

**7th MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE
5 JUNE 2024 @ 2:00 PM
MINUTES
VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT: Dr Sonia Bush Chairman (via Zoom)
J. Rosalie Twohey Member (via Zoom)
Keith Blake Member (via Zoom)

COMMISSIONS SECRETARIAT MEMBERS PRESENT:
Melanie McField Manager (in-part)
Francis Kearns Deputy Manager
Lise Hurlstone Research Analyst
Jessica Ebanks PR & Education Coordinator (in-part)
Jonah Sigsworth Office Support Administrator/Intern (in-part)

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:11 pm. The Chairman welcomed all in attendance and opened with a prayer.

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting

a. Meeting held on 24 April 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2024 were approved with no changes. The Secretariat was asked to upload them to the CSPL website.

b. Meeting held on 1 May 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2024 were approved with no changes. The Secretariat was asked to upload them to the CSPL website.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

a. CSPL 26th Report

The Secretariat updated the Commission that the 26th Report was finalised and sent to the Deputy Governor’s Office on 9 May, who confirmed that it was sent to Parliament later the same day. The Report has also been published on the CSPL website.

b. Update re Parliamentary Code of Conduct

Members reviewed an email from the Attorney General (AG), received on 8 May, related to the Parliamentary Code of Conduct. The AG advised that discussions on this

matter are still ongoing. The Commission requested that the Secretariat thank the AG for his message and advise they await any further updates.

c. Update re Election Observers' Report

Members were advised that an email was received from the Supervisor of Elections (the "Supervisor") on 16 May which provided an update on the status of progressing the recommendations from the Elections Observer's Report (EOR). The email made a specific request of the Commission to assist the Supervisor's efforts by advocating the need for greater political support in addressing the concerns identified in the EOR, and identified the Constitutional Commission as potentially being able to address any constitutional changes.

The Commission considered the Supervisor's requests and asked the Secretariat to a) draft correspondence to the Premier supporting the Supervisor's request for increased political support, and b) respond to the Supervisor's email updating him on the Commission's actions and recommend that he write to the Constitutional Commission outlining his case and requesting their support as well.

d. Conflict of Interest Issues Reported on at the Department of Tourism

Members reviewed the correspondence sent to the Director of the Department of Tourism on this matter on 30 April, and were advised that a follow up was sent on 29 May. The Commission requested that the Secretariat diarise follow ups every two weeks going forward, beginning on 12 June.

e. Report on Campaign Financing

Members reviewed the correspondence sent to the Premier on 15 May requesting an update on campaign financing reform, and were advised that no response has yet been received. The Secretariat was asked to reference this issue when drafting the correspondence related to item 3.c.

f. MOUs

i. Auditor General MOU

The Commission reviewed the final version of the draft letter to the Auditor General requesting a meeting to discuss several items of mutual interest. The letter was approved and the Secretariat was asked to send it. The Commission noted the recent news articles that the Auditor General would be stepping down from her position at the end of 2024, however, it was agreed that this did not prevent the proposed meeting from taking place.

ii. Anti-Corruption Commission MOU

The Commission reviewed the draft process for sharing information between the CSPL and ACC, which was requested at the last meeting. The Secretariat

advised that the ACC Senior Investigative Officer and Chairman had been consulted during the drafting to ensure their input was included. Members discussed and agreed the process was sensible and well-assembled, and based on the input from the ACC team, it was approved.

g. Update on Policies and Procedures:

i. Lateral Flow Tests/Procurement Procedures

The Commission was advised that this issue is addressed in the letter to the Auditor General referenced in item 3.f.i. above.

ii. OAG Investigation into Government Procurement Practices

The Commission was advised that this issue is addressed in the letter to the Auditor General referenced in item 3.f.i. above.

h. PR & Education Initiatives

i. Video Update

The PR & Education Coordinator advised that the new employee orientation video introducing the CSPL is in progress. In addition, the audio for the two tutorial videos for filing declarations to the Register of Interests (ROI) has been recorded and is currently in production. Recording took place on 22 May 2024, and the Department of Communications is aware of the deadlines for these.

The Commission requested that a follow up email be sent on the videos as the deadline is fast approaching. The Secretariat agreed, and further advised that, if necessary, previously produced videos could be used if the current videos were not completed on time as expected.

ii. ROI Comms Plan

The PR & Education Coordinator also provided an update on the status of the ROI declaration period communications plan. Public service announcements are scheduled to be recorded for release during July, and written materials are being finalised. Members were asked whether they would be able to attend radio interviews to promote the ROI declaration period, and the Chairman advised that she can be available during the second week of July. The Secretariat will make arrangements accordingly.

iii. Education 4 Justice (E4J)

The PR & Education Coordinator advised that she had reached out to the Department of Education to request for CSPL to attend a 2024-2025 teacher professional development day to introduce staff to the E4J programme. The CSPL will be updated on progress in due course.

i. Register of Interests

The Deputy Manager introduced the Secretariat's Intern/Office Support Administrator, Jonah Sigsworth, to the Commission and advised that he would be assisting with the ROI declaration period for the second year. He will assist with troubleshooting calls, collecting accurate data and doing some preliminary work with the online portal. The Chairman welcomed Mr Sigsworth and thanked him for his assistance during this very busy time of year.

The Secretariat further provided an update on the progress of the preparations for the ROI declaration period, including the status of improvements to the online portal, and what information the Secretariat expects to be able to present to the CSPL at the end of the summer.

j. Complaints/Enquiries

i. CSPL Complaint 001/2023

The Secretariat updated the Commission on this matter, and the recent requests for an update from the complainant. The actions to-date on this case were reviewed and it was agreed that some clarification was needed and alternate routes for investigation should be explored. The Commission requested that the Secretariat follow up on the latest correspondence with the Premier and provide a 21-day timeframe for a response. Additionally, the Secretariat will speak with the Auditor General to get an update on her previous knowledge of this issue. The complainant will be updated accordingly.

k. Commonwealth Caribbean Association of Integrity Commissions and Anti-Corruption Bodies (CCAICACB) Membership & Conference

The Secretariat Manager updated the Commission that it was decided that no Secretariat staff member would be attending the CCAICACB conference, and provided an update on the responses to the enquiries made regarding the status of the CCAICACB. Upon review it was agreed that that membership fees should not be paid at this time.

l. Recent and Upcoming Trials of the Former Speaker of the House

The Secretariat advised that the full written judgement from the trial of Mr W. McKeeva Bush (which took place in February 2024) has been embargoed. It was noted that the CSPL must allow the justice system to run its course and cannot intervene while these matters are still active in the Courts. The Commission will, however, keep this issue as a standing item on future agendas.

4. Any Other Business

a. New Members

The Secretariat Manager updated members on the recent recruitment efforts for new Commission members. An external recruitment took place in May and four expressions

of interest were received for the CSPL, though three of the four submissions did not meet the eligibility criteria.

b. All-Chairpersons' Meeting

The Chairman updated members on the quarterly all-Chairpersons meeting that took place on 13 May 2024. Updates on the cleaning and construction work at the Secretariat offices were provided, and the updates that were provided on behalf of the Commission were discussed.

c. CSPL Minutes

The Secretariat updated the Commission that the way the meeting minutes were displayed on the CSPL website had been changed to a more user-friendly format so that all minutes for each year could be viewed more easily.

5. Action Items

The Secretariat:

- a. Thank the Attorney General for his update on the Parliamentary Code of Conduct as outlined in item 3.b. above;
- b. Draft correspondence on the Elections Observer's Report recommendations to the Premier as outlined in item 3.c. above;
- c. Reply to the Supervisor of Elections email regarding the Elections Observer's Report recommendations as outlined in item 3.c. above;
- d. Follow up with the Director of the Department of Tourism as outlined in item 3.d. above;
- e. Write to the Premier regarding campaign finance reform as outlined in item 3.e. above;
- f. Issue letter to the Auditor General re meeting to discuss the MOU and other issues as outlined in items 3.f.i, 3.g.i. and 3.g.ii. above;
- g. Follow up with the Department of Communications on the status of the ROI tutorial videos as outlined in item 3.h.i. above;
- h. Arrange radio interviews to promote ROI filings with the Chairman as outlined in item 3.h.ii. above;
- i. Continue to progress work on data collected to report to the Commission on the 2024 ROI declaration period as outlined in item 3.i. above;
- j. Add monitoring of the trials of the former Speaker of the House to future agendas as outlined in item 3.l. above; and
- k. Draft correspondence and carry out actions in relation to complaints and enquiries as outlined above.

6. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meetings

- a. Update: Parliamentary Code of Conduct
- b. Update: Election Observers' Report

- c. Conflict of Interest Issues Reported on at the Department of Tourism
- d. Report on Campaign Financing
- e. MOUs
 - i. Auditor General MOU
 - ii. Anti-Corruption Commission MOU
- f. Update on Policies and Procedures:
 - i. Lateral Flow Tests/Procurement Procedures
 - ii. OAG Investigation into Government Procurement Practices
- g. PR & Education Initiatives
 - i. Video Update
 - ii. ROI Comms Plan
 - iii. Education 4 Justice (E4J)
 - iv. Register of Interests
- h. Complaints/Enquiries
 - i. CSPL COMP 001/2023
- i. CCAICACB Membership & Conference
- j. Trials of the Former Speaker of the House
- k. Commissions Secretariat Office Works

7. Date of the Next meeting

Next meeting will be agreed via round-robin email.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.



Dr Sonia Bush

CHAIRMAN

COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE