

## Robert Hawkins for Kam Lake MLA

September 13, 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?

The GNWT needs to immediately recognize and close that gap with a progressive action plan. The funding gap must be immediately addressed. This hurts all communities in the NWT. It's time the GNWT ceases to download underfunded programs and services to municipalities without associated and adequate funding. This issue needs addressing by the new Assembly after the election. The Assembly needs to take leadership and consult municipalities on the issue of under-funding and insist on action based on that consultation.

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?

Two actions: 1) Consultation and 2) Collaboration. Consultation: Make sure that communities are partners in the securing of adequate and ongoing funding. Collaboration with my partner MLAs, through working together. The shortfall carried by the municipalities is enormous, however in terms of overall GNWT budget, addressing this shortfall is achievable.

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?

Absolutely. I have been and continue to be a champion for supporting money and policies to address these issues. This is a territorial problem and I feel strongly that the GNWT's role has not been adequate in addressing these issues. This is a territory-wide issue requiring territory-wide input and solutions.

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?

The GNWT, through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) should create a Climate Change Task Force (CCTF) to help develop action plans and initiatives that support the diverse goals and objectives of each municipality. The CCTF should have clear, measurable milestones and results, be based on community need. It goes without saying that noting that each community is unique, and a one size plan/solution won't work for everyone. That said, this is no excuse not to be bold and deal with the issue of our times.

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?

An immediate call to action to address all the gaps highlighted, including demanding a timeline that can be publicly followed along with measurables that show action is being taken.

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?

Shameful. Through collaboration, this can be addressed.