

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS – OCTOBER 24-25, 2023 | MONTREAL

As part of the updates on construction and infrastructure projects, the commissioners were briefed on the deficiencies identified in many of the buildings delivered to Kativik Ilisarniliriniq. The buildings are still under warranty, and the Material Resources Department is working with construction companies to ensure corrective work is undertaken. Deficiencies were identified in different communities in the following buildings: housing (Aupaluk and Puvirnituk), warehouses and bus garage (Kuujuuaq and Salluit), schools (Ikusik—Salluit, Iguarsivik—Puvirnituk, Innalik—Inukjuak), Adult Education Centre (Kangiqtuujaq).

The \$130.5 million infrastructure Accumulated Maintenance Deficit is expected to increase further. The last phase of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq’s (KI) global infrastructure maintenance needs assessment has started. It will target all KI housing units in the 14 Nunavik communities.

All required maintenance work is tracked using Maximo software, introduced 2 years ago. This computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) helps by automating workflows and provides an up-to-date inventory of all required maintenance work on our buildings.

Over the last two years, the maintenance needs of all schools, adult education centres, student residences and warehouses were assessed in the 14 Nunavik communities. These needs are now tracked (and budgeted for) using Maximo software.

Once the maintenance needs of all KI housing units have been assessed, the school board will have a comprehensive overview of the annual budget required to carry out work on all its infrastructure.

New spill response kits have arrived in all Nunavik villages. The kits will be used by Kativik Ilisarniliriniq maintenance staff to respond immediately to fuel spills without relying on supplies from the municipality (NV). The new kits include special packaging to transport hazardous waste down south.

Over the past years, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq’s commitment to environmental stewardship has focused on soil decontamination around its buildings and construction sites, removal of hazardous material from Nunavik, and the prevention of spills (for example, through the timely replacement of oil tanks).

Information Technology support in the classroom means that fully interactive touchscreen smartboards have now been installed in all Nunavik schools.

The Information Technology team manages broad infrastructure projects to ensure internet access to all schools, centres and offices in Nunavik. In addition, the team also supports employees in resolving day-to-day technical support issues and more.

The team travels regularly to all 14 Nunavik communities to ensure the maintenance of in-class technology used by teachers and students in the youth and adult sectors (iPads, computers, smartboards, etc.).

In response to questions from the commissioners of different communities, the Adult Education and Vocational Training (AEVT) department provided an update on its current service offering, which considers the need to also reach the residents of communities where there is no Adult Education Centre.

In communities with no Adult Education Centre, discussions are ongoing with the municipality and other Nunavik organizations to identify space that can be used for training that is in demand. Typically, short-term courses can be accommodated (for example, the current travelling welding or art workshops), while longer training (1 to 2 years) tends to be based at our permanent facilities.

The Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) is another program that the AEVT department is seeking to expand. This can help adults with extensive work experience receive a formal certification for competencies that are assessed by a specialized instructor.

Parenting training and gun safety training are in demand and are still part of the AEVT service offering.

The commissioners expressed concerns and discouragement in the face of an uncoordinated regional approach to address the issue of bullying (including cyberbullying). Despite an agreement with the Nunavik Police Service (2019) and a Memorandum of Understanding with the NRBHSS, the Ungava Tulattavik Health Centre and the Inuulitsivik Health Centre (2020), much remains to be done.

The commissioners shared their concerns in relation to specific incidents that had occurred in their community (including arrests at school).

They agreed that when situations arise, it's unclear which organizations are ultimately responsible for handling what, and who should lead interventions. As a result, there is also no consistency from community to community in how responses to incidents are managed.

As a follow-up to the presentation of a preliminary data dashboard made at previous meetings by the General Administration, the commissioners agreed that it would be useful if schools (and commissioners) were to receive a snapshot of student attendance by mid-October. Shared with parents or presented publicly by each local commissioner, this data could be an eye-opener and help schools get the support they need from Nunavimmiut.

Despite support for this proposal from both the commissioners and the administration, Education Services emphasized that data-driven decision-making still requires a change to the organizational culture within Kativik Iisarniliriniq.

While we are moving in the right direction, there are still challenges with data quality and regular data entry by schools that must be addressed.

The data project was on hold from June to October 2023 due to a lack of staff. Implementation will resume in November 2023, and an update will be provided to the commissioners in December.

Emergency Childcare Services were rolled out in some Nunavik communities this fall, for Kativik Iisarniliriniq employees and students who are parents. The commissioners expressed their support for expanding this new service offering wherever possible. This initiative is funded for a two-year period by the Childcare First Initiative, a program funded by the Government of Canada and managed by the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

This initiative represents an emergency response to the service disruptions that currently characterize the Nunavik daycare system across the region.

The closure of daycares has a ripple effect on the continuity of services in the education sector. Many of our employees (teachers, for example) rely on daycare services, and they cannot come to work if their own children are not cared for.

The Emergency Childcare Services are implemented in schools with an available workforce, housing and space. The services can only be used by Kativik Iisarniliriniq employees and students who are parents, for children up to 4 years old. They operate strictly during school opening hours (and therefore cannot be used as before or after school childcare).

The Child First Initiative is funded by the Canadian Government under Jordan's Principle. It aims to ensure that Inuit children can access the products, services and supports they need when they need them, while the Canadian Government works with Inuit partners, provinces and territories to develop long-term approaches to help better address the unique needs of Inuit children.

The commissioners reviewed and approved the 2022-2023 Financial Audit report, which includes a \$8 million deficit. They stressed that the deficit reveals the need for new budget rules to provide Kativik Iisarniliriniq with adequate funding.

The commissioners were updated on the ongoing negotiations of Kativik Iisarniliriniq with the Ministry of Education regarding budget rules. There has been no progress since March 2023. The school board's current budget rules were approved at the end of 2019 and expired on June 30, 2023.

In parallel, the 2023-2024 budget was prepared and submitted to the MEQ for approval prior to review by the Council of Commissioners. However, discussions with the government are currently at standstill, which is worrisome.

In addition to the \$8 million deficit for the 2022-2023 school year, an accumulated \$26 million deficit will be carried over in 2023-2024.

Collective agreement negotiations are ongoing, and strike mandates have been obtained by the unions representing Kativik Iisarniliriniq employees. The strike mandates obtained by the unions representing Kativik Iisarniliriniq employees were strongly supported and are aligned with what is being observed in the rest of the province.

Strike mandates are expected to be implemented in the coming weeks and months by teachers, support staff and professionals.