2022, \$950,000 in 2023
- TAB 2 - Management of Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park - \$850,000 in 2022, \$850,000 in 2023
- TAB 4 - Management of the Cayman Islands Craft Market - \$140,000 in 2022, \$140,000 in 2023
- TAB 5 - Management of the Hell Geological Site - \$40,000 in 2022, \$40,000 in 2023

Are there any questions?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, before any Member poses questions I want to thank the Cayman Airways' staff and ask that they be excused. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

**The Chairman:** Questions?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman this has obviously been a difficult time. These tourism attraction board assets were put together for two reasons:

- As we have the flow of incoming tourism, this is part of the attraction process that balances what they do while on the island;
- The other part of it—Pedro Site and the Botanic Park—is the offering for local people: the historical value; the time sensitivity; areas that allow the community to be together.

Since we have them all together, maybe we could get a quick snapshot of how the Minister feels they are doing—obviously in a downturn when part of their basic throughput of people has been stopped.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, I want to thank the elected Member for that question, and the ability to speak to all of them at once.

He is right in saying that most of this funding is focused on the fact that there would be low numbers, at least for the foreseeable future and until that starts to pick up slowly, we want to continue to support these amazing attractions.

With respect to Pedro St. James, as you heard in my contribution I have been encouraging many different departments and Ministries to use the location as an option, because it will help fill the gap lost from cruises as well as stay-over hopefully not for too, too, long.

Also, highlighting the fact that it is a national historic site, with these sites there need to be repairs and the like. Unfortunately, some parts of the castle itself have to be fixed now and there is money available in that—I really think the Ministry of Culture should give me some money in this budget because we keep it up, but I will leave that one alone.

Moving on now to the Queen Elizabeth Botanic Park. This money is needed now more than ever as a result of Hurricane Grace affecting it, because you know the park is mainly vegetation and they had to go through much while simultaneously trying to build a small park for the kids; but it looks like we will be able to make it, as long as international supplies and labour meet demands when necessary.

In respect to the Craft Market, you would have heard me announce that we purchased a new location on the waterfront, just north of Lobster Pot, at the old... I cannot remember the name of the old site, but it is the old Solomon family's residence. We are excited about that location and have also put some monies in with respect to a waterfront experience capital injection to which I will speak a little bit later. We intend to have the craft market at that location.

I think I may have unfortunately failed to announce in my contributions [that] the location on the Kirkconnell site where the current craft market is, will



come to an end at the end of this year. We want to thank the Kirkconnell family so much for working with the Cayman Islands Government, and the people, allowing us [the use of] that location under a peppercorn lease—even more reason to purchase the location that we did.

We are in hopes that we can get the new location that we purchased in order so that, in the event of cruise and stay-over coming back quicker, we have a place for those craft market attendees; we are working against time, but at the moment, it does not seem like there is going to be major cruise at least until probably, the end of the first quarter—hopefully things will be in place, at least, for the craft market location. We have other waterfront spots where we can potentially put them on a temporary basis if necessary, only if necessary, until we finish the new park.

In respect to the Hell site, another major attraction location, I have been in talks with some of the adjacent landowners because it is another area that I think we should enhance—the Hell location has so much to offer.

We know that the McDoom family owns one of the key components of Hell, and I have spoken to them to let them know that the Government is interested to partner or buy that location to help enhance the Hell experience, because it is quite like the Stingray City location. I think it is either the second most-visited location, or at least in the top five along with Stingray City, so we want to enhance it so when we do reopen cruise people can get what they have been accustomed to in respect to our amazing site.

Outside of those matters, the only thing that would end up being a TAB whatever number in the next budget would be the new site because it is intended that this new project will fall under the responsibility of the Tourism Attraction Board; we want to get it established for them to take over its management also, because it will be the new site for the craft market.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to ask this question—I think it is as relevant here as anywhere else, and maybe I have a solution further down. Have there been any discussions on the Tourism Attraction Board taking over the management of the Public Beach vendor area?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** The simple answer is No, Mr. Chair; there have been no discussions.

The Board has not brought it to my attention as anything that they were interested in. I was not aware that there was interest in doing so, but I am happy to consider it and happy to speak off air to the Member,

about the pros and cons he sees as to that and whether it is something that the Board would take up.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member of George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman; I thank the honourable Minister for that response.

I think it should be something that you might want to address prior to cruise returning so that we do not go back to the status quo on the public beach but rather, we utilise those huts—even if they have to be retrofitted in some areas.

The idea [being] that the vendors would be located in those huts and would then move their chairs, or whatever they are renting, from that area to the beach as needed, rather than we end up in the situation that we were in for many decades until the pandemic. I know right now it is managed by the Public Lands Commission.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** I think that was a statement by the Member more than a question.

I have taken into consideration what he said and will speak with the relevant Ministers in respect to whether it is a good option for this administration or not. As I said before, I am happy to speak to him off air.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town West.

**Mr. David Wight, Elected Member for George Town West:** Thank you Mr. Chair, through you.

Can the Minister clarify if the vendors who occupied space in the craft market originally will be given first refusal, even though it will be a new site? I have been asked by a few people who were there pre-COVID [as well as] people who are interested in getting booths when it reopens. We just want to find out how that will work.

Thank you.

**The Chairman:** That is a good question. Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to welcome the question by the elected Member for George Town West. You are 100 per cent correct. This honourable committee will be happy to know that we will be focusing on those persons who are already there and they will have the first right of refusal to go there.

We intend that this site will have at least the same number than before. Now, because it is a multi-purpose site, meaning a multipurpose attraction, we

cannot say that there will be more spots than before until we finish the planned project, but I can guarantee that those who were there before the pandemic hit, will have the opportunity to come back.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of:

- TAB 1 - Management of Pedro St. James' National Historic Site - \$950,000 in 2022, \$950,000 in 2023
- TAB 2 - Management of Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park - \$850,000 in 2022, \$850,000 in 2023
- TAB 4 - Management of the Cayman Islands Craft Market - \$140,000 in 2022, \$140,000 in 2023
- TAB 5 - Management of the Hell Geological Site - \$40,000 in 2022, \$40,000 in 2023
- EI 39 – Tourism Attraction Board \$220,000 in 2022, \$220,000 in 2023

Please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, I just want to thank the Tourism Attraction Board members and ask that they be excused.

#### **NGS 1 - Organise, Administer and Execute the Cayman Islands' Fishing Tournament**

**The Chairman:** Okay colleagues, we move on to NGS 1 – Organise, Administer and Execute Cayman the Islands Fishing Tournament - \$30,000 in 2022 and \$30,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, I would like to suggest—

*[Crosstalk]*

**The Chairman:** Any questions? Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, we are looking at this particular line item for the fishing tournament, but we also see TP 67 for \$1.8 and \$2.3 in 2022 and 2023 respectively; is this a separate line item from TP 67? Can the Member

say when they are planning the tournament— this year or next year?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** One second, Mr. Chair.

*[Pause]*

Mr. Chairman, through you to the Deputy Opposition Leader.

Normally the tournament is in April. Obviously, there are restrictions from a gathering perspective so we do not know what April will bring; but we want to make sure that money is available in hopes that [we] are able to facilitate the fishing tournament, as it is an important one to our overall tourism brand, being a Caribbean island. Also to confirm that it has always been a separate line item confirmation for this organisation.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, as the Ministers talked about partnering with sports, I think the Cayman Islands Fishing Tournament is an opportunity for Sports Tourism— for that tournament \$30,000 is not much.

I do not know if you have plans together, because there are real opportunities there as far as how you market it to high-net-worth individuals. I am assuming that you all have a strategy for how you are going to work together with it?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Yes, we will be partnering; as the honourable Minister said, sports tourism is going to be a major thing for us.

We decided to keep this amount the same because of this particular event [but] in respect of developing something larger, we would focus those monies coming from the TP from a sponsorship perspective. I am certain that there are enough monies available within my and the Minister for Sports' TP, that if we want to develop something collaboratively in the next year— COVID allowing—we can find the necessary monies to fund them that way.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is probably more of a statement than anything, but I agree with the Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

This is certainly one of those events that we have made efforts over the years to try to return it to "Million Dollar Month" glory. I have witnessed fishing tournaments in Jamaica, BVI and other islands where

you would see a tremendous number of international boats in attendance. If you could actually attract one of the major fishing teams with international recognition, [it] would be great.

We started to look at ways to attract them and I think this may certainly be an opportunity; but you will certainly need to look at ways to incentivise those who used to come—and attract even more boats. [For example], streamlining things with the CBC (immigration, customs), and the very controversial duty concessions on fuel for the boats, even if just for the return journey home.

These are some ideas that I would be supportive of; I think that we could establish and build it into a much larger, much more beneficial-for-the-country event.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to highlight a point: there are no duties on fuel for vessels that are leaving; but I recognise it can be something to consider for the fishing itself during the tournament.

With the support I am hearing from the Deputy Opposition Leader as well as the former Minister of Tourism, if they would support an increase of \$100,000 to my TP 67, I am willing to try to go back to the Million Dollar Month concept so we can build it. I am scared to ask for it because we have been accused of overspending, but if they are willing to support it...

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman, I think we can cross that bridge when we get to TP 67 because there is 2, 3, 4-point-something million dollars there. I am sure you can find \$100,000 out of that to help fishing.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions for NGS 1? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of NGS 1 – Organise, Administer and Execute the Cayman Islands Fishing Tournament - \$30,000 in 2022 and \$30,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **NGS 7 - Management of Small Business Development**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to NGS 7 – Management of Small Business Development in the amount of \$311,000 in 2022 and \$311,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, with what we have been through with the pandemic I think it would be interesting to hear an update on the outreach to small business development.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman give me one second please, sir.

*[Pause]*

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you Mr. Chair, this line item deals with the Land and Sea Co-op.

As we know, the Land and Sea Co-op assists many tour operators to facilitate the business with the cruise lines and stay-over tourism. Obviously, that has been limited as a result of lack of cruises, but also [included] in that amount is three months' worth of the Stingray City Feeding Programme which we knew would have to continue to be supported until we have enough tourists for enough trips going to Stingray City, that it goes back to its normal routine.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you, Mr. Chairman; \$311,000 in 2022 and \$230,000 in 2023 goes to the Co-Op?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Correct and the difference between the two is \$81,000 which is \$27,000 for the next three months—January to March—which is to deal with the Stingray City Feeding Programme.

If you were to take away the Stingray City Feeding Programme, you would get \$230 in 2022 and \$230 in 2023; the exact amount.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you Mr. Chairman, I would say to the Minister, that this is one of the most important line items that he has brought forward for the people who are part of that Co-Op.

I am very happy to see that you continued the Stingray Feeding Programme; I am sure you have an open dialogue and interaction with the boat operators and continue to make sure that they get help with the needs that they have (considering they have not been able to use their vessels for years), so thank you for that.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions related to NGS 7? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of NGS 7 - Management of Small Business Development in the amount of \$311,000 in 2022 and \$230,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### NGS 26 - Miss Cayman Committee

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to NGS 26 Miss Cayman Committee - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$100,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush, Elected Member for West Bay West:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for West Bay West.

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush:** Just to inquire from the Minister, if I am right: Seems to be that government is supporting two national pageants—Miss Cayman Universe and Miss Cayman World. Am I right? Is that what it is called?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you Mr. Chair.

Yes, the Member is correct; the Government is supporting both. One [offers] a bigger scholarship than the other. One scholarship is through my Ministry, and the other is through the Ministry of Education.

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush:** Both of them get scholarships?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Correct.

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush:** And both of them get administrative funds?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** I am not aware of the other scholarship. The Ministry of Tourism does not offer any other support to the one that we do not own the franchise for—their scholarship comes from education. There is no other funding available.

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush:** So one gets scholarships through tourism and one gets through education and only one pageant gets administrative funds?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair. That is correct, sir.

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush:** Are there any thoughts, Mr. Chairman, to look at the operations of the other one that we are not assisting? We are giving them scholarships, that is assistance, but I am talking about how we could assist them administrative-wise? I would ask the Minister to take that on board and look at it.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** I will do sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, just looking at the Plan and Estimates, it does seem to signify that both are receiving administration. The description is Administration, Organisation, Promotion and Execution of Miss Cayman Islands Pageant, but in the quantity it has Local Miss Cayman Beauty Pageant arranged for 2022/2023, \$100,000 each and representation at an international pageant 2022/2023—oh, representation; that is for the same pageant...

Alright, great. I read it again and I answered my own question.

**The Chairman:** Okay; any more questions for NGS 26? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of NGS 26 – Miss Cayman Committee - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$100,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman as we know, our reigning Miss Cayman is away in Israel.

I want to take this opportunity and wish her, on behalf of the whole Committee, the Opposition and Government, the best in her efforts. Come back home with happiness and safely, as we know the COVID-19 virus is out there. We are very, very, proud of her and we wish her the best. Hopefully she sees this.

### NGS 57 - Gardening Projects and Landscaping

**The Chairman:** Thanks very much for that Minister.

Alright colleagues, moving on to NGS 57 - Gardening Projects and Landscaping - \$4,000 in 2022 and \$4,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, Elected Member for George Town South:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the honourable Minister:

Gardening Projects and Landscaping, \$4,000 for 2022 \$4,000 for 2023. I know this is a small amount, but can the honourable Minister indicate what it relates to?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair, I am going to allow my Chief Officer to give a basic overview but to say that this is exactly the same amount that was

there from the last administration. We continued the efforts as we did not want to cancel anything the former Minister implemented under his Ministry.

**The Chairman:** Chief Officer Stran, remember you are still under oath. You may provide the details. Thank you.

**Mr. Stran Bodden, Chief Officer, Ministry of Tourism and Transport:** Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, sir.

In relation to the question, the output details the thinking for 2022/23, Mr. Chairman. There will be a major tree planting project throughout the island spanning 2022/23—some locations designated and bearing stages of planning already; and we have ongoing searches for additional locations, with the full flower show being planned for 2022.

Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Honourable Minister, in terms of the tree planting, would that include the whole island or three islands, and will it also involve all of our parks in all of our constituencies?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** To answer the question, through you Mr. Chair, I think this is a collaborative approach with a number of different Ministries and a number of different allocations. Obviously we would not leave out the Department of Agriculture, and Culture, in respect to this. This is part of a bigger plan for planting more trees in the country, and I have been reliably informed that this is the Ministry of Tourism's contribution.

As you see on the Plan and Estimates on page 194, it highlights all the various different elements. This also tries to help with the Botanic Park's Children's Garden. It is a collaborative approach on the islands bigger picture with planting more trees. It is not specific only to parks, but anywhere to be identified [where it] is necessary.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I recognise that the Member for Savannah is heading up the Beautification Committee. Will they all be working together to plant these trees?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair.

The answer is yes, because this administration works together on all projects, no matter what it is. This was a separate line item from the beautification output—which I am glad that you highlighted—which is \$500,000 for beautification purposes.

They would work collaboratively but this one is focused on planting of trees more so than the clean-up.

The other one (the money is available there), may focus more on keeping the place clean and doing the necessary research on legislation as well, to have a stronger enforcement because, unfortunately, we have a number of pieces of legislation for littering and... forgive me—

[Pause]

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** The Town and Planning Law that mandates that you keep your house and your property in a certain order. Many properties across the island, and sometimes even businesses, have not kept their properties in the right order which carries this derelict kind of approach.

We also have a severe problem with vehicles, [so] that \$250,000 per year, a total of \$500,000 over the budget period, will not only go in to clean-up but the necessary work [so] that the committee can inform this administration on what we need to do to keep the country beautified—whether that is strengthening our legislation through a stronger enforcement arm or quarterly clean-ups. All these things.

Though, as opposed to this \$4,000, which is specific to just tree planting, the other money will cover a little bit of this as well; it will have the latitude to say, if we want to beautify this area, we can purchase some plants and do so, but this line item for the \$4,000 will be specific to planting.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions for NGS 57? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of NGS 57 - Gardening Projects and Landscaping - \$4,000 in 2022 and \$4,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**BLOCK VOTE:**  
**TP 12 - Tourism Scholarships**  
**TP 13 - Miss Cayman Scholarship**

**The Chairman:** Moving on now to TP 12 - Tourism Scholarships - \$815,000 in 2022 and \$815,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Minister.

Can the Minister confirm that all of those tourism scholarships funds are utilised on an annual basis for scholarships?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will ask the CEO to give us a little background.

I am not sure if we used all of it; I know that maybe not as many students are going off to school because of the COVID restrictions, so there is a possibility of some savings this term, but I am assuming things will go back to normal for the next term.

You would have also heard me announce that the PACT Administration, in support of my colleagues, has agreed that we would allow two pilot scholarships in the range of \$60,000 which fall under this as well, but I will ask the Chief Officer to give us some background in respect to funding uses.

**The Chairman:** Chief Officer Bodden.

**Mr. Stran Bodden, Chief Officer, Ministry of Tourism and Transport:** Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Minister is absolutely correct. Not all the funds are utilised every year for various reasons. Some students may move to online classes; some may defer to another semester, therefore, not all the funds get utilised, but whoever puts in for the funding up to the threshold as the Minister has outlined, does get the funds every year, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. To the honourable Minister again:

Are the students attending the hospitality school at UCCI eligible for these scholarships as well?

**Mr. Stran Bodden, Chief Officer, Ministry of Tourism and Transport:** Through you Mr. Chairman, the answer to the question is yes.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will take— Sorry.

Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman. Apologies.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Just a quick question. If you are in Cayman Brac or Little Cayman and you want a tourism scholarship to come to UCCI—that is available?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Well, as long as you are Caymanian, you can get the scholarship. I think maybe—

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** I qualify.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** I think the question—

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** My question is this: A couple of our young people have missed the date for the scholarship and now they are going to start in the middle of a term of when they can get a scholarship. Should I advise them to go ahead and apply to Education and Tourism for it?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** One second, Mr. Chair. *[Pause]*

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, the simple answer is that you would have to follow the same protocols as the Education Department; but I suspect that the Minister thinks that it is kind of inconvenient for some. If having it throughout the whole year is something that can fall within the administrative responsibilities and not become too much of a burden, it is something we are willing to visit because, yes, persons may not always start at the start of a year, but maybe in the next semester—or Spring.

I get the logic, but obviously, there are reasons why they keep them within that time frame. There is a level of discipline there as well, for young people particularly, that you know you have to get your paperwork in; otherwise people will just wait until whenever they want to do it, and the longer you have the administrative window open, the longer the cost for the administration process as well.

I understand what you are saying, however, and we are willing to see what offerings, we can do to facilitate within reason.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for that.

In Cayman Brac, you are probably talking about two students; about somebody who got excited about a tourism career so they want to come. The class is not available in Cayman Brac, and they do not want to lose six months waiting for the next window. We can talk offline.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, the Member and I can speak during the break and I will be happy to try to facilitate as much as possible.

**The Chairman:** Can I add one thing to your discussion, because something occurred to me while listening to the Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

In cases where you have a diploma course or certificate course that would not start in the middle of the traditional school year, how would those things be addressed? Because if that is the case, if you only have a window then, and you have a certification course or diploma course outside the normal, I think they need to have some flexibility to deal with those things. That is something I caught, listening to the Member, that I think needs to be addressed also.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair. Just to confirm, the Education Department, particularly, has facilitated different registration periods for those different types of diplomas, courses and degrees. You want to apply for a degree which starts in September, you apply during this period; for a diploma that starts on the first part of the year, you apply during this period. It is not like it is inconvenient [and] everything is at one time.

There are actually registrations allocated for the different programmes.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. Any other questions?

**Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Minister of Education and District Administration and Lands, Elected Member for Cayman Brac East:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Education.

**Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly:** Just a matter of clarification.

Last year in particular, because of COVID, it came to my attention that these situations were occurring. Mr. Chairman, [as] the objective is to ensure that applicants have equal access to the scholarships, once there is a good reason and it is not just the student being lackadaisical or submitting before midnight—which happened to some [applications]—I directed the Education Board to extend the period by a month, so that option is available as well.

**The Chairman:** Okay. Any other questions for TP 12 - Tourism Scholarships. Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman I think we are okay if you want to take the vote on 12 and 13.

**The Chairman:** Thanks to the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition; we will take TP 12 and TP 13 together.

All those in favour of TP 12 - Tourism Scholarships, \$815,000 in 2022 and \$815,000 in 2023 and all those in favour of TP 13 - Miss Cayman Scholarship - \$75,000 in 2022 and \$75,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **TP 67 - Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance**

**The Chairman:** Next item, colleagues. TP 67 - Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance - \$1,850,000 in 2022 and \$2,350,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. Before the \$100,000 conversation comes up...

Mr. Chairman, could the Minister give us an outline of what these are going to be spent on?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chair. This allocation covers the amount of \$1.5 million for the film commission rebate that you heard me announce in my contribution—we are trying to build a film industry.

It will also cover \$250,000 for the Beautification Committee. One second Mr. Chair.

*[Pause]*

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chair.

Through you again, the balance would be the standard amount that would be there as per budgets under the former Minister, for your regular TP appropriations for sponsorships and the like; say for instance, when they want to go to Cayman Brac and they are asking for assistance for jet skis, et cetera, this is where the money comes from.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Could the Minister get into more detail on the \$1.5 million rebate for films? I appreciate we do not have taxes to refund. I am wondering how this would be done—this being a line item; whether it is going to be an assessment where a check is given to the film company at the end of their period. How will we achieve this?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A very timely question.

The plan is pretty simple. First off let me say the fact is that this money is not given back to any film or company until after they have done the film. We would probably do an audit of what they have spent and how that is direct spend within the economy. Hence the reason you heard me announce the Film Commission, which will be analysing what model we would use; how we would determine what we are willing to say is considered to be a rebate or not.

For example, trickle-down spend, could not be calculated but direct spend, for instance, a person stayed in a hotel room, we would not have made that money off the room and board or the arrivals in respect to the flights, so we have to determine that; and I will be working closely with the Minister of Finance to find out what model we would be happy to accept.

Once that model is figured out, then we can say, okay, as per what they spent in the community, whether it is \$10 million [and] \$7 million out of that has been direct spend. [Out of] that \$7 million we will take, say for instance, 20 per cent and give them a rebate on that amount. They have to spend the money up front, [we] do the analysis, and after the analysis is done, we

determine and agree together and that is where this amount will come from.

Now, I personally believe this amount is going to be a small sum, but we are willing to come back to ask for the Opposition's support if in fact we get that many films or a film that is that large and spends that amount so if you were just to take the standard average rebate in film of 20 per cent, this would be a film for \$5 million or just over, which is not necessarily a very large film.

If necessary, we can use the \$1.5 million from the 2023 amount and if necessary, come back to this honourable House to ask for assistance, but that is the basic plan and we will definitely update Parliament as soon as we have a better-formulated structure upon which we are going to manage the rebate programme for the film industry.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin, Elected Member for Red Bay:** Mr. Chair, I am happy to give way to Mr. Hew.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chair.

Just a follow up on that. I spent quite a bit of time working within the Film Commission and with the film industry locally and overseas, and at the time most of the filmmakers I spoke to felt that the tax rebate, as they call it, was not so much of an incentive.

In most countries it was so burdensome to put in the application for it and even when they did, it sometimes took many, many, many years to see any monies returned; but what was burdensome for Cayman was:

- Dealing with work permits—how long the persons can stay on island;
- Duty—Kaboo [Festival] for instance, every time they took a guitar in or out of the container, Customs had to be there to record it.

It gets a bit cumbersome. Those were issues that we really struggled with and of course, the anti-paparazzi law as well. When it came to attracting major stars, the absence of one was an issue.

We have the immigration laws and other laws that basically act as anti-paparazzi because persons would have to apply for a work permit to come in as a journalist and then we could screen them to see what type of journalist they are—whether mainstream or a propaganda magazine, et cetera—but movie stars do feel more comfortable coming to a jurisdiction that gives them some recourse in that jurisdiction as far as dealing with paparazzi.

I offer my full support to the film industry. I was a huge supporter of reviving the Film Commission and bringing in CayFilm, which looked like it was going to be a significant event for us annually, so I do support it. I

have difficulty dealing with the concept at this time, but... I am happy—and again, you offered the Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman opportunities to collaborate, so I certainly have no issues in sharing what the prior thought process was and what our visions were on this.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chair.

I want to thank the Member for his comments and I agree with him. What is going to be the success of this industry is not only the rebate, but the efficiency. That means working collaboratively with other Ministries, from CBC to Immigration and whatever is necessary, because film is all about time and how quickly you can get things done. They run on a very tight schedule.

That is one of the main things that the new Film Commission will have to address, once appointed: what is the best way to be efficient; which other departments do we have to work with to get that done. I am committed to that, and it will be a top priority in the first part of the New Year, after Christmas.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman I wonder if the Minister could explain the entry on page 195 of the Plan and Estimates. The 12-month forecast under Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance for 2021 is \$63,814,259, whereas the estimates for next year are only \$1,850,000 and for 2023 \$2,350,000.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. McKeeva W. Bush:** Mr. Chairman, before you get to that, as I have to leave the Chamber, just allow me to record my thanks and appreciation to Ms. Rosa and her team for her assistance this past year.

Whenever we asked her to do anything, get anything for us, help us with anything as a Representative [and] as an MP, she is always most willing to help wherever she can. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, honourable Member for West Bay West. The honourable Minister of Tourism responding to the honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, to the Member's question: That amount included the stipends to the recipients for the whole of this year; that is why it is outlined in that way. All of the supplementaries for the displaced tourism stipend recipients that we came to Parliament for were outlined in that.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister.



I came to the conclusion that that must be what it is, but because of that I find it somewhat alarming that the Government is only proposing \$1,850,000 for 2022, compared to almost \$64 million in 2021. Now, either someone is projecting there is going to be a marvellous recovery of the tourism industry starting in January, or that amount is hugely under-budgeted.

**The Chairman:** Actually honourable Member for Red Bay, it is actually budgeted elsewhere; I take it in anticipation that you will support that vote when it comes up, but it is budgeted elsewhere.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Okay, yes! \$2,500 a month right?

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** We are good. We are good.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair as you said the amount . . . you see if the Member for Red Bay was paying close attention to my contribution in Parliament, he would have heard that the stipend recipients process and payments will be transferred to the Ministry of Finance; but maybe he was not in the Chamber at that time because he has been late quite often recently but—

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman I did hear that but there is no explanation here for the huge difference. It does not say stipends; it simply says Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance. That is all it says.

**The Chairman:** I note that, honourable Member for Red Bay and you are correct. When we came into the office and saw that number we were a little surprised too, but then we were told that is where it was booked for the displaced tourism workers. It is budgeted elsewhere, but your point is well noted.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, you are taking over the responsibility for this now?

**The Chairman:** Correct. It will fall under one of my Ministries.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Alright, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman I think the Minister said that there is about \$250,000 in beautification; as the former Minister responsible for Public Works and Parks, will there be additional funds in that Ministry for the upkeep and maintenance of all of these beautification efforts?

I think there are going to be a couple line items for beautification [initiatives] and I assume this will include vegetation, plants, et cetera. This has been (and I am not being smart here, Mr. Chairman), this has been a challenge for us. It is fantastic to build all these parks and to do all the beautification—I support it 100 per cent—but I want to know whether or not there are other line items for the upkeep and maintenance of these beautification projects. Are they are included in each line item?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Relevant question. As the maintenance will fall under the Minister responsible for Parks, I assume that question could be asked at that point for your relevant answers.

**The Chairman:** For the record, honourable Member for George Town North, under the Plan and Estimates, PAH 4 - Public Parks and Cemeteries Maintenance and Management, there is also over \$2.1 million budgeted for 2022, and \$2.2 million for 2023 under Planning; so yes, there are funds budgeted elsewhere.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman thank you for that. We will have a look at it when we get there.

What I want to ensure is that there should have been additional funding budgeted for the maintenance of some of the road corridors that we have somehow inherited recently as well as all of the new parks that were under construction or being constructed, and the fact that last year we took back the parks from the Dart organisation.

When we get there we will have a look at it, but I want to make sure that there is adequate funding for that department to carry out the services they already carry out, plus the additional that have fallen upon us over the last year/year and a half and what is coming.

**The Chairman:** Okay, thank you. Any other questions with regard to TP 67 - Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance? Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, this is \$1,850,000, \$2,350,000, the Minister has identified \$1.5 million and \$250,000. It leaves \$2,500,000. My understanding is that if you have an opportunity and you have to have a vision and some fund somewhere to take advantage of, to do something that has a positive result and a good Return on Investment (ROI) for the country, you have to be in a position.

Assuming that is what this \$2.5 million is parked there for, is there a vision of how it will be spent and what opportunities you think may arise?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chair. The Member broke down the total amounts for 2022 and 2023. Which part of the spending are you talking about because, unfortunately, I have to clarify something, Mr. Chair:

The first year for the Film Commission is only \$1 million. The second year in 2023, it will be \$1.5 million which is a total of \$2.5 million for the film; then the \$250 million would be on both years, which would then leave the \$600,000 which would normally be in the TP which you are aware of. Which one specifically are you talking about—or are you talking about the overall plan for spend?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** If I use the example that we discussed before, you said if I could get another \$100,000 on my TP then I could give it to the fishing association, right, but I just use that as an example.

That is your vision, right? And you do not know whether the opportunity is going to be there because somebody would come and say, *Minister there is a good ROI on this for tourism for the country itself, is this something that you are interested in doing?* And you analyse it and you say, yes—or we can split or we can do 50 or whatever.

My question is, do you have this available for other opportunities that you believe are going to become available for the country?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Well, the amount of \$600,000 that has been allocated there has been allowed to—I am happy that my colleagues at least allowed me to keep it to where it was before, which is our traditional sporting events and sponsorship events that we would do.

Of course I would want it increased, but subject to the finances that are available. Now, whether all of them will move forward or not, we will juggle that; say for instance, if we find savings one place and we find a new venture that we want to pursue like that Million Dollar month with the fishing experience.

We can pull from the next year and then if necessary, find savings within each Ministry and ask my colleagues to support me in that respect you know, the act of juggling the money if necessary when it comes forward; but it would be unfair to my colleagues to ask for any more with the limitations and we saw within the budget debate, the very serious concerns about how much spending we are doing.

I am appreciative for this amount. I will have to make do with what is there and try to do more with less. At the very least, this is what was there when you were

in office, so I am quite sure I can do just as good if not better with the same amount.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Interesting.

What I understand then is that there are funds available if somebody makes a case for some type of opportunity in Cayman Brac or Little Cayman.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Yes.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Good.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions with regards to TP 67? If not, I will put it to the vote.

All those in favour of TP 67 - Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance - \$1,850,000 in 2022, \$2,350,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **OE 91 - Depreciation of Ministry of Tourism and Transport Executive Assets**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues the next item is OE 91 - Depreciation of Ministry of Tourism and Transport Executive Assets - \$5,000 in 2022 and \$5,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? If not, we put it to the vote.

All those in favour of OE 91 - Depreciation of Ministry of Tourism and Transport Executive Assets - \$5,000 in 2022 and \$5,000 in 2023 please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EI 49 - Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre**

**The Chairman:** Next item colleagues, is EI 49 - Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre - \$2.5 million in 2022 and \$2.5 million in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, could the Minister give us an update on the Turtle Farm itself. It is a very important anchor to tourism in the West Bay area for sure.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, I do not think—oh, we do have one of the Chief Heads of the Turtle Farm here. I will ask one of them to step forward to give a comprehensive outlook of it.

**The Chairman:** You may repeat any one of these. Whichever you are comfortable with.

**Mr. Sean Glidden, Finance Manager, Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth and the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. At the start of your first response, can you state your name and title for the record, please? Thank you.

**Mr. Sean Glidden, Finance Manager, Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre:** I would like to thank everyone for the opportunity to share.

My name is Shawn Glidden. I am the Finance Manager of the Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre and I will do my best to answer your questions.

Right now, as a quick update, for the years that we are in operation, we are looking to do the same as projected by the Tourism Ministry. We are looking to do the 40 per cent and the 70 per cent as noted previously with other departments. We are hoping to have the cruise tourism back, that being one of our main revenue streams.

We are also looking at avenues to diversify on our revenue while we have been still in operation. Those areas we were expecting that tourism will be back in the near future and so with the tourism area, we are working steadfast to come up with new innovative ways to diversify our revenue streams.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman, I want to take the opportunity, on behalf of the Opposition, to thank Mr. Glidden for [attending] this morning; for the perseverance that you [shown] to be there through this pandemic every day to keep the doors open and give people the opportunity; and tell him how important we believe the Turtle Centre is—most importantly, the anchor that it creates for the West Bay area, especially. That we see it will come back and the opportunity that it will give the same people that were there before.

I am sure one of my colleagues will ask the question about the employees there—that they continue to work, they continue to be paid and they are in a position to accept the growing tourism as it starts coming. That is a question.

**The Chairman:** Mr. Glidden.

**Mr. Sean Glidden, Finance Manager, Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre:** So to answer your question, through you Mr. Chairman, we are working on maintaining the staff. With the movement now I

believe that we will be going to the POCS pay scale, and so that should be assisting the staff in maintaining—if I am answering the question correctly for you, sir, is that we are going to be moving to the civil servants' pay scale as well. If I understood your question correctly, sir.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr. Glidden just to make sure that you are good: The \$2.5 million covers your operational expense?

**Mr. Sean Glidden, Finance Manager, Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre:** No, sir. The \$2.5 million that we will have for equity injections projected for the next two years will not cover the operating expenditures. It has been agreed upon that we will be taking on a \$10 million dollar loan that would help with the operating expenditures.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** What would your bottom line be? That is \$5 million a year plus \$2.7.5 million a year?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, just to help support. The drawdown of that loan would be \$8.8 million in 2022 and \$1.2 million basically in 2023, assisted with the injection of the \$2.5 million per year each year will get them up to par, because the thinking is by 2023 things should be back to where they should be, that they can help facilitate themselves.

If you put the calculation of the \$8.8 million plus the \$2.5 million, you get over \$10 million for 2022 and then if you do the \$1.2 million plus \$2.5 million in 2023—because they are going to be doing a lot better—it is a smaller number, only \$3.7 million but by then their revenues should be a lot higher in 2023. Does that make sense?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** It makes sense how you explain it. My concern is that it is going to be \$10 million for the operation, there is no capital expense in this at all. It is a loan to fund operational expense and it is going to be \$10 million in 2022.

**The Chairman:** Sorry, I think it is more a loan to fund the operations of the Turtle Centre; I think that is pretty much it because, when we looked at what they wanted to do we looked at the cash flows and we considered the law which actually requires them to make a profit.

Right now they are running on an overdraft and we decided it was actually better for the country since the Government had excess cash, to actually convert the overdraft into a loan, charge them no interest for the next two years, give them additional lending for what it is that they want to do for the day to day operations, which include both operational and capital, plus also make equity injection, so it is not just operational expenses but rather, the operations of the Turtle Centre.

In terms of what defines operations, it is something that will be driven more by the board than anything else. When they came in and made their presentations to Caucus, as we were going through the budget and we looked at what their plans were, that was something that we looked at.

As I said in my contribution, there was a time when the subsidy used to be \$10 million per year. When you look at it, \$6 million of that went towards a loan which no longer exists and \$4 million would have been their normal subsidy, but then you look at the Turtle Centre having almost 100 staff employed directly, another 500 indirectly and then having an attraction that hosts over 200,000 people per year. The question is then, where else could you get roughly 600 people employed, over 200,000 visitors for \$4 million a year as a big part of our tourism product?

It was still along those veins, based on what it is that they expressed to us during the budget presentation, why we came up with the numbers that we wanted in terms of what would have been for their operations as they would need it, because it does include some capital and also what it is that they would need as a shortfall.

When we looked at both areas, that is how the \$10 million loan was broken up between \$8.8 million in one year—because we expect activity to be lessened—versus the revenues as it would improve in 2023, how much they will actually need and then we made a normal equity injection. For us, the equity injection is really more to help, if anything, on the capital side as opposed to the operational side; and the loan if anything is more to fund them more on the operational side than anything else.

That was pretty much the mind-set after they came in and made a presentation in terms of what it is that they wanted. That is how we looked at it based on the presentation that was made to the Caucus, based on the budget that was approved by the board; basically, we did not want them to go and borrow the money to stay alive. That was pretty much how those funds came about.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman we are in total agreement with you—the way that the Government looks at the Turtle Centre is the same way we viewed it; the most important part for us is to ensure that the employees are satisfied, taken care of, and know that they have a job this year [and] next year, as the Turtle Centre grows.

The only question we are asking is if you are satisfied that this is the funding they need, obviously, and you have one part of it—the operational and salary side of it. You are not identifying any capital but, as you ramp up your arrivals and your business, you believe that the money that has been allocated will make it fit for purpose when it needs to serve us as a tourism attraction.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Was that question to me or to the Chairman?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** If you can answer, that would be good.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** To follow in the footsteps of my good, good, Chairman and Finance Minister, yes.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, sir.

**The Chairman:** On a separate note, I want to thank the Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman for the concern he raised with the staff because it is a very big issue for us also, in terms of making sure the staff is properly compensated, et cetera.

That is one of the reasons why over the next two years we are looking at roughly \$15 million being injected into the Turtle Centre as both borrowing and capital; plus, they save not paying the interest, because interest payments alone would have been like \$500,000 over the next two years—with us lending the money that is money they actually save to do more. That is what we looked at.

Any other questions with regards to EI 49? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of EI 49 – Cayman Turtle Conservation and Education Centre Ltd. - \$2.5 million in 2022, \$2.5 million in 2023, please say Aye. All those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 159 - Waterfront Tourism Experience**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, last item for the Ministry of Tourism and Transport, EA 159 - Waterfront Tourism Experience - \$1 million in 2022 and \$560,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman I wonder if the Minister could explain whether this relates to the property he explained to us that Government has just bought or is in the process of buying—I am not sure which—just North of the Catboat Club?

**The Chairman:** Minister for Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Through you, Mr. Chairman, the Member is correct, yes.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman is this the purchase price of the property?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** No, sir. I will get the exact purchase price for you—as a matter of fact, I think you'd be better suited to ask that of the Lands Minister at the appropriate time.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Ah, that is where it is.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Yes.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Okay.

Mr. Chairman, I accept that; so the \$1 million for next year and the \$560,000 for the following year are operational costs?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** No, sir. The amounts there are for the remodelling and to bring it up to par to opening it. We think that would be sufficient to get the location to where it is at, along with assistance to the Tourism Attraction Board which it will eventually become a part of.

We think the location and the offerings that will be supported by the Department of Tourism will have it in a way that it can sustain itself with its own revenues, because there is so much chatter about what that location can offer. That amount, plus the following year's, are more so to get it to where we want it to be, to be able to operate financially.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Okay, thank you.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Could the Member please let us know when they anticipate the facilities to be open?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I said to my very, very capable Chief-Officer, that it has to be done by the middle of next year but, as all Members on the Opposition side who have been a part of Government know, sometimes things go a bit slower than necessary.

I can promise you that I will be putting on the necessary pressure to get it developed; but I am so happy to hear that you guys are in support of this project because I really believe, not only for the PACT Administration but for the country as a whole, [that] this location is something that the people can be proud of and I really look forward to inviting all Members, including the Opposition, to be there in celebration as we cut that ribbon together, because I think this project can be something special.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I thank the honourable Member for his answer.

Can the honourable Member tell us where in the budget will the operational funding be held? I anticipate that it is intended to be a non-profit and, having some understanding of what it takes to operate a food and beverage facility, I anticipate it will be a substantial operation budget.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you. Through you, Mr. Chair, as I said in my answer to the Member for Red Bay, we believe the monies that are there will be able to get it up and running and, [that] once it is set up in collaboration with the Tourism Attraction Board—because it will fall under the Tourism Attraction Board eventually, once we have gotten the final paperwork done—there will be enough business for its revenues to help it continue to operate.

My latest update was that the former owners received a check and it will be in our hands, I think it is supposed to be this week, actually. Once it is in our hands, that money is to try to get it up to par and then transferred over to the Tourism Attraction Board with it having enough to operate. Once in operation, the revenues will keep it operating on its own.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I thank the honourable Minister for that response.

Let me understand this: The operational budget will be in TAB 1 or—well, that is Pedro St. James; TAB 4, TAB 5 – Hell...

That is what I am wondering; if the Minister believes that it will be open in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter in 2022, then I would assume that the \$560,000 for 2023 is operational.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, before I answer the good Member I would like to thank the staff of the Town Centre for attending, and ask that they be excused.

[Pause]

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** To answer the Deputy Opposition Leader's question, maybe I forgot one key principle to this model, which was to put the restaurant itself out to tender. That way, the revenues will be able to self-sustain it, plus we would make revenue off of the rental because the cost that we would have to deal with for the rest of the property will be smaller, in our view—which is just the upkeep of the craft market area, the bathroom facilities; not all the assets you need, whether it is buying food to cook, goods, lights and services, employees, salaries and all that.

The intention was (and is still being developed as we speak) to tender it out to a company that is willing

to operate but simultaneously train Caymanians—and one of the principal agreements is that it has to hire Caymanians on a training programme. Ideally, it would be great to find a school that trains people, that is willing to operate a restaurant that—in my humble opinion—will be very profitable because it has the Cayman Government's support behind it.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank the honourable Minister for explaining that.

I admire his enthusiasm and certainly would support anything that advances our people, particularly in the hospitality industry, which I spent most of my life in.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** And in my constituency; but I can tell you it is not that easy to make money in a food and beverage establishment whilst training people.

I do believe more thought needs to be put into this going forward, and would [also] say to the Member that when the time comes, I would be considerate of what is being perceived by some in the industry as the Government competing with those on the waterfront who have been struggling to stay open for the last year and a half.

I do share his enthusiasm, I feel there are more questions than answers as far as I am concerned, but we shall watch and see.

Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition, once the plans are finalised I will implore upon the Minister to provide an update for you, as the representative for the George Town North area and also your fellow colleagues, as to what is planned; but, based on what the Minister said with regards to tendering it, more than likely it will be run by a private establishment.

The Government is more interested in ensuring that the people of the Cayman Islands own at least a little bit of real estate on the waterfront and enhance the tourism experience. It is not about competing with the private sector; it is more about adding something on the waterfront to our tourism product.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I share with you in that and I am very happy that the property has been secured within my constituency.

These are just things for consideration. Perhaps the honourable Minister may want to consider working with the Cayman Islands Tourism Association (CITA). Perhaps they could actually operate it in partnership with the Government as a training centre, and

any revenues from it could go towards supporting CITA's operations. Just a suggestion, but I appreciate your offer and we look forward to—

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Sorry, Mr. Chairman. Did I just hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say to give this business to CITA? Did I hear you correctly saying that?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, I did not say to give it to CITA. I said, perhaps the Minister may consider the operations of the training facility in partnership with CITA.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** I apologise Mr. Chair, but through you: The reason we are even considering this in the first place is because previous operations with CITA did not work.

We have a hospitality school at the University (College) that whenever persons—trained there under the stewardship of CITA members—graduate, they still cannot get into the industry, so much so that we have had to consider creating an environment where they can learn on the job as well as from the certification perspective. That is the whole concept of this, so forgive my response in that respect.

Yes, they can be in collaboration with what is necessary to be listed, but CITA carrying it out—and when I say CITA I do not mean it as a whole organisation, but my confidence in them running it...

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Let me rephrase that; I do not want to throw the baby out with the bath water here, because not all CITA members... As a matter of fact, 95 per cent of them work well with the Ministry but at this particular tenure, I do not think it is what we are trying to go with.

What we are trying to do is say, "*listen, please tell us what you think they should have, and we will deal with it*". We can say they have been certified from an academic perspective, as well as in-house training because once we do this project, moving forward, we will no longer accept—no longer accept—businesses saying, "*first you need to train*" and when we train them, then they say, "*well, they do not have any experience*"—because that is what has been happening; and we have the studies to show how many people have gone through the hospitality training school and still cannot get a job in the industry.

Hopefully this project will cover both areas, so they no longer have any excuses once they finish this programme. I think this is something that the former Minister of Tourism is well aware of, so forgive me for

my response about the CITA, or at least particular members of the CITA.

**The Chairman:** Alright, if there are no other questions I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 159 Waterfront Tourism Experience - \$1 million in 2022 and \$560,000 in 2023 please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it. Colleagues that concludes the appropriations to the Minister of Tourism and Transport. I understand the Minister probably wants to say something before we break for lunch.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Yes. Yes, Mr. Chairman. First I want to say thank you for allowing the questioning process. I want to thank all the staff of my Ministry as well the various different departments and Government-owned companies who came and gave evidence today. Some did not even need to be here as there were no specific appropriations, but I made sure they [attended] in case there were any questions, so I want to say thank you so much to them.

I want to say thank you so much to my finance team within the Ministry. They have been working really, really hard, keeping me abreast of where we are in respect to our financial position. With that being said, I [seek] permission to allow them to leave now that we have completed, and thank this honourable committee for their support of the numbers in the Bill.

*[Crosstalk]*

**The Chairman:** Alright, thank you very much. Colleagues, we will take a break now and resume at 2:00pm. Thank you.

**Committee suspended at 12.30 p.m.**

**Committee resumed at 2.02 p.m.**

**The Chairman:** The Committee is called to order. We will resume. Thank you; please be seated.

Colleagues, before the lunch break we concluded the Ministry of Tourism. Now we will start with appropriations to the honourable Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

### **Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure**

#### **PAH 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister for Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure**

**The Chairman:** The first line item is PAH 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister for Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure in the amount of \$3,306,562 in 2022 and \$3,144,004 in 2023. Are there any questions?

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Any questions?

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much.

All those in favour of PAH 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister for Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure in the amount of \$3,306,562 in 2022 and \$3,144,004 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **PAH 2 - Emergency Response Services**

Moving on colleagues, to PAH 2 - Emergency Response Services - \$351,056 in 2022 and \$358,787 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, this is for facilities management?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks, Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure, Elected Member for North Side:** This is for the single-day hurricane preparations that they do plus the generators, sir. This is based on the number of generators being serviced by Department of Vehicle and Equipment Services (DVES), the staffing and fuelling and the terms of Public Works for the outputs previously considered in the single-day hurricane preparations.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I thank the honourable Member for that answer.

Mr. Chairman to the Member, I know we struggle sometimes with parts of the responsibilities falling under Facilities Management and others falling under Public Works. I think Facilities Management had places like the Civic Centres, while Public Works were doing the schools, et cetera. Is this all under one umbrella now?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** This would be under Public Works based on the emergency planning exercise, but also for the management of the hurricane supplies and shutters of post-disaster assessments and repairs not covered by other clients or under the National Emergency exercise. This would just be under one committee, yes.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. Yeah. He answered it just now and no, it is not covered.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? Thank you. With that said, I will now take the vote.

All those in favour of PAH 2 - Emergency Response Services in the amount of \$351,056 in 2022 and \$358,787 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

#### **PAH 4 - Public Parks and Cemeteries Maintenance and Management**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to PAH 4 - Public Parks and Cemeteries Maintenance and Management in the amount of \$2,130,512 in 2022 and \$2,234,723 in 2023. Are there any questions? Hon. Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I do not believe this is under this but I do not want to get locked out if it is. The construction and development of new parks is not covered by this vote, right? This is just maintenance of existing ones?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** That is correct, sir.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Okay. Mr. Chairman just one question and again, I am not sure if this falls under this or not.

This is not my constituency, but it is a road that I travel and I am very proud that we actually put the boardwalk in place because it will keep any construction from occurring there forever, I hope, but the boardwalk area itself is very poorly maintained. There are a number of planters there and it has been that way for quite some time.

I am not sure if this falls under the unit that has been set up to deal with cemeteries and parks and so forth, but somebody or some entity needs to take responsibility for it. I mean, that area of South Sound Road is very scenic, very beautiful, but this place is almost never maintained and it is not a big job; it is only

four or five planters, but nobody seems to take the responsibility for it—and that is from the time we were in Government, not trying to say this is your responsibility that it has been that way. Just nobody seems to take responsibility for it.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, I want to thank the honourable Member for Red Bay.

We will definitely be looking into it. I just spoke to my colleague right here but I think what we may probably [do] is have the National Roads Authority (NRA) look at it, because it would be considered a sidewalk, more or less.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Yes, in fact the boardwalk and those planters are in the road reserve, because that is how we went about doing it. I do not want it to fall between stools again, because that is what happens: This one says they are not responsible and that one says they are not responsible and then nobody does it.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Noted, sir. We will make NRA responsible for it from now on.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions with regards to PAH 4? Mr. Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman as I indicated earlier, while we were talking about the \$250,000 funds for beautification under the honourable Tourism Minister, I am very much aware of the efforts in the last Government to purchase land for the public, especially on the waterfront. I know we just about doubled the size of the Bodden Town and East End Public Beaches and a couple of others.

We also went through an extensive exercise of providing parks and green spaces—two in West Bay, a couple in Bodden Town again, the Prospect Park which the representative spoke about and which we are still awaiting, and a few expansions including the promised expansion of the Neil Godfrey Park on Washington Boulevard. We also inherited the Dart Parks as well, which was long overdue.

I know that they are struggling and I do not know who has responsibility now for the Public Beach and a park there that is being used heavily and I know that there are plans to put an exercise park there, so I have grave concerns.

I had concerns when I was a Minister and have even more concerns now, as the 2021 budget was \$2.4 million and we are down to \$2.1 in 2022 and \$2.2 in 2023. Is this enough money to maintain all of these parks, all the beautification projects that we are undertaking, and the little things like the boardwalk the Member for Red Bay spoke about, et cetera? And I see in here, cleanliness, inspection and upkeep of downtown George Town waterfront, et cetera.



Is this enough money?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you: Knowing that we are now taking on the Dart Parks, et cetera, we will monitor this as we go along, and if we see that we need more money, sir, we do not have a problem coming back to the House for a Section 12 somewhere down the road.

**The Chairman:** The only thing I would add for the Member's benefit is that, when we looked at these parks we were aware that there are many civic organisations that do much of this. We are hoping that this go-around we can actually partner with said civic organisations, where they can adopt some of these properties to take care of them [as a way] of giving back to the community.

That was something that we looked at. Ms. Heather, the Member for Savannah, found many people willing to volunteer or "adopt" some of these parks and take care of them so we are actually hoping at a minimum, that some of these civic organisations will step up to the plate and pretty much—just like you "adopt a roundabout"—adopt a park also.

Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I do agree with you that possibly some of the service clubs would be willing to adopt. I know traditionally, the Leo's Club had taken care of at least the infrastructure on the Public Beach.

However like I said, the park at the Public Beach is now almost oversubscribed. Everything from the volleyball courts to the beach football courts; what was supposed to have been a children's park and they are still using the area as a dog park, and now the exercise area. That area in itself requires almost fulltime management.

The crew at Parks and Recreation are stretched, I know that. They are stretched, and believe you me: no one recognises them, until something goes wrong or someone goes somewhere and it is overgrown. They also have all the cemeteries. We just added a new cemetery in West Bay [which] the Member spoke about during the debate. I personally do not think there is enough in here, especially if there is a cut—

I know there was not enough when I was Minister; not even nearly, so I know there is not enough now, because there is a reduction here. The Minister has my full support and yes, good suggestion on reaching out to the service clubs, et cetera, but if there is any way to add additional support to the Minister, we would support that.

**The Chairman:** Just for the record, contrary to popular belief, not everything the Minister asked for he got, many of them got scaled back for us to be where we

are. Any other questions on PAH 4? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of PAH 4 - Public Parks and Cemeteries Maintenance and Management in the amount of \$2,130,512 in 2022 and \$2,234,723 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### PAH 8 – Management of Special Projects

Colleagues, moving on to PAH 8 – Management of Special Projects in the amount of \$2,935,823 in 2022 and \$3,137,629 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** It is almost \$3 million, so if the Minister could just explain what these special projects are or what sort of projects fall under that heading?

**The Chairman:** Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. This is the exclusion of minor-work projects under \$100,000 per project, sir. It is transferring from PAH 10 below, which is reengineering some of the business processes to ensure that clients' costs are properly tracked and billed [INAUDIBLE].

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** But under which department or unit or agency?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Public Works, sir. PWD.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Oh. Okay.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, is this in Major Projects' office?

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** This is all of them, sir; capital and Major Projects' office.

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Yes, sorry. It is under All Capital Development from Minor to Major.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Through you, Mr. Chairman, it would be good if we could hear what some of those ongoing projects are, whether it is a cruise ship terminal or...

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Please do not go there.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** What it is they are working on, sir.

*[Extended pause]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, some of the projects listed are:

- The Coe Wood Beach Dock Project;
- The Old Man Bay Dock Project;
- The Garden Park Dock Extension Ramp Reconstruction;
- The Prospect Community Park;
- Eddie Sanchez Park;
- Frenchman's Park in Breakers;
- The Break Court Park in Bodden Town;
- William Harvey Park in West Bay;
- The Godfrey Nixon Community Park; and
- The Scranton project in George Town Central.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I am most grateful to my Deputy Leader for having unearth that information. Could I now ask the Minister, Mr. Chairman, if he could provide us with an update on what is happening with the Eddie Sanchez Community Park, which is intended to serve both the Red Bay and Prospect constituencies?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you.

We are looking at the Eddie Sanchez Park. We expect to complete the additional landscaping and parking works for the beginning of the New Year.

[As] we know that it took a pretty big hit [during Tropical Storm] Grace, we also have to look at how the structure of some of those cabanas would have to be rebuilt, sir; but the park is on target to be fixed and rebuilt in the first part of the New Year, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman these projects seem to take far longer than you would expect for what should be a relatively straightforward exercise. We ("we" being Government), purchased the six parcels of land, I think we paid almost \$1 million dollars for the

land, and had the plans developed. Now we have been trying for the best part of three years, I guess, to get this project through.

The cabanas that the Minister referred to, were clearly not built substantially enough; Grace took the roof off of both of them and set them right down alongside it. The problem is, that because there is so little space in Prospect and Red Bay for people to engage in physical activities, people have been using the park, even though it is unfinished and unsafe in some respects.

We really would ask that attention be turned to that as quickly as possible. When I was Premier I understood that one of the obstacles was that there was a decision, taken by some group, that the landscaping should be a single-source procurement; and that created issues involving the need for a business case and such things.

I am really anxious, Mr. Chairman, that we get through all of those technical issues and we get this park up and running as quickly as possible for the benefit of the Minister for Health and Wellness' constituents, as well as those that I have the honour to represent in Red Bay.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chairman, being the Minister of Planning, when I looked at that park the first thing I realised is that those cabanas could never stand on the two legs that they got—talk about building on stronger foundation...

We really need to go back and redo the entire design of those cabanas. They wanted to build a few in North Side and I refused, because I know they could not take the wind load of a hurricane. When I do finish that park for the honourable Member for Red Bay, I want him to know that they will be done properly and the best that this Government can do, and it will be done as quickly as we possibly can, sir.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for that.

Mr. Chairman, I am not sure if this is under this vote or not, but the issue of the promised, I will not put it any higher, Seafarers' Park next door—which my administration committed to: I did not hear anything about it in any of the budget speeches or debates, and I have not been able to find any reference to it in these documents.

I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, whether or not the Government has decided not to proceed with that project. If so, I think it would be a really disappointing decision, because the remaining Seafarers that we have get less and less almost every month now, and if we truly want to build a memorial, something that they can see as part of recognition of the incredible

legacy they have left, we really need to get it done sooner rather than later.

I know people will say there are priorities and money issues, but the Government has committed to borrowing almost \$350 million, so I would hope that this infinitesimally small amount could be found to make that project, even if the Government wants to put its own vision on it; but that legacy is there to remind all of us, and those who come after us, of the incredible contribution that Seamen made to this modern Cayman.

**The Chairman:** Mr. McLaughlin, first of all thanks for raising that. I think it is safe for me to say on behalf of the Government, that it is something we fully support. When we were putting together the budget and looked at where we were starting from—I mean, the surplus for 2021 alone is \$19 million—one of the biggest issues that we had to face, as a Government, was looking at the increased health care costs.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**The Chairman:** Yeah, we started with \$19 million surplus which is literally a flat amount, and when we saw the amount in terms of the increase in the health care costs for the Seamen, it became almost a balancing exercise.

I can tell there were things to complete that the Premier is fully supportive of us finding money as soon as something becomes available, because that is something he has committed to, but we had to choose between the healthcare costs for the Seamen and Veterans versus something [else]. That is something that we are looking at, but we are hoping that as things improve, it is one of the things that we can kick start.

I can also tell you that Cabinet Secretary—not to speak out of school—Samuel Rose it's something that he is very passionate about also, so it is one of the things that as soon as things turn around it will become a priority for the government again. For right now it is one of those things were, you know, you cannot do everything one go in the current situation that we are in, but it is something that I think every Member this House recognises the point that you are making and it is something that we would like to see done very, very quickly also.

**Hon. W. McKeever Bush, Elected Member for West Bay West:** Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman?

As someone who is supportive of that park, and as a patron of the Seaman's Association and as Speaker of this House, we have to look at the plan though, because there is no real exit. You get in the Assembly and you get jammed here.

Whether they are demonstrating about coffee, the fact is there is no exit, and we have to plan that a little bit better to make sure that we have some room to play and not to take away from that plan because we

want to make it better; but before redeveloping that we have to plan with the Assembly in mind.

**The Chairman:** I do not think that is an issue from that standpoint, but Mr. McLaughlin your point is made. Like I said, it was raised and discussed, and unfortunately it took a lower priority, I should say, as opposed to other matter. Mr. McLaughlin continuing, sorry.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin,:** Mr. Chairman, I am not quite sure I understood your response though, because you spoke about having to weigh the need for improved health care coverage and so forth, and pensions or stipends for the Seamen against the construction of a park but as far as I understood, your budget presentation, the \$350 million dollars which you proposed to borrow is for capital projects, not for ongoing programmes.

All I am trying to say is, some of those other capital projects could give up the million or million and a half or two million—I do not know what the number is—necessary to create this park. It is just a question of priorities and I think if, as you say, the Government shares the Government I had the honour to lead's commitment to building a lasting legacy to our Seafarers, then I believe you can find the \$2 million dollars from the myriad of projects that you have planned that will be funded by that \$350 million dollars.

I should warn that I am going to beat this drum as long as I am here, so this is the first little *rub a dub*.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Premier.

**The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton, Minister of Sustainability and Climate Resiliency, Elected Member for Newlands:** Mr. Chair, thank you very much. I want to reassure Mr. McLaughlin that this is a shared issue.

We certainly are very committed to addressing this and making sure that we move forward to this. There was a proposal to do \$750, I think, in 2022 and 2023 respectively, but when facing certain realities and making cuts in certain areas, these were things that, while we decided to make the cut, we were still committed to it and want to move forward.

In the coming months, in the first or second quarter of 2022, we are committed to try to find the funding to get that park moving because we are as committed to it and as passionate about it as he is, so I can assure Mr. McLaughlin that he will not have to beat that drum for very long.

**The Chairman:** I feel good, because it feels like the Section 12 for that is already approved.

*[Laughter]*

**The Chairman:** Yes, thank you very much. Any other questions with regards to PAH 8 – Management of Special Projects. Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you. I want to thank the Minister for pointing out many of those projects and the good news that some of those brought.

I want to focus in particular on the Major Projects Office, the major Government projects being planned or managed by that office at the moment. If he could provide us with some highlights.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. Some of the major projects are the long-term Residential Mental Health Facility, the John Gray High School redevelopment, the airport redevelopment project, and the Judicial Admin Temporary Grand Court Phase One A of Scotiabank, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Sorry, I missed one. Just to let you know that the Integrated Solid Waste Management System (ISWMS) is on that too, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. ISWMS is important; that is a burning topic.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, can the Member tell us if there are any further hurricane shelters, civic centres, et cetera, on the budget for the next two years?

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Is it? Okay, sorry then. What about the George Town revitalisation? Where is that covered?

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Further down.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will take the vote.

All those in favour of PAH 8 – Management of Special Projects for \$2,935,823 in 2022 and \$3,137,629 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### PAH 10 – Management of Government Properties

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to PAH 10 - Management of Government Properties in the amount of \$12,073,657 in 2022 and \$12,105,442 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for George Town North, Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. Through you, Mr. Chairman. This is Facilities Management now?

**The Chairman:** Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. And Public Works, yes, sir

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, could the Member give an indication of what upgrades and development for Town Halls and Community Centres are planned for this budget period.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair that will be further down as we go along.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** That includes renovation of existing which is usually under this, but I might be wrong.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you to the honourable Member for George Town North: That is actually in EA 78 as we get down further.

*[Pause]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, that also falls under EA 152.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions with regards to PAH 10? If not, I will put it to the vote.

All those in favour of PAH 10 - Management of Government Properties in the amount of \$12,073,657 in 2022 and \$12,105,442 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### PAH 11 - Procurement and Maintenance of Government Fleet

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to PAH 11 - Procurement and Maintenance of Government Fleet - \$3,646,859 in 2022 and \$4,051,254 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, could the honourable Member give us an update on the target of 30 per cent electric vehicles purchased by the Government for their fleet?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, I have been reliably informed because of the COVID, the sourcing of some of these electric vehicles has been more difficult than originally planned but they are finding places that we may be able to do something in the New Year.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Yes, sir, correct.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chairman through you, sir. I need to give a little background first. When we developed Phase one of the Department of Vehicle and Equipment Services, one of the goals was to streamline and create efficiencies and cost savings within the Parts Department and there was anticipation. Would the Minister be in a position to give us an update on whether or not we realised those savings as we had planned?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair if the honourable Member for George Town North does not mind, we could actually put that in writing directly to him, sir. There are special reasons because of COVID, sir.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is fine, the question was really just an opportunity for the Department to talk about all of their achievements because it certainly was.

As I said in my debate on the budget, the conditions there were very difficult and we figured that the assumptions of efficiencies were highly evaluated on the business plan but yes, absolutely.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions with regard to PAH 11 - Procurement and Maintenance of Government Fleet - \$3,646,859 and 2022 and \$4,051,254 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**PAH 13 - Provision of Planning Services  
PAH 14 - Management of Planning Applications**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to PAH 13 - Provision of Planning Services in the amount of \$35,187 in 2022 and \$35,148 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I do not even know where to start with this one.

I am sure everyone in this Chamber has received complaints because it is a constant thing about how expensive, how convoluted and how long it takes to get through the planning process.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Number 14?

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Oh, *provision* of planning services, not *management*. Okay. Can write down my question so I do not have to ask it again.

**The Chairman:** Since both relate to Planning we can combine PAH 13 and 14 if you want.

If that is the case then I will restate: PAH 13 - Provision of Planning Services in the amount of \$35,187 in 2022 \$35,148 in 2023 and PAH 14 - Management of Planning Applications - \$4,362,721 in 2022 and \$4,420,379 in 2023. Are there any questions? Hon. Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think what we, and the country as a whole would benefit from, would be some explanation by the Minister, or by the Director of Planning, about the work there.

I am sure they all have heard the same complaints we do about timeliness; about the sheer bureaucracy and the increasing cost of moving a planning application through to completion of a project. If they could give us some explanation in relation to resources, human resources and others — whether what we have is adequate.

What sort of length of time does it take? All projects are not created equal, I understand that, but the average project to go through the process to where you get your red card to how long it takes to get the various individual aspects of it dealt with—electric, plumbing—the whole lot; because as I said, I am sure everybody here gets these complaints. I get two or three a week.

We got them before we were in Government, we got them when we were in Government, and we are out of Government and they are still there, so it is a chronic issue.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, I will make the Director of Planning, Mr. Haroon [Pandohie], answer that.

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Haroon. Before answering the question raised by the honourable Member for Red Bay, can you state your name and title for the record please? Thank you.

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning.

Mr. Chairman, it is quite an extensive question so I guess I could break it down into three components:

- One relates to the process;
- Another relates to the workload; and
- The third relates to resources.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Sorry sir, if I could just clarify in terms of when you say *the process*: From the time you submit for planning permission to getting a building permit? Okay.

The process is broken into two components. There is the planning process related to houses and duplexes and then what we consider everything else, being major projects. If a planning application for a house meets all the necessary criteria and requirements set out in the regulations and does not trigger a consultation requirement under the National Conservation Act, it is usually dealt with within a week because those are considered administrative approvals.

If they trigger a consultation that is a 21-day period in order for that consultation to occur, for us to get back that feedback, and then process that application. I say if it meets all the requirements; if there is a process by which they are seeking a variance that triggers a 21-day notification period to the adjacent landowners.

Again, if it needs a variance that will be submitted to the Central Planning Authority for consideration as to the merits of the variance. That is dealing with houses and duplexes. Again, applications that meet all the requirements and that do not trigger that consultation phase are usually dealt with within seven business days.

Moving swiftly on to major applications, i.e. Apartments, commercial buildings, industrials, et cetera. Those applications—and this is a very important part: For most people, when considering the planning process much of the focus is on the Department of Planning.

The Department of Planning serves as a hub for many other entities that consult and actually operate within the planning process, and a fair amount of time is actually given to those various consultations. On a major project, the project is sent out for consultation to:

- The National Conservation Council (NCC),
- The Department of Environment (DOE),
- Department of Environmental Health (DEH),
- The Water Authority (WAC),
- The National Roads Authority (NRA) and, depending on where it is located, The Airports Authority (CIAA).

During that time, we also do the 21-day notification period and then, depending on the type of application, it may trigger newspaper ads. That is the major public consultation process.

The Member would be aware that the regulations were amended earlier this year to allow for the process of advertising plans. The plans are now visible on our website, so you no longer have to come down to the department to view those plans. Once the notice goes out by Registered Mail, it triggers the 21-day consultation period to the adjoining landowners.

If any consultation with an entity such as the NCC, NRA, et cetera, is ongoing, that work occurs in the background; at the end of that process [and] once all of those matters are addressed, the application is sent to the Central Planning Authority for consideration.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Resources?

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Yes, sir.

Resources have and continue to be a challenge for us when you look at the volume of work.

Looking quickly at planning approvals that occurred from the first to the third quarter of this year, we are looking at:

- 620 planning applications—an excess of \$1.2 billion worth of projects;
- 94 apartment complexes, two hotels, government projects, commercial projects, et cetera;
- 965 permits issued for the same period, valued in excess of \$611 million;
- 290 Certificate of Occupancy Certificates in excess of \$184 million;
- Factoring ongoing works, as of today we have got 1,793 permits active—we are either doing plan reviews or inspections on them, et cetera.

Quickly looking at the stats, until 30th November, the Department of Planning conducted over 12,136 inspections and over 5,090 plan reviews; again, focusing on your point in terms of the feedback that you received from the public, when you put the resources of

the department [and] the volume of work that we are currently conducting, and compare it against the fact that we currently have 404 pending inspections sitting in the system. Those are inspections persons have [submitted], that they are asking us to respond to.

As I know many Members will be aware of, especially this time of the year as we are getting into the Christmas season, persons are looking to occupy structures, the majority being residential structures; they are looking to get into their homes, into an apartment they built. On the back end of all that we have many projects that have been accelerated in an attempt to make up for the time lost during the COVID lockdown.

Again, all of that has come together for us. Then, when you consider the scale of projects that we are currently working on; quickly running through them:

We have got a number of 10-storey buildings currently under construction. Many of those have multiple towers—the Grand Hyatt for instance, [has] three 10-storey towers; we got the Lacovia project that is in for permits—again, three 10-storey towers; two 10-storey towers at Camana Bay. We have a number of other 10-storey projects currently under way.

We have a number of projects currently in for permits or under way: The Mandarin Oriental Hotel, The Watermark project, the Indigo Hotel...

When you factor in the number of apartment complexes that are currently underway, a number of them rapidly approaching completion, especially in the Grand Harbour area, the turnout rate again, sir, contributes to the immense workload that the department is handling right now.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you very much for that comprehensive explanation. I think it gave all of us a much better idea of the department's sheer workload, but you did not mention whether or not your human resources are adequate, and if not how short they are.

I would like you to focus particularly on the Building Control Unit (BCU), because that is the unit most of the complaints are levied at, not so much the Central Planning Authority or the Department of Planning. The processes that have to be gone through and the inspections that have to be conducted by the Building Control Unit tend to be the focus of most of the frustration, I think.

**The Chairman:** Minister for Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you, the Planning Department is in recruitment of a new Planning Officer of Policy and Development; a Planning Assistant, Compliance Officer, two Inspectors, and a Planning Examiner.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Education.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I should say that has not answered the question.

**The Chairman:** I know; I realise that. Honourable Minister of Education, were you...

**Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly:** I had a question but I was prepared to give way to the honourable Member for Red Bay if he had any questions.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, what I am trying to get at (and I am not trying to make life difficult for anybody): The Director is the man who has to deal with this. We hear the complaints, but that is his life, so what is his view about the adequacy or lack thereof, of the current human resources that he has on hand?

**The Chairman:** Before the Director or the Minister answer, Mr. McLaughlin, the only caveat I would add is that I know as a Government we looked at making some changes to the Planning Law looking to go back to where people can do the smaller jobs around their house, I think up to 10 per cent, that seem to tie up the BCU. If we do away with that, then at a minimum it will free up many planning resources to get to what really needs to be done.

I mean, some of the inspections that we see people waiting on are so small, so mundane; even having some certification process where another person can look at something independently. I know the Minister spoke about it in his contribution. I hope he or the Director can expand on it, but I know it was part of the thinking when they first came with the long list of employees that they were looking for.

I will be fair and say that they came asking for a number of employees and something that I, at least, looked at and considered, is: When we looked at the additional cost of the resources and then looked at the additional revenues that were forecasted, at that point we knew we were not seeing value for value.

Then, as we deep-dived into it, we realised that much time was spent on small, mundane stuff; that is why we wanted to have a review of the legislation and regulations, to see what we could do to free that up, so the resources that they have can at least focus on what needs to be focused on. That was part of the exercise that came up, but they can expand on that a bit more.

Minister of Education, you wanted to add something?

**Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly:** Yes sir, I have a pressing question.

**The Chairman:** I just want to make sure—

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I still have not had a response, sir.

**The Chairman:** I know; I am waiting on them to expand on that. Thank you.

Director.

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Through you, Mr. Chairman.

When it comes to resourcing, there is a multi-faceted aspect to it. The number one aspect of it being, what is the turnaround time that we are looking for, and much of that is industry-driven. If we go into it saying we are going to turn around within three days, we get asked for a 24-hour turnaround time.

I guess the aspect of it that would have to be determined is, what is the turnaround time that the industry is seeking, and then we can back load it into resourcing. Currently, we are in the process of recruiting two additional combination inspectors; we recruited a Plans Examiner who, all else being equal, will start with the department in January; and we are in the process of recruiting to fill two inspector positions that we recently lost by individuals moving on to other areas within the industry.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, can I ask Mr. Pandohie then, if he thinks that when these posts are filled he will have adequate human resources to deal with the level of work that exists and is projected to come.

**The Chairman:** Mr. Pandohie.

[Pause]

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Through you, Mr. Chairman.

I will try to stay away from the “adequate” because, again, that becomes a bit of a moving target depending on the outcome that the industry is seeking. What I would say is that I believe that, with the additional human resources coupled with a number of other initiatives that we have brought online, we would be in a place to significantly reduce the [number] of complaints that you are currently receiving.

[One] of the initiatives we rolled out is a virtual inspection programme. Utilising that programme, an inspector in the office with the appropriate I.T. technology is able to conduct a number of inspections virtually. That has greatly reduced the amount of time it takes for an inspector—getting on the road, going out to an inspection. Something that would normally take an hour is now accomplished in 15 to 20 minutes.

Last year, we rolled out our Third-party Plans’ Examiners’ Programme which allows private entities meeting the necessary requirements to be certified to review and certify plans on behalf of the Department. We also [expanded] that programme to allow third party inspection companies to operate. Again, they would be able to conduct inspections and submit the certification reports for a number of projects to the Department.

We also rolled out our Special Inspector Programme. That allows individuals to hire local competent firms to conduct what we consider high priority inspections dealing with seismic [conditions], wind loading and wind resistance for a number of large projects. Projects we deem to be critical because of the high propensity for the loss of life if there is a failure with those projects.

Coupled with a number of improvements that we have made to our website to roll out information; a number of improvements that we have made to our online planning system to allow persons to be able to submit applications; to get feedback, to allow staff to process applications in a more effective and efficient manner. We have a number of customer-centric amendments coming out early next year as well.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank the Director for that. I will just finish with this [statement]—and it does not require a response.

This Government, as my Government did during the last couple of years, has hung its hopes in terms of revenue generation—correctly, I believe—on financial services and development. Tourism? We do not know when that is going to come back, so it is absolutely critical, I believe, that these processes are working well and efficiently.

Mr. Pandohie is a very experienced Director of Planning now. I would just say to him, Mr. Chairman: If you need more human resources, now is the time and this is the place to say so; otherwise, it is going to be very difficult for you to use that as a basis for why things are not getting done on a timely basis when complaints continue to come in. I leave it there.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions with regard to PAH 13 and 14?

**Hon. Juliana Y. O’Connor-Connolly:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Oh, sorry; Minister of Education.

**Hon. Juliana Y. O’Connor-Connolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the Minister to the respected Director of Planning: Could he perhaps update the committee of what obtains with the Brac and Little Cayman Planning Inspector, and whether or not you got as many complaints as I have been getting.

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Through you, Mr. Chairman to the Minister.

As it relates to inspections conducted on the Sister Islands, at present we fly an inspector over to process and handle those inspections and year to date, we have processed 180 for projects in the Sister Islands.

**Hon. Juliana Y. O’Connor-Connolly:** Just to follow up, Mr. Chair.



The numerous complaints that I have gotten, [which] I am sure my colleague from the Brac has also received, are not necessarily [about] the visits, but... the person to speak quite bluntly, whom I understand has given situations on the Brac before and was removed, and also gives issues in Grand Cayman, so we will ask for active consideration for either a replacement or a Sister Islands' Planning Inspector.

A letter is coming (if you have not received it) with some 20-odd signatures setting out the various issues. I can speak more off-record.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you. Let me join voices with my colleague.

It seems to be an issue of personality with some of the inspections. What happens in smaller islands is [that] you develop a relationship of trust with an inspector from Cayman, let's say, and that goes a long way in the continuity of the building project itself.

I know that there has been a break in the people who were doing the inspections and [I am] joining voices, if you could make sure that we get consistent inspections in a very timely manner because, as Grand Cayman, even more, Cayman Brac depends on building as part of its economy.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. Director.

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Sorry, Mr. Chairman, if I could respond. I would welcome the opportunity to delve into that deeper offline if I can, and to the point just to, quickly, highlight some things. I do take your point sir, because I think one of the most frustrating things that I have heard during the inspection process is what is referred to as the "goalpost moving," and we have invested a tremendous amount of effort and resources into training to drive that level of consistency.

As you said, and I think it is, you know, for a number of things, you can teach technical competency, but the personalities and how it all mixes is a little more challenging to work through; but we are actively working on it, sir, and I would welcome the opportunity to just to delve into that a little bit more offline, if I may.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (I got used to that; one of my parents calls me that when I am in trouble).

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister. In an effort to identify efficiencies and innovation, just before

the COVID pandemic, we entered into a programme with Ernst & Young (EY) and their innovation lab.

Unfortunately as I said, COVID came, we did continue for some time with the programme virtually. I wonder if the Director can tell us whether they completed that programme or if it has been put on pause. Just an update on that.

**The Chairman:** Director Pandohie.

**Mr. Haroon Pandohie, Director of Planning:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for the question.

Yes, sir, we completed phase one and two of that project, phase one being the wave space session. We then moved into phase two and a number of the projects that I spoke to, were the result of that in-depth investigation and process.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. Mr. Chairman. Through you, thank the Director for that.

I just want to confirm that the review of the National Development Plan will be under the Ministry of Sustainability?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister for Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, that is a combination between Planning and Sustainability, yes. Both Ministries.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** So I can ask questions here, I guess.

**The Chairman:** Well, this is not the vote for it but sure, we are fully transparent. That is fine.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Okay. I want to ask the Minister, through you Mr. Chairman: I got the feeling that we are doing away with PlanCayman. Can I confirm that?

**The Chairman:** Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, that is absolutely not true. I do not know where he got that from.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to confirm that and I appreciate the response. I just wanted to confirm it on record.

The second question, through you Mr. Chairman: Will the review of the National Development Plan include all three islands or just Grand Cayman?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chairman, through you. The plan started with Grand Cayman. We are going to be looking at Little Cayman and Cayman Brac as we go further, but right now we are dealing with Grand Cayman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the Minister and the Director for their cooperation today and, as usual, always here to support.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. Any other questions? If not, I will put it to the vote.

All those in favour of PAH 13 - Provision of Planning Services in the amount of \$35,187 in 2022 and \$35,148 in 2023 and PAH 14 - Management of Planning Applications - \$4,362,721 in 2022 and \$4,420,379 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **PAH 16 - Licensing of Drivers and Vehicles**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to PAH 16 - Licensing of Drivers and Vehicles - \$610,677 in 2022 and \$917,197 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Mr. Joseph Xavier Hew.

*[Laughter]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Yes, Mr. Chairman thank you. Through you to the honourable Minister—or perhaps one of his team can help. What is the current situation with physical licence plates? I see many temporary plates.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Planning?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. I will have the Director answer that question.

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** I swear by the Almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Director.

Before you respond to the honourable Member for George Town North, can you state your full name and title for the record, please? Thank you.

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** David Dixon, Director of Department of Vehicle and Drivers' Licensing (DVDL).

Mr. Chairman through you, to the Member. There were a total of 735 temporary plates issued back in September. Due to the global pandemic and the timeline on ordering plates that caused us to run out despite the fact that we had the order in some three months prior. The plates were in route to Grand Cayman and unfortunately, they were incorrectly sent to another jurisdiction hence, a further delay.

I am happy to say that as of last week, or the week before last Friday, we received 37,550 permanent license plates. Those went into production immediately last week Monday and the temporary plates ceased. We have a programme in place where we will be calling the owners of those vehicles starting this Saturday, to have those plates changed out for the permanent ones.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, I thank the Director for that response.

Would he also be able to provide an update on where we are on replacing the old plates with the new ones?

**The Chairman:** Mr. Director.

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** Mr. Chairman through you, to the Member, we have a total of 29,777 vehicles that were re-plated since January 2016. We have a total of 4900 left to be re-plated by June of next year.

Part of the 37,550 plates we received will form part of that re-plating and is to be completed by June 2022. Again, we will have a Saturday programme to do the swap out of those plates.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you, could the Director update us on the progress with their online services and perhaps provide some data on the use of it therefore.

**The Chairman:** Director Dixon.

*[Pause]*

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** Can I have a minute, Mr. Chairman?

*[Pause]*

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** Mr. Chairman to the Member, when we rolled out the online services back in 2017, we were at 6 per cent or a total of \$6,000. I am happy to say that as of October this year, we are at 20 per cent and in excess of \$2 million. We continue to upgrade the website with the online portal and that should give greater access to our customers.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the honourable Minister or the Director, I am not sure, and if they cannot answer, I completely understand; it was in the press that there were investigations into corruption at the DVDL, specifically the driver's license department. Have those investigations concluded or are they ongoing?

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** Mr. Chairman, through you to the Member, those matters are before the courts and would be *sub judice* to answer, sir.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? Colleagues, with your indulgence, while the Director is there... Looking at page 29, EA 150 - Electronic Vehicle Registration Gantries—Mr. Dixon that is also under your remit?

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** Yes, sir. In collaboration with the National Roads Authority.

**The Chairman:** Okay. So, is it okay colleagues, if after I finish with this vote I move to that one, while Director Dixon is still here—is that fine with Members?

Okay. Well, with that said, there being no other questions on PAH 16, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of PAH 16 - Licensing of Drivers and Vehicles - \$610,677 in 2022 and \$917,197 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 150 - Electronic Vehicle Registration Gantries**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, turning to page 29 EA 150 - Electronic Vehicle Registration Gantries in the amount of \$100,000 in 2022 and \$100,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Could we have an update on installation of the additional gantries and expected timeframe.

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** The representatives from Tönnjes will be travelling to Cayman to determine the layout for the remaining gantries, including the ones at Dart tunnel and Esterly Tibbetts Highway.

[Pause]

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Can just tell us when, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. McLaughlin. Honourable Minister of Planning the response? Or Director Dixon, the response?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. I have been reliably informed that it should be June next year, sir.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote.

All those in favour of EA 150 - Electronic Vehicle Registration Gantries in the amount of \$100,000 in 2022 and \$100,000 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it. Thank you very much and thank you, Director Dixon.

**Mr. David Dixon, Director, Department of Vehicle and Driver's Licensing:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

#### **PAH 23 - Construction Trades and Vocational Apprenticeship Programme**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, the next item on the schedule is PAH 23 - Construction Trades and Vocational Apprenticeship Programme in the amount of \$802,765 in 2022 and \$1,037,715 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman through you, if the honourable Member could give us an update? I know he touched on it in his debate and spoke about other possible partnerships. I also notice here that I can appreciate the \$462,000 in 2021 but we expanded the capacity with the new building so I see the \$802,000 goes up to just over \$1 million. Is this part of the new partnership?

Perhaps the Member could let us know what it includes.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chairman, the Acting Director of the Public Works Department (PWD) will answer the question.

**Mr. Troy Whorms, Acting Director - Public Works**

**Department:** I affirm by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much Acting Director. Before you respond can state your full name and title for the record, please? Thank you.

**Mr. Troy Whorms, Acting Director, Public Works:** Troy Whorms, Acting Director of Public Works, through you, Mr. Chairman: In answer to the Member's question in respect to the partnership expressed by Minister Ebanks in regards to Inspire Cayman.

Those discussions are more in principle of exploring various partnerships for this country; as you would know Training and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been around for some time and the reality is that we should not be competing with other organisations; we should be finding a way for the entire country to benefit from the platforms that exist, so those types of partnerships are things that the Government would explore.

What we can elaborate on in respect to partnerships [is] that they should be quite beneficial and I think Members in the House would be quite interested to hear that with the Deputy Speaker we are exploring with the Planning Department as well, a pilot programme that would allow us to use persons that are going through apprentice programmes to sit various licences.

Thus, when they come out of a programme they would be able to sit the various planning licences; to be able to work towards getting those types of roles within our government and within private sector in our country, as well as recognise persons that are in the private sector as well, to get them qualified to better address the lack of qualified inspectors. [With] these pilot programmes, we will be able to utilise our Caymanians in the inspection protocols.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you I would like to thank the Acting Director, which I hope will not be Acting for too much longer. Thank you, Acting Director for that response.

Mr. Chairman, I am actually going to throw out an idea on the building that houses the training centre. I am going to ask the Government if they would consider naming that building "The Levi Allen Training Centre." I think it would be very befitting to do so and certainly deserving, posthumously.

*[Desk thumping]*

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. With all due respect to the Member for George Town North. The Public Works Department along with Ms. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare have already put that [request] forward to us, so we are already going in that direction.

Thank you, sir.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Needless to say, Mr. Chairman, it is fully supported by this side.

**The Chairman:** I am very happy to hear that. Any other questions with regard to PAH 23. If not, I put it to the vote.

All those in favour of PAH 23 - Construction Trades and Vocational Apprenticeship Programme in the amount of \$802,765 in 2022 and 1,037,715 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **PAH 24 - Agricultural Support and Regulatory Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to PAH 24 - Agricultural Support and Regulatory Services in the amount of \$5,106,540 in 2022 and \$5,316,614 in 2023. Are there any questions? Mr. McLaughlin, Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman I want to say generally that I think the department continues to do an excellent job with, I think, quite limited resources. My inquiries around there indicate that they are significantly short staffed. I wonder if the Minister could address that.

The other issue which I hear complaints from farmers regularly about, is the fact that the department's sales section is closed on Wednesdays, which is very inconvenient for farmers and other persons who want to purchase feed, plants, seedlings or whatever from there. I understand the reasoning behind that is because they work on Saturdays, so they give them the extra day off.

However, I also understand that the issue is really one of funding, because most of the staff would work the extra day; it is that it is not funded, and I wonder if the if the Minister can indicate if he has had any representations on this or what his view may be on these two aspects. That is, the need for more staff and the need for the place to be open at least 5.5 days, if not six days a week.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you.

One of my first things coming here was to actually look at that Wednesday closing at Agriculture. Listening to the farmers at all the meetings I went to, it was one of their major complaints and I did promise them that we were going to look at ways to see how we could have it open.

Mr. Chair, I would say there is probably nobody that knows what those guys go through down there at Agriculture, than I do. I even visit them on Saturdays just to see and yes, Agriculture has been under-staffed for many years, sir. Many, many years, not just today; but we are working in that direction to help facilitate and fix that problem.

I was actually trying to get delivery service to wherever the crops were, so we did not have so many bodies having to go to the Agriculture Department to pick up their feed; we could actually deliver it to their farms directly just to help ease the burden on the farmers themselves.

I hope that answers...

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. Two new members (I think it was two) were just added to the Agriculture Department, and we are also hiring extra members in the coming new year to ease the under staffing.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman; I thank the Minister.

The Minister is right, this is a department that has been chronically under-staffed. I know it is always a challenge, but we really need to make an effort to improve the staffing levels there, because the people who work there do an incredible job, and many of them are carrying far more than they ought to in terms of workload.

**The Chairman:** What I can assure the honourable Member for Red Bay, is that when the Minister presented his budget and we went through it in Caucus, Agriculture was one area that what he asked for, we pretty much gave him; there were no cuts made to that request. I remember that because there were very few.

Any other questions with regards to PAH 24? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of PAH 24 - Agricultural Support and Regulatory Services in the amount of \$5,106,540 in 2022 and \$5,316,614 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

Colleagues with your indulgence. There are several related to housing.

*[Pause]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman that is fine with me, as long as the honourable Minister explains the differences in these to us so we can question from there.

**BLOCK VOTE:**

**NHT 4 - Administration of the Affordable Housing Initiative**

**NHT 5 - Administration of the Government Guaranteed Home Assisted Mortgage**

**NHT 6 - Administration of the New Affordable Housing Initiative**

**NHT 7 - Administration of the Build on your Own Property Initiative**

**EI 57 - National Housing Development Trust**

**EI 71 - Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure**

**The Chairman:** I want to thank the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition for helping us in the interest of time.

Colleagues we will be bundling six items together just to keep the conversation centred on those items. We are looking at voting in block:

- NHT 4 - Administration of the Affordable Housing Initiative - \$170,000 in 2022 and \$178,000 in 2023;
- NHT 5 - Administration of the Government Guaranteed Home Assisted Mortgage - \$270,000 in 2022 and \$282,000 in 2023;
- NHT 6 - Administration of the New Affordable Housing Initiative - \$215,000 in 2022 and \$230,000 in 2023;
- NHT 7 - Administration of the Build On Your Own Property Initiative - \$20,000 in 2022 and \$20,000 in 2023;
- EI 57 - National Housing Development Trust - \$10 million in 2022 and \$9 million in 2023;
- EI 71 - Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure - \$4,088,000 in 2022 and \$1,988,000 in 2023.

Are there any questions?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, trying to see what the differences are between NHT 4 - Administration of the affordable housing initiative and NHT 6 - Administration of the new affordable housing initiative.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Perhaps the Minister could give us an overview on each of those, please.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chairman, through you.

NHT 4 is more the operations; NHT 5 is the government-assisted mortgage programme; and NHT 6 is guidance and consulting with them, working with them—helping them prepare their documentation, going to the bank, et cetera. Everything is more administrative.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, ask the Minister: NHT 5 - Administration of the government guaranteed home-assisted programme, which we believe is an excellent programme: The \$270 and the \$282, are not related to the actual percentage of the guarantee, but more of an administrative issue?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. That is correct, sir.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** So NHT 5 would help you prepare yourself for one of these loans and then the administration would move you forward. Excellent. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Sorry about that, through you Mr. Chairman, what is the representation? How would this... Let me just speak to you offline about it.

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Member, could he give us an update on plans for affordable housing in George Town?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. We are actually looking at doing housing in the district of George Town. A proposal was made just yesterday, sir, and it was presented to the board, to sit down with them and go through that. As soon as that proposal is settled, I do not have a problem inviting the Member for George Town North if he has a particular interest in that project, because it is in his constituency, to take a look at the homes we are proposing to build there, sir.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you to the Member, I do see in the Plan and Estimates it says Affordable Home Sites: Windsor Park and off Linford Pierson By-pass. I assume the "Windsor Park" are those that are there currently—or is that an expansion?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Also, am I understanding, then, that the Linford Pierson By-pass project is not happening or is being re-considered?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. The 26 houses [in the] Windsor Park affordable housing site have been occupied. The site was redeveloped and the houses were allocated to some 16 tenants through a lease-to-own arrangement—some of them got "grandfathered in" from the old programme—and 10 tenants were in a rental agreement from the 26 houses that were allocated for that site.

You [asked] if we were going to look into the Linford Pierson site. At the moment we are seeking more land in central George Town to see if we can preserve the Linford Pierson site, it being a wetland area.

It is also next to Randyke Gardens and we know the problem that we created with Randyke already. We feel that if we develop that site it [would] create a more damaging effect to Randyke by the time we build it and for the cost of the money to develop it. It was not feasible to do anything with it right now and then have to go back and fix the problems in Randyke from whatever it is we [would] cause.

A few days ago I spoke to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition on that briefly, just giving him the upbeat of everything that was happening in that area, being that Randyke is actually in his area, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, can we clear this up then?

On page 250, NHT 4 – Administration of the affordable housing initiative, there is a reference in terms of location to George Town affordable home sites Windsor Park and Off Linford Pierson By-pass, so which is this then?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. Again, I think we will have to change the George Town one because that would actually be going through George Town North on the old Cox site, sir, not the Linford Pierson's.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** So Mr. Chairman, what I gather is that the Government's policy decision is to not proceed with the development of the 24 or 25 acres which our Government purchased for the purpose of affordable housing in George Town, [but instead] revert to the former George Town site which is between the old Cox Lumber Company and Watler's Road.

Mr. Chairman that is incredibly valuable land; certainly, [per] the assessments that we did, it is far more viable, and financially sensible, for Government to utilise that for other purposes than affordable homes. I would not say it is in the centre of George Town but, certainly, within the George Town business district; it is

commercial land. I wonder if the Minister has had advice regarding that.

**The Chairman:** The Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. The value of the old Cox site land that the honourable Member for Red Bay is talking about, does not in any way compare to what it [would] cost us when it comes to filling the Linford Pierson property, sir; it is going to cost us more to fill that property than the value of the Cox site. If they had bought better value land, then we could have better discussions today, sir.

**The Chairman:** The Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, it is 25 acres. I discussed this with the former Chairman of the Board who was there for eight years. The plan was to do what is done everywhere else—you do a lake, you fill it...

Those assessments were done, but I am not going to get into an argument with the Minister. He will see, if they do the numbers, and the numbers will be scrutinized at some point—here, or in Public Accounts Committee. We will see, but if the Minister could say how many houses they expect to get on the site next to Cox, where the original affordable houses were built, which were done under Dr. Frank McField's tenure and lasted about three weeks.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chairman, right now it would be hard for me to say exactly, being that negotiations are ongoing [between] the Housing Development Board and the developer that is proposing to build the homes. If he wants, I do not mind putting it in writing for him as soon as the Board has made a decision.

**The Chairman:** The honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To the honourable Minister, on the Plan and Estimates on page 250, on the location of some of these affordable homes, the last bullet point says 118 Dorcy Drive, Grand Cayman—what is that? I mean, I had no idea that we had land in there and that you proposed affordable homes to be constructed in the Industrial Park area.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. I have just been reliably informed that it is office space for housing, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman through you—[it is] probably more of a comment, but, we were talking about parks and public spaces earlier in the same Ministry and some of the ideas that we were looking at for the George Town Courts site.

If you see the number of persons using the basketball courts there in the evenings and on the week-ends, along with the issues surrounding the Annex playing field being part of a school and having to be secured, for obvious reasons; and not as accessible to persons, in particular the elderly, to walk in the morning et cetera, and at the school, the Truman Bodden Complex is being used heavily. I have concerns about the future of that property as well.

We thought about putting a Green Space Sports Park, Amphitheatre—an area for hosting Heritage Day. George Town is the only district that does not have a heritage site or an area to hold Heritage Day celebrations.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I want to just put it out there that if this is in fact, what they want to do with that site—I do not know if that would include the basketball courts or not—then perhaps we could look for property elsewhere in that area in particular, the area that the Minister for George Town Central and I share, which is densely populated. Quite frankly, right now the kids have nowhere to go and play football. The basketball courts are in high demand, and there is nowhere for people to walk safely other than up at the High School. Just a few thoughts.

Mr. Chairman through you, moving on to NHT 7 - Administration of the Build On Your Own Property initiative, page 253 on the Plan and Estimates—\$20,000 [in 2022] and \$20,000 [in 2023]: Is that just for the administration of what we used to consider the Government Guarantee Home Assisted Mortgage (GGHAM)... or what would those \$20,000 be?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you, that is mostly the administration costs to help those that want to build on their own property, sir.

*[Pause]*

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** EI 57, page 258. Equity investment. I recall in your debate you talked about purchasing an excavator and other equipment, is that what this is for?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Housing.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, the machine that the Member for George Town North speaks about was purchased from the previous money, not out of this money, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman through you, perhaps the honourable Member could tell us what these \$10 million in 2022 and \$9 million in 2023 is for.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair.

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, that \$10 million is to go through the build of the homes project through each district from North Side to West Bay and also first phase in George Town, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman, Mr. Moses Kirkconnell.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, to the Minister. We had a quick discussion about some of the programmes that you have in place to help people access this, which we certainly endorse.

The last one we talked about was \$20,000 for the Build On Your Own Property Programme. The calls we get are: "What do we do to get this help, what phone number?" Do we just call your Ministry?

1. Who do we tell our constituents to get in touch with to help them with this;
2. Certain banks endorsed the GGHAM programme to be involved; I am not certain if the bank in Cayman Brac has endorsed this or not.

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you.

We do not have the list of the banks off-hand but, as you know, we are going to be negotiating with the banks along with you, sir; I have spoken to you about getting the programme up and moving as quickly as possible; but I would just tell you that you can refer everyone to the National Housing Development. I do not have their telephone number off hand, but I am pretty sure we can find that and give it to them.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman, thank the Minister very much.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Thank you too, sir.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, for completeness, could the Member give us an overview on EI 71—\$4 million and \$1.9 million.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Housing.

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, my Acting Chief Officer, Leyda Nicholson-Makasare will answer that question, sir.

**Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure:** I solemnly and sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence that I shall give this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. Acting Chief Officer, before answering the correspondent Member, can you state your title and full name for the record please? Thank you.

**Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure:** Good afternoon everyone. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of PAHI.

Mr. Chairman through you, EI 71 represents multiple assets for the Ministry and the breakdown is for all the departments under the Ministry which include DVDL, PWD, DVS, FM, Planning, Agriculture and Core Ministry. It is all our capital acquisition for the period of 2022 to 2023.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. Through you, I would like to thank the Acting Chief Officer for that response. It is clearer for me now. Maybe I should have gotten the questions from my shadow Minister before he walked the aisle, it would have made today a lot easier.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not colleagues, I will put it to the vote:

- NHT 4 - Administration of the Affordable Housing Initiative - \$170,000 in 2022 and \$178,000 in 2023;
- NHT 5 - Administration of the Government Guaranteed Home Assisted Mortgage - \$270,000 in 2022 and \$282,000 in 2023;
- NHT 6 - Administration of the New Affordable Housing Initiative - \$215,000 in 2022 and \$230,000 in 2023;
- NHT 7 - Administration of the Build On Your Own Property Initiative - \$20,000 in 2022 and \$20,000 in 2023;



- EI 57 - National Housing Development Trust - \$10 million in 2022 and \$9 million in 2023;
- EI 71 - Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure - \$4,088,000 in 2022 and \$1,988,000 in 2023.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **NGS 24 – Spaying and Neutering of Dogs and Cats**

**The Chairman:** Next item colleagues is NGS 24 – Spaying and Neutering of Dogs and Cats - \$30,000 in 2022 and \$30,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of NGS 24 – Spaying and Neutering of Dogs and Cats - \$30,000 in 2022 and \$30,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **NGS 84 - Cayman Islands Agricultural Society**

**The Chairman:** NGS 84 - Cayman Islands Agricultural Society - \$186,520 in 2022 and \$186,520 in 2023. Are there any questions?

If there are no questions, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of NGS 84 - Cayman Islands Agricultural Society - \$186,520 in 2022 and \$186,520 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **TRANSFER PAYMENTS**

##### **TP 76 - Assistance for Infrastructure Development**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues were now moving down to the Transfer Payments Section.

We are starting with TP 76 on page 28 - Assistance for infrastructure development \$200,000 for 2022 and \$200,000 for 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for Red Bay, Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, just an inquiry: Whose infrastructure is this, farmers? Or is this infrastructure for the department itself?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. It is for the Bodden Town Church of God Hurricane Shelter which is 85 per cent; to be completed in the first quarter of 2022.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Oh, seems an odd place to put it but, anyhow...

**The Chairman:** Okay, thank you Mr. McLaughlin. I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of TP 76 - Assistance for Infrastructure Development \$200,000 for 2022 and \$200,000 for 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **TP 84 - Agricultural Sector Development**

**The Chairman:** Moving to TP 84 - Agricultural Sector Development - \$500,000 in 2022 and \$800,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for Red Bay, Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I would request that the Minister explain what this money is for in more detail, so that farmers out there might understand what it is.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. This is for our National Egg Strategy—to certify all egg producing farmers, national livestock and development plan and the comprehensive livestock breeding programme and artificial natural insemination and embryo transplant to be improved; then developed into a national livestock identification tracking system to address animal theft, and anything else.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** And the same for both years?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** That is correct, sir.

*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** No, sorry, \$500 and \$800, sir.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, it is more money in the next year, but I meant whether it is the same...

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** To cover the same responsibility? Yes.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Yeah.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of TP 84 - Agricultural

sector development - \$500,000 in 2022 and \$800,000 in 2023, please say Aye.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **TP 90 - Assistance to George Town Revitalisation Committee**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to TP 90 - Assistance to George Town Revitalisation Committee - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

#### **Motion to amend description**

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, can we amend the description on this Assistance to George Town Revitalisation and take the word "committee" off of it, sir?

**The Chairman:** Sorry colleagues, we have an amendment on the Floor. The honourable Minister for Planning has asked for the description of TP 90 to change from Assistance to George Town Revitalisation Committee to Assistance to George Town Revitalisation.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, that is a motion to amend, I presume? Mr. Chairman, perhaps the Minister could be asked to explain why the change.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, the Chief Officer for PAHI will answer that question, sir.

**The Chairman:** Acting Chief Officer.

**Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure:** Mr. Chair through you, the reason for the removal of the word "Committee" is because it was specifically to address other expenses related to that TP.

It is not only for the committee and the expenses related to the stipend that was given to committee members, but to assist with various promotional events such as the George Town Christmas programme, the George Town lights; any marketing related to George Town's revitalisation for which we partner with various groups to encourage commercial and family activity throughout George Town.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, can we take that to mean that the committee is not being dissolved then?

**The Chairman:** Any other Member wish to speak to the amendment?

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Okay colleagues, all those in favour of TP 90 - Assistance to George Town Revitalisation Committee description being changed to TP 90 - Assistance to George Town revitalisation, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Agreed: TP90 changed to Assistance to George Town revitalisation**

**The Chairman:** For the record, the name of TP 90 has been changed to Assistance to George Town revitalisation.

#### **TP 90 - Assistance of George Town Revitalisation**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues with that said, back to TP 90 - Assistance to George Town Revitalisation - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Mr. Hew, Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, hearing the Acting Chief Officer's comments on the purposes, I will assume that the difference between 2022 and 2023 is COVID-related, where you anticipate hosting larger events in 2023, than in 2022?

**Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure:** Mr. Chair through you, that is correct, sir. As we get the project online further, and with the infrastructure we have put in place, we will see an increased need to do different projects as we go into 2023.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, just for clarity. You said *projects*, I assume you meant events?

**Mrs. Leyda Nicholson-Makasare, Acting Chief Officer, Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure:** Mr. Chair, through you; yes, events.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of TP 90 - Assistance of George Town Revitalisation - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**TP 113 - Agricultural sustainable production Programme**

**The Chairman:** TP 113 - Agricultural sustainable production Programme - \$1 million in 2022 and \$800,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for Red Bay, Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, could the Minister explain that programme.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you: that programme aims to create farm lots to lease, and outfit the lands with irrigation systems and post-harvesting facilities to help farmers. We are basically looking at subdivide some of the land in East End first, so that we can have 2-acre lots for farmers. That is what the money is allocated for.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, so I can confirm: This is land lease to farmers?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Correct. A programme.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** A programme to do that? Ok, great.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I am not sure if this is the right place, and I had a note here because I kept waiting, but, I know over the last few years we have had a shortage of cattle for beef production, and have imported animals to fill that gap. With the rising costs of beef, particularly in North America, whence we get most of ours, I thought perhaps this would speak to a programme to boost and refresh our breeding stock, otherwise, every couple years we are going to find ourselves having to import animals to produce local beef.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, to the Member for George Town North, you will be glad to know that we just signed off on that programme and that the Agricultural Society is currently looking to bring in some 150 head of cattle and approximately 50 head of goat, I think; and, not to forget the Brac, the Brac will have its share out of that cattle as well.

*[Desk thumping]*

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you and through you, Mr. Chairman, can the Honourable Member say whether or not these are to replenish the breeding stock, or meat production?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** It was really to replenish the breeding stock, sir. We gave the farmers the initiative that they could actually get one bull too, if they preferred, so they could have the one bull they had bred for so many years for Christmas beef this year; then whatever they are bringing in now will be able to replenish their breed and they would have a new stud bull in their programme.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of TP 113 - Agricultural sustainable production Programme - \$1 million in 2022 and \$800,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.  
Colleagues moving on—

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman. OE 93; OE 101; OE 122; OE 123 and OE 124, we are happy to do as a block vote.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much for that Honourable Mr. Joseph Hew. Colleagues, with the Opposition's support, we will take the next five items in block:

**BLOCK VOTE:**

**OE 93 - Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)**

**OE 101 - Depreciation of Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure Executive Assets**

**OE 122 - Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation**

**OE 123 - Global Island Partnership**

**OE 124 - Caribbean Telecommunication Union**

[Therefore,] all those in favour of OE 93 - Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) in the amount of \$122,000 in 2022, \$122,000 in 2023; OE 101 - Depreciation of Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure Executive Assets - \$9,694,000 in 2022 and \$9,694,000 in 2023; OE 122 - Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation - \$20,000 in 2022 and \$20,000 in 2023; OE 123 - Global Island Partnership - \$5,000 in 2022 and \$5,000 in 2023; and OE 124 - Caribbean Telecommunication Union - \$12,000 in 2022 and \$12,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **EA 36 Miscellaneous Road Surface Upgrades**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we now move on to executive assets starting with EA 36 on page 29. EA 36 is Miscellaneous Road Surface Upgrades - \$3 million in 2022 and \$3 million in 2023. Are there any questions?

Mr. Joseph Hew, honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, through you to the honourable Minister. There are two parts to the question:

What has been the practice on the miscellaneous road surface upgrades is to provide a recommended list of upgrades to each Member for their constituency; the Member would then have the ability to go and visit and discuss which ones to prioritise.

It was also done on a rotational basis starting in West Bay heading East, or East End heading West— Can the Member say if that will be done this time and where we are in the cycle?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you, to the honourable Member for George Town North, I have no problem picking him up and going through the roads one by one with him any day of the week. He and I did that before, so that is not a problem, sir; and to let him know that in the New Year the cycle will be starting in the West Bay area, working our way out.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman through you, just confirming that what has been the norm is that NRA will send to each one of us...

Yes; okay, great. Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions with regard to EA 36?

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Okay, I will take the vote. All those in favour of EA 36 - Miscellaneous Road Surface Upgrades - \$3 million in 2022 and \$3 million in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **EA 37 - Farm Roads**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to EA 37 - Farm Roads - \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, if I could ask where these farm roads are going to be located.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. The farm roads we are looking at are in the district of North Side and East End.

**Hon. W. McKeeva Bush:** Do not forget the few in West Bay.

*[Laughter and crosstalk]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I am particularly interested— *where* in East End.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair as we spoke earlier about leasing land to farmers, some of this money will be allocated to get the roads to land, particularly in the high rock area, sir. As you may know, there has been talk about laying farm roads in the Hutland area in North Side, going down to what we call Round Key or heading towards Rum Point.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I know about the North Side ones, but the East End ones...

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** I am glad that you know about the North Side ones, sir.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I would be interested in seeing where these are being proposed.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** I have no problem showing you that on a map, sir.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I want to make sure they are going to agricultural land and we do not wind up with subdivisions, houses.

*[Crosstalk and laughter]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** I was going to say the same thing.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** More than once.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Not like it was done before, sir; no, when we put in the roads, we will lay them for farmers.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Yes, I am an old soldier, my friend.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 37 - Farm roads - \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **EA 78 - Government Office Accommodation Project 1**

EA 78 - Government Office Accommodation Project 1 - \$850,000 in 2022 and \$850,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you. Perhaps the Minister could enlighten us as to what this entry covers.

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. This covers the replacement of a radiator for a generator; a redundancy for data centre; air cooling; office fit-out of \$300,000 for each year—which is necessary due to the recent reorganisation of the government; and installation of cameras for the Government building to integrate with the 911 system.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 78 - Government Office Accommodation Project 1 - \$850,000 in 2022 and \$850,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **EA 142 - George Town Revitalisation**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to EA 142 - George Town Revitalisation - \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for George Town North, Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the Honourable Member.

I know the Honourable Member did a good job in updating us as to the continued plans for the George Town revitalisation. I did have a Parliamentary question, which we were unable to get done Thursday, on the one thing that he did not mention.

Our Government made a decision to include the fish market across the street into the George Town revitalisation; that included building restrooms and a couple of parking spaces as Phase 1 of the Seafarers' Park, and one of the landowners in the cove had agreed to allow the structure to house the fish market to be built on his property.

Can the Honourable Minister say whether or not there is any further consideration to this or has that been shelved?

**The Chairman:** Sorry, I think that Parliamentary question was redirected to the Minister of Lands; I think that vote would probably be the best one for that question.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chair.

I think yes, when it comes to what is happening to the site that they are currently on but as I said, there was a decision made in part that we would proceed to add negotiations with the fish vendors for doing a few spaces in order to alleviate the issue with the parking spaces—which actually belong to the restaurant next door, but are quite often occupied by the fishermen; and the issue of having public restroom facilities for them and the fish market's clients.

We had decided to include that, as well as the Thompson family had agreed to allow us to build a market on the south side of the cove. Those are the plans I am asking about. Have they been shelved?

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you.

Again, I think that is a question better asked under lands because as far I know, the property does not belong to us. We have been talking about trying to purchase the property in the front, but as to what he talked about—building in the front—I have no idea. This is the first time I am hearing about it, sir.

**The Chairman:** Alright colleagues, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 142 - George Town Revitalisation - \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **EA 147 - Minor District Works**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving to EA 147 - Minor District Works, \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023.

Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman through you. This is a line item that was included, during my time as Minister. I just want to confirm: is this to assist in carrying out minor works in parks and jetties, et cetera, within each district.

**The Chairman:** The honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. That is correct, sir. We are also looking at it for the Old Man Bay site in North Side.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? Okay, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 147 - Minor District Works \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 148 - Major Roadworks Expansion Projects**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to EA 148 - Major Roadworks Expansion Projects - \$12,543,000 in 2022 and \$11,934,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North, Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the honourable Member. He did a good job outlining what some of the plans were for the Ministry in the next two years during his debate, I just want to give him an opportunity to perhaps give us a bit more detail as to what major road works are covered in this expansion project.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, EA 148 - Major Roadworks actually covers the Linford Pierson Highway; the Airport Connector Road (ACR), the CUC and Kings roundabout upgrade; Hirst Road; East/West roundabout and from CUC to Fairbanks to West Bay Road and the Godfrey Nixon and Grand Harbour roads.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman through you.

This is a plea again; I have said it every opportunity we get for the last four years, and I will keep saying it. I know the Director must be sick of me saying it

as well: Bike lanes, safe pedestrian passage and overpasses. We have to look at over, under—something.

How are we going to get people across the six lanes in Red Bay? How we get people safely across the Esterley Tibbetts Highway as more hotels go up around the Public Beach area. Governors Harbour is a very large residential area. The safety of our people, encouraging people to use other modes of transportation, has to be in the budget. It has to be priority in the original costing, it cannot be something after.

I look forward to the nice green markings and some traffic calming measures in that middle lane. Last week Friday I saw a car travelling south from the Margaritaville Hotel area, through the middle lane at least 70 mph. In the middle of the day, at a minimum of 70mph. We got to slow them down, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Red Bay.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, the Director would probably be sick of hearing from me about the roads also, particularly in the Red Bay/Prospect area.

A great deal of work has gone on there over the course of the last couple of years and we are nearing the completion of the additional third lane going west now; but as I am sure everyone is aware, there was a fatal accident on the local access to Prospect Road, right by Andre's Jerk Chicken stand; not Minister [Ebanks]—I am not aware that he has that particular talent...

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** It was another fatal accident clearly involving speed. There are constant problems with access from Selkirk Drive onto the main thoroughfare, particularly during peak hours.

There is also the ongoing issue of the need for those who live on Selkirk Drive to have additional access through to Grand Harbour and beyond, especially if we are going to put through the King's connector Road which will allow you to get from Grand Harbour to the roundabout by Kings Harbour. I am sure they are going to have to reconfigure that roundabout.

They are all improvements there but, again, like former Minister Hew, I plead for us to consider and place safety and traffic-calming measures to slow down traffic, high on the list of priorities. When the Commissioner of Police comes Mr. Chairman, I am also going to talk about the need for better enforcement, because I swear in recent years the people in this country [have] gone mad on the road.

*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I mean... I do not know, and I should not make judgments but, looking at those two cars that collided last night around 10:30, there had to be speed involved for that level of damage and injury to

occur. I really think we need to press these issues and get some more road calming measures [and] speed cameras in place.

Linford Pierson Highway is a race track because, of course, unless the police are behind you, [there is] not much they can do. Now and again they stand with a radar around the roundabout at that new development being built by Paragon Builders [and] get somebody, but I am telling you, I am often on that road at 5:00 AM [and] people cross you at 60, 70mph. Where are they going that time in the morning, Lord only knows, but—

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** We really have to do something about it.

Up in Bodden Town, especially going through Breakers, you would think it is an airplane coming through. Enforcement is an issue, and if the Police Commissioner has concerns or issues with staffing or other resources, we need to find out what those are because it is not safe.

I am a cyclist and I have always been very alert but now I am downright afraid to ride, even on a Sunday, because the roads are not very wide; the margins that they have put in place are much better than nothing, but they are really not suitable to ride on because the surface is very, very rough, and it catches all of the debris and within 10 minutes, you have got a puncture on a bicycle because of all the stuff that accumulates.

It does provide some level of additional safety because there is somewhere to go, wherever those are, but we need to think beyond that and for everybody to think that the roads are meant for everyone, whether you are pedestrian, a cyclist—I would not say a horse-rider anymore, but there was a time when horses used to traverse them as well—motorcycles, cars...

Everybody has to use the roads and they need to be safe. Any time there is an interaction between a bicycle or motorcycle, and a car, it is really not a fair fight you know, so we really need to continue thinking holistically about how we can make traversing our roads and highways safer for everyone.

And to the Deputy Leader's point regarding Grand Harbour: it is a massive issue. There are six lanes plus the median that you have to traverse to get from one side of the road to the other. Many, many people who do not drive work at Grand Harbour in a wide range of businesses; they get a ride in a car or use the bus and they have to get across the road to get to work.

We have got to find a way to sort those problems out. [It is not] easy and almost certainly not cheap, but we do have to find a way to deal with these issues, so I hope the Minister is taking all of that on board and will have solutions for us next year.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? I now put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 148 - Major Roadworks

Expansion Projects - \$12,543,000 in 2022 and \$11,934,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 149 - Government Solar Charging Stations**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to EA 149 - Government Solar Charging Stations - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$100,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North, Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I just think they need more money for this, sir; and I would like to say that I am the proud owner of a fully electric car, but I cannot drive it to Parliament because there is no Electric Vehicle (EV) plug here.

**The Chairman:** No, you can drive to Parliament, you just will not be able to drive back.

[Laughter]

**The Chairman:** Any other questions for that? There is one at... Yeah. Okay, colleagues with that said, all those in favour of EA 149 - Government Solar Charging Stations - \$100,000 in 2022 and \$100,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 151 - Upgrade Ramps and Jetties**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to EA 151 - Upgrade Ramps and Jetties - \$300,000 in 2022 and \$300,000 in 2023. Are there any questions? Seeing that there are no questions, I put it to the vote.

EA 151 - Upgrade Ramps and Jetties - \$300,000 in 2022 and \$300,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 152 - Civic Centre/Town Halls Upgrade**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to EA 152 - Civic Centre/Town Halls Upgrade - \$458,000 in 2022 and \$458,000 in 2023. Are there any questions Honourable Member for George Town North, Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you. Could the honourable Member expound on these and let us know which Town Halls and Civic Centres are being upgraded in this budget?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, we are looking to do upgrades to pretty much all of the Civic Centres and Halls. Now, probably not all of them will get the same number of upgrades because not all of them need everything, but there will be significant upgrades to pretty much all of them, sir.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Through you to the Honourable Minister, can the honourable Minister say if they are going to do upgrades to the South Sound Community Centre? I want to know specifically, because that civic centre is used extensively and is in dire need of an upgrade, so can I have your or the Ministry's commitment that it is one that will be upgraded?

Thank you.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, we will definitely do upgrades to that Civic Centre, sir; we will not miss any of them. As a matter of fact Mr. Chair, through you, I do not mind taking a walk through that Civic Centre with the Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Through you Mr. Chairman, I certainly would welcome that, so I am at your beck and call, whenever.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Okay, we will.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much.

All those in favour of EA 152 - Civic Centre/ Town Halls Upgrade - \$458,000 in 2022 and \$458,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 153 - Upgrade of National Parks**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to EA 153 - Upgrade of National Parks - \$1 million in 2022 and \$1 million in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you, could the

honourable Member let us know which national parks this is for—or is this for the development of a National Park?

#### **Motion to change description**

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. This was for upgrading Kaibo Beach Park and continuing with the Scranton Park, sir—and we request change of the [description from] Upgrade National Parks to Parks Upgrade.

*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** The description, yes. Can we change the description?

*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Upgrade of Parks, sir.

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we have a motion on the Floor by the honourable Minister to change the description of EA 153 from Upgrade of National Parks to Upgrade of Parks. Would anyone like to speak on that motion?

If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of changing EA 153 - Upgrade of National Parks to Upgrade of Parks, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 153 - Upgrade of Parks**

**The Chairman:** Okay colleagues, with that said, the item now reads EA 153 - Upgrade of Parks - \$1 million in 2022 and \$1 million in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, to the Minister. Quite a few items have been brought forward today. Is the idea to have Public Works do most of these, or you are going to look at partnering with the private sector as well?

**The Chairman:** The Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, some of them we will have partnerships with, sir.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, I have one question.



**The Chairman:** Okay, honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you. The honourable Minister spoke about the Kaibo Park, are we still moving forward with the plans to install the groynes and do the sand replenishment there?

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. That is correct, sir. Dr. [Kevin] Bodge came up with a design for us to do these rock groynes so that we could salvage the beach; protect it from eroding again and implementing the replenishment of the sand around the beach.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Mr. Joseph Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, these are the original designs that I saw in Bahamas? The T? Okay. Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Thank you. With no other questions, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 153 - Upgrade of Parks - \$1 million in 2022 and \$1 million 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 160 - Design and Construction of a New Civic Centre (Northward)**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving on to EA 160—and I can assure you this was not done by my Ministry.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, I am really glad that you brought it up but that needs an amendment to the description, sir. Can we remove the word “Northward”? I think your team may have been setting me up, sir.

#### **Motion to change description**

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to note that I finally figured out what happened to the Seafarers’ Park money.

*[Laughter]*

**The Chairman:** Colleagues there is an [amendment] on the Floor to change EA 160’s description from Design and Construction of a New Civic Centre (Northward) to Design and Construction of Civic Centres. Would anyone like to speak to the amendment?

If not, we take a vote. All those in favour of EA 160 being changed from Design and Construction of a

New Civic Centre (Northward) to Design and Construction of Civic Centres, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **EA 160 - Design and Construction of Civic Centres**

**The Chairman:** So colleagues, EA 160 - Design and Construction of Civic Centres - \$1 million in 2022 and \$1 million in 2023. Are there any questions?

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister say where are these new civic centres proposed to be located?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, we are looking around for where we can actually put new ones, but we definitely have identified a locations for the Northward area in Bodden Town.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you, to the honourable Member. Are these going to be hurricane shelters as well, and at what level of hurricane shelter?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you: We have a record for building only the best of the best, so I do not know why the honourable Member would ask what level we will build it for. We cannot build a level two, sir; they will be top grade, Class-A, Category-5 Hurricane shelters.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** “Class A.”

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess design and construction; so \$1 million in two years will be predominantly design and process.

**EA 161 - Submarine Cable**

**The Chairman:** Okay, any other questions? Honourable Member George Town South, Ms. Barbara E. Conolly

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. My question is we have 19 constituencies, right, is the proposal that a Civic Centre will be constructed in each of our constituencies.

**The Chairman:** Minister for Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you. I would have to find the money tree that the honourable Member for Red Bay talked about.

**The Chairman:** Just to give some context, Ms. Conolly: When we got the National Hazard Management Committee's presentation, we noticed that there was only 8 per cent shelter space in Grand Cayman.

While we are looking at different places, it is an island-wide thing where we have to look at different low-lying areas where we can put [shelters], but I think everyone agrees that 8 per cent is inadequate, so it is to start the process of at least upgrading to get more hurricane shelters around.

Now, Bodden Town East and Bodden Town West are the two largest districts and Bodden Town's Civic Centre is being used for something else, so there is literally nothing there, between two of the largest districts. Thus, we wanted something that was high and dry, at a certain sea level height and everything else; it is something that we are looking to do around the island, and in some cases partner with churches and others, to see what we can do.

We determined as the Government that 8 per cent of hurricane shelter space is wholly inadequate, so now we have to find a way in which we can actually address that problem and get it up to at least 15 or 20 per cent, maybe by the end of the first two years, and then maybe 35-40 per cent by about the end of the next two years.

It would be a combination of new civic centres that are multi-purpose and partnering with churches or any other buildings that are going up, to see what we can do to ensure a certain standard, so at least people have some level of protection in the event of any natural disaster. Pretty much that was the thinking behind it, so this is just to start the process.

Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 160 - Design and Construction of New Civic Centres - \$1 million in 2022 and \$1 million in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**The Chairman:** Last item related to the Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure in this Schedule [is] EA 161 - Submarine Cable - \$15 million in 2022 and \$15 million in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Mr. Joseph Xavier Hew.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the Honourable Minister.

Can the Minister provide us with details on how the Government intends to achieve the submarine cable?

I know a strategic outline case was done, which called for either a triple P or a fund with an estimated cost between \$50 and \$75 million, and I see we have \$15 million dollars for each year here, so if the Minister could provide us with some background on how we plan to achieve this.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you. I do not think this is the right moment for us to commit to anything because the process is ongoing. I would not want to make anyone think that we are putting this in the wrong direction while the Request for Proposal (RFP) is already out and moving forward, sir.

**The Chairman:** Sorry, just in the interest of transparency. We accept that something needs to be done. I think what the Minister is saying, is that we have not yet tied down what the exact thing is at this point.

We have been receiving proposals from different people with different options and I think once we have looked at all the different proposals, then we can determine what is the best way; but either way, we recognise that we want to ensure that we have some investment in the cable, so at least we have some say with regard to the prices being charged, et cetera.

We recognise that the undersea cable will literally be Cayman's only connection to the world and that currently Cayman is ranked about 190-something of all countries worldwide with regards to broadband costs.

From that standpoint, and seeing where the industry is going in regards to fibre, et cetera, at a minimum, we want to ensure that by the time the next cable goes in—which would last for at least 25 years based on the estimated useful life—the people of the Cayman Islands will at least have some say or some skin in the game and not be totally at the mercy of some other provider. That is pretty much where it is; there have been no terms set in concrete as to when we are looking to do it.

More than likely it will require some level of partnership, but we want to make sure we have skin in the game so that at least we have some say in terms of

the design and everything else that goes with it. That is pretty much where we are.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Hon. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman; I understand and appreciate that. Through you to the honourable Minister, would the Honourable Minister be able this time to say whether or not it is our intention to develop and own the landing stations?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister for Planning.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair, through you, that is the direction that we plan to go into.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman, Mr. Moses Kirkconnell.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. To the Honourable Minister.

We have been faced with an uncompetitive undersea line for many years and done a remarkable job of fighting through the industry and finding our place in the world. It is now our opportunity to bring a utility to the shores that makes us all equal, so to speak. I think what you have just said is that the idea is that the Government would participate in this; that there would not be one provider that controls the line.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Well done. That gives us a different competitive set with where we sit now that we can look at, competing with Bahamas and other places.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** The Government would what?

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Well, I do not know. We have not seen the presentation, so we are a little naive in the way forward, but I was told the presentation [includes] a spur that goes into Cayman Brac.

*[Crosstalk and laughter]*

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** He saw the presentation.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair through you, everything that we look at, we always try to make sure the Brac is included into it, sir.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Very good answer, thank you very much.

Through you, Mr. Chair I understand where he is and look forward to getting updated when he can. Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Ok, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EA 161 - Submarine Cable, \$15 million in 2022 and \$15 million in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it. That concludes the appropriation for the Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Johany Ebanks:** Mr. Chair if you do not mind, I just want to thank my team from the entire Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure for all the awesome work that they do. You guys are awesome; I just want to let you know I really appreciate everything that you do. Thank you all.

**The Chairman:** The committee will just take a five minute break to get the other Ministry lined up, so I will ask Members to stay in their seats. I think we are doing the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Home Affairs. I need to see exactly where they are and get them ready. Thank you.

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Proceedings are resumed. Please be seated.

## Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage

### YSC 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we are on page 19 starting with Appropriations to the Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage. YSC 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage in the amount of \$2,183,160 in 2022 and \$2,274,038 in 2023. Are there any questions?

*[Crosstalk]*

**The Chairman:** Okay. With that said, we take the vote. All those in favour of YSC 1 - Advice and Support to the Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage in the amount of \$2,183,160 in 2022 and \$2,274,038 in 2023 please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**YSC 3 - Sports Services**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to YSC 3 - Sports Services - \$4,639,769 in 2022 and \$4,639,769 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister. If the Minister could be so kind as to give us a bit more detail on this appropriation.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister of Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush, Minister of Home Affairs and Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage, Elected Member for West Bay North:** Okay. This will be to ensure the facilities are all up to par. We have a big maintenance programme in place.

We have just gone through a total—what would you call it? Went through every facility, highlighted everything that we found. We are going through them and fixing them up and also, we are looking to rubberise the walking tracks on the outer districts.

When I say rubberise Mr. Hew, it is not the Mondo surface; it is a liquid type of rubber that will make it easier on people so that walking will not hurt them. We also intend to take some of the training to the outer districts, so that everybody is not in the stadium wearing out the expensive Mondo track.

Also part of this are the talent identification programmes that we will have in place to identify talent in all fields—sports, art, culture, et cetera.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, and through you I thank the Minister for that response.

On the area of maintenance, can I ask the Minister if we now have companies with the proper equipment to maintain the AstroTurf fields?

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister of Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** At this moment, it is out for tender but we have been made to understand there is a particular instrument that is there for the AstroTurf that has not even been used. That is part of the assessment that has been going on and the AstroTurf is one section that we still have to fine-tune.

I have other types that we have received; I can sit with you and show you, to see if we are going to continue or discontinue that. When the Sports Council meets, that will be one of the topics.

**The Chairman:** Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you.

Continuing on the AstroTurf fields, I noticed in some areas, the Ed Bush field in West Bay, for instance, they leave the emergency access gate open, not just unlocked—and I can appreciate, perhaps if the ambulance comes it needs to get on the field, but they leave it open.

People are free to drive onto the field, first; secondly, the amount of gravel and rock, et cetera that is carried on to the field by the foot traffic through there and dragging the coolers and uniforms, and everything else.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** At the Ed Bush field?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Okay. I have never seen...

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** You know, the big gate.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** The big gate right by the changing rooms.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Yeah, with the access to the field. It is interesting that the gate to enter the facility is locked, but the gate to enter the field is wide open.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** You are correct.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I think that happens in quite a few areas and, once you get foreign debris onto the field, it is going to cause damage. That goes without saying.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** You are 100 per cent right, sir. I have never actually seen it closed, so you are right.

What we also found around the bottom side toward the North (the opposite end from where you are talking about), when the ball would go over, people would go over and they tore down the barbed wire fence in the back; the cows came through and came onto the field.

We purchased the barbed wire and the posts and Mr. Paul Rivers did the work himself; we have now put in a system where, when you go over, there is a type of gate to go through which the cows would not come through. You have them kind of criss-cross each other, to save them having to climb and then the cows will not be able to come in. We have got that covered as well.

We are doing full maintenance on the fence. We found much on the outside, like no one has been doing—the maintenance has been poor to admit the truth. Very poor, so all of that is in the assessment and all these things are going out to tender.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? We are on page 19 of the revised schedule. Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. Mr. Chairman through you, could the Honourable Member give a bit more detail on this talent identification development programme?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Yes, sir. We intend to go into the schools. We intend to [encourage] arts. The sports are already there, it is just that we are going to fine-tune it.

When we identify someone that is talented, we have the intention, instead of waiting for them to necessarily come to us, we will be going to their parents first because—you will understand it, most people do not—you have to sell the child a dream. If the child does not want it, they will never get there. You spot children that have all this talent, and we allow them to sit behind a television with PlayStation all day.

If you sell it to the parents, then you let the parents know that their child will be looked after. For example, we will make sure transportation is there and we also have to make sure their schooling is in place, because it does not make any sense—as you know, a lot of these young people have talent, but their grades are down... what is the next step? It is supposed to be college.

Sports is supposed to be the vehicle to better education, so the next step, when we get the parents and get the child on board, is to make sure that there is nothing there for that child to have a reason to fail. Not just leave it and hope it happens. No. We are going to do everything to make sure it happens. We will make sure we work with the associations.

Something else we have noticed, and some coaches have admitted, you will have a young person playing football who should really be running track, but is because of the grouping. We have to do everything to encourage them. *This is the sport that will get you places much more than this sport.*

It is along the lines where when we spot the talent, we will try to make sure that we develop them in all aspects, in a holistic way. Schooling, sports, even things like civics that many people may miss; we will make sure that when they do go overseas, these athletes are representing us.

Another advantage we have, Mr. Hew, is that working closely with the Olympic committee and other associations, we will be working to get these young people off to more competitions because competition is what makes us better, not staying here and playing amongst ourselves; or to see that people come here for competitions.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of YSC 3 - Sports Services

- \$4,639,769 in 2022 and \$4,639,769 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### YSC 4 – Youth Services

**The Chairman:** Moving on to YSC 4 – Youth Services - \$649,300 22 and \$649,299 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Member for George Town South.

**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the honourable Minister. Can the honourable Minister give a breakdown of what this line item represents? Youth Services.

**The Chairman:** Minister of Youth Services.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Okay. This are initiatives like *Proud of Them*. We are also researching the criteria and whether we want to expand it to give other young people who have done good things that may not be just academics or sports. It may be a young person that has done [something] outstanding in another area.

There are things coming that you all will hear about soon, like the Young Chef Young Waiter Competition that will be a world-wide competition that we may even host here. There are a number of other events that they do, like the cookouts. These are just some of the things that are happening in this section, ma'am.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of YSC 4 – Youth Services - \$649,300 in 2022 and \$649,299 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on—

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, I have had an opportunity to look through NAG 1 down to NCF 5 and there are no major changes in those budgets. Seems to be just a continuation of programmes, so we can do those in block, sir.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much.

Colleagues, I want to thank the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his kind cooperation. We will take the next nine items together.

[Crosstalk]

**BLOCK VOTE:**

**NAG 1 - National Arts, Exhibition and Festival**

**NAG 2 - National Art Collection**

**NAG 3 – Art Education, Outreach and Training**

**NAG 4 – Art Information – Facilities, Promotion, Scholarship and Publication**

**NCF 1 - Arts and Culture Preservation, Documentation and Promotion**

**NCF 2 - Cultural Festivals/ International Exchange / Local Partnership**

**NCF 3 – Management of Operations and Maintenance of**

**FJ Harquail Cultural Centre (FJHCC)**

**NCF 4 - Training and Support for Artistic Development**

**NCF 5 - Youth Arts Programming**

**MUS 4 – Collection and Preservation of Significant Material Evidence**

**MUS 5 - Museum Facilities, Exhibitions and Displays**

**MUS 6 – Provision of Policy and General Advice on Museum Matters**

**The Chairman:** All those in favour of NAG 1 - National Arts, Exhibition and Festival - \$209,940 in 2022 and \$209,940 in 2023;

NAG 2 - National Art Collection - \$120,620 in 2022 and \$120,620 in 2023;

NAG 3 – Art Education, Outreach and Training - \$177,760 in 2022 and \$177,760 in 2023;

NAG 4 – Art Information - Facilities, Promotion, Scholarship and Publication - \$241,680 in 2022 and \$241,680 in 2023;

NCF 1 - Arts and Culture Preservation, Documentation and Promotion - \$108,873 in 2022 and \$108,873 in 2023;

NCF 2 - Cultural Festivals / International Exchange / Local Partnership - \$383,468 in 2022 and \$383,468 in 2023;

NCF 3 – Management of Operations and Maintenance of FJ Harquail Cultural Centre (FJHCC) - \$345,320 in 2022 and \$345,320 in 2023;

NCF 4 - Training and Support for Artistic Development - \$266,437 in 2022 and \$266,437 in 2023;

NCF 5 - Youth Arts Programming - \$6,152 in 2022 and \$6,152 in 2023;

MUS 4 – Collection and Preservation of Significant Material Evidence - \$154,124 in 2022 and \$154,124 in 2023;

MUS 5 - Museum Facilities, Exhibitions and Displays - \$600,797 in 2022 and \$600,797 in 2023; and

MUS 6 – Provision of Policy and General Advice and Museum Matters \$136,999 in 2022 and \$136,999 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**NGS 47 - Mentoring Cayman Programme**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, moving over on to NGS 47 - Mentoring Cayman Programme - \$9,000 in 2022 and \$9,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of NGS 47 - Mentoring Cayman Programme - \$9,000 in 2022 and \$9,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**NGS 58 - Elite Athletes Programme**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to NGS 58 - Elite Athletes Programme - \$39,500 in 2022 and \$39,500 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. Through you, could the Honourable Minister inform this committee as to how many elite athletes we have in what sports?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** We have one elite athlete in track and field, and this is something that the Sports Council will revisit as well.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Minister, can the Minister say if this \$39,500 includes any room for additional elite athletes?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister for Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** No.

**The Chairman:** Mr. Moses Kirkconnell, you had a question, sir?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I listened to the Minister earlier in another conversation; it seems that he has a bigger vision than what is on this line item.

Would it be fair to ask him to expand a little bit on his vision, which might actually take you to NGS 59, or would you prefer to take a vote on this before we move on; but I think a picture that is being painted by

the Minister starts to come together with both, Mr. Chairman.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Through you, Mr. Chair, the Elite Programme has been that you get there and just throw money at people every month; and my query is, *where is the incentive?*

In other countries you have the Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Games, Pan-American Games, Commonwealth Games, and Olympics. You go to these various games and [when] you finish in a certain position, you get a certain amount of money from the country. This is the way most other countries do it;

However, when you know you are getting a sum each month, what incentive is there for you to push? You are not hungry. Now, maybe what we have to do is look for like an insurance policy for our athletes—make sure that if they get injured, they are covered; that there is a policy there for them to see a doctor, get treatment, the various things that go with it.

When you say go into the NGS 59 programmes, I am also looking at finally getting a sports psychologist into the country—it is something our athletes are lacking and it is a very, very big, problem. These programmes cannot just sit in a silo; “*Oh, John Brown is a good runner and we just sent him up there to run.*”. What is the next step?

In the programmes I even intend to go where they sign purchase agreements with the various associations. Starting in the New Year, all the associations will have to put on level one, level two, or whatever they are called in their various associations so that we will have more coaches. Then, the coaches will specialise in various events.

Instead of having just one coach work with 40, 50, 60 children, and a child doing this event and a different event, no—we will have a coach that the experienced coaches will over-see; and we will bring in a guest coach for two to three weeks to work with our coaches and our athletes, so that whenever they return, they know how much they have progressed. For some of the associations, to actually get to the next level, the overseeing coach has to see what you have done, or okay what you have done.

Like I said, [there is] also the education aspect of it; we have many athletes [that], because they are good at sports, tend to neglect their books—it cannot happen anymore. The nutrition is not in the right place, so we intend to have a nutrition programme and another good thing: With the new 50-metre pool coming into being, the national athletes will get to use a major gym as well so, like you said Mr. Moses, it is the overall programme that we are looking at.

Thank you.

*[Inaudible interjection]*

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** I said sports psychologist, yes.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Through you Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Minister for that. Obviously, you brought in a few of your other line items, but thank you for doing that. I think it was very well received by all of us.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** [Since] NGS 59 has certainly come into the discussion and by extension, in fact, NGS 60 and NGS 82, I have questions on NGS 59 and NGS 60.

**The Chairman:** Then I will take the vote on NGS 58 and combine NGS 59 and NGS 60.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

**The Chairman:** With that said, all those in favour of NGS 58 - Elite Athletes Programme - \$39,500 in 2022 and \$39,500 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **BLOCK VOTE:**

**NGS 59 - Youth Development Programme**

**NGS 60 - Sports Programme**

**NGS 82 - Other Sports Programmes**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues we are going to group the next three, so we move to NGS 59 - Youth Development Programme - \$121,850 in 2022 and \$ 121,850 in 2023 2023;

NGS 60 - Sports Programme - \$1,552,325 in 2022 and \$1,552,325 in 2023;

NGS 82 - Other Sports Programmes - \$95,000 in 2022 and \$95,000 in 2023.

Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I can lump them together. I notice in NGS 59 and 60...

Let us do NGS 59 first. The number of programmes under NGS 59 has been reduced tremendously from 33-38 in 2021, to 16-34 in 2022 and 2023. Can the Minister inform us as to what programmes were reduced?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** There were [many initiatives] called programmes that were just giving people money

to go do something that was not organised, not challenged, or looked at. You had clubs that were not even members of the association getting money to put on camps, et cetera. How can you? You are not a member of your organisation or even have a club in the league, but you are getting money from the government to do camps and such.

There was almost no accountability for many of the items that were there. This is where the Sports Commission comes in—you have people that look at who requests money [and] for what, and they will say, “Well, okay, this is what it is; yes, this is a good programme and I will forward it to the list of members on the Sports Council or Commission,” (whichever you prefer to call it), “that preside over it.”

Most of this first year will be feeling-out things to fine tune them, and someone is there that you know very well also, Mr. Neil Murray. We have many people that are not affiliated with any particular sport; will not be biased to any one sport. Those are some of the things that we are looking at.

We have to revamp all of this, because it is just money being thrown at stuff—people simply saying, “I have a camp; I am doing this; I am doing that”, as you know. Look at the problems when you all had a youth programme—who was getting, and the people who were [to be] getting were getting nothing.

These are the things I am trying to avoid. I am trying to get everybody organised that, if you say you have a programme Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 5 o'clock, I can show up at 5 o'clock, sit, and watch the programme and see that you are not just there every day doing the same thing; that people are progressing.

A perfect example, Mr. Hew, is that there are people who insist that they must run their programme all year round. The young people in the programme are not getting a chance to try another sport that will make them a well-rounded sportsperson, instead of [being] just closed off on one sport. These are things we are going after. I am sure it will grow once we get the rules in place.

A perfect example: To become a core sport—there are no rules in place on how you become a core sport and if you look in NGS 60, that is the core sports. The way some of these people have become core sports, or stayed core sports, is highly questionable, so we are going to put rules in place. *This is how you become a core sport. This is what you do if you become a core sport.*

We have people come to us with 7, 8 junior programmes—I will use Rugby for an example. They met with us; they do not want money, they got their own, but they would like to be recognised as a core sport. They got programmes and they have accountability. You can see their AGM, you can see the membership. You can see everything is in line, they are well above board.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Through you, Mr. Chairman, I thank the honourable Minister for that response, which leads me nicely into NGS 60 where we see the reverse.

We have a reduction in sport programmes and events, number of reports, and audited financial statements (from 14 to 11), but we see a doubling in the funding from 2021 to 2022. It could be that some of these programmes could not take place during the pandemic, but if the Minister could advise as to why we see a move from \$764,000 to \$1.5 million.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** All of a sudden, three or four more associations were allowed to be core sports, that is what most of that money is; but things are being put in place.

We had places [and] people [that] were supposed to submit reports, were not submitting reports but were still getting the money. All that has stopped. If you do not present what is on your contract, you get no money. Plain and simple.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, through you. I thank the Minister for that response, though I am not sure how it equates to the doubling of the funding from 2021 to 2022.

In fact, if I understood him, he said that they were putting processes in place which would weed out those that should not be in the core sports or are not fulfilling the requirements, such as audited financial statements, et cetera, which would be a reduction, but what we see is a doubling of the figures—\$764,000 in 2021 to \$1.5 million in 2022 and 2023.

**The Chairman:** The Minister of Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Yes, sir, with the [core sports] criteria being put in place, there is a very good chance that there will be two or three more sports, but there is also a chance that some may drop out of being core sports.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The doubling is not clear because it says there was a reduction [in the] number of sports programmes and events from 32 in 2021, to 30.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** There are many events that we pay for, that the associations should be paying for because we are giving them finances, then we turn around and double up by doing what they should be doing.

If you are a core sport, you are expected to do certain things to meet the criteria and there are some places for which we have been doing it instead of allowing the associations to do it.



[Pause]

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, through you. I thank the Minister.

Perhaps he or the Ministry can provide the Opposition with a written response showing some of the changes why we went from \$764,000 to \$1.5 million whilst we had a decrease in services.

**The Chairman:** Okay. Minister of Sports, do you promise to do the undertaking?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Definitely, sir; we will get the information to you that you require.

In fact, what I will do when this is over, is to sit and talk with you and ask you to nominate someone from the Opposition to sit on the Commission so that you can put in your 25 cents' worth also. If you take a look at the list that we have, there are people there that I know you will be pleased with, that can keep you on par with what we are doing.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman, Mr. Moses Kirkconnell.

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister. On NGS 60, one of the core sports you have is Special Olympics. Could you expand on that a little bit? Obviously it is extremely important to all of us, and I know you have had great success with it.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister for Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Could you repeat that, sir?

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** The Special Olympics that you have under the description NGS 60.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Yes; we fund them.

Special Olympics is one of the better-organised associations. The Sports Office does not have to do much, really, except to fund them what we have agreed on; but I intend to work with them to bring back the law enforcement torch run, the fire truck pull and other activities that [involved] the Special Olympics before.

I spoke to one of the members and said we were going to get together but, as you know, the last five or six months [we have been] trying to get this ready, so I will be working closely with them as well; but they are a well-run, oiled, organisation. It is just the funding that they get every year.

Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote.

All those in favour of NGS 59 - Youth Development Programme - \$121,850 in 2022 and \$121,850 in 2023 2023;

NGS 60 - Sports Programme - \$1,552,325 in 2022 and \$1,552,325 in 2023;

NGS 82 - Other Sports Programmes - \$95,000 in 2022 and \$95,000 in 2023; please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **NGS 83 - Other Cultural Programmes**

**The Chairman:** NGS 83 - Other Cultural Programmes - \$40,000 in 2022 and \$40,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing as there are no questions, we take the vote. All those in favour of NGS 83 - Other Cultural Programmes - \$40,000 in 2022 and \$40,000 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **TP 49 - Youth Programmes and Other Non-Governmental Organisations**

**The Chairman:** Moving down to TP 49 - Youth Programmes and Other Non-Governmental Organisations - \$130,000 in 2022 and \$130,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing as there are no questions, we take the vote. All those in favour TP 49 - Youth Programmes and Other Non-Governmental Organisations - \$130,000 in 2022 and \$130,000 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **TP 107 – Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage Programmes**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to TP 107 – Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage Programmes - \$1,618,550 in 2022 and \$1,618,550 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Member for George Town North.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Honourable Minister.

This is on TP 107. Again, we see that in 2021 it was \$429,000, then in 2022 and 2023 it is over \$1.6 million. Can the Minister provide us with some details on where this funding is going?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Mr. Chairman, through you. This is where:

There is much redevelopment of the cultural, civic and sports programmes in the communities directly; just specific to the districts and communities, where we are going to ensure that each district has certain facilities that we can run the events within each to try to bring us together. You will have more competition where you have a constituency competition; a district competition—you keep picking your best out of your best. You widen your base.

However, this is not only in sports. Like I said, this is cultural. Many people are missing that—culture. For example, I had a meeting with the arts people and the young people said where they work, it is almost impossible sometimes. How can we help them with their supplies, the various art [materials]? And believe you me, there is considerable talent in the art world here, that really needs assistance.

There is the Youth Empowerment Symposium (YES)—a big youth conference we will have every year, where young people will look at things like entrepreneurship, doing business online, being influencers where they can get sponsors, et cetera. We have a Caymanian young woman right now, who moved to Florida and has close to 3 or 4 million people as an influencer; she moved out and she is doing it. We have young people trading online, over their phones, and making money in such a way that they are asking how they can bank their money.

This is a big annual conference during which we will have workshops and motivational presentations, with people coming to talk to our young people. In the morning it will be 12 to 16 years old, and in the evening it will be for 17 to 25 years old. We will try to get businesses to come in and say, “*Look, this is what we do; if you can do this, we can use your services.*”—and young people will run it. We got a young man from the Cayman International School (CIS) and one from the Youth Department; we are trying to get everyone together.

This is just one of many programmes we are looking to start. There are a few others we are looking at, which we intend to run as well, like the Young Waiter, Young Chef I mentioned earlier.

No one has an excuse to fail, because we are going to look at every aspect of the community, every aspect of life, and say, “*What can we do for the young people?*” When we talk them and ask, “*Why do you feel you do not have a chance? Why do you feel you are not going where you want to go?*”, and they provide us with that information, we will build [programmes] around that, so they no [longer] have an excuse; and we will take it to them. We are not waiting for them to come to us necessarily.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of TP 107 – Youth, Sports, Culture programmes. \$1,618,550 in 2022 and

\$1,618,550 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

## Other Executive Expenses

### BLOCK VOTE:

**OE 81 World Anti-Doping Agency  
OE 82 Regional Anti-Doping Organization**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on now to Other Executive Expenses...

Thanks to the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, we will take the next two votes together. All those in favour of OE 81 - World Anti-doping Agency, - \$6,000 in 2022 and \$6,000 in 2023; and OE 82 - Regional Anti-doping Organisation - \$9,000 in 2022 and \$9,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

## Equity Investments

### BLOCK VOTE:

**EI 23 - Cayman Islands National Museum  
EI 47 - Cayman National Gallery  
EI 72 - Cayman National Cultural Foundation**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to the Equity Investments section on page 20—

[Crosstalk]

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much. We will put the next three to the vote right now. All those in favour of: EI 23 - Cayman Islands National Museum - \$424,000 in 2022 and \$380,000 in 2023; EI 47 - Cayman National Gallery - \$150,000 in 2022 and \$30,000 in 2023; EI 72 - Cayman National Cultural Foundation - \$240,000 in 2022 and \$90,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**EI 86 - Ministry of Youth, Sports,  
Culture and Heritage**

**The Chairman:** The last item in the [Equity Investments] section, EI 86 - Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage - \$1,475,000 in 2022 and \$453,073 [Equity Investment to purchase entity assets]. Are there

any questions? Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, through you to the honourable Minister.

Again, we see that the appropriation in 2021 was \$453,000; 2022 \$1.475 million, and in 2023, \$1.75 million. Can the honourable Minister provide us with some insight to these?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Gladly.

This is \$1 million each year towards the pool, and the upgrades and fixing up of the various sports facilities that I spoke about earlier on. If you go around the island right now, only 25 per cent of the lights on almost every field may be working, and they are the old lights that were not bright to begin with; so we are replacing all of them with LED lights, et cetera. That is what this is, sir—the pool and upgrades to facilities.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, through you. I may have missed it but... where will the pool be built?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Right where it is now.

If you want, I will make sure to get you a copy of the plans presented by Cayman Islands Amateur Swimming Association (CIASA), so you can see it.

I must take my hat off to CIASA; we worked together, they have done a lot of work, and it will be nice to be in partnership with them, and the private sector, to build this pool. I think it is going to bring not only results in the international arena, but sports tourism as well.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Through you, can the honourable Minister say whether the original pool will remain as a training pool, or if there will be a training pool and, secondly, whether or not there will be diving facilities as well.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Sports.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** To be very honest, the diving part was just slightly touched on. It is a very good idea so we will go back and discuss it, but yes, there will still be a warm-down pool. What you would call a training pool.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EI 86 - Minister of Youth

Sports Culture and Heritage - \$1,475,000 in 2022 and \$1,750,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

Colleagues that completes appropriations to the Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage. I am sure the Minister would like to thank his Ministry's staff before we move to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Through you Mr. Chairman, you said it for me, but I would like to thank the Ministry staff who worked very hard. We found many things that we have to work through, to try to get Sports to where it should be. They work very hard, and I am very grateful and thankful to them for their guidance and the way they work with me and keep me covered. Thank you very much, staff. Have a good evening.

## Ministry of Home Affairs

### HAF 1 – Policy Advice, Legislative Initiatives and Ministerial Services

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving now to page 18, appropriations to the Minister of Home Affairs, and we are going to start with HAF 1 – Policy Advice, Legislative Initiatives and Ministerial Services - \$2,244,396 in 2022 and \$2,314,684 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, again: I see a huge increase from 2021 to 2022 and 2023. Is this due to the reshuffling costs of that?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Mr. Chair, through you. What you see there was only [for] six months. Remember this is a completely new Ministry; what you are seeing [in 2021] is only six months of operation.

What you are seeing there now is the real figure and it has been squeezed down as well. We have done everything to ensure that safety and security have not been compromised.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HAF 1 – Policy Advice, Legislative Initiatives and Ministerial Services - \$2,244,396 in 2022 and \$2,314,684 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HAF 2 - Correctional Supervision, Intervention and Support Services**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to HAF 2 - Correctional Supervision, Intervention and Support Services - \$4,740,941 in 2022 and \$4,875,135 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you, would this cover the monitoring devices' cost, or is that under 911?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Mr. Chair, through you, this is the Department of Community Rehabilitation (DCR). What you are asking about comes under 911.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

If not, I will take it to the vote. All those in favour of HAF 2 - Correctional Supervision, Intervention and Support Services - \$4,740,941 in 2022 and \$4,875,135 in, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HAF 3 - Prison Custodial Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to page 18, HAF 3 - Prison Custodial Services - \$19,542,255 in 2022 and \$20,075,982 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing as there are no questions, I will put it to the vote. All those in favour of HAF 3 - Prison Custodial Services - \$19,542,255 in 2022 and \$20,075,982 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HAF 4 - Public Safety, Electronic Monitoring and Incident Response**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HAF 4 - Public Safety, Electronic Monitoring and Incident Response - \$5,748,545 in 2022 and \$5,699,670 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, through you. This is where the electronic monitoring is covered, correct?

**The Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman through you, to the Honourable Minister: I see that there was an increase in the average number of prisoners held in custody, but then a decrease in funding here so I just want to make sure— it has always been an issue, it is nothing new.

I want to ensure that there is enough budgeted to efficiently operate the monitoring devices, to maximise that programme in helping to reduce the number of persons incarcerated—in particular, those who should not be.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Through you, Mr. Chair, the numbers in this vary, but we have enough to cover the averages. We, too, watch this very carefully, Mr. Hew.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HAF 4 - Public Safety, Electronic Monitoring and Incident Response - \$5,748,545 in 2022 and \$5,699,670 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HAF 5 - Domestic and Aerodrome Fire Services**

**The Chairman:** Moving to HAF 5 - Domestic and Aerodrome Fire Services - \$15,625,204 in 2022 and \$16,114,567 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman; through you to the Minister.

If I am correct, further on there will be a capital investment for an aerodrome. The numbers here are very similar and I do not see an increase in personnel. I want to be sure that we are taking into account, that when the aerodrome facilities are developed, it will require its own staff.

**The Chairman:** Alright, thank you. I put it to the vote— Sorry.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I think the Minister was going to respond.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Yes, we have enough staff and we are not cutting anyone.

**The Chairman:** Alright.

All those in favour of HAF 5 - Domestic and Aerodrome Fire Services - \$15,625,204 in 2022 and

\$16,114,567 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### HAF 6 - Regiment Services

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HAF 6 - Regiment Services - \$1,500,000 in 2022 and \$1,500,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

If not, I'll put it to the vote. All those in favour of HAF 6 - Regiment Services - \$1,500,000 in 2022 and \$1,500,000 in 2023 please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### BLOCK VOTE:

#### HAF 7 – Cadet Corps Services NGS 90 - Cayman Islands Cadet Corps Committee

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HAF 7 – Cadet Corps Services - \$829,147 in 2022 and \$823,336 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the honourable Minister.

I heard the Minister reference, (I think I did; if my memory serves me) to creating some synergies between the Cadet Corps and the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS). I notice, though, that we have a reduction in the number of training sessions, and an increase in the budget and costs.

I want to give the Minister an opportunity to walk us through his ideas and the reduction in training sessions.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Home Affairs.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Yes, Mr. Chair. Through you, thank you to the Member.

As you remember, what I said about the Police [Service], was that it is the one service that we were not getting inroads into. Fire, Prison, the Coast Guard, and all the other uniform branches are part of the curriculum [and] they are taking certain sessions and doing the training for us, so we do not have to do it.

What we are trying to do, is that when these young people graduate, if they decide to apply for a job at the fire service, they would have had [aspects] from the fire service in their training, that would allow them to be a step ahead of someone just coming off the street.

This is why you see less training sessions—because now we do not have to do all of them.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We can go ahead and do NGS 90 - Cayman Islands Cadet Corps Committee as well, if you want to add that into the vote.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much for your co-operation. Colleagues, all those in favour of:

HAF 7 – Cadet Corps Services - \$829,147 in 2022 and \$823,336 in 2023; and  
NGS 90 - Cayman Islands Cadet Corps Committee - \$25,000 and \$25,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

Colleagues, moving to TP 69 - Support for the Bridge Foundation—

**Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell:** Mr. Chairman, I apologise for missing the opportunity on HAF 5 – Domestic and Aerodrome Fire Service, but I believe it would be remiss of me if I did not thank them for what they bring every day, especially as the representative for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman, [because] they actually function as our Regiment—they are the ones you call when you need something, and I know each of the individuals and their teams.

Something that my colleague and I were extremely proud of this year: we have had an ongoing situation on both islands which we regularised with District Admin: Equipment.

Obviously, one of the challenges they [faced] was gearing up for the eight—we had to get equipment. It used to be that you would bring equipment to Grand Cayman, you would use it and when it was mostly worn out, you would send it to Cayman Brac and subsequently, it would go to Little Cayman.

District Admin had been doing it, but this year I recognise Health Authority for bringing brand new equipment; and the Fire Service brought trucks and smaller vehicles, and were very kind to invite us to be involved. We recognise what they do for us every day so, thank you all very much.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much for that, Mr. Kirkconnell. We really appreciate it.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Please tell him to send over some soldiers with fish.

*[Laughter]*

**TP 69 - Support for the Bridge Foundation**

**The Chairman:** Alright colleagues. TP 69 - Support for the Bridge Foundation - \$155,000 in 2022 and \$55,000 in 2023. Any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, through you to the Honourable Minister. It is not a large sum of money, but I did notice that there was a reduction in 2023 by some \$100,000.

**The Chairman:** The Honourable Minister of Home Affairs.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** This is being looked at very carefully—we have even discussed moving it to another Ministry—[but] if push comes to shove, we will ask for supplementary funding.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** He wanted to tell us he is sending us soldier crabs, sir.

*[Laughter]*

**The Chairman:** Okay. I put it to the vote.

All those in favour of TP 69 - Support for the Bridge Foundation - \$155,000 in 2022 and \$55,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**Ayes.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**EI 85 - Ministry of Home Affairs**

**The Chairman:** Last item on the page, colleagues, EI 85 - Ministry of Home Affairs - \$10,087,000 in 2022 and \$8,061,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. Is this the redevelopment of Her Majesty's Prison?

**The Chairman:** No; I think a portion of it is included in here.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. Through you sir, perhaps the Minister could give us more details on this Appropriation.

**The Chairman:** Re-development of the Prison—that is a good one. Honourable Minister of Home Affairs.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Okay. That EI involves all of our capital projects. That is:

- Replacement of the ladder trucks—because like I said earlier on, [they only span] four floors [and] now we have a few 10 storey buildings;
- Plus their trucks are getting old, anyway, so we have two new ladder trucks;
- We also have Phase One of the Prison;
- Tank 11;
- Computers;
- Equipment for emergency response;
- Upgrade to the 911 system.

That is all it includes, but the main part of it is Phase One of the prison, and the new trucks.

**The Chairman:** Sorry, colleagues.

In the interest of time, if you look at the Budget Statement for the Ministry of Home Affairs; Ministry of Youth, Sports Culture, Heritage; and the Ministry of Financial Services, and then at page 24, there is a list of all the different capital projects. It would be much easier, in the interest of time.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, through you to the Honourable Minister.

It is more of a comment on your new ladder trucks, sir: It may sound simple, but please have a chat with the Minister of PAHI, and ensure that when they order the fire trucks, they come with the right coupling attachment for the fire hydrants.

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Yes, sir. That mistake may have been made in the past; it will not happen again.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of EI 85 - Ministry of Home Affairs - \$10,087,000 in 2022 and \$8,061,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it. Colleagues. That completes the appropriations to the Ministry of Home Affairs—

**Hon. Bernie A. Bush:** Mr. Chair?

Mr. Chair, through you, I would like to say a special thank you to Home Affairs. Keeping in mind that this Ministry is responsible for the security and safety of our country, and that 95 per cent of their work cannot be done [remotely]—people have to be there; and with this pandemic... Hats off and respect is due to them.

Also, Mr. Chair, I would like to correct something that I said in my budget speech.

Repeating something that the outgoing Chief of the Prison had said, I [stated] that an individual was the

designate for the Prison Director. What I should have said was that it was the Acting Director. I jumped the gun, because it has to be advertised; one of the foolish things we have in our country. You have someone trained to take over a [position], then they have to apply for it; anyhow, that is the way it is but I want to apologise for jumping ahead of the gun in saying that, because I was out of place.

To my staff, thank you all very much for all the hard work and the risks they take, because when everybody else is running out, they are running in. Thank you all very much and have a good evening.

Thank you very much.

*[Desk thumping]*

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we will take the evening break. We will start back at 7pm and finish the evening with the Ministry of Health. Thank you all very much.

**Proceedings suspended at 6:15**

**Proceedings resumed at 7:06**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, please be seated. Thanks very much.

## **Ministry for Health and Wellness**

### **HES 1 - Policy Advice and Ministerial Services to the Minister for Health and Wellness**

**The Chairman:** We are now looking at the appropriations for the Minister for Health and Wellness on page 30 of the Schedule and we will start with HES 1 - Policy Advice and Ministerial Services to the Minister of Health and Wellness - \$8,161,762 in 2022 and \$8,138,603 in 2023. Are there any questions?

*[Pause]*

**The Chairman:** Okay; with that said, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 1 - Policy Advice and Ministerial Services to the Minister of Health and Wellness - \$8,161,762 in 2022 and \$8,138,603 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HES 2 - Health Regulatory Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HES 2 - Health Regulatory Services - \$2,460,814 in 2022 and \$2,487,417 in 2023. Are there any questions? Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Honourable Minister.

Again: Looking at the appropriation [for] Number of Certificates Issued, we had a 12-month forecast of 250 in 2021 and we are forecasting 45-75 for 2022 and 2023; Inspections down from 70, to between 50 and 75—but then we see an increase in the appropriation from \$1.7 to \$2.4 million and almost 2.5 million in 2023.

Can the honourable Minister provide some insight for this?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner, Minister of Health and Wellness:** Mr. Chair, through you, that is to bring that amount up to the Strategic Policy Statement (SPS) target.

*[Pause]*

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you, can I ask my Honourable colleague to repeat his question, so I can ensure I answer it directly.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I am questioning having a figure of \$1,734,501 for 2021's 12-month forecast. For 2022 we have \$2,460,814 and 2023, \$2,487,417; however, it seems that the Number of Certificates Issued is down from 250 to 45-75—most items are around the same. [Then] we have an item—"Number of papers, reports, speeches, statements, responses to questions and replies to correspondence", that went from 8 to 1100 - 1600.

I am trying to get some understanding from where the almost \$1 million increase on this appropriation comes?

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you, may I request the Director to come and speak to these figures please?

*[Long pause]*

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, with your permission I will call on the Director to address these numbers, please.

**Ms. Milissa Webb, Financial Accountant - Health Regulatory Services:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this Honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Director. Before answering the question, can you state your name and title for the record, please? Thank you very much.

**Ms. Milissa Webb, Financial Accountant - Health Regulatory Services:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon. My name is Milissa Webb and I am the Financial Accountant for the Health Regulatory Services.

Through you, Mr. Chair, the budget numbers that we are talking about [show] an increase from \$1.7 million in 2021, to \$2,460,814 in 2022 and \$2,487,417 in 2023 [representing] an increase in personnel costs. The number of certificates issued, on-site inspections and publications, all of these quantity measures are actually taken out of the 10 outputs that we have per department.

The five line items that speak to that, those numbers are actually taken from HRB 9 to HRB 18, which give a more comprehensive breakdown of each output—each certificate issued per output.

[Pause]

**Ms. Milissa Webb, Financial Accountant - Health Regulatory Services:** Mr. Chair, through you. In addition, about the outputs HRB 9 to HRB 18, on the budget statement's page 37 if you look at HRB 9, you will note the budgeted number of certificates issued was actually 200-275 for 2022; and 225-300 for 2023.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Through you, Mr. Chairman. I think I understand what the Member is saying—that this appropriation covers increases in personnel costs from HES 9 through HES 18.

**Ms. Milissa Webb, Financial Accountant, Health Regulatory Services:** Through you, Mr. Chair, [it is] HRB 9 to HRB 18.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Okay.

[Pause]

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

If not, I'll take the vote. All those in favour of HES 2 - Health Regulatory Services - \$2,460,814 in 2022 and \$2,487,417 in 2023—

[Laughter]

**The Chairman:** Please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**The Chairman:** I am going to take a 5-minute break. Sorry, guys.

[Pause]

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, apologies; please be seated. I would ask all Members in the Chamber not to send me any more texts or pictures—thank you.

### **HES 7 – Collection, Recycling Disposal of Waste**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to HES 7 – Collection, Recycling Disposal of Waste \$7,241,094 in 2022 and \$7,460,361 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** This is HES 7?

**The Chairman:** Correct.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Honourable Minister, we notice about \$1 million increase here in this appropriation as well.

I also notice, under "Timelines": *Twice per week as per current residential collection scheduled*—I do not think we are currently collecting twice per week. Is that a proposal, and is it contributing to the increase in the appropriation?

[Pause]

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you.

**The Chairman:** Yes, honourable Minister.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** To answer the question on frequency: Once a week is for regular household collections; the other one is for recyclables. We have increased the bin capacity for this collection, so those will include resources and additional staffing to make that a reality.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for that response. Then we are going to a twice-per-week residential collection?

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** I have been reliably informed that it would include the recyclable bins that are strategically placed and regular collection of household garbage.

The two will be over twice a week, so there will still be once a week for regular household trash and the other would be for recyclable items; however, I can request permission for the Director to expand on that response.



**Mr. Richard Simms, Director - Department of Environmental Health:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give this under requirement shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Simms.

Before responding to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, can you state your full name and title for the record, please?

Thank you.

**Mr. Richard Simms, Director - Department of Environmental Health:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. My name is Richard Simms, and I am the Director of the Department of Environmental Health.

Through you, Mr. Chairman, to the Member: As the Minister stated, what we are hoping to do is put a provision in place to have curb-side recyclables collected, and to do that we have to be able to provide the various bins to the residents in addition to our regular collection.

Further to your question, alluding to the landfill operation with the increase of \$1 million I think, that is to cover the landfill operation which obviously has increased in terms of equipment rental and additional [requirements] to keep the landfill going. We have seen an increase in waste coming into the landfill, and we have to have additional resources to deal with those matters.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

Thank you.

I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 7 – Collection, Recycling Disposal of Waste \$7,241,094 in 2022 and \$7,460,361 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HES 8 - Public Health Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we are moving on to HES 8 - Public Health Services - \$3,120,121 in 2022 and \$3,155,903 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chair, through you. I am not 100 per cent sure if this is where I would ask the question, but while we have the Director in the seat after being sworn in...

I saw the printing of leaflets on rodent control. My question to the Honourable Minister or to the Director is, how many people do we now have doing rodent control across Grand Cayman?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health or Director.

**Mr. Richard Simms, Director - Department of Environmental Health:** Through you, Mr. Chairman to the Member.

As it stands, I have one officer covering the entire island, but we have recently advertised for one position and Cayman Brac, and three others in Grand Cayman.

Now it is just a matter of short listing and interviews so hopefully, I should have those vacancies filled within the first quarter of 2022.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions?

I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 8 - Public Health Services - \$3,120,121 in 2022 and \$3,155,903 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HES 9 - Environmental Health Monitoring Services**

**The Chairman:** HES 9 - Environmental Health Monitoring Services - \$754,086 in 2022 and \$764,736 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing that there are no questions, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 9 - Environmental Health Monitoring Services - \$754,086 in 2022 and \$764,736 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HES 10 - Emergency Response Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HES 10 - Emergency Response Services - \$190,199 in 2022 and \$171,417 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing that there are no questions, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 10 - Emergency Response Services - \$190,199 in 2022 and \$171,417 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HES 11 - Mosquito Control Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues we are moving on to HES 11 - Mosquito Control Services - \$11,328,997 in 2022 and \$11,380,498 in 2023.

Seeing that there are no questions, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 11 - Mosquito Control Services - \$11,328,997 in 2022 and \$11,380,498 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HSA 18 - Counselling and Support Services**

**The Chairman:** HSA 18 - Counselling and Support Services - \$4,750,083 in 2022 and \$4,782,681 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, through you.

The counselling services currently being offered: is there a collaboration between those services being offered within Her Majesty's Prison and those outside of the prison? I ask because recently I have seen... It seems like most people that come out of prison end up right back on the street, back to their old habits, within a matter of days.

Thus I am wondering; I know that they have rehabilitation programmes within the prison, so I wonder if there is a continuation of the services provided to the inmates when they are released.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair through you. I would request your indulgence in having the Director of that Department expand.

**The Chairman:** No problem.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Thank you.

**Mrs. Judith Seymour, Director, Department of Counselling Services:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much Director.

Before responding to the Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, can you state your name and title for the record, please? Thank you.

**Mrs. Judith Seymour, Director, Department of Counselling Services:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Judith Seymour and I am the Director of the Department of Counselling Services.

Through you, Mr. Chairman, services provided in the prison are actually done in collaboration with the Department of Community Rehabilitation and the Prison. The decision was taken some years ago by the former Prison Director that they wanted to have their services done internally; and now I believe the Department of Community Rehabilitation provides through care services for persons who enter prison and then transition into the community. Some of those persons

are referred to our programmes, and if they are, they are provided with the services.

**The Chairman:** Okay. Any other questions?

If not, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HSA 18 - Counselling and Support Services - \$4,750,083 in 2022 and \$4,782,681 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HES 19 - Policy Advice and Awareness Programmes**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HES 19 - Policy Advice and Awareness Programmes - \$224,938 in 2022 and \$224,730 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Okay, seeing that are no questions I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HES 19 - Policy Advice and Awareness Programmes - \$224,938 in 2022 and \$224,730 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HEA 2 - Medical care for indigents**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we are moving on to HEA 2 - Medical care for indigents - \$12 million in 2022 and \$12 million in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for Red Bay, Mr. Alden McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman I have been sitting here looking at this and puzzling. I am sure there must be some reason, but if we forecast that this year will cost us \$20,971,006... on what basis do we forecast that next year, and the year following, will only be \$12 million [each]?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Or Mr. Chairman, you know I have been around the block a while, is this just fudge?

**The Chairman:** "Fudge" is a very strong word, [honourable Member]. The truth of the fact is, you know it is a very difficult number, similar to NGS 55, because HEA 2 is done at HSA and NGS 55 is non-HSA care. I understand where you are coming, but it is a number that is always very difficult to budget for annually.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** But this is...

Past performance is the clearest indication of what the future is likely to be. I mean, this is...yeah,

fudge is probably the wrong word; this needs something a bit stronger—almost misrepresentation—of what the forecast is likely to be.

**The Chairman:** Well, actually...

To some extent, because it can be argued, that as our people become healthier, more health-conscious—because bear in mind, that 2021 was a unique year with COVID, et cetera.

As the Ministry [implements] more wellness programmes, there is a very strong possibility that our people may be healthier; and I am sure you would want our people to be healthier too.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Excellent try, Mr. Chairman; but that is what will eat the small projected surplus you have in 2023, sir. That is it, right there.

**The Chairman:** If it is any consolation, honourable Member for Red Bay, the \$12 million versus the \$20-odd million forecast was the same figure as the last budget under your administration.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** I told you I have been around this block a while.

**The Chairman:** I know; we learned from the best.

*[Laughter]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Alright. Well, you did not learn that from me, but...

*[Laughter]*

**The Chairman:** Actually, no. We learned from more than you, several of you.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** You are the super-qualified accountant, so this time it will be on your head, not mine.

**The Chairman:** Well, I am sure you will approve it if it goes above, because I am sure you want us to look after our people. Thank you very much. Any other questions?

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, not a question, just a minor statement.

I almost feel déjà vu, because I recall going through that exact line in position with the last budget, and this exact output; the difficulties for projections seem to be a common practice, not only for the last administration but going forward, so he is well aware of the circumstances. It is nothing far from what was happening before.

**The Chairman:** We have been around the block with him too, that is fine.

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**The Chairman:** No, no, I was in your position last time and had the same questions, so I completely understand; but you are also very optimistic in terms of people taking care of themselves, so I share your optimism.

All those in favour of HEA 2 - Medical care for indigents - \$12 million in 2022 and \$12 million in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES and one audible No.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

Mr. McLaughlin, you really would not vote for even \$1 to help our people?

*[Inaudible interjection]*

### **HEA 6 - Medical Services in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman**

**The Chairman:** Okay.

HEA 6 - Medical Services in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman - \$3,783,158 in 2022 and \$3,783,158 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Thank you very much. Seeing that there are no questions, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HEA 6 - Medical Services in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman - \$3,783,158 in 2022 and \$3,783,158 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HEA 10 - Ambulance Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HEA 10 - Ambulance Services - \$3,638,537 in 2022 and \$3,395,337 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again to the Honourable Minister, there is just over \$1 million increase from 2021 to 2022. Could the Minister explain that for us?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you. The 2022 budgetary allocation [reflects] the increase in demand for provision of 24-hour pre-hospital emergency care services, and non-emergency transport for residents and visitors to our islands.

Now we look at the Emergency Medical Service (EMS), which consists of three teams:

- One team is based in West Bay and covers the entire West Bay Road corridor up to the Ritz Carlton;
- The second team is based in George Town and covers from the Ritz Carlton to Belford Estates in Bodden Town.
- The third team is based in North Sound and covers everywhere East of Belford Estates.

When you look at expanding, provision is made for additional ambulance service in the eastern districts—discussions [to] identify a place for it are still ongoing but, knowing my honourable colleagues are definitely looking further east, that is in this appropriation. The increase also [contemplates] the cost of that additional EMS team to be stationed (right now, it is proposed for Bodden Town), which adds an additional and most-needed service for the eastern districts.

Whether that is the final location is to be [seen], but what we can establish [is] that more coverage is definitely required in the eastern districts. The highlighted cost in 2022 represents the cost of the ambulance and training for the team, in addition to the cost of the non-emergency transport vehicle as well.

**The Chairman:** Any other questions? Thank you, Mr. McLaughlin.

With that, I will take the vote. All those in favour of each year HEA 10 - Ambulance Services - \$3,638,537 in 2022 and \$3,395,337 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HEA 11 - Services at District Health Clinics**

**The Chairman:** HEA 11 - Services at District Health Clinics - \$2,489,947 in 2022 and \$2,489,947 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing that there are no questions. I put it to the vote. All those in favour of District Health Clinics - \$2,489,947 in 2022 and \$2,489,947 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HEA 12 - Mental Health Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HEA 12 - Mental Health Services - \$4,395,204 in 2022 and \$4,245,204 in 2023. Are there any questions.

Honourable Alden McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, looking at the description and the location in those two sections, the numbers you just recited, do not appear to cover the cost of the operation

of the long term residential facility currently under construction in East End. Where is there a provision for that in the budget?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you, that would be in another line item that will fall directly under the Ministry, not under the HSA.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** So it will come later then?

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Yes, sir.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** You are welcome.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much for that. I will take the vote. All those in favour of HEA 12 - Mental Health Services - \$4,395,204 in 2022 and \$4,245,204 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### **HEA 16 - Geriatric Services**

**The Chairman:** HEA 16 - Geriatric Services - \$4,376,497 in 2022 and \$4,376,497 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Honourable Member for Red Bay, Mr. McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the amount forecast to be spent this calendar year is only a little over \$615,000, then leaps to \$4,376,497 for the two ensuing years. I am sure there is an explanation for it—maybe this is part of the transformation that the Minister for Social Development spoke about.

There might be some cross-over there, but if I could have some explanation for the significant increase.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you, patients are assigned to this particular allocation for a single encounter and then referred for continued coverage, as you rightly stated, by the Needs Assessment Unit. Some patients are unwilling to access NAU services, and others are not indigent but require financial assistance during episodic medical care or for a period [of time].

These services are going well with little to no challenges. It is adequately managed by the patient financial services team in conjunction with the patient experience manager and the need for coverage has been steady since 2019, with a drastic increase from 2020. We will be working in collaboration with my honourable colleague responsible for that Ministry, Minister Ebanks.

**The Chairman:** Apologies.

Sorry, honourable Members. There seems to be an error in that presentation.

*[Crosstalk]*

**The Chairman:** The 2021 number; if you were to look in the purchase agreement—and I do apologise for that—the actual 2021 forecast for the 12 month is the same for 2022 and 2023.

The amount has remained flat between 2021, 2022 and 2023 so it is a typo, Mr. McLaughlin, and I do apologise for that.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** That is why we are over here.

**The Chairman:** That is right, very good Opposition. That is on my finance team, and I do apologise. So I guess the question is...

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Yes, Mr. Chairman because I was going to give the Minister a little trouble if that was her only answer but I see now; we are good.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, sir. That one is on us.

With that said, let's put it to the vote. All those in favour of HEA 16 - Geriatric Services - \$4,376,497 in 2022 and \$4,376,497 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**AYES.**

### **HSA 17 - Medical Care beyond Insurance Coverage/Uninsured**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HSA 17 - Medical Care beyond Insurance Coverage/Uninsured - \$4,034,418 in 2022 and \$4,034,418 in 2023. Are there any questions?

*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** We are good with that, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much.

Colleagues, I put it to the vote. All those in favour of HSA 17 - Medical Care beyond Insurance Coverage/Uninsured - \$4,034,418 in 2022 and \$4,034,418 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HEA 18 - School Health Services**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HEA 18 - School Health Services - \$1,918,778 in 2022 and 2,018,778 in 2023. Are there any questions?

If not, I put it to the vote, all those in favour of HEA 18 - School Health Services - \$1,918,778 in 2022 and 2,018,778 in 2023, please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

### **HEA 19 - Medical Care for Chronic Ailments**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues moving on to HEA 19 - Medical Care for Chronic Ailments - \$1,359,255 in 2022 and \$1,359,255 in 2023. Any questions?

Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through you to the Honourable Minister.

There is a [significant] increase here again; almost doubling it. I do see where they are projecting quite a substantial number of patients—between 40 and 200, versus the 60 forecasted for 2021. Is there a particular reason we expect such an increase in patient services?

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you. The need for this coverage has been steadily on an incline, with the need for it doubling from 2020 attributed to Cayman's ageing population. I hope that satisfies the query.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I mean, I see they are projecting a huge increase, but I wondered whether there was a particular reason or any insight, as to why such a large increase. Have we added additional services? Have we had that

significant an increase in the non-communicable diseases, i.e. cancer, hypertension, Diabetes, et cetera?

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you. We have just seen an increase in the demand for chronic medical services. They present pretty much at any time at HSA without insurance or under-insured and this enables us to keep up with the demand.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, there seems to be another error in respect to the numbers in the purchase agreements. If you go to page 597, you will see that the figure for 2021 does not correlate with the figure for 2021 on page 276 of the Plan and Estimates.

*[Long pause]*

**The Chairman:** Alright, thanks much. We will take the vote on HEA 19 - Medical Care for Chronic Ailments - \$1,359,255 in 2022 and \$1,359,255 in 2023. Those in favour please say, Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.  
**HEA 20 – Public Health Programmes,  
Investigations and Treatments**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues, we have reached page 31. I will start with HEA 20 – Public Health Programmes, Investigations and Treatments - \$2,409,835 in 2022 and 2,409,835 in 2023. Are there any questions?  
Honourable Alden McLaughlin.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have been through this section of output groups purchased by the Minister of Health and Wellness a few times now, and what I find most curious, is that there is no reference anywhere herein, that I can find, to the work and the resources allocated to managing and treating COVID-19. I am not sure where that is accounted for in the budget documents.

I see reference here—I thought it would have been here—to medical examinations, tests and so forth in relation to HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases; but, given the amount of resources we have devoted to COVID-19 over the last, almost two years now, I would have thought there would have been some reference to those costs in the budget document.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, I would like your permission for the CEO to respond to that, please.

*[Crosstalk]*

**Ms. Lizette Yearwood, CEO - Health Services Authority:** I swear to the almighty God that the evidence I shall give to this honourable Parliament shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**The Chairman:** Madam CEO, welcome. Before answering the honourable Member for Red Bay's question, can you state your name and title for the record, please? Thank you.

**Ms. Lizette Yearwood, CEO - Health Services Authority:** Lizette Yearwood, CEO of the Health Services Authority.

Mr. Chairman, through you, the way that the COVID expenses have been managed right from the beginning of the pandemic, is a direct reimbursement through the Ministry of Finance. It has not been a specific output under the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you.

Then my next question is for you, Mr. Chairman. Does that appear in the appropriations to you?

**The Chairman:** Sorry, Honourable Mr. McLaughlin, I was distracted speaking to the Financial Secretary (FS) and did not hear the answer.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** The Minister did not hear your response, ma'am.

**Ms. Lizette Yearwood, CEO - Health Services Authority:** Mr. Chairman, through you, the reimbursement for the COVID expenses is through the Ministry of Finance, and [therefore] it is not represented as an output under the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

*[Long pause]*

**The Chairman:** Sorry, just conferring with the FS.

Basically what we did just for this year (the 2022/2023 budget), was add a line item which is \$10 million-plus related to COVID—to cover COVID-related things. We do not have an exact number of what it would be, but there is \$10 million-plus budgeted for COVID-related activities so if need be, it may cover some of that cost.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, thank you for that; so then, if the Ministry of Health and Wellness or the HSA ordered supplies or procured anything to deal with COVID—medicines, or whatever the case may be—the practice was, or is, that they would spend the necessary money and it is reimbursed through the Ministry of Finance.

**The Chairman:** Correct. The current system is set up that way in terms of OE 140, which was the vote that was set up. That is what we are using currently; we have that one cost centre to track every COVID-related

expense, because [in the] budget it was never a line item, or department, [et cetera].

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Is that what created the confusion with the ordering of test kits by Blue Water Medical and Crown Agents?

**The Chairman:** No, that was a different thing altogether.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Could we get an explanation as to what transpired there and where the matter is now?

**The Chairman:** I think that is one of the Parliamentary questions you filed, so we will deal with it in [Parliament].

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** No, Mr. Chairman, I may never get to the Parliamentary questions. We are in Finance Committee now, and I believe this is the most appropriate place of all for that matter to be properly interrogated.

**The Chairman:** Sorry. What was your question, sorry.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, you responded to the first part of my question.

You said that the current accounting arrangements were not the reason for what I called *confusion* (this may be the wrong word), with respect to what seems to be the double ordering of LFT Kits—one set ordered by the Ministry of Health and Wellness from Blue Water, and the other by the Ministry of Finance from Crown Agents.

I am trying to get an understanding of what transpired there; ultimately, what is the current situation and whether government is out of pocket as a result.

**The Chairman:** Well, to answer the question:

First of all, the Ministry of Finance never ordered any LFT kits. Those are actually ordered by the Ministry of Education, which the Finance Ministry paid for out of OE 140.

The Ministry of Health had a separate order that was paid for out of their own budget.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you for that clarification. If we can take this a little further:

What we have seen in the media indicated that the kits ordered by Blue Water were... I do not want to use the word *cheaper*. Were *less costly* than those procured through Crown Agents.

What I am trying to understand, is what created that situation; whether or not Blue Water has now been made whole; whether the Government is in receipt of both sets of kits, i.e. both orders—and if not, what the current situation is.

**The Chairman:** What I can say is first, do not believe everything you read in the media—I say that to you.

Secondly, there are two separate transactions. What I will admit is that there may have been some cross in communication lines, but they were dealt with separately and what we have done is that we have actually asked the Auditor General to take a look at the process, to see what happened.

In essence, there were two separate transactions: one by the Ministry of Health and one by the Minister of Education, so they are two separate things altogether.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Right, but clearly something went wrong. I do not believe everything I read in the paper at all which, Mr. Chairman, with respect, is why I am asking you, whom I think would have a clear understanding of what actually transpired.

How did you wind up with a situation where the Blue Water order was cancelled, resulting in court proceedings which I gather has now been withdrawn, as the matter has been settled?

**The Chairman:** Well, I am sorry. I am not aware if the matter has been withdrawn or if it is still before the court. I have not been updated by the Attorney General in that regard; but what I can say, is that it was always the intention of the Government to order two million LFT kits.

I know one million was ordered by the Ministry of Health, and one million by the Ministry of Education. That much I can say; it was always the intention to order two million LFT kits.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, if I may? By no means am I trying to—

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, with respect, the Minister is not responsible for either of these Ministries. If he wants to comment, that is fine, but I am trying to ascertain through you, sir—

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chairman, I am still an elected Member of this House who is allowed to ask questions. Maybe it is not convention to do so, but I still have the privilege to do so in this committee.

If you recognise him before me, I will accept that Mr. Chairman, but I do have a right to ask and speak, just as much as him.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I never tried to interfere with his right to ask, I am trying to stop him from interfering with my right to ask.

Mr. Chairman, what I am trying to understand—I have gotten a little further down the road; so the intention was always to order two million, but the initial order placed by the Ministry of Education to Blue Water was for one million ...

[Inaudible interjection]

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** However, my understanding was that the Blue Water order was placed first.

**The Chairman:** Well, you see, this is where I guess the confusion came in because Health did one order, Education did one order and pretty much everybody is basically trying to pull from the same pool, I guess, to some extent, but from the Ministry of Finance's [perspective], at that point we recognised the Ministry of Education's order over the Ministry of Health's.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** There is a procurement process for orders of this size conducted by the Ministry?

**The Chairman:** The Ministry of Education's order was actually done via a Cabinet paper, and at that point Cabinet pretty much agreed on a single source, in the interest of time, to actually get the one million in so that the kids at least could be tested from the LFT here for the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** But help me to understand this: In my experience, the determination of whether or not it is an appropriate order for a single source, is not [made] by Cabinet. It is either determined by the Procurement Committee itself, or by the Ministry's procurement committee.

How does Cabinet get into the role of deciding whether something is appropriate for single source or not?

**The Chairman:** Because it was deemed to be an exceptional purchase, which at that point was not subject to the Procurement Law. Section 3 of the Procurement Law actually states out the exemption. From that standpoint we had a situation where—and this is the reason why we asked for it to be reviewed—where we had, within the Procurement Law as it stands, up to \$100,000 can be approved by the Chief Officer; from \$100,000 to \$250,000 is done at the ministerial procurement committee.

In this situation, this was actually above the ministerial committee's limit, but at the same time it did not go to the Public Procurement Committee, so it left kind of a limbo area. Thus, the reason why that decision was made in terms of using a Cabinet Paper and having it being done that way. Thus the reason why we have asked both the Attorney General and the Office of the Auditor General to take a look at both processes, to see exactly what it is that we need to do to make sure, when something is outside of the Public Procurement Process but also above the limit of the actual Ministry, how then, do we deal with something like that.

Because something that we found out during COVID, for example, was that there was not even a procurement process [for] many of the transactions that were made and it was also outside that limit, so while during that time we never actually took the time out to actually deal with it, if we found a gap in the law where

Cabinet can do it, if a state of emergency has been declared.

In this situation, a state of emergency was never declared, but the intent of the law was always to be that if an emergency or exceptional circumstance comes in, Cabinet would at least have that level of authority so on a state of emergency, Cabinet would have been able to do it, but without a state of emergency being declared there is a question.

Thus the reason we asked both the Attorney General and the Office of the Auditor General to take a look at that, to see what it is that we need to do to close that grey era within the legislation.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you very much. Was the Attorney General's view sought before the order was made or subsequently—or did he have a view about it in Cabinet? He usually does on these matters.

**The Chairman:** Well, seeing that it was a Cabinet Paper and the Attorney General sits in Cabinet, I would like to say that if there was a situation where Cabinet did not have the authority to do it, the Attorney General would have said something. In that situation, the Paper came to Cabinet and it was approved; as far as we were concerned, the Attorney General was sitting there, then it should have been fine.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just one more question, I believe, and that is: Was it known to you or to the Cabinet at the time that the order was placed to Crown Agents that the Ministry of Education had already agreed to procure the same number of kits at a substantially lower price than the Crown Agents' order?

**The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton:** Mr. Chairman.

*[Crosstalk]*

**The Chairman:** The answer is no, but to answer your question, the difference was not substantial.

**Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly:** Mr. Chairman, I have been sitting here listening to this and trying not to get involved saying something that perhaps I should not say at this stage, but let me just state that we landed the order from the Ministry of Education here for CI \$2.50, whereas Blue Water was CI \$ 2.55 landed. Do the math.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, if I may ask your indulgence for my Chief Officer whom I would like to speak, who was very involved in the procurement part of this order that my colleague is referring to.

**Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan:** Mr. Chair, I am concerned [because] the line of questioning has gone outside of this output budget.



Now, there are three different elements here. There's your Ministry, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health. If the specific is to the Ministry of Health, that is where the line of questioning should be focused on and then, if any other Member wants to speak about the elements in respect to your Ministry or the Education Ministry, ask the questions at that time.

I think we have gone well outside of the rules and scope of the Ministry of Health in respect to this line of questioning. I am just saying as per the rules that I am aware of, we have gone well past that.

**The Chairman:** I actually agree with you on that one, Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Alden McLaughlin:** Mr. Chairman, I am entirely in your hands, sir. I think you have done your endeavour best to answer the questions. This is the "PACT" right? Purpose-driven, Accountable, Competent and Transparent. I am trying to help you with the transparency bit there.

*[Laughter]*

**The Chairman:** Well, I will say this much, Mr. McLaughlin, I appreciate the assistance, but at the end of the day, we are only responsible for what we say, we are not responsible for what anyone else understands.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, I would really seek your permission so that my Chief Officer can have an opportunity to clarify.

**The Chairman:** No; we are just going to move across the decision now. This has already been ventilated and the night is long.

All those in favour of HEA 20 – Public Health Programmes, Investigations and Treatments - \$2,409,835 in 2022 and \$2,409,835 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, I want to help us move along and say that you can take this down to HEA 26.

**BLOCK VOTE:**

**HEA 21 - Medical Internship Programme**

**HEA 23 - Provision of Anti-viral Medication**

**HEA 24 - Provision of Psychological Trauma Diagnosis, and Treatment for Children**

**HEA 25 - Management and Maintenance of Cancer Registry**

**HEA 26 - Adolescent Medical Health Programme**

**The Chairman:** Thanks very much for that, Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Colleagues, with the assistance of the Honourable Deputy Leader and his guidance of the Opposition, we will take the next 5 items together.

All those in favour of HEA 21 - Medical Internship Programme - \$227,160 in 2022, \$263,445 in 2023;

HEA 23 - Provision of Anti-viral Medication - \$492,000 in 2022 and \$492,000 in 2023;

HEA 24 - Provision of Psychological Trauma Diagnosis, and Treatment for Children - \$105,000 in 2022 and \$105,000 in 2023;

HEA 25 - Management and Maintenance of Cancer Registry - \$62,027 in 2022 and \$62,027 in 2023;

HEA 26 - Adolescent Medical Health Programme - \$840,000 in 2022 and \$840,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, you can do NDC 1, NGS 4 and NGS 53 together.

**BLOCK VOTE:**

**NDC 1 - Policy, Prevention, Surveillance Research, Information, Monitoring and Evaluation**

**NGS 4 – HIV, Aids and First Aid Public Education Programmes**

**NGS 53 - Palliative Care Nursing**

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Joseph Xavier Hew.

All those in favour of NDC 1 - Policy, Prevention, Surveillance Research, Information, Monitoring and Evaluation - \$714,855 and \$714,855 in 2023;

NGS 4 – HIV, Aids and First Aid Public Education Programmes - \$39,325 in 2022 \$39,325 in 2023;

NGS 53 - Palliative Care Nursing - \$100,158 in 2022 and \$100,158 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**NGS 55 - Tertiary Medical Care at Various Local and Overseas Institutions**

**The Chairman:** Colleagues next item and NGS 55 - Tertiary Medical Care at Various Local and Overseas Institutions - \$20,926,911 in 2022 and \$21,593,371 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman.

Through you, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, this is the Appropriation that covers the indigents and Seamen and Veterans and I cannot help but notice that there is a reduction of just under \$15 million from 2021 to 2022 and 2023. If the Minister could kindly indicate where those reductions are.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister for Health.

[Pause]

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you, can I ask where he is seeing the reduction, because I am actually seeing an increase in the numbers I have before me.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** I am looking at the Plan and Estimates, page 287 so maybe there is a mistake there again or...

**The Chairman:** No.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** No? Well then, there is a reduction of...

**The Chairman:** Similarly to HEA 2, Honourable Member, the NGS 55 is a non-HSA care, and as in prior years, I think the current year budget for that amount was actually \$16 million or thereabouts as opposed to \$35 million, so it is one of those where it is very difficult to directly gauge what the exact amount will be in terms of what would actually be used.

What we have done is actually increase the budget for next year compared to what it was this year; I think this year, again, the budget was \$16 million and we actually did \$35 million, which is \$19 million above. This is a situation now where you put a number in but it is very hard to tell exactly where it is going to land.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Again, Mr. Chair, it has been increased for what we are proposing.

**The Chairman:** But the budget for this it was like \$16 million and the \$35 actual so it is very difficult to budget for that one. Any other questions?

If not, I'll take the vote. All those in favour of NGS 55 - Tertiary Medical Care at Various Local and Overseas Institutions - \$20,926,911 in 2022 and \$21,593,371 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### TRANSFER PAYMENTS

#### TP 44 - Temporary Poor Relief Payments for Young Parents Programme (YPP) Students

**The Chairman:** Colleagues are moving on to transfer payments now. TP 44 - Temporary Poor Relief Payments for Young Parents Programme (YPP) Students - \$70,000 in 2022 and \$70,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

With that I will take the vote. All those in favour of TP 44 - Temporary Poor Relief Payments for Young Parents Programme (YPP) Students - \$70,000 in 2022 and \$70,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

#### TP 73 Other Health and Wellness Programme Assistance

**The Chairman:** Yeah, is a bit moving on to TP 73 Other Health and Wellness Programme Assistance \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

If not, I'll take the vote. All those in favour of TP 73 Other Health and Wellness Programme Assistance \$500,000 in 2022 and \$500,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Mr. Chairman, you can do OE 15, OE 103 and OE 127 together.

#### BLOCK VOTE:

#### OE 15 Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) Subscription OE 103 - Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) OE 127 - Caribbean Association of Medical Council (CAMC)

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much, Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Colleagues, with the support of the Opposition in this regard, I will take the vote for the next three items. All those in favour of:

OE 15 Pan American Health Organisation Subscription - \$15,000 in 2022 and \$15,000 in 2023;

OE 103 - Caribbean Public Health Agency - \$18,500 in 2022 and \$18,500 in 2023;

OE 127 - Caribbean Association of Medical Council (CAMC) - \$10,500 in 2022 and \$1,500 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**EI 53 - Ministry of Health and Wellness**

**The Chairman:** Moving on to EI 53 - Ministry of Health and Wellness - \$7,875,000 in 2022 and \$3,776,000 in 2023. Are there any questions?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Through you, Mr. Chairman, I will just ask if the Honourable Minister could give us some indication of what is covered under this appropriation.

**The Chairman:** Honourable Minister of Health.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Mr. Chair, through you, this appropriation covers the e-Gov Initiative—that is a computer software; it includes the Department of Counselling Services. As it pertains to 2022 for health and regulatory service, \$400,000 for the e-Gov Initiative and in 2023, \$250,000.

For the Nexus World Compliance Tool for 2022, \$30,000 and for 2023, another \$30,000; and for monitors and computers, 16 docking stations for 2022, \$5,000 each for both years for the Department of Health Regulatory Services.

For the Department of Counselling Services there is a breakdown of the total for 2022, \$410,000, that includes vehicle replacement, replacement of printers, again, furniture, website file management and renovations of the new main office and that goes into \$50,000 appropriated for 2023 of \$40,000 for the one vehicle and \$10,000 for replacement of printers and computers.

For MRCU, it includes an excavator, vehicles—that is a Toyota Hilux and one Ford; the Field Seeker Software, ramp repairs, aerial application drone and the stainless-steel pump, allocated \$859,000 for 2022 and a total of \$274,000 for 2023, which covers the second vehicle. It is a total of six vehicles and \$35,000 for that in the next year of another Ford vehicle. That also includes some gates at the site of \$15,000 and a stainless steel pump, which would be done in 2023.

For the Core Admin where the long term mental health facility is concerned, this includes \$5 million allocated for 2022. Major Projects Office of \$50,000, also in 2022; two vehicles, \$50,000 each, split over \$50,000 in 2022, \$50,000 in 2023; office equipment \$75,000, allocated for both years, 2022 and 2023.

We continued down to the Department of Health Regulatory Services. For solid waste...

*[Inaudible interjections]*

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** That is enough?

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you. You covered the mental health facility. I probably should have been a bit more specific in my questioning, but that is the big-ticket item there.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Well, yeah, it is covered.

**Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition:** Thank you.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

All those in favour of EI 53 - Ministry of Health and Wellness - \$7,875,000 in 2022 and \$3,776,000 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**EA 30 – Cemetery Vaults**

**The Chairman:** And finally colleagues, EA 30 – Cemetery Vaults - \$173,000 in 2022 and \$173,700 in 2023. Are there any questions?

Seeing as there are no questions, I will take the vote. All those in favour of EA 30 – Cemetery Vaults - \$173,000 in 2022 and \$173,700 in 2023, please say Aye. Those against, No.

**AYES.**

**The Chairman:** The Ayes have it.

**Mrs. Sabrina T. Turner:** Can I take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all of the Departments that fall within my Ministry for their hard work and dedication in pulling this together. I thank you for working and having patience as you have with me, as my first time doing our budget. Congratulations to us and to my colleagues.

Thank you for your support.

**The Chairman:** Thank you very much Honourable Minister.

Colleagues that brings us to the end of Finance Committee for tonight. We will start back tomorrow at 9am sharp, and we will be looking at the appropriations to the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General. We will try to get them all in tomorrow. Ambitious, but we will try.

With that said, this committee stands adjourned for tonight for tomorrow morning back at 9am.

**At 8:40pm Finance Committee adjourned until 9am Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**