Marshall Islands Chamber of Commerce

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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 20, 2010 Marshall Islands Resort

Meeting called to order by Vice President Mike Slinger at 12:15 P.M. Approximately 60 members and guests were in attendance. The next regular meeting will be held on Friday, February 5, 2010, to accommodate the new President of Continental Micronesia who will be our guest speaker.

- **Minutes** – approved electronically prior to the meeting

- **Guests**

- Mattlan Zachrias, Minister, RMI Resource and Development
- Tommy Kijner, Secretary, RMI Resource and Development
- Martha Campbell, American Ambassador
- Bruce J. D. Linghu, Taiwan Ambassador
- Eric Watnik, Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy
- Lawrence J. Kimmel, Ph.D., Political and Economic Officer, US Embassy
- Nalayini Brito, Secured Transactions Project, Vinstar
- Thomas Arthur, Grant Consulting Services
- Karen Galvan, Veterinary Clinic
- Anita Schutz, CMI Business Department Chair
- Visiting CMI business students

- **Chamber Vice President's opening remarks**

Welcome to the January Chamber of Commerce meeting. The first order of business is to elect new officers. Are there any nominations from the floor?

- **Officers – 2010 and 2011**

Steve Phillips, President
Mike Slinger, Vice President
Salome Andrike, Treasurer
James McLean, Secretary

- **International Labor Organization (ILO) Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific**

Chamber members reviewed and welcomed the first draft of a Marshall Islands country labor policy. However, members concluded that more time is needed to review and assess the impact of what is proposed. The Secretary was directed to inform ILO of this decision.

- **RMI Bill #56 Banning Plastic and Styrofoam**

Chamber members reviewed and discussed this proposed legislation. Whereas members agreed with the intent of the law, the fact that insufficient public hearings were held compels the Chamber to not accept this legislation as written at this time. It should also be noted that the bill summary does not accurately reflect the content of the bill. The Chamber recommends that further public hearings be held to adequately assess the impact of this proposed legislation on the business community.

- **Secured Transactions**

Ben Chutaro introduced Resource and Development Minister Mattlan Zachrias who briefly addressed this month's rollout of secured transactions. The secured transactions regulations were promulgated late in 2009 and we are now in the 30 day comment period. By the end of the month, the new Ministry of R&D LRA and secured transaction filing office will open for business. The off island Website to use to register or inquiry about personal property liens is http://stformi.com.

Ben Chutaro and Nalayini Brito briefly demonstrated the concept behind and the use of the new Website.

- **Veterinary Clinic**

Karen Galvan briefly presented the ongoing (January 13 – February 5) veterinary clinic that is spaying and neutering dogs. This volunteer effort supported by local donations is promoting the stabilization of the dog population on Majuro and not euthanasia. By the end of the month an island wide count of dogs will be completed. It has already been learned that there are three times as many male dogs as female dogs. If the suggested program of dog sterilization is followed Majuro can expect to reduce the dog population by 50% in the next five years without having to euthanize dogs.

- **US Department of the Interior and the East West Center Workshop for the Long Term Viability of Power in the Freely Associated States**

Thomas Arthur briefly discussed the captioned workshop that will be held in Hawaii in April. At present, MEC pays more for electricity than it collects. This is not unique to the Marshall Islands. This will be a high level planning meeting with attendees from the Marshall Islands government, MEC representatives, experts, and donors. No power means no business! If the business community has any comments, please direct them to Al Fowler at the US Embassy.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Minutes prepared by:

Jim McLean