

MINUTES
1st MEETING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION
8 JANUARY 2010
CONFERENCE ROOM
COMMISSIONS SECRETARIAT

PRESENT:	Pastor Al Ebanks	Chairman
	Julene Banks	Member
	Wil Pineau	Member

APOLOGIES: N/A

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:15 p.m. Mrs. Banks was asked by the group to open the meeting with a prayer. Mr. Pineau recorded the Minutes in the absence of a secretary.

2. Introductory comments

The Chairman welcomed Commissioners Mrs. Banks and Mr. Pineau to the inaugural meeting and thanked them for their willingness to accept the high honour and privilege of serving the country. Each Commissioner represented an important part of the diverse Cayman Islands community and the Chairman said he looked forward to working with them. He said it will be important in carrying out the work of the Commission to put aside any personal agendas. He believed the Commission should act fairly and transparently at all times and should work diligently and responsibly to carry out the four main functions of the Commission:

- a. To advise the Government on questions concerning constitutional status and development in the Cayman Islands;
- b. To publish reports, discussion papers, information papers and other documents on constitutional matters affecting the Cayman Islands;
- c. To promote understanding and awareness of this Constitution and its values; and
- d. To exercise such other functions as may be prescribed by a law enacted by the Legislature.

The Constitution states that the Commission and its members shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority so the agenda that is established should not be dictated by any particular group or individual. The Commissioners agreed that they should always provide any person or group with an opportunity to be heard and that public education should become an important initial priority. The Commission agreed to promote understanding of the provisions of the new Constitution and to work initially on developing standard protocols for the operations of the Commission that will lay a solid foundation for the future.

3. New business

a. Letter of Appointment

- i. The Chairman reviewed the terms of appointment for the Commission. The Governor suggested that the duration of tenure should be between two and four years, with the changing of any members being staggered so as to achieve a degree of continuity. Commissioners can be reappointed. The Chairman discussed the staggered duration

of tenure and the Commissioners agreed with this approach. Commission members agreed for Mrs. Banks to serve two years, the Chairman to serve three years and Mr. Pineau to serve four years.

b. Governance structure

- i. It was agreed that one of the first matters to be addressed by the Commission is to develop the operational rules in terms of setting the agenda, calling meetings, releasing minutes, reaching consensus, proposing agenda items and operating the meetings etc. Mrs. Banks said she would produce a draft for review for the next meeting.

c. Press Briefing

- i. The Commission said that no event has been held to celebrate the achievement of the voters passing a new Constitution.
- ii. The Commission agreed to hold a press briefing in the near future to announce the establishment of the Commission and to provide the public with information about the initial priorities.
- iii. The purpose of the press briefing would be to deliver, in broad terms, the immediate goals of the Commission.
- iv. Additional areas of focus were the Commissions' immediate objectives regarding education initiatives and engaging the public, key stakeholders and media.
- v. Mr. Pineau agreed to draft speaking points for the press conference.
- vi. The message overall message would be to communicate the contents of the new constitution by educating and engaging the public and working together to create understanding and inclusiveness of the components of the constitution and its impact for modern governance going forward.

d. Website

- i. It was agreed that a website should be created for the Commission.
- ii. Commission members discussed the idea of only having one website for the four Commissions for ease of access by the public (Constitutional Commission, Commission for Standards in Public Life, Human Rights Commission, and the Judicial and Legal Services Commission).
- iii. It was decided that the Chairman should present this proposal at a meeting with the Manager of the Commission Secretariat and the Chairmen of the other Commissions.

e. Budget for Commission

- i. It was agreed that the Commission needed to confirm the annual budget with the Manager of the Commissions Secretariat to determine and to priorities the work of the Commission.
- ii. It was suggested that the budgetary allocation of resources would focus initially on the following priorities: Constitutional Commission website, educational guides and printed materials and other reports and projects initiated.

f. Standardized procedure and administration framework

- i. It was agreed that the Commission would put in place procedures, policies and a standardized administrative framework. The aim is to create consistency, transparency and effectiveness in the work of the Commission.

- ii. The priorities are to set structures and operating procedures, a strategic plan for short term and long term goals, and the expectations of the Commission. An up to date and interactive website is also necessary for accountability to the public.
 - iii. Mrs. Banks circulated copies of a draft discussion document relevant to process and prioritisation to all present for comment at the next meeting.
- g. Interaction and communication with community and other Commissions.
- i. It was suggested that the Commission draft a consultation statement that would entail how the Commission consults with the country at large.
 - ii. Public feedback mechanisms were considered vital to solicit feedback from the community at large.
 - iii. Commissioners agreed to consult regularly with the other Commissions by a sharing of data, processes and systems.
 - iv. It was suggested that it would be valuable for the relevant Commission chairs to meet regularly especially throughout the organisational phase.

4. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

5. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meeting

Draft document presented by Member Julene Banks including -

- i. Defining the term "matters of national importance"; and
- ii. Ensuring that the Referendum law is in place as soon as possible.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be confirmed once the Secretariat's office is set up.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.



Pastor Al Ebanks
CHAIRMAN
CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION