

Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting
November 10, 2005 Melele Room Marshall Islands Resort

Meeting called to order by President Domnick at 12:15 p.m. With 54 members and guests present.

Review of Minutes of October Meeting: Approved

Guests: Bryan Grey PII guest from Australia, Frank Armstrong Investment Consultant to MISSA. Mark Anthony Keaa, Nitijela UNDP Rep. Simon Ellis with clam farm and former Majuro resident.

Presidents Report: No formal report

Correspondence: No mail

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kamal J. Gunawardane Subject Bird Flu (Avian Flu) H5A1
Influenza A, B & C. Bad type is A. Worried about this type of flu because it affects humans and animals. It has the capability to change as it develops. Small changes can happen to make you no longer immune to the flu. You need a shot every year, this will help your immune system combat the new strain of virus.

History of Flu	1918	Killed 20-40 Million	Spanish Flu
	1957	Killed 1-4 Million	Asian Flu
	1968	Killed 2-4 Million	Hong Kong Flu

Flu Epidemic has a 40 year cycle...It's time. With the new virus the community as a whole is no longer immune

How do Birds Spread the Virus? Domestic birds get exposed to wild birds, infected poultry is eaten by humans.

To have an epidemic the general population has no immunity. New virus must be able to replicate in humans, new virus must transcend in humans.

SARS vs. Avian Flu

SARS Infectivity 1+ Sars are big droplets Bird Flu B+ minute particles

Sars in Hospitals, Bird Flu in Community.

No current vaccine, may take 6 months to develop a new vaccine. In that time the virus can change. Anti virus vaccine not a panacea to prevent the flu. Vaccine can slow the spread, 30% of the population may die if an epidemic hits.

Bird Flu has not been detected in the U.S. or the Pacific. Safety precautions must be taken when cooking fowl. Always cook at high heat and make sure the meat is well done, cook eggs hard.

Question and answers followed.

Committee Reports:

- **Financial Report:** We currently have \$7364.00 in our account.

- **Business and Trade:** Ambassador Greta Morris announced to the Chamber Members that agents from U.S. Secret Service will be here at the end of the month to conduct counterfeit classes for all businesses in Majuro, free of charge. Tom Maus of the Embassy will be getting the meeting schedules out to Chamber members. Ambassador Morris also mentioned that she will look into maintaining domestic status of the Marshall Islands on the U.S. Postal Service destinations.
- **Impromptu Guest speaker:** Casten Nemra Assistant Secretary of Finance. Has been in the position for one year. Works very closely with Chief of Customs, Daniel Timothy, (Whom he brought today for moral support). Looking at changes in Customs Laws 1st Offence \$2500.00, 2nd \$5000.00 close the business 3 months, 3rd \$10,000 close permanently. Cases pending: 5 Cases more than in the last 6 years. One case goes to court, three were fined and one settlement. Cigarettes: Highest tax, highly consumable, easy to conceal. Working on changing law and regulations of import and sale. There is a survey in progress of the stores on island. This is a covert operation to find out who sells and who pays. **Assistant Secretary fielded questions** from the members on a number of very direct questions. His response was generally, there are efforts to catch and punish those violating the law. There have been changes in the individuals that work in Customs and Immigration due to corruption. They are making efforts to tighten up the whole operation. He expressed his confidence that there would be change.
- **Education: No Report**
- **Environment: No report.**
- **Tourism:** Bill Weza reported on the efforts of MIVA in continuing to work with Japan Airlines to begin service to the Marshall's from Japan. He was challenged, by members of the Chamber, as to what MIVA is doing to get the runway extended, and when is the resurfacing going to be done. In response Weza stated that letters have been written to Jack Chong Gum on the time table for completion of the work in time for JAL to begin flights in late April and early May. In response to MIVA's letter Jack stated the extension of the runway is considered cosmetic by FAA and is not covered under the current airport improvement funding. As to the question will the Airport Authority have funding to purchase the \$500,000 of ground handling equipment necessary to service JAL, Jack responded they will not purchase any equipment to handle JAL, "it is no funding". As to the timetable for the completion of work Jack responded, "Late April early May for the scheduled completion of the work". This is too late. MIVA has asked Ports Authority to allow MIVA to make a presentation on the economic importance of the runway completion and the impact on the economy. MIVA has asked the same of Cabinet.

- **Government Relations:** Jerry Kramer: Read a letter from Minister Brenson Wase to the U.S. postal service on the cancellation of USP service to the Marshall Islands. Jerry read another letter from a Chamber member to the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to recall the RMI Ambassador to the U.S. of the U.S. does not continue to honor the USP service to the Marshall Islands. General discussion followed.
- **Communications:** No report
- **Health Committee:** Dr. Pinano, spoke on the campaign to have school children do a flyer on seat belts, this will start this month. Teen pregnancy, this is big issue. Directly related to not being in school and a general lack of education and supervision. There is a program on a National Comprehensive Cancer Project, more will be reported later. Bird Flu was addressed by Dr. Kamal
- **Financial Services: Jim McLean** reported that there are a number of counterfeit 50's and 100's in the community. Look at the serial numbers they are all the same. Check watermarks and threads in the bills and if you have a counterfeit detection pen use it. Some of the bills are good most are very bad to very poor. Attend the seminar being conducted by the Secret Service.
- **Special Projects:** Christmas parade December 17th.

Old Business: None

New Business: It got late no new business.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:00 pm

Minutes by Bill Weza
For
Secretary Don Hess