

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

College Nordique/Dechinta Funding

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources —June 7, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. First off, I'd like to ask the Minister and his staff about the funding for Francophone affairs. It's a rather significant reduction. Last year it was \$124,000 and this year it's to be \$77,000. Has part of that been combined in this arts organization operating fund or can someone explain that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: That funding is sunsetting and it was funding that we did give to WSEC in the contribution.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks for that information. My other questions are I believe somewhere in this list of contributions there may be money for Dechinta and College Nordique. Can the Minister confirm that? And can the Minister also tell us whether there has been any changes in the funding these two organizations received last year as compared to them this year? Thanks Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: The government does fund both College Nordique and Dechinta. It is later on in the business plan or in the main estimates under the post-secondary education...

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MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of questions to follow up on my colleague from Kam Lake. It is my understanding that Dechinta and College nordique have submitted proposals to the department for core funding to help them get established. I think those proposals have been in with the department for several months now. I am just wondering whether the department has responded to those proposals and what that response might be or when we can expect to get our responses? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned earlier, the Skills 4 Success action plan that we are going to be rolling out here and hopefully bringing back into the House in the fall is going to be reflective of all our partners, stakeholders, whether they are businesses, Aurora College, moving forward. So we want to make sure that action plan gets done and that the business case from all areas is looked at. Hopefully we will have their input into creating this action plan as well, which we did commit to working with all our partners on the development of this action plan.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that and for his response. It seems to me then that the department hasn't formally responded to these two proposals but anticipates taking those into

consideration in developing an action plan for Skills 4 Success. Is that the case? Is the Minister actually going to respond formally in writing to these two proposals that have been submitted to the Department? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have our staff that are working with both College nordique and Dechinta. We will respond with a formal response to their proposals. This is the first time we have had a comprehensive report as such, the Labour Market Needs Assessment Report that came out. To make sure that we do it right and that we do get our resources in the areas that need to be done, we have to get that action plan done first. That way we can have our program services reflect that. We will respond with the formal response to both institutions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I will ask the Minister to add more clarity to that. You are not quite answering the question as I see it. I am looking for a time frame or a date, Mr. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We could give a formal response, but it is simply going to be saying what we are here today as the action plan. We have to get that done first. We could give a formal response this week, early next week. We still want to work with all our stakeholders when we are developing this action plan and making sure it is reflective of the comprehensive report. That will be the next steps. Yes we will get a formal response out this week or early next week.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I do appreciate your efforts at chairing this meeting. I appreciate the response from the Minister. Why I am raising this is that I have had representatives from both Dechinta and College nordique contact me in an effort to try to find out the status of these submissions. That is why I am pressuring the Minister to find out what is going on with the proposals.

I understand he has now committed to getting back to them within a week or so and that is great. If the response is that those proposals will be considered in the context of developing an Action Plan, that is fine. These things have been outstanding for a while now. I think we should make more of an effort to respond to them in a timely fashion. So I think that is what I have heard from the Minister. Once again, I do appreciate your effort at chairing the meeting. Thanks Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes. I appreciate that. As I mentioned, our staff is always in contact with both College nordique and Dechinta. I believe our representative has spoken with them in the last two weeks. Any information like that -- and I appreciate that Members are bringing this to the table. We want to support our partners. We appreciate the work that both institutions do.

There are some areas that need to be considered as well. That is the legislation that needs to be done. We also have to make sure that we are doing the things that were asked for. There was a motion in the House in the 17th Legislative Assembly that we are looking at working on. There are a lot of things that have to come into place.

So as I mentioned, our representatives did meet with the organizations in the last two weeks. We are keeping in touch. It is not like we are not talking to these organizations, which I hope people don't think we are doing because that is what we are doing. Just to let everybody know that. Thank you.

