

**2nd MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE FOR 2025
8 APRIL 2025 @ 2:00 PM
MINUTES
VIA ZOOM**

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

GUEST:	Tonica Williams	Incoming Member
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COMMISSIONS SECRETARIAT MEMBERS PRESENT:

Melanie McField	Manager
Lise Hurlstone	Research Analyst
Jessica Ebanks	PR & Education Coordinator

The meeting began with a presentation to the Chairman, Dr Sonia Bush, whose term with the Commission ends on 30 April 2025. Dr Bush was presented with a plaque of appreciation for the 4 years she has served as Chairman. The Manager acknowledged Dr Bush's dedication to the Commission over the years, and wished her well in her future endeavours.

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:09 pm and the Chairman opened with a prayer. Members discussed the constitution of the Commission and the Manager confirmed that the search for a member who fulfils the accountant requirement continues. As Parliament has been dissolved the Secretariat must await the outcome of the upcoming General Election for the position of Leader of the Opposition to be established again in order to put any names forward for consideration. The Secretariat was asked to continue progressing the search for potential members as able.

The Manager introduced the meeting guest, Ms Tonicia Williams, who fulfils the requirement for a legal practitioner and whose appointment officially commences 1 May 2025.

The Chairman noted she is satisfied with the way in which the recruitment of members has progressed. As the appointment of the final member is still pending, members

agreed to proceed as an administrative meeting and under the advice of the AG.

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting

a. Meeting held on 18 July 2024

Members are updated that former Member Rosalie Twohey approved the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2024, and they have been posted to the website.

b. Meeting held on 22 November 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 22 November 2024 would be deferred.

c. 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.

d. Meeting held on 5 February 2025

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 February 2025 would be deferred.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

a. Update: Parliamentary Code of Conduct / Good Governance Campaign

The Commission was updated that changes were made in the approach to the Good Governance campaign to refocus on incorporating the Parliamentary Code of Conduct. The primary tact was to submit questions to the Chamber of Commerce debates which focused on the Parliamentary Code and governance generally.

Members discussed the current status of the Parliamentary Code and how it could be moved forward after the General Election takes place on 30 April 2025. The Chairman suggested taking the earliest opportunity to remind the new government of the importance of the Parliamentary Code, and try to secure a meeting date as soon as possible with Cabinet. The Secretariat was asked to approach the Cabinet Office to inquire about booking such a meeting, as well as to reach out to the Speaker of the House for a similar meeting, once able. Additionally, the Secretariat should draft a potential agenda in preparation for these meetings, and circulate to members for approval.

b. PR & Education Initiatives

In relation to general PR & Education Initiatives, the Chairman suggested that she would like to see a return to focus on the educational outreach programmes, such as the United Nation's Office on Drugs and Crime's E4J programme, for the CSPL.

i. Video Update

The PR & Education Officer advised the Commission that the Commission's

introductory video has been added to the New Civil Servants' Orientation Trainings since the beginning of this year. Two sessions per month are hosted for newly joining civil servants.

ii. 2025 Election Media Coverage

The PR & Education Officer updated the Commission that she has been conducting media reviews on the General Election coverage in the media, especially related to the Chamber of Commerce debates, which the Commission submitted questions to. She advised that the goal was that once the Election was over she would analyse the discussion and compile a summary for the Commission to review and outline any action points that may be necessary.

c. Update: Election Observers' Report / Campaign Financing

The Commission was updated that no updates were available on this matter due to the impending General Election. Members considered potential strategies to seek a response on the matter once the new government was elected. It was agreed that establishing a relationship with the Speaker of the House would be the best way forward.

i. Update on Pre-election ROI Period

Members were updated on the Register of Interest submission rates from candidates for election, which were due on 3 March 2025. All individuals who had declared their candidacy had submitted declarations to the Register. Members also discussed an article published by Cayman News Service on 7 March 2025 titled *Candidates meet only basic requirements of register*. It was agreed that a discussion on declaration requirements should be added to the agenda for the presentation to the new Cabinet that the Secretariat is to prepare.

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

Members reviewed the updated draft letter and approved the changes, requesting that the letter be issued.

e. Draft MOU with Office of the Auditor General

The Manager updated members on the correspondence with the Auditor General and Acting Auditor General regarding the draft MOU. The Office of the Auditor General requested that discussions resume after the current busy period, at the beginning of May 2025. Members agreed and asked the Secretariat to revisit the conversation at the earliest opportunity.

f. Register of Interests Update

i. Update on compliance follow-ups

The Research Analyst provided a brief summary of the statistics of submissions to the Register of Interests received.

Over 150 new submissions have been received since mid-September 2024, increasing the total number of submissions for the 2023-2024 period to 1000+ (up from approximately 850). The majority of these submissions resulted from the compliance follow-ups, with the next largest category being submissions from candidates for election to Parliament, and then the regular submissions from newly appointed Persons in Public Life.

It was noted that an estimated 300 persons (approx.) still have outstanding declarations. Members agreed to proceed with the next step of enforcement, which requires appointing officers for outstanding declarants to be notified of their non-compliance.

ii. Emails from Declarants

Members reviewed correspondence submitted from declarants with special requests regarding their submission requirements and agreed to responses to each. The Secretariat was instructed to reply to the declarants accordingly.

iii. ROI Examination Procedure

Members discussed the draft ROI Examination Procedure and provided some feedback. The Chairman inquired about the possibility of hiring additional staff to assist with the examination of declarations, which the Manager said would be considered. It was requested that the document be circulated via email to allow for more detailed consideration after the meeting.

iv. Declaration Guidance Notes

Members requested that the document suggesting changes to the Guidance Notes for declarations be circulated via email to allow for more detailed consideration after the meeting.

v. Civil Debt Recovery Procedure

The Research Analyst updated members on a conversation that took place with the Deputy Manager and the Assistant Financial Secretary for Asset Management & Regulatory Compliance with the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development, Ms Nathania Pearson. The conversation focused on what a procedure to carry out the enforcement of fines for Persons in Public Life not in compliance with the declaration requirements. Ms Pearson is to provide some additional documentation on the procedure, and the Secretariat can then compile a set of issues that the Commission will need to consider in order to move forward. The Secretariat was asked to proceed accordingly.

g. Complaints/Enquiries

i. CSPL COMP 001/2023

Members were updated that no responses were received from the respondents since correspondence was sent in December. A recently published local news article related to the matter was discussed. Members agreed that this should be kept on the agenda for further consideration after the outcome of the General Election.

h. Trials of the Former Speaker of the House

There were no updates on this issue.

i. CSPL Strategy Meetings

Member Woody Foster noted an email circulated to members prior to the meeting regarding Cayman's ranking on the World Bank Group's Worldwide Governance Indicators, and the data sources used to compile this. This was raised for further discussion in a future Commission strategy session.

i. Accountability for Politicians

Members agreed to defer this issue for a future meeting on the Commission's strategy going forward.

ii. ROI Declarations of Gifts

Members agreed to defer this issue for a future meeting on the Commission's strategy going forward.

iii. Considering Changes to Membership Requirements

Members agreed to defer this issue for a future meeting on the Commission's strategy going forward.

j. Draft 27th Report

Members requested that the draft 27th Report be circulated via email to allow for more detailed consideration after the meeting.

k. Award Presentation

See the meeting opening above for a description of this item.

4. Any Other Business

a. Departure of Chair and Upcoming Appointments

The Chairman thanked all members and the Secretariat for their work with her over her 4-year tenure, and congratulated incoming Chair, Woody Foster. Member Keith Blake added words of appreciation for Chairman Bush. Members also acknowledged the re-appointment of Member Blake, which he noted was confirmed recently.

5. Action Items

The Secretariat will:

- a.** Continue to progress names of potential new members, as noted in item 1 above;
- b.** Approach the Cabinet Office and the Speaker, once possible, to book meetings at the earliest opportunity, as noted in item 3.a. above;
- c.** Review the Ministerial Code of Conduct, the Parliamentary Code of Conduct and the Standards in Public Life Act to consider amendments, as noted in item 3.a. above;
- d.** Draft potential agenda for future potential meetings with Cabinet and the Speaker for members consideration, as noted in item 3.a. above;
- e.** Continue conducting media reviews on election coverage, analyse and summarise for members' review, as noted in item 3.b.ii. above;
- f.** Add review of ROI declaration requirements to potential Cabinet meeting agenda, as noted in item 3.c.i. above;
- g.** Finalise changes to letter in letter to Department of Tourism Director and issue, as outlined in item 3.d. above;
- h.** Arrange a meeting with the Acting Auditor General to discuss MOU at earliest opportunity, as noted in item 3.e. above;
- i.** Proceed with issuing ROI non-compliance notices to appointing officers, as noted in item 3.f.i. above;
- j.** Reply to correspondence from ROI declarants, as noted in item 3.f.ii. above;
- k.** Re-circulate draft ROI Examination Procedure for members consideration, as noted in item 3.f.iii. above;
- l.** Consider possible options for proactive examination of declarations, as noted in item 3.f.iii. above;
- m.** Re-circulate suggested changes to the declaration guidance notes, as noted in item 3.f.iv. above;
- n.** Obtain outstanding information and compile list of issues/questions for CSPL to consider to proceed with ROI non-compliance fines, as noted in item 3.f.v. above;
- o.** Retain CSPL COMP 001/2023 on next meeting agenda, as noted in item 3.g.i. above;
- p.** Set agenda for separate Commission strategy meeting, as noted in item 3.i. above; and
- q.** Re-circulate draft 27th Report for members consideration, as noted in item 3.j. above.

6. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meetings

- a.** Update: Parliamentary Code of Conduct / Good Governance Campaign
- b.** PR & Education Initiatives
 - i.** 2025 Election Media Coverage
- c.** Update: Election Observers' Report / Campaign Financing
- 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. ROI Examination Procedure
 - iii. Declaration Guidance Notes
 - iv. Civil Debt Recovery Procedure
- g. Complaints/Enquiries
 - i. CSPL COMP 001/2023
- h. Trials of the Former Speaker of the House
- i. CSPL Strategy Meeting
- j. Draft 27th Report

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 4:00 pm.



Dr Sonia Bush

CHAIRMAN

COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE