

**1<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE  
COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE for 2025  
5 FEBRUARY 2025 @ 2:30 PM  
MINUTES  
VIA ZOOM**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Dr Sonia Bush	Chairman (via Zoom)
	Keith Blake	Member (via Zoom)
	Jay Ehrhart	Member (via Zoom)
	Woody Foster	Member

**COMMISSIONS SECRETARIAT MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Melanie McField	Manager
Francis Kearns	Deputy Manager
Lise Hurlstone	Research Analyst
Jessica Ebanks	PR & Education Coordinator (in part)

Before the meeting was called to order a discussion took place on the constitution of the Commission. The previous week it had been brought to the Chairman's attention that the Commission currently did not have a member who was a chartered or certified accountant, as was required by s.117(3) of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009.

As a result of this, the Commission requested that the Secretariat seek advice from the Attorney General on the ability of the Commission to continue operating. The Secretariat shared the advice of the Attorney General via email with Members. After considering this advice, it was agreed that the Commission could continue operating except where decisions may cause adverse consequences for parties.

It was noted that the very specific requirements for membership of the CSPL need to be addressed in the longer term in order to reduce the risk of the Commission not being properly constituted again in the future.

The Commission therefore agreed to proceed with this meeting on the basis of the Attorney General's advice. Hereby follows a record of said meeting.

**1. Meeting called to order**

After the above-mentioned discussion, the meeting was called to order at 2:54 pm and the Chairman opened the meeting with a prayer.

## **2. Minutes from Previous Meeting**

### **a. Meeting held on 18 July 2024**

The Secretariat advised the Commission that due to the temporary personal circumstances of former member Rosalie Twohey, attempts to secure her approval of the July 2024 minutes had not been made in the last few weeks. However, members advised of updates since seeing Ms Twohey at Government House on 22 January, and requested the Secretariat to resume liaising with Ms Twohey on the approval of the minutes.

### **b. Meeting held on 5 December 2024**

On the premise that CSPL is not adequately constituted at present, it was agreed that the review of minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2024 would be deferred.

## **3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

### **a. Update: Parliamentary Code of Conduct**

The Secretariat provided an update on the status of the Parliamentary Code of Conduct after the Manager spoke with the Attorney General on 28 January 2025. The Commission continues to be concerned about the lack of action on this issue, and considered how they could highlight it given the impending General Election.

The Secretariat PR & Education Coordinator joined the conversation to assist in the discussion of how to keep this issue in the public sphere. The Commission ultimately agreed to add the Parliamentary Code of Conduct as an aspect of a Good Governance Election Campaign, which is addressed in full in item f.ii. below. For example, questions on the Parliamentary Code could be included in questions submitted to the Chamber of Commerce debates. The Secretariat was asked to revert to members when more detail around the campaign was agreed.

### **b. Update: Election Observers' Report / Campaign Financing**

The Commission was updated that no response was received from the correspondence sent to the Premier on 19 December 2024 following up on the status of the recommendations from the 2021 Election Observers' Report and the campaign financing reform initiative.

Members felt that these issues may be important enough to be included in the Good Governance Election Campaign, where possible, and discussed. While enforcement of campaign financing falls under the remit of the Elections Office, the status of implementing the recommendations from the 2021 Election Observers' Report was within the CSPL's remit.

#### **i. Update on pre-election ROI period**

The Secretariat also advised that the Deputy Manager and Research Analyst had a meeting with the Supervisor of Elections and Deputy Supervisor of Elections on

22 January 2025. Participants discussed how the CSPL and Elections Office could work together to carry out the Commission's responsibilities to make potential Nominees for Election aware of the obligation, under the Standards in Public Life Act, to file declarations prior to submitting their nomination papers. The Secretariat confirmed a plan is in place as to how this will be handled on both sides.

**c. Conflict of Interest Issues Reported on at the Department of Tourism**

The Commission was updated that the previously requested correspondence to the Director of the Department of Tourism was sent on 6 December 2024, and no response had yet been received. The Commission agreed that a third and final letter should be sent, cc'ing the Deputy Governor. The Commission asked that the draft letter should not seek the disclosure of confidential information, but should rather seek assurances that similar situations will not arise in future. The Secretariat was asked to draft this letter for the Commission's review.

**d. Meeting with the Governor**

Commission members noted that they met with Her Excellency the Governor, Mrs Jane Owen, for lunch on 22 January 2025, along with former member Rosalie Twohey. Matters discussed included the Parliamentary Code of Conduct, the handling of complaints before the Commission, relationships the Commission could benefit from establishing and the constitutional reporting requirement.

Members noted that they were encouraged by Her Excellency's desire to assist and support the Commission in carrying out its functions, where appropriate, and appreciated the opportunity to engage in these open discussions.

**e. Meeting with Auditor General**

**i. Draft MOU**

It was noted that Commission members Keith Blake, Jay Ehrhart and Woody Foster met with the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) on 13 January 2025 to discuss a variety of matters. Regrettably, the Chairman was unable to attend due to illness. At that meeting the Secretariat was asked to update the Memorandum of Understanding between the CSPL and OAG to describe the arrangement between the two entities in greater detail.

The updated MOU was provided to members and it was agreed to consider the document for any amendments. The Secretariat was asked to recirculate this document so it could be discussed via round robin email for approval in order to circulate it to the OAG as soon as possible.

**f. PR & Education Initiatives**

**i. Video Update**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**ii. Good Governance Campaign for 2025 Election**

The proposed strategy for the Good Governance Election Campaign was discussed. It was agreed that the Parliamentary Code of Conduct and other topics, such as the recommendations of the 2021 Election Observers' Report, could be incorporated into a campaign, as indicated above. It was also agreed that the Secretariat should arrange for questions to be submitted to the Chamber of Commerce pre-election events, on the topic of the Parliamentary Code of Conduct and other governance matters.

A further suggestion of submitting questions on good governance to the Tower Marketing public consumer survey was made, which the Secretariat advised it would investigate further.

The Chairman expressed her gratitude to the PR & Education Coordinator for her assistance on this matter.

**g. Register of Interests Update**

**i. Update on compliance follow-ups**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**ii. Emails from Declarants**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**iii. ROI Examination Procedure**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**iv. Declaration Guidance Notes**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**v. Civil Debt Recovery Procedure**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**h. Complaints/Enquiries**

**i. CSPL COMP 001/2023**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**i. Trials of the Former Speaker of the House**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**j. CSPL Strategy Meetings**

It was agreed that this matter should be considered at the next meeting.

**4. Any Other Business**

**a. Recruitment of Members**

The Deputy Manager provided an update that a meeting was held with representatives from the Cayman Islands Institute of Professional Accountants (CIIPA), and the Cayman Islands Legal Practitioners Association (CILPA) to discuss members of these organisations being invited to express an interest in joining the CSPL. Both organisations agreed to help.

Separately, the Deputy Manager advised that the Governor's Office had also independently received an expression of interest from a member of the public who was a chartered accountant, in response to a public call for Commission members in a recent speech made by Her Excellency. The Secretariat had subsequently reached out to this individual to complete the necessary paperwork for consideration.

The CSPL Chairman sought a timeline from the Deputy Manager on when it was expected that the fifth member could be appointed. The Deputy Manager indicated that the pressing issue is the dissolution of Parliament, at which point the Leader of the Opposition position is vacated, on 28 February 2025. The required consultation with the Leader of the Opposition on any proposed new members would therefore need to take place before that date. The Chairman emphasised the need to secure a fifth member as soon as possible, along with a member satisfying the legal qualification requirement before her departure on 30 April.

**5. Action Items**

**The Secretariat will:**

- a.** Resume following up with former member Rosalie Twohey on the July minutes, as noted in item 2.a. above;
- b.** Incorporate questions on the Parliamentary Code of Conduct into the Good Governance Campaign, as noted in item 3.a. above;
- c.** Carry out plan for pre-Election ROI period, as noted in item 3.b.i. above;
- d.** Draft letter to Director of Department of Tourism, as noted in item 3.c. above;
- e.** Re-circulate updated MOU with OAG to members for email discussion, as noted in item 3.e.i. above;
- f.** Carry out approved plan for Good Governance Campaign, as noted in item 3.f.ii. above;
- g.** Progress recruitment of new members, as noted in item 4.a. above; and
- h.** Schedule the next meeting date, as noted in item 5. above.

**6. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meetings**

- a.** Update: Parliamentary Code of Conduct

- b.** PR & Education Initiatives
  - i. Video Update
  - ii. Good Governance Campaign for 2025 Election
- c.** Update: Election Observers' Report / Campaign Financing
  - i. Update on pre-election ROI period
- d.** Conflict of Interest Issues Reported on at the Department of Tourism
- e.** Draft MOU with Office of the Auditor General
- f.** Register of Interests Update
  - i. Update on compliance follow-ups
  - ii. Emails from Declarants
  - iii. ROI Examination Procedure
  - iv. Declaration Guidance Notes
  - v. Civil Debt Recovery Procedure
- g.** Complaints/Enquiries
  - i. CSPL COMP 001/2023
- h.** Trials of the Former Speaker of the House
- i.** CSPL Strategy Meetings

**7. Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be scheduled via email. The Secretariat will circulate a meeting invitation with Zoom details.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:22 pm.



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**Dr Sonia Bush**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE**