

Jackie Jacobson for Nunakput

September 18, 2019

In reply to NWT Association of Communities – Questions for MLA Candidates Election 2019:

(Answers in number sequence to each question received)

1. A \$40 million shortfall still exists for community governments. What is your position on the funding formula for community governments and the significant shortfall not being addressed over the past five years?

\$40 M shortfall for community governments: the existing funding formula for community governments should be revisited and adjusted so that programs and services to residents are maintained appropriately. The GNWT's operating budget (which addresses program and service delivery) is separate from the capital budget (which manages the assets of government) and the operating budget surpluses are also expected to pay for half of the capital budget expenditures.

2. 2. What steps will you take to ensure that communities funding shortfall as identified by MACA is addressed and do you commit to prioritizing funding?

*Steps to take on MACA input and prioritized funding to community governments: a responsible MLA will consider the priorities identified by his/her constituents as well as those of Cabinet and Regular Members – there are expenditure priorities outlined in typical budget forecasts and these are largely influenced and controlled by the *GNWT Fiscal Responsibility Policy*. I will commit to negotiate and mediate on what my constituents identify as their priorities.*

3. 3. Homelessness, mental health and addictions are serious issues in the North. Are you willing to work to ensure these issues get addressed and potential solutions put in place in a timely manner?

Homelessness, mental health and addictions: these are ongoing issues that are inevitably linked to community wellness and housing needs – I am committed to look for short- and long-term collaborative solutions that would be implemented immediately.

4. How do you think communities can prepare for the climate change crisis that is presently occurring in many communities and what is your position on the Territorial Government finding solutions and taking a leadership role with funding?

Climate change solutions: there is an increasing urgency to the forecasted impacts of climate change that we are currently witnessing at the community level – I would urge increased attention be paid to other world-wide responses as well as their solutions i.e., shore-line erosion and flood conditions has been addressed for millennia by the Netherland countries. The NWT Carbon Tax rebates and benefits program should of course be increased to fiscally reflect an

acknowledgement of individual commitments to reduce further negative climate change impacts.

5. What are your views on the issue of the early childhood education deficiency in the NWT and how it relates to post-secondary success of students and do you support an Auditor General Review of the education system?

Early childhood education deficiency and proposed Auditor General review of NWT education system: it is interesting to note that in every successfully negotiated northern Indigenous Government, one of their first priorities – is that of education in general and that cultural resiliency and strength comes from a strong vibrant partnership with knowledge holders and caregivers at the community level. I would support any effort to address educational needs for all northerners.

6. The 2018 Federal Budget affirmed that its expectation is that a 25% portion of the revenues from cannabis excise taxes provided to the Territory and Provinces be transferred to municipalities and local communities. What is your view of the GNWT deciding that there will be no revenues passed on to the municipalities from the Territorial Government?

25% Cannabis excise tax transfer to municipalities: while cannabis use is now legal in Canada and all jurisdictions, the framework for administering the purchase, use and health consequences of cannabis is still being developed federally and regionally. It would of course be beneficial for communities to realize the federal expectation of 25% of collected Cannabis Excise Taxes.

Questions and Responses vetted by Official Agent Barney Masuzumi