

**COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE  
1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING OF 2020  
MINUTES  
12 FEBRUARY 2020  
COMMISSIONS SECRETARIAT**

**PRESENT:** Rosie Whittaker-Myles                      Chairman  
                  Sheenah Hislop                                Member  
                  Isatou Smith                                         Member

**SECRETARIAT MEMBERS PRESENT:**

                  Deborah Bodden                                 Manager  
                  Shari Welcome                                      Public Relations and Education Coordinator (in-part)

**1. Meeting called to order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:15pm. The Chairman thanked all for attending and the meeting was opened with a prayer.

**2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 3 September 2019 (approved previously via email) were signed by the Chairman.

**3. Outstanding Business**

**a. Meeting with the Public Procurement Committee (held on 7 November 2019)**

The Chairman provided an overview of the Commission’s introductory meeting with members of the Public Procurement Committee (“the PPC”), on 7 November 2019, given the Commission’s constitutional remit as it relates to procurement thereby creating an overlap of responsibilities between the two bodies. The Commission agreed to further consider this overlap and asked the Secretariat to assist by drafting a framework for the Chairman’s consideration.

Members noted that the PPC indicated their willingness to work with the Commission in so far as the legislative and constitutional powers and mandates allow. Members expressed their concerns to the PPC of its failure to publicise minutes of its meetings in contravention of the Procurement Law.

**b. The Standards in Public Life Legislation (commencement date)**

Members noted the SPL Law commencement date of 1 March 2020 as indicated by the Hon. Premier in his statement of 31 January 2020. The Manager advised that the Commission’s press release, commenting on the announcement of the SPL Law commencement date, will be issued today.

Members noted the changes to the SPL Regulations, made by Caucus, and agreed they had no concerns.

Members considered the drafting and content of the Instructions (necessary to accompany the SPL Regulations for the completion and submission of declarations along with identifying Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQ’s”) which could be developed to assist persons with understanding the Law). Once the content of the Instructions is agreed, the Commission will develop a communications strategy to ensure the necessary information is widely circulated. The Secretariat will assist by drafting the Instructions and a set of FAQ’s, for the Commission’s consideration. During these discussions a number of queries were identified and the Manager will pass these on to the Hon. Attorney General (“AG”) to resolve.

Members were made aware that the Manager spoke with the AG earlier today, to request that an SPL Law 2020(Revision) be drafted. The Hon. AG is currently considering this request given that Revisions are undertaken in January of each year. The Secretariat will continue to update the Commission on the status of this request.

The Commission discussed the status of the draft SPL Regulations. The Manager was asked to seek an update from the Hon. AG as to the date the Regulations are expected to be agreed and Gazetted.

**c. Ministerial Code of Conduct**

Subsequent to the last meeting, the Secretariat wrote to the Cabinet Secretary on 4 September 2019 and queried whether the Ministerial Code of Conduct (“the CoC”), previously reviewed and commented on by the Commission, is drafted exclusively for Ministers and Members of Cabinet, or whether the document will also make provision for extension to Chief Officers and other senior civil servants. To date, the Secretariat has not received a response. The Commission agreed to write to the Hon. Premier to seek an update on the finalised CoC and to request sight of it.

**4. Any Other Business**

**a. Integrity Commission of Trinidad & Tobago 2020 Calendar**

Members were informed that the Integrity Commission of Trinidad & Tobago provided a courtesy copy of their 2020 Calendar addressed to the Chairman.

**b. Terms of Appointment**

The Commission was informed that both the Chairman and Member Sheenah Hislop have accepted His Excellency the Governor’s request to extend their tenures on the Commission from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020.

**5. Action Items**

**The Commission was asked to:**

- a.** Review and provide feedback on the Draft Instructions and FAQ’s when circulated by the Secretariat.

**The Secretariat was asked to:**

- a.** Prepare a draft framework for the Chairman to consider as it relates to 3.a. above;
- b.** Prepare the Draft Instructions and FAQ’s as detailed in 3.b. above within two (2) weeks;
- c.** Request an update from, and submit the queries to the Hon. AG, regarding the SPL Regulations as detailed in 3.b. above; and

d. Prepare draft correspondence to the Hon. Premier as detailed in 3.c. above for the Chairman's consideration.

**6. Items to be discussed at the next meeting**

- a. Constitutional provisions (in relation to procurement)
- b. SPL Law, SPL Regulations, Draft Instructions and FAQ's
- c. Ministerial Code of Conduct

**7. Next meeting**

The next meeting date will be held on 3 March at 2:00pm.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25pm.



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**Rosie Whittaker-Myles**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**