

**Government Renewal Initiative
Public Service Sessions Gander and Clarendville
February 11, 2016**

Q1. Thinking of all of the thing government spends your money on to provide residents of the province with services, what are the three things that could be stopped in order to save money?
Standing offer. We have unique suppliers who won't stock parts. If one company has a Standing Offer Agreement then they break agreements because they know we have no choice but to buy from them. They say they don't get taxes
When purchasing new equipment don't cheap out. When you cheap out you end up buying the rest of equivalent in parts and paying a man to assemble it. Parts and time can be very costly
Work is being contracted out to be done yet coming back with work still to be done with it and sometimes the work they did must be re-done
Things like chains, shock rods, and other parts that can be made in the shop are being bought when they can be made for a fraction of the price
Training apprentices and laying them off when we're short guys
Taking units that are out of service and rebuilding, only to be parked out of service
Taking units from one government agency and parking only to use and rebuild older models to use
University increased residency fees but not tuition. Not fair to students who stay in residence. Tuition would be equal
College of the North Atlantic in Bonavista – not feasible to pay for a kitchen program and others like heavy equipment when enrollment is so low. Subsidized education for a few students
Mailing machine in my office but I have to drive to another office to drop off the mail for another employee to deliver to the post office. Some even get paid mileage to do that but it's a waste of time and resources to do so
Utilizing outside resources for meetings when they can be done internally
Standing Offer Agreements from outside NL when just pennies of savings. We pay couriers to deliver things from St. John's when we can get the same item locally with our own resources (trucks)
Time it takes to get three quotes for small items with little savings
Ferries built outside of NL when we can do it in NL
Cost of maintaining small populations living in remote areas
Heavy on management. Some offices have Assistant Deputy Minister, Director and a Manager with only 3-5 staff
Managers who exist but front line staff does work
Regional Mangers manage the managers, who are then managed by a Director in another region
Foremen who only manage one staff
Analysis of the budget in the last 5 years needs to be examined to see what went off the rails where things have changed
Health care costs have gone through the roof. Yes we have an older population but costs have risen and puts a demand on our budget. Expectations have gone crazy. We just can't afford it
Call-in staff in health care are rarely on a schedule. Need to manage staffing. Should not be adhoc. Call-in staff will often roll into overtime
Staff scheduled to cover vacation leave who call in sick are replaced by a call-in often on overtime, and there's 3.5 times the salary to cover one shift
Keep health costs down
Resettlement. Not an easy topic but we need to be realistic. Places need to be sustainable
Retirements. Attrition. Average age of public service. Some people can retire but hang on. Maybe cap pension to certain years to encourage those who can go to go

There are many who would like to retire but few years away. Incentives may help reduce the workforce
Population needs to increase. Keep youth here
Get rid of \$1000 incentive to have a baby
Income support recipients get some benefits that should be discontinued. Daycare for parents who are not working. Money being used for drugs and alcohol
Need to help Income Support recipients who can work to find meaningful work or volunteer
Government paying methadone treatments and for taxis to and from health appointments should be examined. Being abused. Costing more
Municipalities and Local Service Districts – need to be looked at
Education system – small rural schools hanging on that need to stop
Sell old schools that are eating up resources
MUN accommodation fee increases are unfair to students outside of Census Metropolitan Area
Schools here with portables but space at high school. Not configured properly
Vacant school board office. Plowing lot, heating building, paying insurance
Using work vehicles for personal use. Taking trucks home for weekend yet using them to get to store. Examine on a case by case basis because in some cases it makes sense
Sick leave. Managers sometimes get cleared to work from home
Cannot cut \$2 billion out of our budget. Taxes, more people, or more businesses
College – people are being funded to go to private schools to do Adult Basic Education at four times the cost. Sometimes are being sent to St. John's and paying rent and transportation when the Adult Basic Education program doesn't start when they need them to (may have to wait six months)
After days of sick leave used, employees need a note, even if these are medical appointments. If an employee has medical leave for surgery for longer than 6 days, and returns to work, he/she will need to go to the Emergency Room or Doctor for a note for a day off with a migraine. Taking up time from medical staff and wasting resources
Paying services for cabin owners that live on the islands should be user pay. Residents would have a reduced cost
Costly to provide education to few/limited students on the island communities
Cut out all day kindergarten
Remove politics from budget processes. Too much politics in the way we do budgets each year
Took out photocopies that cost little and worked fine and now have big costly machines that don't do the job that I'm looking to do and cost more per page
Pool of government vehicles (a depot to sign them out from). People flying in could use them as well instead of rentals.
Delete LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) from new construction projects. High cost for little to no benefits. We have no LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified. Only working towards or striving to achieve. Consultants are making the money. It's a guidance document that is now being used as a policy document verses guides to work towards
Centralization/regionalization – we are spending a lot of money on buildings and other structures that can be done cheaper from a more central spot. i.e. Government offices. Colleges. (i.e. duplicating heat, cleaning, snow clearing)
Clinics – more centralized. Might be better to have a nurse practitioner that can go house to house vs run a clinic
New Job Evaluation System means paying higher wages to trades. Was good to get shortage of individuals to the jobs. It is not hard to get employees in these trades anymore

Review paystubs and clarity of them. Make it accessible online
College – programs 8 -4pm. Building is utilized after hours for other training without charging fees – Service fees could be charged vs just charging to pay the trainer
Review new departments that have been created in the past 15 years to determine applicability to the public
The amount of programs and money we are paying individuals to go to school – 100% coverage without the individual having to contribute. Student is not motivated to do well if they are being paid anyway
Review shredding processes throughout government
Have one school board for the whole province. Similar for health boards. (Remove the politics – good news government delivers the message, bad news board delivers)
Close Muskrat Falls
Modify – social assistance, there’s a lot of fraud for benefits. People have been caught, and nothing has been done about it. Better monitor and penalize them
Travel costs are spent on the underemployed and unemployed can be reduced rather than paying for all these taxis, hotel rooms as well
Fines/tickets that exist but are not collected all the time. Fines need to be collected, how best to do that? Outstanding fines exist but can’t be collected. How do you collect when you are a young driver who can’t pay insurance?
Ferry services to communities that have small population are very expensive. Why are we allowing alternate rides (that are not necessary) rather than emergency cases only
Political patronage appointments should be removed/stopped
Stop using external agencies for transportation – e.g., Harvey’s book flights and hotels
Government could make its own transportation arrangements and save money – do it internally
Coordinate and/or reduce rides for clients, rather than using separate cabs
Why should children of social assistance go to daycare when the parents are home?
Cut full day kindergarten
Some accountability of managers who only have two employees to manage
Top heavy in upper management; reduce it
Shift of human resources from the Avalon to rural parts of the province
Out sourcing mechanical problems should be done in-house. Should be reviewed. There should be a pool of resources
Should be able to go on-line to find out test results – doctors get paid to give these results
Stop having to go to a Doctor to get a note for government employees

Q2. Given the financial challenges facing our province, what three things do you think government could do to raise money (increase revenue)?
Incentives for businesses to start up in NL
Alternate energy – wind and tidal. Make use of what we can harvest
Companies have to pay cost plus for many things they shouldn’t (e.g. rain suits being taken home by employees on shift during rain but not being brought back)
User fees for some health costs – minimum charge to help cover costs and curtail abuse
Bring back some of the fees that were taken out in previous government
Certificates for journey persons – signed by Ministers and mailed out. Email!
Online printing of licenses like moose. Reduce mailing and personnel costs

Appointments for doctor offices that are missed are charged \$25. Charge fees for no-shows for appointments with government staff such as driver's examiners, inspectors, etc. Reduce wait times for those waiting for service
We only produce 10% of our food supply. More farms reduce our dependency and creates jobs
Start looking to ourselves more (ferries, cranberries, manufacturing, farming, water)
HST needs to be increased
Eliminate large bonuses for corporate leaders (Nalcor)
Lobby for federal transfer payments
This process needs to speed up. Credit rating lowered and that in and of itself is costing us money
Healthy foods are expensive. Milk versus Pepsi. Means more stress on our healthcare system
Politicians get a pension after 8 years. Bonuses to Speaker of House and other positions costing more
Increase income taxes on higher earners. Look at ways to ensure we protect our vulnerable population (disabled) with tax credits
Work on ferry construction if done here would mean employment, taxes, and money going back into the economy. However need to be done with efficiencies
Unions and government need to talk more especially on bigger projects – apprentices, costs, etc.
Sunnyside Waste Management Site – industrial waste – would cost \$12,000 for a regional waste transfer site but yet they developed another site closer to Clarendville at a cost of \$300,000 plus staff
Waste collection – now paying more for less service
Motorized vehicles should be registered – increase fees
Trail fees – sell stickers
User fees on many things
Increase tax on gas to keep it at an artificially high rate (\$110 or \$115)
Increase HST. Fairest approach
Cottage taxes. Set rate for all people that have a cabin
Anyone living in a local service district should have fixed tax. Roads are being cleared by province as well as other services
If you have a crown land lease you should be able to buy
Crown land should not lease they should only grant
More cottage lots should be made available (grants not lease). With lease government is left with the liability
Sell government assets (College of the North Atlantic, Grand Falls Mill Houses, vacant buildings). Put building to public tender
Two tier health care. If can afford pay for some services
Need to focus savings in the health care if this is the bulk of where the money is being spent. Government is contributing to this when you have to go to the doctor to get a note for sickness
Privatize ferries
Collect unpaid fees, fines
Increase ferry fees – two tiered (resident vs tourist/visitors)
Charge services that are now free (i.e. water sampling, drivers written test regardless of fail or pass)
Grow things (i.e. Marijuana) in Wooddale tree nursery
Have a casino. May create social problems but would bring revenue
Tax winnings/lottery
Healthcare – more people are being paid double time. This is expensive. Not enough regular staff

If there are infractions identified during inspections then fines should be issued
Licensing – whatever you are applying for, you should be paying for these licences and they should be on par with other provinces; e.g., swimming pool, septic, restaurants
Government has the authority to fine but is encouraged to work the problem out (directed by their superiors) but these infractions should be fined. Officers should be able to do their job
Pay for services; e.g., oil spills expenses (transportation, meals, etc.) should be billed to the client
If you choose to live in isolated/rural community and need a service e.g.. Inspection then this inspection should cost more as it is more expensive to offer
Stop contracting work out that can be done within government e.g., electrical work
Change in the guard of upper bureaucracy in each department, we need to have a change in views or ideas. It's mid-management as well. There needs a change
Major road work in other provinces uses toll booth, let's use them
Same fees for all terrain vehicles – look at all vehicles not just snowmobiles and increase upkeep of railways
Fine uncompliant and unlicensed tourism operators
Also extend to uncompliant private operators; fine them. Let officers/workers do what they are hired for
Increase corporate taxation
Make available more crown land for sale
Keep your license plate with the driver, then fines are easier to collect and harder to accumulate large number of unpaid fines
Sales tax should be increased to 15%
Raise university fees comparable to other universities across Canada
Raise public fees to match private education institutions. If Government pays, then the student should go to the least expensive institution

Q3. How can government be more innovative or efficient to provide quality services at lower costs?
Accountability – need to listen to staff when they have ideas to save. No need to order parts when we can fix them
Common sense must prevail
Managers need to also follow policies on vehicles
Proper management can make a call on efficiencies on the floor
Vehicles idling unnecessarily costing fuel
More services online – like vehicle renewal and driver's licenses
Telemedicine services to people outside of major areas
Lync and teleconferencing meetings as opposed to face to face meetings
Operate more like private industry – no need to wait until major crisis to ask for ideas. People working in private industry can offer suggestions all the time. This should be ongoing
Curtail abuse of sick leave. After 20 years you are only credited with the sick leave you used in your earlier years. This policy encourages employees to actually use it
Bring in payout of sick leave for retiring employees instead of severance
Allow private facilities to offer fee for service clinics for things similar to ultra sounds, physiotherapy, speech, etc. May take stress of wait times
Energy efficiencies – lightbulbs. Solar lighting, timers, etc.

More online services – this will happen over time. It may not cut staff, it may not require new staff but it will be more efficient
Tracking of leave time within government should be able to be done online. Electronic i.e. like signing up for T4
Management leave program instead of the collective agreement process (sick leave, vacation, etc.)
A culture that allows innovation. We don't have a culture of innovation. We need to improve how we interact. The only thing we share is the bathroom!
Empower regions to have their own decision making processes. Get rid of micromanagement. We are hired and paid at a certain caliber but can't make the decisions
Make phone calls to deal with issues. Not everything in writing. The culture is changed everyone is afraid to make a decision
Decentralize decision making and broaden regional decision making. Empower vs. disempower
Work orders are going through about 6 people to get approval for a \$2.00 cost. No matter what the cost \$2 to \$2000 the process is the same
Changing the work days. Shorten the work weeks. Compressed. This needs to be managed properly
Full work week can be four days. Employees can be rotated. Employees can still get benefits. Look at what is being done in other countries
Succession planning policy within government. Personal evaluation. No current process to determine who is doing the work and who isn't – evaluations
Promote policies that exist like job sharing, income averaging, time off without pay, etc. These all add to efficiency. Allow rejuvenation
Deal with the problem workers that are abusing the systems
Review the travel policy for use of travel agents
Streamline some of the services
Introduce minimum guaranteed income for the income/social services. Go look to other counties
Promote online training and services. A lot is there but employees don't know
Do an assessment of skills needed in a certain region and determine if it can be rethought how they deliver them regionally
Cost of housing offenders. Electronic monitors are more effective
Look at public/private partnerships for services (i.e. Long term care)
Consider redeploying staff to other areas
Utilize more on-line technology for meetings and training courses – reduce transportation expenses
Have in-house Government travel agency
Allow employees to make their own reservations
Consolidate travel by doing multiple inspections in an area within a week rather than having return trips later in the month
Put private accommodations up to \$50.00 – employees will use it more often
Social assistance recipients – get them to do community work; winter programs to shovel for seniors; candy striper. Market it as skills development – interpersonal relations etc. They should volunteer or fill low salaried jobs rather than bring foreign workers. They should not be home doing nothing
Social assistance recipients should have mandatory drug testing
Social assistance recipients should have medical exams and drug testing by independent/objective doctors appointed by government
Implementing a computer program to provide medical results

Meditech results should be returned via on-line
Use technology to see specialists in St. John's rather than traveling to the city or at least to receive results
When it comes to training, have the trainers go to the clients rather than have the students travel to the training site, e.g., bring people from Clarenville to Grand Falls Windsor for training
Have a bus to pick up (e.g. – around the loop) for underemployed and unemployed to Gander for work, medical appointments, etc. It would save on taxis and encourages underemployed to get to work. This bus would be free for both, underemployed and unemployed
Put the retirement age back to 55 and have mandatory retirement
For politicians, they should have longer period of work before receiving their pensions
Let people retire, if they don't have all criteria (age + work experience) still let them retire without penalty
Assess library services across the province – have a central location and distribute by mail
Stop leasing buildings across province, utilize provincial space/offices

Q 4. Is there anything else that you would like to suggest/add to the discussion?
Manufacturing items in province to replace our import
Tourism development important for rural areas in particular
Strengthen our Immigration Strategy and actively seek out those looking to relocate
Province has high infertility rate – in vitro-fertilization options only available outside NL and long adoption wait times yet children in system as foster children being paid for by government. Children need permanency
Time wasted by employees on Facebook and social networking sites may be abused where it is not legitimate
Government vehicles need to be monitored
Layoffs shouldn't be mainly frontline staff. These are the positions we need
Have to look at the positions that are needed and ensure they are filled. Not just say we are not going to backfill positions. These may be the needs
Stop micro managing. Take people to task if they are not doing their jobs properly
There are managers that don't even manage people
Ensure managers have the skill to manage people
MHA's sometimes don't have to have any educational background to make decisions and run the province. There needs to be a better process to identify the provincial leaders
Consideration [of] geography when determining cuts to jobs/position
Province should have to manage their budget like municipalities. Have a legacy fund
Review retirement age – go sooner
Should review commuted value for retirees