

Meeting Minutes
Thursday April 14, 2005
Marshall Islands Resort Melele Room
30 Members in attendance

Meeting called to order by President Carlos Domnick at 12:40 p.m.
Review of Meeting minutes of March 10, 2005, Minutes approved

- **Financial:** \$6714.52 balance in account increase of \$350.00 from last meeting.
- **Guests:** Minister of Research and Development **Minister John Silk**. **Glen Joseph** Newly appointed Director of MIMRA. **Dr. John Hay** visiting the Marshalls to do a study on environmental issues. **Boyd** new assistant to Stephen Philip at Moylan Insurance.
- **Mail Summary:** Email from Ben Graham on Trust Funds in the Pacific. Air Marshall Islands sent email concerning cargo space to and from Hawaii sometime next week. Details and costs to follow. Letter from CMI, they are having Foundation Day Friday and Saturday and they need money. Email from Guy Pierce on the EIA being conducted on the site for the Taiwanese Dry dock. Letter from RMI Embassy in Washington on a Marshallese soldier that was wounded in Iraq. Family need help getting to Texas to visit, he is in very critical condition due to a bomb blast injury
- **Guest Speakers:** Minister John Silk, Mr. Fred Muller, and Mr. Glen Joseph.
 - **Minister John Silk:** Minister Silk stated that he would keep his remarks brief. The topic of discussion was the recently concluded meeting here in Majuro on a Regional Fisheries workshop and Trade Negotiations, between the ACP states and the EU. This meeting was in association with the Pacific Forum Countries, ACP and EU as it relates to the Cotonou Agreement. The RMI Government realizes that the development of the private sector is important to sustained growth through Global relationships with the ACP and the EU. Late last year myself, and a Chamber member Bill Weza attended the Phase II kickoff of negotiations in Fiji. The Marshall Islands were elected to head the Fisheries negotiations. Overall negotiations will be completed by 2007. We feel with more involvement in the EU/ACP will lead to better relationships with the WTO. We are very optimistic that RMI can negotiate some very good agreements with the EU. This is based on the language of the Cotonou Agreement where they cannot negotiate anything less than already exists with any other country. Other than fisheries we have nothing to trade on a wide scale.
 - **Questions? Dave Strauss. Why do we want to trade with Europe?**
 - **Answer:** Fisheries is a big issue. It is very important to the region. Also Tourism. There is a large demand for fish in Europe as well as places for tourist to travel, Europe is a very large market.
 - **Neal Skinner:** We have things to export, Noni and Pearls as one.
 - **Answer:** Very small production on a world scale. Although a good start.
 - **Carlos Domnick:** The EU knows the RMI's capacity to trade is minimal. RMI need tax revenues to survive. The only trading we do/did with EU is AMI purchasing of airplane parts from a German or another European country's company. We have to have the import tax revenues on these sales, under the agreement there would be no tax. This is a problem that has to be worked out in the negotiations.
 - **Secretary Fred Muller:** The secretary spoke on the upcoming Trade and Promotion trip to Kwajalein. The Trade Show is scheduled on Kwajalein on Monday the 16th of May. The show will be for one day only. The Secretary elaborated on the types of items that were exhibited last year and touched on some to the items Kwajalein is now buying from Ebeye as a result of last year's show. He stated that any interested parties contact MIVA or the Ministry to arrange to be part of the show. There are restrictions, a meeting to discuss these restrictions will be scheduled in a few weeks.

There will also be a business workshop on how to start a business on Kwajalein, and work opportunities that have now become available to Marshallese.

- On other issues the Secretary stated that some rules for the importation of Kosrae limes has been worked out they are now able to import this product. We have also been working with the Philippines on food development.
- There was a recent workshop at the Women's center on canning fruits for export. The conference was well attended. The Secretary also stated that the group learned how to make wine from local fruits.
- **Questions? : Dave Strauss,** Why would a Marshallese business want to open a business on Kwajalein if the Commander can cancel any contract at any time?

Jerry Kramer: Last year's Trade show was a success 90% due to Secretary Muller. Jerry stated he would not attempt to negotiate with Kwajalein unless the Minister of R&D is involved. This would keep the negotiations on a legal basis.

Jim McLean: Trade with Kwajalein has a tax cloud over any trade. Will RMI tax be added in any direct trade with Kwajalein? The Secretary wasn't sure.

Joe Murphy: My recent visit to Kwajalein was horrible. Degrading and made to feel like a criminal.

- **Glenn Joseph:** As the new manager for MIMRA he is still pretty new in his position. He had some of his own questions to work on. Where do we go from here? Where is MIMRA? MIMRA is the Case Management for Costal, Training, Fisheries and Aqua Culture
- **Questions? Dave Strauss:** What is the status of the dry dock?
- **Answer:** Glen knows as much as he reads in the newspaper

President Domnick thanked the guest speakers and extended Chamber support.

Committee Reports:

- **Membership and Public Relations:** Two new members Farmers Association and the Handi-Craft Association. We had lunch to encourage them to join...They did not show up.
- **Business and Trade:** No report
- **Health:** No report
- **Environment:** Dr. John Hay here to do an Environmental study nothing to report.
- **Education:** No report.
- **Tourism:** Bill Weza elaborated on some collaborative pieces of promotional work between Rongelap Expeditions and MIVA as well as Marshalls Dive Adventures. There is an upcoming visit by a company from Kona, Hawaii. Jody Bright will video a TV show for viewing in the Western United States. The visit of the President of Taiwan is scheduled for May 1st and 2nd. This is in conjunction with May Day celebrations including the National Cup Race.
- **Government Relations:** Jerry Kramer. Waiting for the latest bills to be sent out. Nothing as of yet.

Old Business

- Dave Strauss, what about the phone system upgrade? Answer, This Summer.

New Business

- What is the status of the Marshallese soldier that was injured in Iraq? His condition is serious. The U.S. Army has flown his family to Texas where he is in the hospital. The Chamber will send a letter of support to the family.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:40

Minutes Prepared by Bill Weza

Approved _____

Approved with changes _____